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A Novelist's Roadmap to Reinvention

BY CLAIRE COOK

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary presents a range of possibilities when it defines reinvent: "to make major changes or improvements to (something) . . . to present (something) in a different or new way . . . to remake or redo completely . . . to bring into use again."

There are people who will give you bullet points, action plans, absolute secrets to success. But the truth as I see it is that nobody really knows. What works for you might not work for me. What works tomorrow might not work next year, or even the next day. If it were easy to be successful, we'd all be doing it.

"The only thing constant is change." Heraclitus

If there were a roadmap to success, we'd all be following it. We'd have it saved on our GPS or made into a poster hanging over our bed. Every book would be a bestseller, every movie would be a mega hit, every blog

would have a gazillion followers, every restaurant would have a line snaking out to the street.

So you have to create your own roadmap. You have to designate your starting point, figure out your destination, work around the inevitable detours and potholes and traffic jams. You have to stay on the road, even if you don't feel like it. Even if you really need to pee.

It's a huge leap of faith. It's a ton of work.

But it feels awesome when you get there.

I love happy endings, so nothing would give me more pleasure than to tell you that once you finally arrive

about our stellar lives!

INSIDE this ISSUE

President's Voice: Dystopia Not For Us 3
Slate of Officers / Nominating Committee
Candidates ······ 8
Ballot
Celebrate Popular Fiction Week · · · · 13
NINC Conference 2014: Where Do We Go ······ 14
Writing Is Taxing: Easy-Peasy Tax
Recordkeeping
The Mad Scribbler: Estranged from Reality 18
-

at your reinvention destination, all your dreams will come true and you'll be living on easy street, set for life. Because that's where I am now, on the other side of that magical finish line. Boy oh boy is my life perfect, and I can't wait for you to join me here in reinvention paradise. We'll have drinks! We'll chat

But I owe you the truth, and the truth is it doesn't work that way. There will always be challenges and, likely as not, they'll get even bigger. As the ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus said, "The only thing constant is change." Continued on page 5

Novelists, Inc.

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Address changes may be made on the website.

Members without Internet access may send changes to the Central Coordinator.

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Introducing...

The following authors have applied for membership in NINC and are now presented by the Membership Committee to the members. If no legitimate objections are lodged with the Membership Committee within 15 days of this Nink issue, these authors shall be accepted as members of NINC. For further information or to recommend eligible writers, contact:

Membership Chair:

Tracy Higley tracy@tracyhigley.com

This Space **Deliberately** Left Blank

*

Proprietary Information

NINC has room to grow...

Recommend membership to your colleagues. Prospective members may apply online at http://www.ninc.com. Refer members at ninc.com. Go to Members Only, "Member Services" and click "Refer a New Member to NINC." Take NINC brochures to conferences.

President's VOICE

Dystopia Not For Us

I recently read Cyn Balog's new YA dystopian, *Drowned*. Well-written, about a community on an island that becomes completely flooded with every incoming tide. They survive by crowding on a high platform to ride out the tide in assigned formations—children and the more valuable members of society in the middle where it's safer, and the older and less valuable toward the edges where the ever-increasing waters devour them one—or twenty—at a time. The king and princess



Meredith Efken

huddle in the rickety tower of their sea-battered castle, a luxury and relative safety the rest of the community deeply resents.

The point the story makes is very similar to *Lord of the Flies*—when humans feel a scarcity of resources, and when fear and desperation set in, we turn on each other, treating even friends and family members as the enemy in a bid to survive.

Those kind of stories are not really my thing—they force me to confront some very dark truths about my own humanity that I'd prefer to pretend don't exist. As much as we like to think otherwise, these stories resonate because the underlying mindset they portray is at work even now, and I'm seeing it a lot among my own "people"—the writing community.

It seems that as soon as self-publishing took off, writers divided themselves into two camps: indie and traditional. No matter that a lot of authors are actually doing both. Now, when retailers and publishers battle each other in high-profile negotiations or court cases, writers are choosing sides, creating teams.

And turning on each other in the process.

I get it. I really do. The publishing world can be totally crazy-making. There is a lot of resentment among writers for the unfair treatment we and our books have received by some traditional publishers. It's easy to be lured into a sense of schadenfreude when we see some bigger, stronger force pushing back against an industry we feel did us wrong.

But I also get why some writers choose to stay in that traditional model. Not everyone has the time or ability to manage their own distribution, promotion, and marketing. Not all authors can take on the risk involved in moving their business to an indie model. Some authors write in genres that don't sell so well in the indie market.

And that's how we get dystopian attitudes in our writing community. Team Retailer, Team Publisher. Team Indie, Team Traditional.

I've heard traditionally published authors complain that in NINC all we do anymore is talk about indie publishing. I've heard indie authors (not so much in NINC) judge or even mock authors who have chosen to stay with their publisher. I've read news articles and blog comments on both sides, pointing fingers and condemning the other.

I've also seen authors on both sides take a cynical attitude of "pass me the popcorn, this should be an entertaining show." They ignore that the "show" takes a very real toll on the employees of these companies as well as writers and other freelancers who are trying to do business with them.

This isn't good, guys. Our loyalties shouldn't lie with either retailer or publisher. The fact is that both are corporate entities whose own loyalties ultimately lie with their stock holders and investors—not us.

In other words, they make decisions based on what they feel will be most profitable for them. No surprise there—it's what corporations do. If it's profitable for them to treat their suppliers well (we're suppliers, by the way) then they will. If they believe it's too costly, they'll give their suppliers less appealing terms.

As business people, authors should maintain an emotional distance from either side. But that's hard when our livelihoods rely on what decisions these large corporations make. Plus, these corporations

are made up of actual people—most of whom are very nice, and we form relationships with them. It's hard to maintain a neutral perspective. We naturally want to side with whoever we feel most connected to.

I'm urging us all to become very aware of these tendencies and to fight against them in how we relate to other authors. Our dismissive, disdainful, or coldly amused words can hurt authors who are being impacted by the larger struggles in the publishing world.

This isn't a platform on a drowning island—we don't have to treat each other as the enemy. I am not being overly optimistic when I say that if the publishing apocalypse happened tomorrow—all the publishers collapsed and the retailers turned on us like a suddenly hungry bear—writers would still find a way to survive and succeed. We would.

