



JANUARY 9 Meeting

IT'S A GREAT TIME TO MARKET YOUR BOOK!

Maximize your book-selling opportunities by planning your promotional year now. Learn about the importance of reading the newspaper, discover Chase's Calendar of Events, determine the lead time for sending press releases or articles to promote your books. This session will jump-start your thinking toward the best ways to make the most of holidays, current events and Small Press Month to market your book all through the year.

We welcome two highly organized and talented authors who will share their knowledge about how to plan your promotional year to take advantage of the best times for marketing YOUR book.



Fran Hamilton is the author of *Hands-On English* and co-author of *The Hands-On English Activity Book*. She has since developed a full line of *Hands-On English* products, all based upon Fran's years of "hands-on" classroom experience using the tools that are now the *Hands-On* product line. She is also the co-publisher of *The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration Anthologies*.

Fran frequently appears on radio and television programs to discuss *Hands-On English* and the English language, self-publishing, things parents can do to help their children succeed in school. She has appeared at bookstores in several states for book signings and presentations for Educators' Night, self-publishing seminars and school book fairs. She has also addressed several organizations.



Linda Austin is the co-author of *Cherry Blossoms in Twilight: Memories of a Japanese Girl*, a memoir of her mother's life growing up near Tokyo during WWII. She grew up listening to her mother's stories and finally got to work writing a book about them after a family friend took the first steps. "The most difficult part was writing in my mother's voice so that readers would be able to hear her speaking her life story." Linda believes that everyone has a story to tell and devotes time to encouraging them to tell it.

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President's Corner

by Ed Sylvia

Marketing! Marketing! Marketing!

Happy New Year, SLPA members! In this issue you will see the results of last year's member survey. We had excellent participation, so thanks for taking the time to fill them out! Your comments and suggestions form the basis of our programs for the coming year.

During our transition meeting held on December 8, the SLPA Board created a calendar of events for '08 with topics from the survey that you felt were the most important to your immediate needs as independent publishers. By far the most important area of interest was Marketing. So the board has planned a Marketing discussion at least quarterly during 2008. You'll find the full calendar of meeting topics for 2008 in this issue and also posted on our web site.

We have all experienced the same publishing problem—in spite of our efforts to bring a great book into the world, the world very rarely takes notice. This is why we all have to see ourselves not just as publishers of books but as *sellers* of books. SELLING is what separates the real publishers from hobbyists. And selling takes both marketing know-how and a certain swashbuckling style of thinking.

If you have ever read the success stories of little-known authors and small publishers you quickly come to understand that it was their marketing resourcefulness rather than their monetary

continued on next page

In This Issue

- 1 It's a Great Time to Market Your Book!
- 1 President's Corner by Ed Sylvia
- 2 What Day Is It? by Linda Austin
- 3 The 2007 Member Survey Results
- 4 Celebrate Today! by John Kremer
- 5 Thinking Seasonally by Fern Reiss
- 6 The 2008 Schedule of Membership Meetings
- 6 Is it Time to Renew Your SLPA Membership?
- 6 Treasurer's Report

What Day Is It?

A smart author or publisher is forward-looking, keeping an eye on the calendar and making note of important dates they can



use to promote their books. They know their books inside and out, they know who their audiences are. They know various hooks they can use. They know that if they have a romance book, the time to start writing articles and thinking of great wording for press releases is at least a month in advance of Valentine's Day, or six months prior if submitting to a magazine. They are looking

way ahead to contact stores or libraries for booksigning events or to set up presentations with back-of-the-room sales to take advantage of cyclical calendar opportunities to promote themselves and their books.

The first place the author or publisher should look for promotion opportunities is the calendar to take note of the usual holidays and commemorations. The second place to look is Chase's Calendar of Events. This book is an invaluable listing of days and months that have been designated to recognize people, places, things, events and anything else someone has thought to remember or honor. Now published by McGraw-Hill, the annually-updated book covers observances from around the world and is used by librarians, activity directors, publicists, and media. For those who are happy with a simplified version, see www.chases.com online and click on "About the Holidays" or "Special Months."

For most, the online list of months and the numerous commemorations associated will suffice for U.S. marketing. From Small Press Month in March to Family Stories Month in November to Oatmeal Month which is January (time for those with books about cereal to get going!), Chase's provides a wealth of promotional opportunities for authors.

