



## Smooth Sailing to Publication: How Authors, Editors, Proofreaders, and Designers Can Work Together Presented by Ruth E. Thaler-Carter

*Editor's note: Planned January speaker Terese Messman will not be able to join us on January 10. Ruth Thaler-Carter, SLPA Communications director and newsletter editor, will step in. Here's what she has to say about the session.*

Both aspiring and established authors face a number of challenges on the road to getting published. It helps to know how to find and work with colleagues who can contribute to a high-quality result and steer you to success. In "Smooth Sailing to Publication: How Authors, Editors, Proofreaders, and Designers Can Work Together," you'll learn why every author needs those experts, how to find them, and how to work with them to create a book to be proud of.

No matter how experienced, every author needs an editor — we tend to be immersed in the writing process and our vision, and we know what we're trying to say, so we can miss errors and clunky passages that an objective reader will notice. That's where an editor comes in.

January 10, 2024  
The Heights

Some authors feel comfortable with moving a finished manuscript into design and layout, but readers are likely to respond better to a professional approach to that part of the publishing process.



Ruth E. Thaler-Carter

And once "the look of the book" is in place, it's vital to have it reviewed by a proofreader, because errors and issues can sneak in during layout, even when working with a skilled and experienced designer.

At our January 10 meeting, I'll provide tips on how to find the people needed to bring a book to life and work together to keep from sinking under stormy seas!

### About the presenter: Ruth E. Thaler-Carter

Ruth E. Thaler-Carter ([www.writerruth.com](http://www.writerruth.com)) has been writing, editing, proofreading, and producing publications since high school. Her current clients/projects include a law firm, PR firm, retirement policy institute, women's health website, independent authors; magazines about gardening, Porsche history, decorative arts, machine computing, and weddings; several newspapers; and more. She is active in about a dozen associations and is the author/publisher of "Get Paid to Write! Getting Started as a Freelance Writer" and "Sometimes You Save the Cat"; a contributing writer to The Business of Editing; and editor-in-chief of the An American Editor blog. She also created and hosts Communication Central's "Be a Better Freelancer"® conference.

### ZOOM

Sign-up is free. Join from your smartphone, computer, or tablet. If it's your first time, follow the prompts and allow it to access your camera and microphone. Use this link for the meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/94227448734>.

Meeting ID is 942 2744 8734. Passcode is 563402.

*The secret of getting ahead is getting started.  
The secret of getting started is breaking your complex  
overwhelming tasks into small manageable tasks,  
and then starting on the first one.*

—Mark Twain

## Accessibility and Representation in Publishing February 14, 2024 Presented by Mary Fashik

Publishing has been one of the most inaccessible industries for the disabled community. There has also been a distinct lack of positive disabled representation in literature.



Mary Fashik

This 90-minute workshop will tackle a wide range of topics including the following: an overview of disability history, ableism, how ableism has kept publishing out of reach for many disabled authors, and how ableism

affects the type of disabled representation found in books.

There will also be a brief discussion about social media and the importance of making social media posts accessible.

Mary Fashik (she/her) is a transnational, transracial adoptee, born in Lebanon. She is the founder of the Disability Justice movement, Upgrade Accessibility. She is also a Susan M. Daniels Disability Mentoring Hall of Fame Inductee and award-winning podcaster. You can contact Mary at [mary@upgradeaccessibility.com](mailto:mary@upgradeaccessibility.com) and via her website: [www.upgradeaccessibility.com](http://www.upgradeaccessibility.com).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Live-Stream the monthly meeting  
<https://zoom.us/j/94227448734>

January 10, 7:00–8:30 p.m.  
"Smooth Sailing to Publication:  
How Authors, Editors, Proofreaders,  
and Designers Can Work Together"  
by Ruth E. Thaler-Carter

@ The Heights  
8001 Dale Avenue  
Richmond Heights, MO  
(doors open at 6:30 p.m.)

February 14, 7:00–8:30 p.m.  
"Accessibility and Representation in Publishing"

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Richmond Heights, MO  
(doors open at 6:30 p.m.)

## A New Year's Wish

2024 started off with a trifecta that promises good luck:  
whole new week, whole new month,  
whole new year!

Here's to a year of  
health, happiness, and publishing success



*Do not hoard what seems good for a later place in the book,  
or for another book; give it, give it all,  
give it now.*

— Annie Dillard



### Early Bird Discount Available for IBPA Publishing University 2024

[www.publishinguniversity.org](http://www.publishinguniversity.org)

The Independent Book Publishers Association (IBPA) is offering scholarships to attend IBPA Publishing University — the most anticipated conference of the year for independent publishers — in Denver, CO, April 25-27, 2024. To lock in the lowest rate (15% off registration), **register before January 31, 2024**. The SLPA is a local affiliate.



## LAST MONTH'S RECAP Polish Your Pitch

**Author, coach, and past SLPA president Bob Baker and Board Ambassador Jo Lena Johnson-Anderson**



Bob Baker

provided insightful critiques for five members who braved their fears and presented their book pitches at the December 13, 2023, SLPA meeting — our first in-person event since the pandemic.

Baker defined a pitch as an elevator speech: “Basically, a way to communicate something in a very short time, often one minute,” he said. “It forces you to get to the meat of your book and answer all the important questions.”

### Tips included:

Keep it short and sweet — about 150 to 170 words. Cut the fluff and unnecessary embellishments.

Record yourself.

Practice so you don't look like you're reading a script.

Keep your audiences in mind: readers and buyers of your book, media person, publisher or agent, bookstore owner or event planner — you might need a different pitch for each.

Stress the benefits — identify the value your book will deliver.

Let them know what you want them to do.

**Critiques from event participants pinpointed how to improve:**

Don't make it all about yourself.

Make it relevant to the book and relatable to the audience — why is the book for them?

Be sure to include the book title! And show the reason for the title. “Talk about and describe the book. Don't bury the essence.”

Make the synopsis clearly relevant to an average person and the genre of your book.

Agents want to know if a book is publishable. Provide the word count, genre, and other books it's similar to.

“Be clear that it's a picture book versus a novel versus a full-length nonfiction book. You have to identify what the reader will get from it: Will they be inspired or learn history? What inspired you to write it — how did you find the story? Say more about the story so they feel your passion.”

For a children's book, “get a few kids together, read your story to them, and see what happens.” Local libraries or bookstores are often open to such events.

## KUDOS CORNER

### Share Your Good News!

For the Kudos Corner of the SLPA newsletter, we would like to hear from members with good news about your successes, such as new publications and upcoming presentations or events. Send items, including images such as book covers or author photos, to newsletter editor Ruth E. Thaler-Carter at [Ruth@writerruth.com](mailto:Ruth@writerruth.com). Publishing announcements may include links to your books.

## The SLPA Needs You!



Interested in being more involved? We need volunteers for these leadership positions. Contact President Andrew Doty at [president@stlouispublishers.org](mailto:president@stlouispublishers.org) for details.

- o Graphic Designer
- o A/V Manager
- o Treasurer
- o Social Media Manager



Meetings are on the  
second Wednesday  
of every month

**In-person meetings have resumed  
at The Heights**

**Free to SLPA members, \$10 to nonmembers.**

**Zoom access is free to all.**

### Admission and Membership

- Monthly meetings
- [Membership is \\$60 per year.](#)

Visit: [stlouispublishers.org/join](http://stlouispublishers.org/join)  
[stlouispublishers.org/benefits](http://stlouispublishers.org/benefits)

### SLPA News & Views

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