And we have the capability of doing so without devouring each other.

That's what it means to be creative. We have the ability to find and create solutions. The world has always loved and needed stories. We are uniquely gifted to meet that fundamental need. If we had to, we would find whole new ways of making a living using that gift. It wouldn't be easy, but we could do it. Especially if we work together instead of taking sides and treating authors who have chosen a different path as the enemy.

NINC can and should be a leader in this collegial way of relating to fellow authors. Let's not wait for some kind of apocalypse to come together and respect each other's chosen business models. We keep approaching this as a scarcity of resources, where we have to fight each other in order to succeed. But that's not the truth.

The truth is, we need each other. There's so much to learn, so many ways of doing business. When we look at each other with a sense of superiority or disdain, we lose the chance to create a new friendship, to see things in a new way, or to enhance our business in ways we didn't know were possible.

NINC members, let's do this. I'm calling on you—on all of us. Let's be the leaders in the writing community and set the tone—both in our own NINC discussions and in the larger publishing world. We can be the ones to consciously erase the battle lines, dismantle the teams, and work together to create a supportive, writer-centric community. Let's be the ones who care more about how we can help each individual author succeed instead of what business model or corporate entity we feel most loyal to. Let's let go of the cynicism and past frustrations, or at least make a greater commitment not to direct those emotions toward other authors.

Slight spoiler on the Drowned story—the heroine discovers she has the ability to survive. And not just survive, but also to save others. Instead of taking sides and being part of the destruction of her community, she is the one who finds the solution. In the end, she crosses those battles lines to rescue even the person the rest of the community resents the most.

That kind of heroism is what the world wants to believe in. But why stop there? If we can imagine it, we can make it reality. As we head toward our conference next month, and then turn our focus to a new year, this is my challenge to each member of our organization. Instead of just writing about people like that people who tear down barriers and extend their hands across rival lines—let's go one better.

Let's be people like that.

— Meredith Efken

NINC Statement of Principle:

Novelists, Inc., in acknowledgment of the crucial creative contributions novelists make to society, asserts the right of novelists to be treated with dignity and in good faith; to be recognized as the sole owners of their literary creations; to be fairly compensated for their creations when other entities are profiting from those creations; and to be accorded the respect and support of the society they serve.

A Novelist's Roadmap to Reinvention

Continued from page I Just when you're getting comfortable, the destination you've happily arrived at can suddenly start shifting under your feet.

That's what happened to me. I was cruising along, represented by a powerful literary agent from a mighty agency that I both liked and respected, published by a series of big New York publishers that believed in my books and helped me make them better, and receiving advances for my novels that were substantial enough to live well on. And then the publishing world began to get rocky, just like the music world and the newspaper world and so many others had before it.

I was one of the lucky authors. I had multi-book contracts, and I was still being sent on book tours by my publisher and published in both hardcover and paperback, so I was able to put on my blinders and ignore the changes at first. Eventually, I couldn't help noticing my career stalling out, but I'm a glass half full kind of person, so I just shrugged it off and figured if I dug down deep and worked even harder than I was already working, I could make up for the shrinking energy and resources being put behind my books.

And then, after years of stability and support, it was jolting when a single one of my novels made the rounds through three separate editors, because the first two left the publishing house. I lost count of the inhouse publicists disappearing through the revolving door—even their names began to blur. But the good news was that this was my final book under contract with this publisher, so I'd just find a better home for my books and me when I was free.

When the time came, my agent and I made the rounds, meeting with editors at the big publishing houses. I signed a two-book contract with the one who promised they'd put all their resources behind me to grow my readership and to get my career moving again in the right direction.

It didn't happen. I think they tried hard with the first book, but the things that used to work for traditional publishers trying to break out a book weren't working so well anymore. I wrote the second book I owed them. And then I found out that their entire plan for this book was to do all the things that hadn't worked for the first one. Even I couldn't find the glass half full in that. So I spoke up, verbally, and then in writing, and then in writing with lots of detail, even some bullet points.

Let's just say it didn't go over so well. A message was delivered to me via my literary agent that I should focus on writing the best book I could write and leave everything else to the professionals.

Oh, how I would have loved to.

Then my editor went off on a three-month maternity leave that would end just before my book came out, leaving her assistant, a very nice young woman a couple years out of college, responsible for the care of my novel, my baby. Less than a month before my publication date, I received an email from this very nice assistant telling me she was leaving publishing to start a takeout food business with a friend. What a coincidence, I almost wrote back. I'm leaving publishing to start a takeout food business, too!

And now no one was in charge of my book.

It was such a low point. I was heartbroken, both for me and for the poor book I'd poured my heart and soul into. I'd spent 13 years trying to be the hardest working author in the universe, and I felt excruciatingly let down by the institution that was literally feeding me. And paying my bills.

It gets worse. Around this time, I started receiving emails and calls from booksellers telling me they were having trouble ordering my backlist books that had been published by my last publisher. And then that last publisher went under and was bought out by another publisher who inherited all their titles. So, in another huge bump in the road, these five backlist books went from being ignored to being part of a fire sale and were now owned by a new publisher that quickly demonstrated they had absolutely no interest in them.

One day right around this time it hit me: I simply can't do this again. I cannot let another publisher break my heart.

It gets better. Independent—aka self—publishing had taken off and grown into a viable alternative. Authors in situations similar to mine were becoming hybrid authors—both traditionally and self-published. And in this new world, there was little of the cloak and dagger stuff I'd experienced in traditional publishing,

where everything from money to marketing was kept secret. Indie authors were generously sharing everything they learned to help others on the same path. Via message boards and blogs and conferences, a great support system was bubbling up.

I'd already dipped a toe in this new pond, back when I first began to feel the changes. E-books were taking off like crazy and my readers were embracing them. Since I owned the rights to Must Love Dogs, I reformatted it and uploaded the e-book on Amazon. I gave it away on Mother's Day to thank my readers for their support. No advertising, just an email blast, a post on Facebook and another one on Twitter. It had 32,000 downloads in that one day and reached the number one spot on the Amazon free list, right next to Fifty Shades of Gray on the paid list. And now a whole bunch of people wanted to hear more from these characters. Amazing.