It's a brand new year. Do you know what day it is?

Questions About SLPA?



Contact Membership Chairman:
Christine Frank at 314-205-2679 or
Secretary/Membership Assistant:
Linda Austin at 314-822-1170

It's a Great Time... continued

She is an active speaker and blogger on the topics of preserving family history, forging strong family relationships, sharing Japanese American culture and World War II history. She has done radio interviews as well as various speaking engagements at educational events and Japanese cultural festivals.

They'll inspire you to look for fresh ideas to market your own work! Plan NOW to kick off the new year with us on Wednesday January 9!

Meeting location: The Lodge at Des Peres. Doors open for networking at 6:30 PM, meeting begins at 7:00 PM. The formal meeting concludes around 8:30 with networking continuing after the meeting. For directions to the Lodge, visit our web site and click the link. www.stlouispublishers.org.

President's Corner... continued

resources that saved the day. Simply put, small budgets force us to use our noggins in ways that the big players never do.

Marketing is both a science and an art. Successful marketing is a balancing act between incorporating time-proven strategies and instincts (I call it "knack"). It requires using both hemispheres of the brain.

So as independent publishers, we cannot just look at marketing simply from the point of seeking the appropriate memory-data. Marketing must also become a passion—a part of your very publishing fabric!

We begin the new year with a meeting that looks at the calendar in new ways, presented by Fran Hamilton and Linda Austin—two author-publishers who have really expanded their own boundaries to reach their readers in a number of resourceful ways. Join us. It's a great way to recharge yourself after the holidays.

Every day presents fresh opportunities to put your message out there. You could even get together with other authors and brainstorm on each other's topics. Sometimes two heads *are* better than one!



Plan ahead, be resourceful, and see just how far you can expand your possibilities. You could really surprise yourself!

— Ed Sylvia, President
slpa1@staircasepress.com

You Talked... We Listened!

Thank you to everyone who responded to the 2007 Member Survey. We found your responses extremely helpful in planning the 2008 year and thought you'd enjoy learning a bit more about who comprises our organization. We had about 27% participation this year to use in our planning for 2008, so if you didn't think your response "mattered," think again!

How did our members find SLPA?

Most respondents joined within the past 3 years, but several date back to 2001. The large majority of current members first "found" us on the SLPA web site, or via word of mouth recommendation. We have a number of members who cannot make it to meetings, due to geography, schedule conflicts, or other reasons, so our web site, newsletters and email communication are essential to them. They feel we're doing really well, but would love to have more.

How much publishing experience do our members have?

The majority of respondents have published 1-4 titles, closely followed by a sizeable group who are just beginning the process or are here simply to learn. Most have published within the last 3 years, though there are a number of very experienced publishers who began as much as 15 years ago.

What genres are most members publishing?

Our respondents publish primarily in these genres: Fiction, Children's, Memoirs, Self-help, Spiritual/Inspirational, Christian, Business, Non-Fiction, Cooking/Crafts, Home Improvement, Technology and Pet Care. 60% of respondents have used Print-on-Demand technology, 50% have used offset printers, 5% have used someone like Kinko's. (Obviously, there is some who have used more than one.)

Trade Distribution

70% of respondents do not have a trade distribution relationship and the 30% who do, work with Biblio, Big River or listed the wholesalers Baker & Taylor and Ingram. A couple of publishers worked with distributors that specialize in their genre. (One in pet care and one in sustainable living) Those working with "true" distributors seem pleased with the results.

Publishing service providers

We have several members who provide publishing services, such as coaching, design work, editing and indexing, and Marketing/PR. These members wish to connect with those who can benefit from their services. At the same time, our author/publisher members are interested in getting to know these vendor members, but prefer not to have meeting topics center on them. They want to form relationships, but do not want to be "sold" to in a vendor-dominated meeting.

The Topics You Need The Most Help With

The first and foremost issue that concerns our members is Marketing. Most wish they "knew more" and say their budget is tight, but all want to do the smartest things they can. Many want to know more about online marketing, but a few expressed a desire to know more about non-internet methods to reach customers, too. So we'll try to include a blend of those ideas in this year's programs. Planning and budgeting is another hot topic. We're actually considering a one-day hands-on workshop on this topic.

