

KeyNotes

April 2009



Ideas, Inspiration, and News You Can Use to Write and Publish Your Book

Hello, Authors and Publishers ~

Here in the MidAtlantic spring is finally taking hold with trees blooming and grass greening up after the recent rain. A rabbit hopped by my window this afternoon. In the Southwest where my nephew and his family live, they are starting to turn on air conditioners, but it's still not beastly hot. Why all the weather talk? Because it's easy to get distracted from things you "should" be doing...like writing and editing and such. And that can lead to empty pages.

Give in! One of the best ways to attract your personal muse is to give her (or him) some fresh air. Get out, admire some flowers, chat with a squirrel or other native wildlife. Recharge your creativity batteries. Then you'll be ready to take on that troublesome chapter or maybe even start a whole new project. So don't take it personally which I say, "Get out!"

Coming Attractions

There are two books coming out in the next month or so, both of which will be remarkable for different reasons. I told you about Tim Burrell's book, ***Create a Great Deal: The Art of Real Estate Negotiating*** last month. Tim's been rounding up some great blurbs for his book and also landing a prime spot at a real estate conference later this year. At the same time, he's working on his website, www.CreateAGreatDeal.com, for the book and for his Negotiating Institute.

The second book will only be available to a select few. The author has compiled information, photos, and letters of a family member who served in WWII, and is publishing a book to preserve the memories of his life. It's the sort of thing I love to work on since my uncle also was in WWII, and I think it's a wonderful tribute to a man who died much too young.

New York, Here I Come

For as long as I've known about the Publishing University conference I have wanted to attend. This three-day event is filled with seminars, networking, and special events for publishers. And, it precedes Book Expo America which is the major annual trade show for publishing companies in New York. Publishing University is organized and sponsored by the Independent Book Publishers Association, and each year they award a scholarship to someone from each of their affiliate associations around the country. This year, I'm the lucky one to represent the MidAtlantic Book Publishers Association in New York!

With experts from all areas of publishing leading the sessions, the hardest part for me is choosing which seminars to attend. Oh, to be able to clone myself for just those three days. The conference wraps up with the Benjamin Franklin Awards ceremony in which the cream of the crop of independently published books are recognized.

And when Pub-U adjourns, BEA begins. This year, The Silloway Press will have two books on display in the IBPA booth – Margaret Rome's *Real Estate the Rome Way*, and Rich Madzel's *How to Sell Your Small Business*. Be sure to visit the Silloway Press website in early June where I'll post photos from both Pub-U and BEA.

Can I Quote You on That?

Talking about spring naturally leads to thoughts of gardens. Plump juicy tomatoes, crisp leaf lettuce, sweet scallions, and tangy radishes – that was the vegetable garden that my mother planted and we all took turns weeding. I don't recall what she did to tend the plants, but I'm pretty sure she never took Prince Charles' advice:

"To get the best results you must talk to your vegetables."

My Word!

Do you fit in your age group? I suspect that many people born before 1970 are like me; I know what my driver's license says, but it simply does not compute. I've reached a point where I am **coetaneous** with people who (theoretically!) are slowing down, rocking back, and taking it easy. Ha!

I like that word – coetaneous (ko-i-TAY-nee-uhs) – meaning being the same age. And I also like that people my age are starting businesses, traveling the world, and still raising a ruckus in many ways. Our perspective gives added color and depth to every day, and we're looking for new experiences all the time. Blasting societal expectations is especially enjoyable!

Thanks to Anu Garg and A.Word.A.Day for vocabulary expanders. Get your own at wordsmith.org.

On Changing Direction...Suddenly

A few days ago, I wrote this sentence, intending it to be the wrap-up to the "Coming Attractions" section of this newsletter: "Next up – and finally – getting back to my own creation, *The Writer's Book of Days*."

Scratch that. I still love that project, and will complete it, hopefully in time for holiday giving at the end of this year. But another book in the same series has pawed its way to the fore, demanding to be attended to. Now. And with an attitude befitting its subject matter: Cats.

It started on Friday morning, April 3, when I finally got around to drafting and posting a HARO request. HARO is the brainchild of Peter Shankman who created a means whereby journalists and others looking for sources could post a request for information. HARO stands for Help A Reporter Out, and thousands of people get Shankman's emails three times a day. It's free, and in the several months I've been getting the emails I've found publicity opportunities for myself and others.

So I've been planning to pull together what I intended to be the second edition in The Book of Days series, *The Cat Lover's Book of Days*. I had set aside my birthday as the

day to do only those things that would help the future of my business, and one of them was posting a HARO asking for unusual cat names. And I so did.

When I came back from lunch I was sure someone had spoofed my email address, my inbox was that full. But no spam, only people eager to share their cat names, stories, and photos. Over 180 of them in the first 24 hours! And still they are coming in. Some are funny, some are just plain weird, and a few are sad as people tell me about their departed feline friends.

Well, I don't have to be hit upside the head with a 2 x 4 to get the message. ***The Cat Lover's Book of Days*** wants to be finished, and soon! And so it shall be. I've boldly chosen an aggressive publication date of October 15. I see some late nights and busy weekends ahead, but also a lot of fun and furry enjoyment.

Featured Article – A Little Known National Treasure

Not long ago I had the pleasure of re-discovering the [National Agricultural Library](#) in Beltsville, Maryland. I've lived here for years but never knew this place existed until last year when a business group held a meeting there. When you drive north on busy Route 1 from the Capital Beltway, you could easily miss the large brown block of a building set back from the road like some stand-offish giant.

But go inside, and you'll find a warm welcome and passion for the work. One of five national libraries in the country, the NAL houses a massive and yet accessible collection of agricultural information. This is not just about seeds and plants; fish, wildlife, food, nutrition, livestock, and the environment all come under the library's mission: "Advancing access to global information for agriculture."

My favorite part of the library is the Special Collections which houses rare books, manuscript collections, nursery and seed trade catalogs, photographs, and posters. Temperature, light, and humidity controlled, this area includes remarkable texts and journals dating from the 1500's to today. I especially enjoy seeing the highly detailed records that people have kept during their journeys to collect samples for the library. These courageous travelers wrote each day of their activities, made sketches, and collected samples in their record books. I loved seeing a swath of blue silk carefully pasted into a journal that was written when the only way to reach the Far East was by long ocean voyage.

Last year I wrote a blog about this treasure trove: <http://tinyurl.com/cbysy4>. If you are in the D.C. area, take a break and take a child with you to discover the National Agricultural Library for yourself. It's free, and it belongs to all of us. Do take along your checkbook, though, and treat yourself to some of the products that are not only [beautiful to look at and use](#), but help support the library as well.

The Keeper of the Keys

That's me, Peg Silloway. Lover of words and collector of books. Publishing is a natural outgrowth of my life-long love of writing, and now I'm pouring that love of wordcraft into creating books that have something to say, that can make a difference, and that help authors' publishing aspirations become reality. Mix that passion for the written word with a background steeped in business reality - accounting, project



management, and small business management - and you have The Silloway Press.

Isn't it high time you published your book? Call me at 301-335-9368, or email me at Peg@SillowayPress.com. Together we can make it happen. **Write On!**

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