



Defining Your Purpose

Facilitated by **Jo Lena Johnson, Book Coach and Publisher**



Jo Lena Johnson

As a writer or an aspiring author, you've spent precious time creating your story. Sure, you have book ideas in your head: maybe it's about your unique family, little known history, or even fantastical fiction. But, until you get those stories out onto the page and then share it with others, people won't know about your work, and they might not understand where you're coming from.

This session will give you the opportunity to share your current writing project, why you're writing it, and gain a clear understanding about why someone should read it! We are here to support you on your journey as an author on the path to publication. Don't be shy. Come ready to share with other authors. We'll all be there to work through it, together!

7 pm, April 13
via Zoom

SLPA Board Member Jo Lena Johnson, the Absolute Good Resilience Coach, teaches leadership, conflict management, and communication skills to people around the world as a certified mediator and international trainer. As a book shepherd, writing coach, and owner of Absolute Good Enterprises, she helps people tell their stories, complete their books, and bring them to market.

Visit: absolutegoodenterprises.com

Walk, Trot, Run: An Author's Journey from Novice Writer to a Multi-book Publishing Contract

Presented by **Debbie Burns**

Join the St. Louis Publishers Association on May 11 for "Walk, Trot, Run: An Author's Journey from Novice Writer to a Multi-book Publishing Contract," featuring **Debbie Burns, best-selling author of the Rescue Me series.**

Writers have many paths to publication and face multiple roadblocks. Debbie's journey over several years landed her a three-book publishing deal in 2016. Since then, she has signed two additional multi-book contracts and written eight manuscripts. Her deep dive into working with a mid-sized publisher resulted in an entirely new learning curve.

Debbie will talk about her journey from novice writer to traditionally published author with a ten-book deal with one of America's top ten publishers. She will review her milestones from pre-publication, including rising above rejection to landing her first agent for a young adult manuscript, deciding when to seek new representation, and receiving her first three-book deal. She will also share her experiences working with a traditional publisher and what she has learned along the way.

To date, Debbie's published work includes six contemporary romances:

the Rescue Me series (set in a fictional no-kill animal shelter in St. Louis) and one stand-alone work of mainstream women's fiction, with a second to release in 2023.

Debbie Burns is a best-selling author of the critically acclaimed Rescue Me series. While her books have earned many awards and commendations, including a starred review from Publishers Weekly, her favorite praise is from readers who've been inspired to adopt a pet in need from their local shelter.



Debbie Burns

Debbie lives in Saint Louis with her family, two thoroughly spoiled rescue dogs, and a ridiculously grumpy Maine Coon cat who (most) everyone loves anyway. Her hobbies include hiking in the Missouri woods, attempting to grow the perfect tomato, birdwatching, and daydreaming, which of course always leads to new story ideas.

You can find Debbie on Instagram [@debbieburns](https://www.instagram.com/debbieburns)
Facebook [@authordebbieburns](https://www.facebook.com/authordebbieburns) and at www.authordebbieburns.com.

ZOOM INSTRUCTIONS:

Sign-up is free. You can 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. Click on this link for the meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/86782144399>. Meeting ID is 867 8214 4399. Password is 668448.

UPCOMING EVENTS

via ZOOM

April 13, 7– 8:30pm

Defining Your Purpose:
An Interactive Author Experience
Facilitated by **Jo Lena Johnson**
<https://zoom.us/j/86782144399>

April 23, 8am –12pm
How to Publish Your Own Book

with [Andrew Doty](https://www.instagram.com/andrewdoty), [Peggy Nehmen](https://www.instagram.com/peggynehen), [Jo Lena Johnson](https://www.instagram.com/jolena), and [Bob Baker](https://www.instagram.com/bobabaker)
Registration Now Open
<https://tinyurl.com/8pxabvpx>

May 11, 7– 8:30pm

Walk, Trot, Run: An Author's Journey from Novice Writer to a Multi-Book Publishing Contract
with **Debbie Burns**
<https://zoom.us/j/86782144399>

ONLINE



How to Publish Your Own Book

Saturday, April 23, 2022 • 8 am – 12 pm

REGISTER NOW: <https://tinyurl.com/4sf44c8e>



→ REGISTRATION CLOSSES 3 BUSINESS DAYS PRIOR TO THE START DATE ←

You don't start out writing good stuff. You start out writing crap and thinking it's good stuff, and then gradually you get better at it. That's why I say one of the most valuable traits is persistence.

— Octavia E. Butler

I would write a book, or a short story, at least three times—once to understand it, the second time to improve the prose, and a third to compel it to say what it still must say. Somewhere I put it this way: first drafts are for learning what one's fiction wants him to say. Revision works with that knowledge to enlarge and enhance an idea, to reform it.

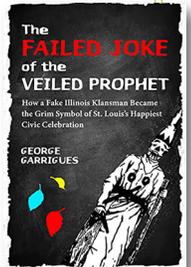
Revision is one of the exquisite pleasures of writing

— Bernard Malamud

KUDOS CORNER

SLPA Member
George Garrigues

George Garrigues' love of writing and sharing stories has endured for decades. He started as a copyboy for the *San Francisco Examiner*. His writing career progressed as he became an editor for the *Los Angeles Times* and served as the former head of journalism or communications programs at the University of the Pacific, Wayne State University, the University of Bridgeport, and Lincoln University of Missouri.



George is the principal of City Desk Publishing and the author of the Read All About It! series (detailing true stories from the late 19th and early 20th centuries). His newest release is *The Failed Joke of the Veiled Prophet: How a Fake Illinois Klansman Became the Grim Symbol of St. Louis' Happest Civic Celebration*.

Visit: citydeskpublishing.com



Meetings on
the second
Wednesday of
every month

In-person gatherings are suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions.

All meetings will be held online until further notice.

Admission and Membership

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

Visit: stlouispublishers.org/join
stlouispublishers.org/benefits

SLPA NEWS & VIEWS

Editor: [Kerri Holloway](#)
Designer: [Carolyn Vaughan](#)
Webmaster: [Kevin Ericson](#)



LAST MONTH'S RECAP SLPA Vendor Showcase



1. **Editwright** – Andrew Doty
editwright.com
2. **Successful Improvements** – Kerri Holloway
successful-improvements.com
3. **Carolyn Vaughan Designs** – Carolyn Vaughan
cvaughandesigns.com
4. **Absolute Good Enterprises** – Jo Lena Johnson, Publisher, Book Coach
absolutegoodenterprises.com
5. **Peggy Nehmen**
n-kcreative.com/portfolio/
6. **Ruth E. Thaler-Carter** – Editing, proofreading, publishing support
writerruth.com
7. **Sierra Dean** – Dean Diaries Publishing
deandiaries.com

SLPA member Ruth E. Thaler-Carter's article, "Finding and Working With Publishing Services Providers" is a great reference for success along the journey to becoming a self-published author. Find it on the SLPA blog at: stlouispublishers.org/blog.