



Long Island Authors Group Member Guide

-- Current to 2018 --
Assembled by Roland Allnach

Welcome to Long Island Authors Group!

This Member Guide is your reference to the privileges you enjoy with membership in LIAG. Formally established in 2008 by John P. Cardone, LIAG has evolved to offer a suite of exclusive benefits to member authors.

To get the most out of your membership it's important to understand what LIAG has to offer and how you can participate. As a grass roots organization the group's efforts are built on the energy of its members. With that in mind, if there is a part of LIAG described in this Guide that you feel you could lend expertise or help, feel free to contact Roland Allnach, LIAG President, at: fiction@rolandallnach.com

In this Guide you will see numerous references to email. It's imperative for all members to have functional email addresses and to check inboxes on a regular basis. Our primary means of communication in LIAG is through email. When you see email from someone in the group, an email subject line with "LIAG" or referencing one of our activities, please do read it in full so that you don't miss out on anything.

monthly “First Wednesday” dinner gatherings. We also have a yearly General Membership meeting and we foster communication between members with a shared contact list.

First Wednesdays are held February thru June and September thru December. There are no gatherings in the months of January, July, and August. December is typically reserved for a yearly holiday dinner.

Invitations for First Wednesday will be arriving to members’ inboxes toward the end of the month prior. Aside from the actual date of the dinner, the email will also include information about the night’s highlight, whether it’s a guest speaker, one of our own authors speaking, an open forum, a book showcase, or whatever the case may be. Also, new members are offered an opportunity to introduce themselves and their books upon their first attendance of a dinner gathering.

Please respond to the invitation email as soon as possible so that we can have a head count. The most common location for our First Wednesday dinner is the Bonwit Inn on the corner of Larkfield Road and Motor Parkway in Commack. There is an informal gathering at the bar starting at 6:30 before we move to our dining room at 7pm.

Our other opportunity to meet as a group is our General Membership meeting in June. Details vary from year to year, so watch your inbox for an informational email on the plans for the current year. If you’re unable to attend First Wednesdays due to scheduling conflicts, this is another opportunity to meet your fellow members and the LIAG Board.

While meeting face to face is a great way to socialize with fellow members, there is no match for the convenience of email communication. To this end, LIAG maintains a shared member contact list.

Members are free to use the list as they choose with the one exception that the list not be disseminated to the public. Just published a book? Just received a great review or award? Have an exciting event coming up? Have a question on publishing or writing? Reach out to your fellow members. We’re all in the same boat.

For purpose of keeping the contact list current there is a yearly update on April 15. Watch your inbox for the update appeal and reply to the Membership Contact Coordinator before the stated due date.

We welcome new members

While it may overstate the obvious, the application process is a potential member's first experience with LIAG. Current members should be ready to summarize our application process and criteria.

As members we're all familiar with the steps involved but there are three particular points about the process that are important. First, an applicant must be a resident of Nassau or Suffolk County. Second, an applicant's submitted book must have an ISBN for potential retail search. Third, application to LIAG is unique in that *every applicant's submitted book is read in full*. Whereas other groups may require a list of credentials and possibly a proof of publication, at LIAG what sits between the covers of a book is given the greatest consideration. If someone asks about application, please stress this fact that every book is read in full.

The application form is available for download on the "Join Us" tab of the LIAG website; this page also has a detailed FAQ section about membership and application. Our Membership Committee handles the reading review process for applicants. The Committee has been expanded to include more readers to ease spikes of applications and thereby decrease overall response time. We look to keep our response time on applications at four to eight weeks.

You Have a Home on the LIAG Website

The LIAG website is the central reference for our member authors. For members who are computer averse and/or do not already possess a website, the LIAG site provides a convenient way to establish a presence on the Internet. Members are welcome to cite their LIAG author profile page for promotional materials and efforts.

As such, it's in the best interest of both LIAG and its members that the website information be current. To facilitate and organize this process we have "Member Update Day" on the 15th of each month.

Member Update Day is handled with two simple steps. At the beginning of each month

all members will receive an email reminding them of the approaching Update Day. Material is to be submitted on the 15th of the month to Debbie DeLouise at debbiewriter@aol.com

What can be updated? Internet links, book covers, your bio, a calendar listing on the LIAG website for an event - the monthly email reminder will have all the details you'll need to know. Once the month's batch of updates is in hand it will be reviewed and handed off to our webmaster for posting to the website.

Founder's Award

The group has historically granted the Founder's Award as special recognition for an individual's support of either LIAG's efforts, for supporting the greater cause of literacy, a charitable effort, or an overlapping combination of the above.

Nominees for the Founder's Award are selected each year by the LIAG membership. Nominees are then reviewed by the current and former LIAG Presidents before being returned to membership in February for voting a final winner. Although there is only one winner each year, remember that nomination alone honors an individual's efforts. The winner is announced and recognized at the March First Wednesday dinner.

Benefits of LIAG Membership

The LIAG Presentation and Workshop Catalog

Through the process of writing and publishing, authors amass a considerable body of knowledge. A great way to reach out to potential readers and build awareness as an author is

to conduct presentations or workshops to share this knowledge. To assist LIAG members in this pursuit and to foster opportunities, LIAG maintains a professionally printed Presentation and Workshop Catalog.

The Catalog is updated on a yearly basis. In the interest of equal opportunity to members the Catalog will be handled as a fresh start each year. Past participants are still welcome and can refresh their description in the catalog for the new year.