So the pieces of my new dream started to come together. I would find a way to get the rights to my backlist books reverted, and then I'd republish them with my own publishing company, which I'd call Marshbury Beach Books after the fictional town in my novels. Then I'd turn Must Love Dogs into a series—my readers wanted more, series were becoming more popular, and it would be fun to have a new kind of writing challenge since I'd never written a series. After that, I'd just keep writing, maybe even that nonfiction book about reinvention I'd wanted to write for years.

I hired a lawyer to help me begin the arduous process of getting the rights to my backlist reverted. But this time I did it the smart way. I reached out to a wonderful organization I belong to, Novelists, Inc., which has a legal fund for its members I could apply to for help subsidizing my efforts. NINC had a list of lawyers, and once I'd chosen one, they even made the initial contact for me.

I finished writing a draft of Book 2 of the new Must Love Dogs series. My agent not only read it, but also gave me helpful editorial advice. We seemed to be on the same page in terms of the steps I needed to take to get my career back on track. I'd already self-published Must Love Dogs and Multiple Choice with her full knowledge and support. It seemed to me that if I could get my career moving again, it would only benefit us both down the road.

And then one day on the phone, my agent informed me that in order to continue to be represented by this mighty agency, I would have to turn over 15percent of the proceeds of my about-to-be self-published book to said agency. Not only that, but I would have to publish it exclusively through Amazon, because the agency had a system in place with them where I could check a box and their 15 percent would go straight to them, no muss, no fuss.

There was no deal, no sale. There would be no self-publishing assistance, no special treatment from Amazon to give my books an extra push, no marketing. I would be paying 15 percent of my profits—forever simply for the privilege of being represented by a big name agency. And this might well turn out to be representation in name only, since it was made clear to me that the mighty agency's subagents could not be expected to devote time and energy to selling rights to works that were not traditionally published.

It was wrong, ethically and financially, and I just couldn't do it. I Googled and searched message boards and was introduced to the term revenue grabbing.

To say it rocked my world would be an understatement. I was stunned, in part because I had several author friends traveling the same road, friends whose agents were supporting their indie journeys to get their careers back on track in a big way, and only commissioning the sales of sub-rights like foreign and audio and film.

A lawyer at another organization I'm a member of looked over my breakup papers furnished by the agency, and told me to look on the bright side, they never would have bothered if they didn't smell money. I was hardly a big fish at this agency, so in my mind it was more about getting caught in the crossfire as agents and publishers alike try to reinvent themselves and stay relevant in these quickly changing times.

I cried. A lot. At one point, I remember Googling Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's five stages of grief and realizing that I was cycling through them all, from denial to anger to bargaining to depression to acceptance. And then, once I finished wallowing and being pathetic, I shook it off and got back to work, more determined than ever.

As much as this whole thing totally, totally sucked, as much as it felt like my entire support system had

been pulled out from under me, I never once questioned that I would continue writing. And I never once questioned that my readers would want to read my next book, no matter how it was published.

If you're having a bad day/month/year, I hope my story just made you feel better! I tell it not to point fingers or to badmouth anyone, but in the spirit of those indie authors who have so generously shared information to help others coming up behind them on the road.

I loved having a savvy, formidable literary agent advocating for me, and a connected group of terrific subagents going after foreign and film rights. I loved working with publishing teams made up of smart people who knew how to help me make my books better and had the clout to get my books much wider distribution than I could ever get on my own.

If the right literary agent comes along, one who gets where I'm going and can support my new journey in a meaningful way, that would be great. But I'm in no rush, and it's been good to take a break to think about what I'll need moving forward, as well as empowering to take control of my own career.

I consider myself a hybrid author, both traditionally and self-published. If the right traditional publishing offer comes along, especially one that would get my paper books into bookstores in a more widespread way than I can on my own, I'd absolutely work with a traditional publisher again. As Guy Kawasaki, the former chief evangelist of Apple, said about his own hybrid author career, "I'm not for sale, but I am absolutely for rent."

This selection is excerpted with the author's permission from Claire Cook's first nonfiction book, Never Too Late: Your Roadmap to Reinvention (without getting lost along the way), which also includes tips for platform-building, social networking, and the story of how the Must Love Dogs movie really happened. You can find out more and download the free Never Too Late workbook at **ClaireCook.com**.

REINVENTION TIPS

BY CLAIRE COOK

- I. Rise above the negativity. Whatever the motive, lots of people will tell you why you can't or shouldn't do whatever it is you want to do. You just have to decide to do it anyway. You might want to protect yourself a bit in the beginning, too. I didn't tell anyone about my first novel until it was finished. You don't need anyone's permission—just do it!
- 2. **Be who you really are.** The big buzz word these days is branding, but I think of it as authenticity. This is the first job I've ever had where I wasn't pretending, or at least trying to pretend, to be a slightly different person. Who I am and what I write are totally in synch. There's tremendous power in that!
- 3. **Confound expectations.** If everybody's doing it, it's already been done. Put a little surprise in everything you do. Originality counts!
- 4. **Do something nice for someone**. It's easy to get needy when you're struggling to figure out what's next, but many of the great things that have happened to me were triggered by something nice I did for someone else. People talk—your actions determine what they say. As one of my characters once said, karma is a boomerang!
- 5. **Get your tech together**. Everything you need to know about the world you want to conquer can be found online. Get your computer skills up to speed—fast! Take a class or find a computer mentor. Research. Network. Create an online presence on Facebook and Twitter. The Internet is a great equalizer—and there are so many opportunities out there just waiting for you to take advantage of them!



Slate of Officers for NINC 2015

President-Elect

Diana Peterfreund is the author of ten books for adults and children, including the Secret Society Girl series and the Killer Unicorns series, and has been a member of NINC since the week she was eligible. She's written adult, young adult, and middle grade fiction and been published by Random House, Harper Collins, Simon & Schuster, Penguin, and a variety of small publishers. In 2013, she went hybrid and began self publishing new adult romances under the name Viv Daniels. Her short stories have been published in a variety of markets, including The Best Science Fiction and Fantasy of the Year, Vol. 5, and the NINC collection, Cast of Characters. Aside from NINC, she belongs to RWA and SFWA, and has served both on

the board and on committees for several RWA chapters (TARA, WRW, and Chick Lit Writers of the World) as well as for RWA National's PRO committee. Diana lives outside Washington DC with her husband, her young daughter, and her dog, Rio. http://dianapeterfreund.com.



