

FRIDAY, JUNE 23, 2023

3pm – 3:30pm Opening & Welcome Session

Shanon (S.D. Huston), Margaret Pinard, with Guests

During this half hour welcoming ceremony, there will be a brief discussion about where to find the schedule and what to expect. Giveaways and how to enter will be announced. We'll also introduce the Keynote Speaker.

3:30pm – 4pm Keynote Speech 2023

**Keynote Speaker, Mark Leslie Lefebvre with Draft2Digital
"Embracing Technology for Success"**

Advances in digital publishing during the last 15 years alone have provided authors with more opportunity and options than ever before. And while much of the buzz about AI and other rapid advances of digitally assisted creativity may spin into heated debates, one thing is certain: technology will continue to evolve, and authors must learn to navigate through this incredibly intense and powerful new world. Lefebvre, who has long been inspired by how technology can help move the entire publishing industry forward, will present a realistic and stark—yet optimistic—view of what authors should consider when determining their own paths and the various technological waves they can ride.

4pm – 5pm Session #1, Seminar

Special Guest Speaker, Alyssa Matesic *CANCELLED*****

"How to Track Your Queries and Boost Your Chances of Getting an Agent"

Querying literary agents can quickly become an overwhelming, disorganized mess, especially considering most authors have to send dozens of queries before receiving an offer of representation from a literary agent. On top of that, since agents typically take weeks to months to respond to queries, it can be difficult for you to keep track of where all your queries stand. In this seminar, you'll learn how to successfully track your queries (with a walkthrough of an example tracking sheet) and what statistics can be helpful to calculate (and when to ignore the numbers entirely). Additionally, you'll get tips on how to improve your query package overall to boost your chances of getting positive responses so you can reenter the querying process with renewed energy and optimism!

5pm – 6pm Session #2, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Nicole Wilbur

“How I Use AI to Kick-Start My Creativity: A Computer Engineer's Guide to an Automated World”

Artificial Intelligence. Everyone is talking about it. No one knows what it really is. Come behind the curtain with Nicole Wilbur, a writer and computer engineer, to understand the building blocks of AI, how it works, and how she uses it to enhance her writing career.

No, really, when you leave this presentation, you will understand how AI works, no matter who you are and what your educational background is.

Once we know what it really is, we'll explore key questions like: How can AI change how and what we write? How can it support platform-building, brainstorming, and roadblock-free writing? And what are the critical pitfalls everyone needs to be aware of before using AI tools?

5pm – 6pm Session #2, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Bryan Cohen

“Ditching the FOMO of Self-Publishing”

Trying to do "all of the marketing things" in self-publishing can lead to low sales and burnout. What's the alternative? Do less of what drives you up the wall and more of what you love.

During this presentation, you'll learn:

- + How to choose the path of “less but better” to give yourself a greater chance to succeed
- + Why small, regular actions can lead to massive growth in less time
- + Which marketing method you could focus on to cater to your strengths, and much, much more

This presentation will answer the following questions:

- + What is the joyful alternative to the fear of missing out?
- + How can I better cater to my strengths as a writer with my marketing?
- + Why do tiny actions done over time make a big difference?
- + Which thing should I focus on for marketing if I only like: writing, photography, video editing, data analysis, planning, or people?

Bryan Cohen has taught over 50,000 authors how to find more profit and less stress. He's excited to share this advice for a calmer, saner, and more sustainable path to self-publishing success.

5pm – 6pm Session #2, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Elaine Canyon

“Thriving as a Discovery Writer”

The advice Discovery Writers often receive falls in one of two veins: become an Outliner, or figure it out yourself, neither of which is helpful. It's one thing to speak to following your intuition, but that doesn't help an early Discovery Writer improve their craft, nor does it help one that feels stuck in their manuscript. Elaine Canyon has spent the last seven years collecting information from other Discovery Writers, along with keeping track of what helps her in her process. In this class, she shares these tips and tricks, helping Discovery Writers fill their tool boxes with what she's learned from years as a Discovery Writer. There is success and fulfillment for Discovery Writers, and it never has to include an outline.

6pm – 7pm Session #3, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Laura Nettles

“Publishing Short Stuff: Finding Open Submissions and Beyond”

Ever wanted to get your short stories, poetry, essays, flash or 100 word drabbles published? Learn my step-by-step process on using web resources to find open submission calls for your shorter works, finding common practices, knowing how to submit, and what to do after acceptance or rejection, and more.