Most Useful Meeting Topics of 2007

Meetings on web-centric topics dominated this past year's "most useful" list, with the Author Platform, Amazon, Lookin' Good on a Budget, Internet Marketing and Book Design topping the list. The Field Trip to the printer was an overwhelming success and based on survey suggestions, we're planning another field trip sometime in 2008, but it will not be on a regular meeting night. (Probably a Saturday)

Meeting Time, Location, Logistics

Everyone likes the Lodge and we'll continue there for the foreseeable future. One addition this year will be a microphone for speakers, since it's sometimes difficult to hear in the room.

SLPA Communications

We're planning some major shifts in emphasis this year with our communications tools. The SLPA web site will undergo a dramatic makeover and will emerge as a wonderful state-of-the-art tool to help all of us to communicate with each other and the public at large. The site will still contain all our "basic" meeting, location and regular contact info, but we're also developing many exciting new features that we'll reveal next month at our February meeting. It's all designed to help our members gain knowledge, exchange ideas, make connections with the resources they need, and greatly benefit our members who can't attend meetings regularly. Last, but perhaps most important, we are working to provide additional online marketing presence for our members through our site. You'll still receive the monthly SLPA newsletter as well as a couple of ezine communications each month about time-sensitive events and our monthly meeting reminders.

SLPA Co-op Opportunities

This year, we'll continue to provide sales opportunities in our SLPA display sales booth. More details on when/where will come in the next couple of months. We plan to have a presence in more locations than ever this year.

SLPA Monthly Meetings

The 2008 Schedule was developed to include the topics our members wanted the most. A copy of the complete schedule is in this issue and will also be posted on our web site. In addition,

National Book Days, Weeks, and Months

The following short report is based on a question posed in an email discussion list. The question was as follows: Does anyone know of the existence of a National Book Day or anything of the sort? Below is book marketing legend John Kremer's response:

January is National Book Month. *The third full week in January is National Book Week.*

Below are a few other book days, weeks, and months — taken from my *Celebrate Today* database. There are dozens more!

January — National Book Month

January 16 — Book Publishers Day

January — National Book Week (*third full week of Jan.*)
Celebrity Read a Book Week (*last full week of Jan.*)

February 23 — Printed Book Day

March 28 — Children's Picture Book Day

April 2 — International Children's Book Day

April 16 — Book-of-the-Month Club Birthday

April 22 — Instant Book Day

April 25 — Book Day and Lover's Day (*Spain*)

April 25 — World Book and Copyright Day
(*Shakespeare's Birthday*)

May — Book Buddy Day (*1st Wednesday in May*)

May — National Family Reading Week (*first week in May*)

May — National Feminist Bookstore Week
(*week of Mother's Day*)

June is Audiobook Month

June 11 — Dirty Book Day

June — National Black Bookstore Week (*week of June 19th*)

June 19 — Mass Market Paperback Book Day

July — National Independent Bookstore Week
(*week of third and fourth Saturdays in July*)

September 17 — Bestselling Books Day

September — Banned Books Week
(*last Saturday in September to next Saturday*)

October 1 — National Book It! Day (*first weekday in October*)

October 12 — Cookbook Launch Day

November 5 — Book Editors Day

November — Book Lover's Day (*first Saturday in November*)

November 12 — One Million Books Day

November — National Children's Book Week
(*third week of November*)

November 30 — Steal This Book Day

December is Read a New Book Month

Details on these days and months — and 18,300 others! — can be found in John Kremer's *Celebrate Today* Special Events Data Files on his web site and many are in his book *Celebrate Today*!

Check out this fun book filled with holidays!

Celebrate Today! features 3,400 special days, weeks, months, and anniversaries that anyone can use to promote their

products, locate meetings themes, plan a party, uncover story ideas, make lesson plans, motivate people, or find an excuse to take the day off. An indispensable almanac!



Here are just a few of the tie-ins you might be able to use this year when planning your publicity schedule:

Special Days such as Homemade Bread Day, Mother-in-Law Day, Human Rights Day, God-Awful Tie Day, Woman's Equality Day, Black Poetry Day, and many others.

Special Weeks such as Be Kind to Humankind Week, National Cleaner Air Week, Fire Prevention Week, Be Nice to New Jersey Week, National Home Care Week, American Beer Week, and many more.