Treasurer

Pamela E. Johnson (aka Pamela Dalton) is the author of romantic suspense and romantic comedy novels, originally published by Harlequin. She has a four-year accounting degree and has served as president, treasurer, long range planning chair, bylaws chair, and finance chair for a variety of local and national organizations. In her other life, she is bookkeeper and marketing manager for the family business. She is currently writing a thriller.



Nominating Committee Candidates for 2015

Cynthia Pratt (aka C.B. Pratt) has lived all over the United States, including California, New York, and many stops in between. Having been a professional writer for over 20 years, she is ill-suited to any normal work and hopes to continue writing for the rest of her life. Independent publishing has allowed her to write the things she has always wanted to, including fantasy and steampunk. She is the author of numerous traditionally published books, as well as the Eno the Thracian fantasy-adventure series. Rivers of Sand will be released late summer, 2014.



A NINC member since year one and former NINC treasurer, Ruth Glick (who writes fiction as Rebecca York), is the author of more than 125 novels and novellas as well as 16 cookbooks. Her first book was on making dollhouse furniture. She went on to publish a kids' SF novel with Scholastic in 1982: The Invasion of the Blue Lights. Since then, she has become a multi-published romance, romantic suspense, and paranormal romantic suspense writer for Silhouette, Harlequin Intrigue, Berkley, and Sourcebooks, with excursions into science-fiction romance, YA, and cookbook writing. She's now a hybrid writer, continuing her traditional career while indie-publishing paranormal romantic suspense, science-fiction romance, and cookbooks. She lives in Maryland with

her husband and four cats, travels frequently, and cooks and gardens for fun. For more about her, see www.rebeccayork.com.

Jody Lynn Nye has published 45 books and more than 120 short stories. Her novels include her epic fantasy series, The Dreamland; a humorous contemporary fantasy series, Mythology; and three medical science fiction novels. She also wrote The Dragonlover's Guide to Pern, a guide to the world of international bestselling author Anne McCaffrey's popular books. She collaborated with McCaffrey on four science fiction novels and wrote a solo sequel to the fourth, entitled The Ship Errant. Jody co-authored the Visual Guide to Xanth with bestselling fantasy author Piers Anthony and edited an anthology of humorous stories about mothers in science fiction, fantasy, myth and legend, entitled Don't Forget Your Spacesuit, Dear! She wrote eight books with the late Robert Lynn Asprin and continued his Dragons series with Dragons Deal and Dragons Run. Her newest book (September 2014) is Fortunes of the Imperium. Upcoming is Myth-Fits, which continues the Myth-Adventures series begun by Robert Asprin. Jody has taught in numerous writing workshops and participated on hundreds of panels at science fiction conventions. She has also taught fantasy writing at Columbia College Chicago and consulted as a script doctor. Her website is www.jodylynnnye.com.

Denise A. Agnew is the author of over 60 novels. *Romantic Times Book Reviews* calls her romantic suspense novels "top-notch," and she's received their coveted TOP PICK rating. Denise has written paranormal, romantic comedy, contemporary, fantasy, historical, erotic romance, and romantic suspense. Archaeology and archery have crept into her work, and travels through England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales have added to a lifetime of story ideas. A paranormal investigator, Denise looks forward to exploring the unknown. Visit Denise's website at www.deniseagnew.com.

With more than 50 published books under her belt, **Vella Munn** no longer has any other marketable skills (except for carpenter ant eradication, which she doesn't want to repeat). She has worked with traditional publishers, small e-publishers, and is self-published and proudly wears her hybrid hat—or she would if she could find it. No rose-colored glasses here and lots of publishing scars. A self-proclaimed hermit, the only people she knows are other writers, mostly NINC members. Attending the conferences (mostly in Florida so her sister-in-law can take her fishing afterward) keeps her semi-sane.

Olivia Rupprecht (aka Mallory Rush) began her career as a novelist with Bantam Books in 1989 and joined Novelists, Inc. in its early years. After many novels later for Bantam, Harlequin, and Doubleday, Olivia became a *Nink* columnist/reporter, then *Nink* Editor in 2003, and went on to work in traditional publishing as a copywriter, ghostwriter, book doctor, and developmental editor. As Series Developer for True Vows, the reality-based romance series from HCI Books, she enlisted fellow NINC members for the launch titles before returning to where it all began: the business of writing novels. *There Will Be Killing* is an October 2014 release from The Story Plant. The one constant throughout this very long and crazy ride is Olivia's belief that Novelists, Inc. is the most valuable, informative, and supportive organization in the industry for publishing professionals of quality fiction.

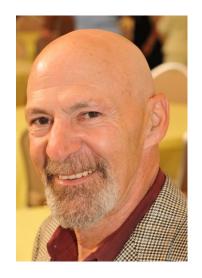








Nominations Committee Candidates, Cont.







David Wind is the author of 35 novels. He began writing in 1979 and has published novels of suspense, adventure, science fiction, and historical fiction. David's newest novel, The Cured, is a legal medical thriller written with Terese Ramin. His novel, Angels In Mourning won the April 2009 Reader's Choice Book Award from thebookawards.com. David's thrillers, originally released under the pen name David Milton, include The Hyte Maneuver, (a Literary Guild alternate selection), As Peace Lay Dying, and Conspiracy of Mirrors. David worked with his wife and even borrowed her maiden name, Bonnie Faber for three mystery/suspense novels. Queen of Knights, a medieval fantasy, and The Others were his entry into fantasy and science fiction. In 1988, David was honored by science fiction writer and Hugo Award Grand Master Andre Norton, who, after reading Queen of Knights, asked David to write a short story for inclusion in her "Andre Norton's Tales From The Witch World 2" Anthology Series. David also wrote the novelization of the ABC seven-day miniseries, The Last Days of Pompeii.

Sally Hawkes has a day job as the Manager of Network Services (that means she's a librarian who works with technology). In the NINC world, she has two evil twins who write contemporary romances and historicals with Regency settings. Sally Falcon is the contemporary author, and Sarah Eagle is the historical writer (she does more research). As Sarah, she was nominated several time for Best Regency Comedy by Romantic Times and once by the Colorado Romance Writers. Currently she's looking into historical mysteries and steampunk. She contributes Business Briefs to the NINC newsletter and is currently working on 25th Anniversary activities.