6pm – 7pm Session #3, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Morgan Hazelwood

“Better Beta Reading”

So you've been asked (or offered) to beta-read for someone. Now what? If they don't tell you, what sort of feedback are they looking for? What sort of feedback should they be looking for? And, of course, how to give feedback that helps — and still be on speaking terms with the author after they've read your comments.

6pm – 7pm Session #3, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Andy at Easy Graphics

"Using Technology for Amazon KDP Keywords and Beyond"

I don't want my books found by anyone!

Said no author ever.

Is it a silly idea to want readers to be able to find your books? Would it be such a bad idea if finding keywords were made easy? Keywords are the life-blood of how books are discovered. Don't roll the dice, rely on gut-feel or voodoo when it comes to selecting the right keywords for your books.

In this seminar, you'll discover how to unearth keywords that rank on Amazon KDP and beyond. We'll use technology to make finding keywords easier and to make sure you adhere to Amazon KDP's guidelines.

We'll cover the following:

- how to find keywords
- where to find keywords data
- leveraging various technologies for keywords

Do yourself a favor. Arm yourself with keywords and data to make informed choices. Join me for the premiere!

7pm – 8pm Session #4, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Troy Lambert with Plottr

"5 Steps to Organize Your Books (and Series) with Plottr"

Plotters and pantsers of the world, unite! If you haven't seen the popular visual book planning and series bible software Plottr, you're missing out.

In this interactive session with mystery author and book coach, Troy Lambert, you'll learn a simple 5 step process you can follow to organize the details of your books and series in Plottr, no matter what or how you write.

You'll learn actionable strategies for:

- Managing your character and location details across books and series
- Visualizing your book and series arcs to give you the big picture at a glance
- Plotting faster (and avoiding plot holes) with the help of proven story

- structures
- Organizing story details as a pantser
- And much more!

If you're ready to organize the story ideas rampaging through your head, then join the session, ask questions, and see why Plottr is rated the #1 outlining software by Kindlepreneur.

7pm – 8pm Session #4, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Nia as Vixen of Fiction with Esther Andujar and Laura Nettles
"Book Covers Made Easy"

This will be a quick and easy to follow guide to using Canva to create a beautiful book cover. From using your own pictures or finding Images available online, to choosing the right Font and word placement for your Genre, we will help you get on your way to making a great digital or physical cover for your book!

7pm – 8pm Session #4, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Desiree M. Ortega
"Discovery Writing With a Plan"

There's this line in the sand between Plotters and Pantsers. Creative people have creative ways of approaching their art. There's no right way or wrong way. In "Discovery Writing With a Plan," we'll explore simplistic approaches such as Micro-Outlining and other various tools to execute a foundation to fall back on while drafting. Famous authors like Stephen King and George R.R. Martin are discovery writers. Are you? If so, do you also need to have some sort of plan going into a new story? Let's embrace and encourage this unique process and find joy in writing.

8pm – 9pm Happy Hour

Margaret Pinard, Shanon (S.D. Huston), with Guests

During this hour, we'll relax, discuss anything great we learned that day, and make connections with our audience members. At the end, we'll break off to go to the After Parties!

SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2023

10am – 11am Session #6, Seminar

Special Guest Speaker, Michael La Ronn

“How to Dictate a Book: The Author’s Guide to Effortless Dictation”

Want to get started with dictation but don’t know where to begin?

Dictation can triple your word counts overnight. In this session, prolific author M.L. Ronn will teach you how to unlock the power of dictation using the methods he's used to dictate over 30 books of fiction & nonfiction.

You'll discover:

- * How to dictate (and why you should)
- * The tools and equipment you'll need
- * How to optimize your dictation setup
- * The 3 types of dictation (the 2nd one will blow your mind)
- * How to dictate cleanly the first time so that you don't have to spend as much time editing
- * And more!

Michael will even perform live dictation to illustrate some pro tips to help explode your word counts! This session will teach you how to become a dictation master. Whether you’re a newbie to dictation or familiar with it, you’ll leave with tips to help you improve. You’ll be speaking your stories so fast it won’t even be funny.

11am – 12pm Session #7, Seminar

Special Guest Speaker, Mark Leslie Lefebvre with Draft2Digital

“Next Level Global Publishing with Draft2Digital”

Draft2Digital isn't just a distribution platform. It's a set of free tools and resources designed to help you take full control of your indie publishing journey. From free eBook and print book formatting using more than 21 custom templates, to universal book links, collaboration tools, and distribution to more than 16 retail and library channels, the goal with every single feature we develop is to save authors time and money so they can focus on what they love best: writing. Come learn about how you can leverage these tools in the way that works best for you and your writing and publishing goals.