Special Months such as National Car Care Month, Anti-Boredom Month, Music in Our Schools Month, Good Nutrition Month, Sports and Recreation Book Month, Youth Art Month, National Hobby Month, and 100s of others.

Anniversaries such as the first drive-in automobile service station, the first artificial heart transplant, the first state to tax gasoline, the beginning of the European Economic Community, the first episode of M*A*S*H, the invention of the coffee percolator, or the first robot homicide.

Birthdays such as those of Bugs Bunny, Mickey Mouse, Thomas Jefferson, Charlie Brown, Ford Mustang, NBC, New York Times, Steven Spielberg, USA Today, Playboy, the singing telegram, the nickel, Confucius, and others.

This book is another great tool to keep in your marketing arsenal. Check out the copy on our resource table, then visit John Kremer's web site and order your own copy today!

John Kremer is an acknowledged expert on book publishing and marketing. Besides being the owner of his own publishing company (Open Horizons in Taos, New Mexico), he has been the editor of the Book Marketing Update newsletter for more than twenty years. He is now editor of the Kremer 100 PR newsletter. John is also the author of a number of books on publishing and marketing, including 1001 Ways to Market Your Books: For Authors and Publishers (6th Edition), The Complete Direct Marketing Sourcebook, High Impact Marketing on a Low Impact Budget, and Celebrate Today. Visit <http://www.bookmarket.com>



How to Sell Your Book Creatively Every Month of the Year

You can make the December holiday season your biggest sales opportunity of the year. And then you can do it all over again—on Valentine's Day, on Easter, and in the summer. In fact, you can do it every month of the year. It's all in thinking seasonally.

If you're lucky, you have a book that easily ties in with the holidays. Many different kinds of books do—everything from those sentimental gift books to books on simplifying the holiday season. Then it's an easy sell. But what if you have a book that doesn't have an obvious tie-in? Doesn't matter. You can still figure out a way to make most books marketable for the holidays.

For example, almost any children's book can be easily marketed for the holidays with the addition of some special holiday packaging. If your book happens to feature a loveable character, even better: Have it designed as a stuffed animal and sell it together with the book. Toy/book combos are tremendously popular for the holidays, and will sell everywhere from your local bookstore to a stand at the holiday flea market or school craft fair.


Gag books lend themselves well to the holiday season too, because people are always looking for inexpensive items for stocking stuffers and bring-alongs to holiday parties. If you've got a book that lends itself to humor and is inexpensive, you've got a guaranteed holiday seller.

Or let's say you have a book on dogs. Instead of sitting out the holidays with Fido, think of how you can market Fido into the holidays. Think of opportunities to give other dog-lovers your book. Maybe there are dog shows during December where you could offer your books. (Don't forget to bring the holiday gift wrap!) Or maybe you can think of ways to couple your book with other products to make a doggie-lovers' ensemble. You could even pair your book with a package of gourmet dog biscuits and market it as a doggie Christmas gift in specially crafted doggie paw stockings. See what I mean?

And when you're thinking holidays, don't limit yourself to Christmas. Think Valentine's Day, think Passover and Easter, think July 4th. Think all the under-commercialized holidays that nobody else bothers with, like Memorial Day and Labor Day. And figure out a way to leverage your product off them.

Even if you have a book that doesn't seem to have any logical tie-in, you can create holiday excitement via your packaging or promotion. This year, for example, we're offering our *Publishing Game* books for the holidays—the same books on finding a literary agent, self-publishing, and doing successful book promotion that we offer all year long. But for the holidays, we're billing them as "Gifts for the Writer in Your Life"—and selling them with an assortment of elegant edibles as well as a novelty mug with the slogan, *Writers are Novel Lovers*. We've got packages in three different sizes and price ranges, and they're already selling like hotcakes from

our web site—and it's still weeks before Christmas. (Don't you have a writer in your life who would appreciate one? Thought so!)

So whatever your book, think about a way to adapt it or promote it for the holidays. And then keep thinking—because if Christmas is here, can Valentine's Day be far behind? 



Next Deadline January 21

Don't be late – no kidding!

Send us news on your new releases or upcoming appearances or anything else you wish to share.