A New York Times bestseller, Kathryn Shay has been a lifelong writer and teacher. She has written 53 books—16 self-published original romance titles, 36 print books with the Berkley Publishing Group and Harlequin Enterprises, and one mainstream women's fiction with Bold Strokes Books. She has won five RT Book Reviews awards, four Golden Quills, four Holt Medallions, the Bookseller's Best Award, Foreword Magazine's Book of the Year, and several "Starred Reviews." Her novels have been serialized in Cosmopolitan Magazine and featured in USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, and People Magazine. There are over five million copies of her books in print, along with hundreds of thousands downloaded online. She lives in upstate New York with her husband and children.

NINC News

Introducing NINC's New Tech Committee

NINC would like to express our appreciation to Aaron Brown (chair), Camy Tang, Barbara Meyers, Dara Girard, and Susan Anderson, who volunteered to serve on the new Tech Committee. The committee already is hard at work, assisting with behind-the-scenes tasks for updating NINC's website.

Your Vote: It's Easy, It's Convenient, It's Needed!

Candidate biographies for the slate of 2015 NINC Officers and Nominating Committee are in the August and September 2014 issues of *Nink*.

Completed ballots must be **received by** October 15, 2014. If you will not be attending the Annual General Meeting at the conference, please take a moment to complete a Proxy form (See page 12) and submit it to the Central Coordinator before October 1, 2014.

Member Signature:							
1ember Name (Please Print):							
lease print out this Ballot, comp	lete, and mail to:						
Ballot c/o Novelists, Inc. P.O. Box 2037, Manhatta	n, KS 66505						
Ballots must be received by	October 15, 2014						
TEM I: Election of Officers	for 2015						
Yes No Diana Pe	terfreund, President-elect						
Pamela Jo	ohnson, Treasurer						
tem 2: Election of the 2016 (Vote for no more than five [
Cynthia Bailey Pratt Denise Agnew	Ruth Glick Olivia Rupprecht Vella Munn	Jody Lynn Nye Sally Hawkes Kathryn Shay					

Save Time and a Stamp, and go Green!
Vote online at www.ninc.com
In the Members Only section

Annual Business Meeting

NINC Bylaws require that an Annual Business Meeting be conducted at the conference. No vote is anticipated at this time, but your presence—in the form of a proxy or physical appearance—is required to ensure a quorum is attained. If you will not be attending the meeting, please send your Proxy to the Central Coordinator by October 1, 2014.

Proxy A

To appoint the current NINC Board of Directors as your agent:

The undersigned hereby appoints Meredith Efken, Julie Leto, Sylvie Kurtz, Ashley Mallory, Lou Aronica, and Laura Phillips, each of them as his/her true and lawful agents and proxies with full power of substitution to represent the undersigned on all matters coming before the membership at the Annual Business Meeting of members to be held at the TradeWinds Island Grand Resort, 5500 Gulf Blvd., St. Pete Beach, FL 33706, on Sunday, October 26, 2014 at 9:30 a.m.

Member Signature:
Member Name (Please Print):

Proxy B

To appoint a fellow NINC member as your agent:

The undersigned hereby appoints (print member's name)
as his/her true and lawful agent and proxy with full power of substitution to represent the under-
signed on all matters coming before the membership at the Annual Business Meeting of members to
be held at the TradeWinds Island Grand Resort, 5500 Gulf Blvd., St. Pete Beach, FL 33706, on
Sunday, October 26, 2014 at 9:30 a.m. Your Proxy will be distributed at the Annual Business Meeting
to the NINC member you have designated.
,

Member Signature:_			
-			

Member Name (Please Print):

Proxy A or Proxy B, when properly executed, will be voted in the manner you directed. If no direction is given with respect to any particular item, this proxy will be voted in favor of the proposals put forth by the Novelists, Inc. Board of Directors.

Please print out this Proxy form, complete, and mail to: Proxy c/o Novelists, Inc., P.O. Box 2037, Manhattan, KS 66505

Your Proxy must be received by October 1, 2014.

Save Time and a Stamp, and go Green! Indicate your Proxy preference online at www.ninc.com



This is the first Popular Fiction Week.

The celebration is paying tribute to the readers' favorite fiction genres:

Horror Mysteries Paranormal Romance Science Fiction/Fantasy Westerns

A number of beloved authors—James Hilton, O. Henry, Roald Dahl, Agatha Christie, and H.G. Wells—were born in September, making September an ideal month to spotlight popular fiction.

Libraries, civic groups, and bookstores are encouraged to set up displays and provide programs to show-case popular fiction books and authors. To assist the promotion, NINC members are volunteering to speak at libraries, face to face or through Skype, in their home states and provinces.

The initial Celebrate Popular Fiction Week will work if the members are willing to help. The 25th Anniversary Committee will work on getting the word out, but the project needs to have participants. That means members in as many places as possible volunteering an hour to be a speaker during the week of Sept. 14 - Sept. 20. The events can be face to face or via Skype.

Participating authors as of *Nink* press time include: Gina Wilkins, Arkansas; Judy Gill, British Columbia; Zita Christian, Connecticut; Barbara Myers, Bette Lee Crosby, and Neil Plaky, Florida; Brenda Hiatt, Indiana; Winnie Griggs and Lynn Emery, Louisiana; Kathryn Johnson, Maryland and District of Columbia; Lacey Williams, Oklahoma; and Patricia Burroughs and Laura Castoro, Texas. To add your name to the list or for more information about the event and how you can help, contact sally@library.arkansas.gov.

Let's not forget that 2014 is also the 25th Anniversary of Novelists, Inc. (NINC) www.ninc.com

NINC is the only writers organization devoted exclusively to the needs of multi-published novelists of all genres, whether they have published two novels or 100+ novels—which some of its members have done. NINC has approximately 700 members worldwide, and its members include numerous New York Times and USA Today bestsellers with careers spanning more than a quarter-century.

Sally Hawkes



Where Do We Go To Eat? Oh Yeah ... and Imbibe?

The restaurants at the TradeWinds are all great, and fit most palates and price ranges. But sometimes, beautiful as the resort is, you might want to try out other eateries in the area.