12pm – 1:30pm Break

1:30pm – 3pm First Page Critique Panel

**Judged by Mark Leslie Lefebvre, Emma Bennet, and Morgan Lee
Hosted by Shanon (S.D. Huston) and Margaret Pinard**

The First Page Critique Panel will critique first page submissions by anonymous writers. During the Panel Session, these works will be read aloud, and panel members will raise their hand if and where they would have stopped reading the work. At the end of the reading, panel members will be able to comment on what stopped them, and then give one positive note about the work.

3pm – 4pm Session #8, Workshop

Guest Speaker, M.K. Williams

“Self-Narrating and Producing an Audiobook for Newbie Authors”

Many new authors don't have the budget to hire a professional narrator or audiobook producer. In this presentation I will walk authors through the process to prepare their audiobook script, how to record it in Audacity, and then mastering the files so they are approved by ACX or Findaway Voices. I taught myself how to do this the hard way. Learning these skills can help them save time and money on their author journey. I'll also review if this is the best option for their book, and if their time is better spent on other projects.

3pm – 4pm Session #8, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Shelby Leigh

“Sell Your Book on TikTok: How to Actually Get Seen by Readers”

Learn how to grow your audience of readers and sell more books on TikTok and Instagram, from an author who has sold >45k books and has grown to >500k on these platforms! There has never been a better time to post on TikTok and Instagram, and take advantage of this free marketing method that has the potential to get your book in front of thousands of new readers. You'll walk away from this brief, but thorough, seminar feeling confident on how to optimize your social media bios, and find and speak to readers on social media using under-utilized tools on Instagram and TikTok.

3pm – 4pm Session #8, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Adrian Santiago (BOOKS BY ADRIAN)

“From Amateur to Professional”

We all start out as amateurs. We love to read. We love the craft of writing. We wish to be an author, published and acclaimed. But for so many of us, we never cross that line from Amateur to Professional. The Amateur loves the craft. The Professional shows up every day, puts the hours in, and makes money from the art they create. Let's talk about how to make that switch FROM AMATEUR TO PROFESSIONAL! Attendees will leave the Seminar with the tools they'll need to get out of their own way, and get the work done! From my own personal techniques, to those recommended by industry professionals, we'll learn to put the amateur behind.

4pm – 5pm Session #9, Seminar

Special Guest Speaker, Courtney Young from The Courtney Project

“Automation for Authors—Working Smarter, Not Harder in 2023”

Living in a digital age means being present online, but we all know there aren't enough hours in the day to be active on every platform when you have books to write. Instead of struggling to find ways to do it all, we'll discuss automation along with different applications to make your “social media life” much easier. The goal is to help you work smarter, not harder, which means having more time to write and publish.

5pm – 6pm Choose Your Own Adventure

AWC Partner, Margaret Pinard

“Choose Your Own Adventurous Path to Publishing! (A Whirlwind Tour of Decision Points and How to Decide What's Best for You)”

If you're just starting, you may not know what you don't know. Here to flag some of the key stops along the path to publishing your work is Margaret Pinard, with the help of several successful authors from a variety of platforms, including C.M. Lockhart, Mariah Ankenman, M.G. Woolley, and Moon Petrie! We'll be highlighting some of the major decision tree branches in the process, and our authors will weigh in on their best tips for what worked for them on issues such as trad pub vs self-pub?, NaNowrimo or No?, and alpha or beta readers or a street team? If you stress about making the right decision, this will guide you to where you can find resources to make informed decisions.

6pm – 7pm Session #10, Seminar

Guest Speaker, A. F. Stewart

“How Authors Should Prepare for Video/Audio Podcasts”

One of the best ways to engage people as an author is through video interviews, panels, and online appearances. In this session, you'll find tips and tricks for being a guest on podcasts, etiquette do's and don'ts, and how to host your own video show.

Topics will include: Hosting platforms, how to find guest appearances, what to do if you need to cancel, and live streaming vs. recording. Plus a Q and A at the end for any questions.

6pm – 7pm Session #10, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Amy Rosenfeldt

“video is the Future: Tips and Tools for Book Marketing Using Video”

Video has taken the social media world by storm. A solid knowledge of video and video editing is crucial now more than ever to market our books. Though I have seven years video editing experience under my belt, sometimes the simplest and most basic solutions to create amazing videos is the answer. “Video is the Future” is a seminar that will introduce viewers to accessible digital tools and softwares to assist with video production, whether it be on TikTok, in the Authortube space or in some other corner of the internet. Authors will be rocking their social media game anywhere and everywhere.

