



# The Beacon

Your guiding light for writing and publishing

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## “Must-have” info for authors...

Advances and royalties for books engage every writer’s mind sooner or later. But there are extras that few of us know about, such as the Public Lending Right and the copyright payment, both of which are paid annually.

Celebrities and best-selling authors are the ones most likely to command six figure **advances**. First-time authors and those of us who write for niche markets often receive very small amounts – sometimes less than \$1000.00, paid in two or three progress payments. Don’t be too horrified about this – what you don’t get in an advance will come to you in **royalties** once your book starts selling. If it sells well, a cheque that delights will arrive every quarter or semi-annually. The advance is taken off your royalties until it is paid out, so you receive the same earnings one way or the other. I prefer a low advance and more royalties, which start coming sooner.

The **Public Lending Right** (PLR) is a program which compensates authors who have their works in public libraries. Canada, the UK, and thirteen other countries provide such a program. From a pool of government funds, each author receives an amount calculated on the number instances their books appear on library shelves across the nation. All that authors need to do is submit their titles and ISBNs via the appropriate website and once a year a cheque plops into your mailbox.

Canada: [www.plr-dpp.ca/PLR](http://www.plr-dpp.ca/PLR)

UK: [www.plr.uk.com/](http://www.plr.uk.com/)

Australia: [www.dcita.gov.au/plr.html](http://www.dcita.gov.au/plr.html)

USA: does not have a PLR program yet.

**Copyright collectives** also exist in some countries and provide users, who have paid for a licence, with immediate, lawful and economic access to published works. Countries like Canada also ensure .... /2

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### From the editor’s desk

Summer is the time I ramp-up my writing as speaking engagements decline in the holiday months; other writers use the downtime to recharge their creativity. July and August is also a time to read those books we have put aside, anticipating more free hours to enjoy them. Writers must read extensively – books and authors we both like and dislike, genres we are not usually drawn to, poetry and plays, as well as books on the craft and business of writing. What are your summer books going to be this year?

I am pleased to announce that Vancouver Community College has graciously invited me to provide a selection of workshops throughout the academic year for their new Creative Writing program. The sessions will be running in the evenings and on Saturdays. See **Forthcoming Events** below. For details on dates and fees, try [www.continuinged.vcc.ca](http://www.continuinged.vcc.ca), click on “Courses and Programs” on the left, and then on “Creative Writing.” I hope to see some of you there. If you are an out-of-town subscriber, many of these workshops are available as books, e-books, and on CD-ROMS. (for those residing in the Fraser Valley, Surrey’s Creative Writing Diploma program runs some of the workshops too.)

Julie H. Ferguson

## Useful websites I recommend:

For periodical and book publishers' guidelines:

[www.writersdigest.com/guidelines.asp](http://www.writersdigest.com/guidelines.asp)

For articles about all types of writing:

[www.write-resource.com/](http://www.write-resource.com/)

My favourite with over 500 resources:

[www.writing-world.com](http://www.writing-world.com)

The author for writers. Her books are the industry standard:

[www.elizabethlyon.com](http://www.elizabethlyon.com)

The best guide to North American writers' conferences:

[www.shawguides.com/](http://www.shawguides.com/) and click on *Writers' Conferences and Workshops*

## Forthcoming events

(for registration details, see website)

- Jun 12** – *Speaking and Writing: A Guide to Promotional Writing for Professional Speakers* for the CAPS Professional Development Series, 1:30-4:30pm, Holiday Inn, Howe St., Vancouver.
- Jun 24-26** – *Publishers and Authors Panel* at the Canadian Authors' Association's annual convention at University of British Columbia, Vancouver.
- Aug 26-27** – *Writing with Power!!* for teachers, through the Literacy Institute's *Literacy Connections K-8*, Terry Fox Secondary School, Port Coquitlam.
- Sep 26** – *Word on the Street*. Free for writers and readers, around the Vancouver Public Library, 11am-6pm.
- Sep 29** – *Crack Open Your Creative Channel!* for all writers at Vancouver Community College, 6:30-9:30pm.
- Oct 6** – *Getting Published in Canada 101* for novelists and non-fiction writers at Vancouver Community College, 6:30-9:30pm.
- Oct 13** – *How to Write for the Online Market* for all writers at Vancouver Community College, 6:30-9:30pm.
- Oct 21-24** – **12<sup>th</sup> Surrey International Writers' Conference**. Join Julie for three workshops: *Brainstorming Brilliant Bios*; *Who Are They?* (researching /writing "About the Market" for queries and book proposals); and *I've Got This Great Idea for a Book!* Also visit Julie in the Blue Pencil Café for an encouraging chat about your writing career and work-in-progress. Visit [www.siwc.ca](http://www.siwc.ca)
- Oct 20, 27 and Nov 3** – *How to Craft Irresistible Query Letters* for writers of books and articles, at Guilford Secondary School through Surrey's Creative Writing Diploma program, 7-9pm.
- Oct 30** – *Crafting Irresistible Query Letters* for writers of books and articles, at Vancouver Community College, 9am-4pm.

## "Must-have" Info

(continued)

that publishers and creators are fairly compensated for this copying. Schools and universities are examples of users who pay an annual licence fee to let them photocopy course material. Again, all that authors need to do is register with the agency. This also applies to photographers, composers, etc. Canadians should register their works at [www.accesscopyright.ca/](http://www.accesscopyright.ca/).

Other countries' copyright agencies may not compensate their authors but you should be able to find out at:

UK: [www.cla.co.uk/](http://www.cla.co.uk/)

Australia: [www.copyright.org.au/](http://www.copyright.org.au/)

US: [www.copyright.com](http://www.copyright.com)

Also available from *Access Copyright* in Canada is an excellent free email course on our copyright laws. Sign up at the site listed above and make yourself aware of this essential "must-have" info for writers.

Don't forget to apply for all the compensation you are entitled to as an author. It's more than you think—I earn nearly \$1000.00/year this way....

Previous issues of *The Beacon* are archived at [www.beaconlit.com/beaconli/newsletter.htm](http://www.beaconlit.com/beaconli/newsletter.htm)



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