Kasey Michaels here. I asked Marsha Canham, a regular visitor to St. Pete Beach, to offer some suggestions on other places to dine ... and here's her quick "down and dirty" report:

Okay, so here are some of the local good eats joints: Right in the TradeWinds is the Flying Bridge, great wings, great burgers. Salty's Tiki Bar is behind the Breckenridge building and beside the adult-only pool and serves great drinks and snacks, and has an open air patio for late night schmoozing or watching the sunset. Sometimes Salty's has live entertainment on weekends.

The restaurant many frequented for breakfast and dinner is gone, replaced by a much-enlarged Beef O'Brady's, and there's always Pizza Hut Express for a quick bite (ice cream available there, too).

If you want to venture farther afield, walk north along the beach to Bongo's right next door (follow the sounds of laughter and music) for live music, finger food, and free sunset shooters.

Jimmy B's Beach Bar is behind the Beachcomber hotel, great atmosphere, drinks, food, and entertainment (from the street, you have to walk through the hotel to reach the Bar, but it's right on the beach if you don't mind sand in the toes).

Across the street from the Breckenridge building is Snapper's Sea Grill which has good seafood a lot cheaper than Silus Dent or even the restaurant in the TradeWinds.

The best seafood is at Rick's Reef, a little dive about six blocks north of the hotel, almost hidden behind palms. Limited seating, so get there early. On the stroll back, hit Larry's Olde Fashioned Ice Cream ... a bazillion flavors, it's been there as long as I've been going to St. Pete (almost 30 years), and the portions haven't gotten any smaller.

PJ's Oyster Bar is at the north end of Gulf Blvd. before the turn onto Pasadena. Great food, good prices on oysters even though I don't eat them. Blah.

If you have a car:

Turn right onto Pasadena and drive about 10 miles, you'll hit the Tyrone Mall for shopping, and ask anyone at the mall for directions to Cody's Steak House, just up the street, and you'll get all you can eat salad, great steaks, and prime rib dinners.

Turn left at the corner of Gulf and Pasadena and follow it around to the end, turn right, and you'll find Woody's Waterfront Bar and the Sloppy Pelican on the intercoastal waterway. Both have yummy food and entertainment on the weekends.

For Italian food, Vito & Michael's (across from Sweetbay Supermarket) is another small diner, but the food is terrific.

Heading south from the TradeWinds, Don CeSar's, aka the Pink Hotel, was built in the '20s; elegant atmosphere and prices to match, but worth a stroll around the grounds to gawk. If you're a walker or a jogger, go there along the beach in the early mornings or just at dusk, and sometimes the dolphins will swim in close and follow alongside.

Heading even further south to Pass-a-Grille, is the artists' community with little shops and boutique restaurants. The Hurricane is the most famous and has great blackened grouper sandwiches (and people wondered why I always gained weight on vacation!)

Heading north and after the turn onto Pasadena, a quick left picks up Gulf Blvd. again and takes you up through Madeira Beach and Treasure Island and Indian Rocks. Just this side (south) of the big drawbridge is Gators ... fab Cuban sandwiches, great wings, and rowdy entertainment.

Across the bridge is John's Pass, lots of good boutique shopping and restaurants along the boardwalk, including a Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. You can rent boats here or go on sunset cruises for dolphin watching, etc.

If you have a taste for Cajun food, the best place is Cajun Cafe on the Bayou up in Seminole, on Park Blvd., about a 20-minute drive north of the hotel. Best crab cakes ever, anywhere. And don't even think of leaving without trying the whiskey bread pudding. They also have about 100 mini brewery beers to try. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays, which is a bummer.

As for sightseeing, there is Fort De Soto with a wildlife preserve and Shell Island for snorkeling. Busch Gardens is close by, and if you are more of a shopper than a birdwatcher, there is a Prime Outlet Mall at Ellenton.

For walkers, the Dolphin Mall is within walking distance from the hotel, heading south, and has a Publix grocery store for mixes (Kasey comment: some people buy bread and bologna, Marsha ... <G>). Between the Mall and the hotel is Norman's Liquors ... best prices on the beach to add to those mixes. There is also a trolley that goes up and down Gulf Boulevard and covers all the beaches. For one price you can ride it all day. I'll probably think of more, but this is a good start—if you see me at the resort, I can give you more ideas and directions.

Marsha Canham

Although registration is full, there could be some late cancellations, leaving openings for members who wish to attend. There can be no more registrations after September I, so if you'd like to be put on the waiting list, email me at kcmi@aol.com and I'll do my best to help you out!

Kasey Michaels, 2014 Conference Chair

Business Briefs

Compiled by Sally Hawkes

Abingdon Press "Pauses" Acquisitions

Pamela Clements, associate publisher, has left Abington Press, and its Abingdon Fiction and Christian Living programs are being reexamined. Anticipated sales are down for both lines. The publisher will market the 75 titles in process through the end of 2015. Ramona Richards, senior acquisition editor (Abington Fiction) and Lil Copan, senior acquisition editor (Christian Living) will handle the scheduled titles.

PW Daily



Easy-Peasy Tax Recordkeeping

Recordkeeping for business owners is critical, not only so that they can accurately track their income and expenses for business planning purposes, but also so that they are adequately armed should the IRS sic an auditor on them. I'm often asked by writers what's the best way to do their recordkeeping for tax purposes. Of course every writer is different, with some preferring to use tax software and others preferring to use spreadsheets or a more traditional manual recordkeeping system. But regardless of what method you use to track your income and expenses, there are some common tips that can help you organize your records in a manner that makes things easier and more efficient come tax time and can protect you in case of an audit.

Organize Records by Category. While some taxpayers maintain their records chronologically by date, I recommend maintaining them by category instead. If you are audited, the IRS generally asks for information relating to certain categories of income or expenses, so having your information already organized in this format will make it easier to compile the data for the auditor.

You should maintain original documentation relating to income rather than relying solely on 1099s to show how much you were paid in a given tax year. Occasionally, a source may fail to issue you a 1099 at the end of the year. Not all payers comply with their reporting requirements. Or, if a source paid you less than \$10 in royalties or less than \$600 for services such as teaching a workshop or making a presentation, they have no legal obligation to issue you a 1099 at year end. You, however, are nonetheless legally obligated to report *all* of your earnings, whether or not you received a 1099. For this reason, you should save a copy of all royalty reports or payment data. Having this documentation at hand will save you from having to scramble at year end to collect the information.