6pm – 7pm Session #10, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Shantaye Brown

“Fear of Vulnerability & Authenticity While Writing”

“There are people out there who will adore your story simply because you gave it every bit of you there was to give.”

After battling with my own sense of what it means to be vulnerable while writing I understand now. It takes a lot of guts to truly be vulnerable and lay yourself bare for others without fear of being judged or rejected. I've come to accept that the best way to combat this is to write the book you want to read. I hope to inspire others to do the same as well as I enjoy the journey and encourage others to do the same. Before you know it you'll have written THE END with a smile on your face, knowing that you gave it all of you.

7pm – 8pm Happy Hour

Shanon (S.D. Huston), Margaret Pinard, with Guests

During this hour, we'll relax, discuss anything great we learned that day, and make connections with our audience members. At the end, we'll break off to go to the After Parties!

SUNDAY, JUNE 25, 2023

10am – 11am Session #11

Special Guest Speaker, Leslye Penelope

“Creating a Story Bible”

A Story or Series Bible is the canonical documentation of your character, settings, and other elements in your fictional world. Think of it as a personal reference guide, and whether you're writing a standalone novel or a long series, it's an incredibly useful tool.

At the end of the seminar, participants will have a solid understanding of how to create and organize their Story Bibles, as well as an introduction to different software options to make the task easier.

11am – 12pm Session #12, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Morgan Lee

“How to Know if Your Manuscript is a Dumpster Fire: Preparing for an Editor”

“How to Know if Your Manuscript is a Dumpster Fire” will present information to viewers on the process of getting your manuscript ready to submit to an editor. We will cover the different levels of editing [developmental, line editing, proofreading, and copyediting], the timeline to submit to each different type of editor, how to know when your manuscript is ready, develop a self-editing plan, and discuss the etiquette of submitting your manuscript. Editing is an important and expensive part of the writing process. Successfully preparing your manuscript beforehand will save you both time and money. Put down the kindling, blow out the match, and let's dig your manuscript out of the fire together!

11am – 12pm Session #12, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Emma Bennet

“How to Perfect Your Author Brand”

In today's world where social media presence is increasingly important, how you present yourself, your life, and your work to potential readers is something all authors should be aware of and work on.

In this seminar, I will explain what exactly an author brand is, give examples of authors who use their brand well, and give you tips on what you can do to start, tweak or overhaul your own author brand to make it work for you and attract readers who'll love you and your books!

11am – 12pm Session #12, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Estelle Van de Velde

“How to Appeal to Your Readers through Your Amazon Page”

What if you could optimise your book's Amazon page in eight easy steps to attract more readers? Self-publishing on Amazon can be tough. There's a LOT of competition out there for a reader's attention. With 10 years in the marketing industry, Estelle Van de Velde will walk you through her process when creating and optimising an Amazon page.

In this talk, you'll learn:

- what your readers look at when on the page;
- tips and tricks to find good categories and keywords;
- and other tools you might have not thought of.

12pm – 1pm Session #13, Seminar

Guest Speaker, Evan Gow

“1 Tool to Do It All”

In this talk, Evan Gow will cover how to use 1 tool in the end-to-end process of writing and launching a book: tracking word count goals, streaming feedback from beta readers, building a mailing list and review team, then cross-promoting your work with other authors.

Where previously, you might have had logins across 5 different services and 8 different spreadsheets to track things, StoryOrigin simplifies the business and marketing sides of being an author by putting it all together in 1 platform.

12pm – 1pm Session #13, Workshop

Guest Speaker, Natalie Locke, with Chandra Arthur
“Non-Writing Resources for Writing”

Flash Fictions are a glimpse, a moment, and there are many routes to change a blank page to a full page. Starting with an editing mind while remembering the reader is the common theme among them.

12pm – 1pm Session #13, Workshop

Guest Speaker, Sako Tumi
“Custom Wiki for Series Bibles”

I will not only walk you through making your own Wiki, but I’ll help you organize it as a Series / Book Bible, with all the bits and bobs that goes into a bible.

1pm – 1:20pm Session #14, Seminar

Speaker, Chandra Arthur, with Natalie Locke
“Research Tools and How to Use Them”

In my presentation, I will review some websites that are valuable resources and how they can be used for research and planning. Then I will share some tips for how to use real-world resources for additional research and expand on that by backtracking, using those secondary sources to find primary sources.

1. A general review of web-based research tools and how to use them.
2. How to reach out to libraries for library lending, thesis papers, universities, and research professionals for information.
3. Tracing sources, web-based, books, and articles.