Get your news and articles in EARLY! Send your information, articles and announcements to editor@stlouispublishers.org.

Fern Reiss is the author of *"The Publishing Game: Bestseller in 30 Days"* (book marketing), *"The Publishing Game: Find an Agent in 30 Days"* (finding a literary agent), *"The Publishing Game: Publish a Book in 30 Days"* (self-publishing). For more information on *Publishing Game* books, workshops, and consulting, and on getting your book and business featured in the national media, sign up for the complimentary *PublishingGame/Expertizing* email newsletter at <http://www.PublishingGame.com/signup.htm>.
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We have a great schedule of meetings planned on the topics you wanted to hear. Mark your calendars now!

Jan. 9 IT'S A GREAT TIME TO MARKET YOUR BOOK!

Maximize your book-selling opportunities by planning your promotional year now. This session will jump-start your thinking toward the best ways to make the most of holidays, current events and Small Press Month to Market your book all through the year.

Feb. 13 MEMBERSHIP 2.0

The SLPA web site is being completely redesigned to provide you with new marketing, educational and networking opportunities. At this meeting we'll reveal the new site before it goes live and you'll be able to ask questions and learn how to take advantage of all the new features we're building for you! Bonus info: How to get the most out of your SLPA/PMA/SPAN Membership.

Mar. 12 HAND-SELLING YOUR BOOK

No one can sell your book as well as you. But there's a lot more to selling your book than sitting at a table and signing in a bookstore. This session is filled with tips and tricks for making the most of personal appearances to sell your book.

Apr. 9 PLANNING SUCCESS INTO YOUR BOOK

Learn how to build your marketing into your book from the very beginning as a designer and a publisher map the process of creating a book from the very beginning all the way to reaching the readers.

May 14 BLOGGING YOUR WAY TO SUCCESS

Don't miss this hands-on demonstration of how to set up, maintain and make your blog a powerful marketing tool. Our internet expert will answer your questions and show you how to do it well.

June 11 AGENT SECRETS

A great author – agent relationship can yield publication, subsidiary rights, foreign rights and more. Learn what it takes to attract an agent, how to write a book proposal and how to interest an agent in your already self-published book.

July 9 LIGHTNING STRIKES

A discussion on how current and future advances in Print on Demand technology combined with the wholesale capabilities of Ingram can put you in position to get books to readers.

Aug. 13 LAW AND ORDER

A panel of intellectual property attorneys will do their best to help you untangle the publishing legal jungle. Bring all your

publishing law questions and our panel of publishing professionals will bring their answers.

Sept. 10 THINKING WAY BEYOND THE BOX

Get your creative juices flowing with this interactive brainstorming session. Participate in exercises that will jumpstart your marketing efforts with renewed inspiration and a fresh point of view.

Oct. 8 WRITING THAT SELLS

Sure you wrote a book, but writing effective marketing copy is a whole different animal. This session is filled with tips from seasoned professionals who know how to make us want to buy things we never even knew we wanted.

Nov. 12 IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO WRITE A GOOD BOOK

Readers and reviewers alike love a great book that reads well and has a user-friendly index. Don't try this at home... find out how to locate the right editing professionals to add to your team and how to work smoothly with them.

Dec. 10 MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS

Fine-tune your publishing business practices so you can be more efficient and ultimately more profitable, while still having a life. We'll cover business plans, budgeting, tracking your sales and expenses and taxes. Fun stuff!

Membership

Time to Renew?



Remember, if you joined or renewed your membership last January, it's time NOW to renew for 2008! We have some exciting new Member opportunities planned for 2008, so don't let your membership lapse. If you're unsure when you need to renew, contact Christine Frank (314)205-2679 or Linda Austin (314) 822-1170.

Treasurer's Report

SLPA Balance of Account
as of December 21, 2007 \$6,843.48

2007 Expense Summary	Expense	Income
Operating expense	\$11,240.36	
Event expense	\$ 9,853.15	
Bank Interest Income		\$ 239.23
Events fees and Membership fees		\$14,010.80
Totals	\$21,093.51	\$14,250.03

The figures above do not include outstanding checks and deposits made through 12/31/07. A Statement of Condition as of 12/31/2007 will be available in February upon request.

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Nehmen-Kodner Design www.n-kcreative.com