With regard to expenses, be sure to maintain original documentation or you might be denied deductions if you are audited. For instance, if you claim a meals deduction, the IRS may not be satisfied merely with a credit card statement showing a payment to a restaurant. The statement doesn't prove whether you ate a meal at the restaurant while dining with your critique partners or whether you actually picked up personal meals for your family instead. The original receipt, however, will show exactly what food and drinks you ordered.

With respect to business meals and entertainment, it's easy to forget why and with whom you dined or attended a show months before. For this reason, I advise making a note on the receipt of the names of the persons in attendance and the business nature of the meal or entertainment (i.e. "attended Broadway show with editor from NY publisher after meeting to discuss plans for new book series"). The cost of a meal or entertainment, including any related tips, is deductible if enjoyed before or after a business activity, or if business is conducted during the meal or entertainment. Meals eaten alone while traveling are also deductible. Note the business purpose of the travel on your restaurant receipt for quick and easy reference (i.e. "meal eaten en route to Novelists, Inc. conference"). Remember that meals and entertainment are always subject to a 50 percent limitation, meaning only half of the cost is actually deductible on your return.

As far as organizing accounts in your tax software, columns in your spreadsheet, or files if you use a manual accounting system, I recommend setting them up using the same subheadings that are used on the Schedule C form. Doing so will make tax preparation much easier because all you will have to do is total up each category and enter the sum on the tax form. If you use a professional preparer, you may save some money in tax preparation fees because less time will be needed to organize your data and documentation.

The most relevant Schedule C subheadings include:

Advertising

Car and truck expenses

Commissions and fees

Contract labor

Depreciation

Interest

Legal and professional services

Office expenses (which includes office supplies and postage)

Taxes and licenses (including state sales tax paid on direct sales from your book inventory)

Travel

Meals and entertainment

Home office expenses

Other expenses

Be sure to keep an accurate mileage log, as car expenses are one of the most common audit items. I recommend that your log include the date, beginning and ending odometer readings, miles driven, destination, and business purpose for each business use of your car.

In my "other expenses" category on my spreadsheet, I have subcategories for dues to professional organizations, subscriptions to writing-related magazines and online resources (such as Publishers Alley, Publishers Marketplace, etc.), website expenses, book inventory, and promotions. Depending on your particular circumstances, you might find that additional subcategories are useful to you.

Estimated Taxes. While we often think of taxes in terms of income and expenses, your recordkeeping system should include an account, column heading, or file for estimated taxes paid during the year. It's easy to forget how much you've paid in and when you made the payment if you don't keep the data organized.

Separate Credit Card. While having a separate credit card for your writing business is not required, many people find it easier to track their expenses if they have one card used only for business expenses. Having a separate card is a good idea if you tend to be lax about keeping up with your recordkeeping.

Copy or Scan Receipts. Receipts often fade. If you look back into your tax records from last year, you may be surprised to find some of them unreadable. Scanning receipts into a computer file or making a copy of them can ensure you have proof of the expenses should that dreaded audit notice arrive.

Phone It In. While many of us might not carry a notepad and pen with us at all times, nearly all of us have a smart phone constantly at our fingertips. I recommend creating a notes file in which you type reminders to yourself, such as the amount of deductible tips paid, mileage figures if you've forgotten to bring your log along, etc. There are also free apps, such as Expensify, that help you track your expenses, mileage and time, and even scan receipts for you.

Happy recordkeeping!

Diane Kelly is a retired CPA/tax attorney. She writes humorous romantic mysteries, including the just-released Paw Enforcement K-9 cop series.

Business Briefs

eKensington and Lyrical Press Now Just Lyrical Press

Kensington is combining the two into a single digital imprint. Alex Nicolajsen, associate director of social media and digital sales, will head the new combo. Other staff includes Martin Biro, associate editor, and Renee Rocco, managing director. The imprint is looking for new fiction in romance, psychological suspense and thrillers, women's fiction, YA, new adult, and cozy mysteries. Lyrical Press will put out 15-20 titles monthly.

PW Daily

The Mad Scribbler

By Laura Resnick



Estranged from Reality

'It is difficult to get a man to understand something when his salary depends upon his not understanding it."

— Upton Sinclair

I publish novels with a traditional house—the independently owned DAW Books, whose books are distributed by that wacky bird, the Random Penguin. So, obviously, I don't spit, piss, or in any way defecate on the notion that there is a valid place in the current and future market for traditional publishers, whether they're small presses or massive conglomerates.

I do, however, typically find the arguments that I see various publishers, agents, and industry pundits making in favor of traditional publishing in the media and online to be weak, facile, logic-deficient, and estranged from reality. But perhaps the most fact-free assertion I keep seeing is some variation of "real writers want to be traditionally published."

I've seen a high-profile literary agent repeatedly assert that the movement of writers is from selfpublishing to traditional publishing, and not the other way around. A publisher recently insisted on a popular blog that "there is still not one ounce of proof that any major authors are leaving traditional publishing or that they're even thinking about it." Another high-profile literary agent has described self-publishing writers as excess baggage that publishers don't really want, anyhow.

There's a lot of this sort of commentary going on out there—which is why I haven't named those three individuals above. Their misinformed assertions aren't nearly unusual enough these days for me to single them out as particularly ignorant about their own industry. Many commentators from the traditional publishing world seem to be equally unaware of what's happening all around them.

The movement of established and commercially successful writers away from traditional publishing toward self-publishing is such a steady flow by now, it's puzzling that anyone in the business can claim with a straight face that it's not happening. Yet they do.

In one of the early high-profile examples of this shift, New York Times bestselling author Barry Eisler turned down a two-book, half-million dollar deal from St. Martin's Press in 2011 and quit traditional publishing in order to pursue self-publishing, as well as a deal with Amazon's new publishing venture. He has since negotiated reversion of the rights for his previous books, and he is a vocal proponent of self-publishing.

Barbara Freethy, author of more than a dozen New York Times bestselling novels, has published books traditionally with Harlequin/Silhouette, HarperCollins, Penguin, and Simon & Schuster. She began self-publishing her reverted backlist in 2011. The venture was soon so successful that she now self-publishes full-time and was recently described in the Huffington Post as "the bestselling Amazon KDP author of all time."