1pm – 1:20pm Session #14, Workshop

Speaker, Nicole Wheatley
“Character’s Voice Through Poetry”

In this workshop, we will be discussing the process used for creating character poems. I will go into detail for each step taken when deciding on a character or subject to focus on, such as choosing a familiar or new subject, researching

distinctive personality traits and mannerisms, adding originality to your poem, and researching character quirks, unknown facts, and new ways to retell their story. Next, I will give the audience five minutes to brainstorm their potential idea for a poem. I am happy to help brainstorm or offer critiques following the workshop via email. Lastly, I will read one of my poems to compare the accuracy of the character's depiction.

1:20pm – 1:40pm Session #14, Panel

Speaker, Heather Dewey Pettet, with S.D. Huston, Mage Ward, a.k.a. Penumbra M.M. Ward, and Glory Fink, a.k.a. Glory Writes the Blues
“Neurodivergent and Other-Abled Characters: The Craft of Creating Believable Characters”

Some characters with disabilities in fiction are flat characters. The overuse of tropes can cause this to happen. But how do we create believable, well-drawn characters who are differently-abled? We can help you to get started.

1:20pm – 1:40pm Session #14, Seminar

Speaker, Sam Wicker
“Is the Supernote for You?”

Are you looking for an e-writer to up your productivity or to lessen your footprint on the environment? If you are, this might help you make that decision easier. I have the Supernote, and I think it's a wonderful tool to help me write. It's distraction free, feels like a notebook and pen, and it's easy to download and upload files with a few clicks. Let's see if it, or another e-writer, is the perfect fit for you too. I'll also hit some highlights about other e-writers for those of you that can draw more than a wriggly stick-figure. I'll go over the pros and cons of each e-writer that I've found during my research before my purchase of the Supernote, so you can make an informed decision before dropping your money on an e-writer.

1:20pm – 1:40pm Session #14, Workshop

Speaker, Jo at Jo Writes
“Data Driven Writing: Unlock the Mastermind Storyteller in You!”

Unlock the power of data and storytelling to take your writing and YouTube channel to the next level with this interactive workshop. We'll dive into the world of data and storytelling and explore how to use data to improve your writing craft. I'll show you how to emulate successful authors to research and understand what works for them and look at how to enhance your stories with research and factual

details to create captivating stories. We'll also cover identifying what's working on YouTube and how data can help you identify trends and optimize your content. Last, I'll share my experience and insights on how even the biggest YouTubers use storytelling in their videos to keep people watching, and how we can apply this to our how-tos or vlogs.

A FREE workbook will be provided to guide you through the whole process. So, if you're ready to take your writing and YouTube channel to the next level, join me in this comprehensive workshop and discover the power of data and storytelling.

1:40pm – 2pm Session #14, Seminar

Speaker, Ben Pick

“Should We Write While on Vacation?”

Should we write while on vacation? And how can we write while on vacation without pushing past the point of burnout or pissing off our families? Vacations are intended to be low stress and a chance to unwind from our day jobs. This is our chance to get in those word counts! Except, that isn't truly a relaxing experience. Writing during vacation may be even more difficult to accomplish, so we need to plan accordingly. In this talk, I'm going to help each of us answer those questions and figure out where and how to write while vacationing. I'll discuss deciding whether it makes sense to write while on vacation as well as tips to get in quality writing while still relaxing and savoring every moment.

1:40pm – 2pm Session #14, Seminar

Speaker, Radgin Wiz (Dr. Radhika Vijay)

“Author’s Writing and Routine Tips (for Beginners)”

Being an author or writer is not about having an idea in mind to write and being an influential author. It requires dedication, willpower, mindset, and action. I will be giving some great tips crafted and practiced out of my own life and experience to begin your author journey, setting yourself strong on this path and outshining as a budding author!!

1:40pm – 2pm Session #14, Seminar

Speaker, Lauren Adele

“Conquering Self-Doubt & Writer's Block”

We can all be our worst enemies and harsh critics of our works. I want to offer some advice by sharing what worked to help me get out of writer's block. Positive affirmations recited each day may also help diminish self-doubt and give you the confidence to tackle that dream project. These suggestions worked for me, and hopefully they can help snap you out of your rut and get you back into writing your masterpiece.

2pm – 3pm Closing Session

Margaret Pinard, Shanon (S.D. Huston), with Guests

During this last hour of the writing conference, we'll explore our favorite parts and how we feel moving forward in our writing lives. Giveaway winners will also be announced.