In April of this year, USA Today announced that New York Times bestselling author Maggie Shayne was parting company with her traditional publisher and turning full-time to self-publishing. "What I have learned," this 22-year veteran of publishing told USA Today, "is that I love having complete creative control over every part of my stories, from concept to completion, from title to cover art, from pricing to marketing."

New York Times bestselling author Lawrence Block self-published his latest novel, The Night and the Music.

A Grand Master of the Mystery Writers of America, Block is a recipient of the Edgar Award, the Shamus Award, and the Diamond Dagger.

Last year, fantasy novelist John Brown initiated negotiations with his publisher, Tor Books (the biggest program in the sf/f genre) to terminate his contract and get the rights back so that he could self-publish. Within the past four months, I have spoken at length with three other longtime career novelists who have all done the same thing—initiated contract termination with their respective publishers, and returned their signing advances, in order to get the rights reverted so that they could instead self-publish the books in question.

Prolific mystery novelist Elizabeth Spann Craig self-publishes, in addition to writing books for Berkley, NAL, and Midnight Ink. She wrote a blog post this year titled "Must A Writer Go Hybrid For A Higher Income?" She began her career in traditional publishing and has maintained a heavy schedule there, yet her self-publishing income accounted for 66 percent of her earnings in 2013. "I feel as if my self-publishing production is slowed down because of traditional publishing," Craig writes in this blog post, where she hints that she anticipates eventually moving full-time into self-publishing.

Any number of writers report making more money by self-publishing the digital and audio rights of back-list than they're making from their new traditional publishing deals. Many also report making more money now with those old titles than the books earned when traditionally published as new releases; Joe Konrath, Ann Voss Peterson, and Lee Goldberg are examples that immediately come to mind. These three writers have also been self-publishing their frontlists for some time, with lucrative results, and they're all vocal advocates for going indie.

In a recent article entitled "These Romance Writers Ditched Their Publishers For eBooks—and Made Millions," historical romance novelist Courtney Milan told Yahoo! Finance that she went from earning an "average household income" with a traditional publisher to earning nearly \$1 million per year as an indie author. "I just can't figure out how it's ever going to be economically feasible [to go back to a traditional publisher]," Milan told Yahoo!

Midlist contemporary romance novelist Bella Andre turned to self-publishing in 2011, at which time she founded Oak Press LLC to publish her own works. By 2014, *Publishers Weekly* named Oak Press as one of the fastest-growing independent publishers of the year, even though Andre is still her venture's only full-time employee.

In July, USA Today bestselling author Claire Cook blogged about her decision to leave her New York publisher (and her literary agent) and self-publish her new book, Never Too Late. After years of a successful career during which she had bestsellers, author tours, marketing support, and a movie deal, the publishing process for Cook's work eventually devolved into entropy at two publishers in a row. Meanwhile, self-publishing had emerged as a viable new career path—one without the "cloak and dagger stuff I'd experienced in traditional publishing where everything from money to marketing was kept secret." Cook started working on getting her backlist rights reverted, and by the time she began self-publishing frontlist this year, she said of her transition from tradpub to indie, "My self-published checks come monthly, not twice a year, and I get much higher percentages of sales without sharing a percentage. The income gap is closing."

In February, #I New York Times bestseller Stephanie Laurens announced she'd left her longtime publisher, Avon, and made a hybrid deal with Harlequin's Mira imprint. For three of the novels in the new deal, Laurens will self-publish the e-books while Harlequin releases the print edition simultaneously.

Hugh Howey is another writer who negotiated a print-only deal—of which there are very few these days. Simon & Schuster acquired the rights to publish the print edition of Howey's bestselling indie novel Wool. Although the hardcover became a bestseller, S&S decided against another print-only deal; and Howey declines to surrender control of his digital rights. The author's self-published works continue to be bestsellers, and Howey has blogged that he looks forward the day when the print rights for Wool revert to him. His experiences with traditional publishing have made him a highly vocal proponent of self-publishing. He has also co-founded Author Earnings, a website which collects and analyzes data about book sales in the new online market, with a particular interest in indie earnings.

And speaking of bestselling indies who are ardently pursued by publishers, as Howey was ... Indie author H.M. Ward, who had multiple books on last year's New York Times bestseller list, has been approached

a number of times by publishers keen to get her under contract. She has also posted explanations on her blog about why she hasn't accepted these offers: publishers have nothing to offer her and working with one would reduce her income. For details, check out her February 20, 2014, blog post, "I Turned Down Over A Million Bucks In Trad Deals."

No, I have not cited household names like J.K. Rowling, James Patterson, Dan Brown, or Nora Roberts in any of the above examples. But given how many bestselling writers I have named here, I find it astonishing that anyone who pretends to know the publishing business can claim that there's no significant movement of writers away from traditional publishers. In fact, I suspect that anyone in publishing who dismisses or ignores the exodus that's already under way will also choose to ignore or dismiss it when a writer of megastar stature switches to self-publishing, too.

I strongly suspect that being unaware of the existing indie-bound flow of writers is only possible for industry pundits and commentators if they *choose* to ignore or dismiss it. Perhaps because the alternative to being this estranged from reality would be to contemplate modifying and updating their business models in accordance with a rapidly changing book world.

Laura Resnick writes urban fantasy for DAW Books and self-publishes her backlist. She prefers cake to pie.

Business Briefs

E-books and Subscriptions Services

The digital version of mail order books is heating up. Two services, Oyster and Scribd, started in 2013, and now Amazon is taking notice. Kindle Unlimited was launched in mid-July and is being lauded as a business model to watch. Among gnashing of teeth and dire warnings, the Amazon service shares similar traits with the others. The service is \$9.99 a month, and Kindle Unlimited will pay authors for how often their titles are accessed by subscribers. There are concerns over how KU will affect independent authors. Royalty rates can't be projected due to the automatic inclusion in both Kindle Unlimited and Kindle Online Lending Library, with payment from the variable KDP Select Fund. There are concerns about KU not helping with discoverability. This looks like another ongoing debate, including agents wondering about publishers' point of view on the subscription services. The Book Industry Study Group's recent study presents publishers as recognizing the services as a permanent fixture from now on.

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