In January watch your inbox for an email about participation in the new year's Catalog. Respondents will then be contacted for Catalog entries. These entries consist of your name, a brief bio, a description of your presentation or workshop topics, your website address (or your LIAG author profile page), and contact information (such as a public email or cell phone number).

Once the Catalog is printed it will be available for distribution through our Traveling Bookstore and by mail queries to libraries. An electronic (pdf) version of the Catalog is also available on the LIAG website homepage.

A host or venue has two options for booking authors from the Catalog. If a venue/host is interested in a single author, the host can contact the author directly. In this case LIAG takes no part in determining compensation or arrangements; all negotiations are handled between the author and the host. If the venue/host contacted LIAG to query regarding a single author, the contacted Event Coordinator will forward the query to the author.

If a venue is interested in several authors or has inquired about setting up a program, the contacted Event Coordinator(s) will then handle arrangements between the host and the requested authors. To maintain fairness among presenting authors, when LIAG is coordinating a program for a host, LIAG will ask for set terms of \$150 per author for a 2 hour presentation/workshop and the right for the author to sell his/her books.

When presenting, remember to mention LIAG either in your introduction or closing remarks. This helps build awareness for the group.

To be clear, *LIAG will not be part of any financial transactions and derives no payment from presentations.* Although LIAG will provide the host with contact information for authors presenting as part of an LIAG organized program, contracts for compensation will be written

between authors and the host/venue at LIAG's set terms (when applicable, as described above). LIAG will not be party to any contract and does not collect or distribute payments to authors.

Authors are responsible for any requisite New York State tax filings for their compensation and/or book sales.

The LIAG Traveling Bookstore

One particular challenge faced by all authors is marketing our books. LIAG's contribution to this endeavor is our Traveling Bookstore. Each year our Bookstore makes a tour around Long Island's various street fairs, craft & gift fairs, and also the prestigious Brooklyn Book Fair. Implemented in 2017, in its first year the Bookstore put our books and authors in front of more than 100,000 people.

The Bookstore consists of two pieces: bookshelf spaces for displaying books for sale and up to four tables for author book signings. As a whole, our Bookstore presents an attractive, welcoming display and receives a warm welcome wherever we go.

The calendar schedule for the Bookstore is assembled during the months of January and February. During this time an initial invitation for participation will be emailed to all members. Subsequent invitations for participation are sent approximately two weeks before each event. Every invitational email will have detailed instructions on how members can participate.

Read on to learn how it all works.

Table Signings

Table signings are for a full day, except for Brooklyn, where signings run on 2-hour time slots. Most events start at 10am and run to either 4pm or 5pm. For signing authors typically it is best to arrive an hour early as town fairs will close street access and parking can become difficult by the official start time. Don't sweat the details; if you take a table signing you will be emailed with specific instructions a few days prior to the event.

The Bookstore will provide you with a 3x3 card table. You will be responsible for bringing a chair, book stock, and table presentation materials. While at your table you will be

responsible for managing your sales. If you don't have a credit card reader, the Bookstore can run the sale and transfer the proceeds.

The overwhelming majority of our events are outdoors, rain or shine. Although our tents provide full shelter from rain, there's always a chance we will be exposed to wind. Therefore, if you have a table signing, please ensure your presentation materials are wind resistant.

The fee for a table signing is \$40. The fee for Brooklyn is \$30.

Bookshelf Space

To provide flexibility and convenience, our Bookstore also offers an opportunity for your books to be displayed for sale at an event. You don't have to be present at an event if you exercise the bookshelf option, saving you the effort and time commitment of a full day while still providing a forum for your book to find its way into the hands of readers. *All books in the Bookstore are displayed full front cover facing out without vertical overlap.*

If you choose the option of shelf space, you will be asked to provide three copies of each title you wish to have on the Bookstore shelves. Participants are free to sign their books and to include bookmarks or press cards. We'll also need a whole dollar sale price for your book.

Copies of your book can be supplied to Roland Allnach at a First Wednesday, at an event date, or by mail. Prior to each event date an email will be sent out calling for Bookstore participants. If a title is low on stock the author will be contacted with instructions for re-stocking.

The fee for shelf space is \$10/title/event.

Notification of Bookstore Fees

Participants will be sent an email notice of their fee for an event approximately one week prior to the event date. The email contains instructions for different payment methods. Fees are due in full for each event upon notice.

Please do not ask to have fees deducted from past sales revenue or to apply sales revenue to future fees.

Payout of Sales Proceeds

Our Bookstore is unique in that **100% of sales proceeds go to authors**. LIAG keeps nothing. Authors who secured sales from the Bookstore shelves will be contacted by email after an event. This email will serve as the sales receipt for NY sales tax filing and contains options for payment to author.

The Fine Print...

All fees collected by LIAG are to reimburse LIAG's expense for event rental spaces. LIAG derives no income from Bookstore sales. As such, participating authors are solely responsible for any New York State sales tax filings and by participating in the Bookstore acknowledge that LIAG bears no responsibility for sales tax filing.

For additional questions regarding the Bookstore, contact Roland Allnach at:

fiction@rolandallnach.com

Local Author Fairs

One of the benefits of life on Long Island is that we enjoy active support of creative and cultural assets. To assist members' participation in opportunities supported by our various localities the group takes effort to share any notifications with member authors. These opportunities vary year to year and are another way for members to reach out to readers. Typically these local author fairs are held at libraries.

Such events come in two flavors: those organized by LIAG, and those referred by LIAG. At events organized by LIAG, the group will take the lead in setting the date, negotiating table fees, organizing participating authors, and settling any other points. For events referred by LIAG, the group takes no direct part in event organization other than forwarding to members contact information for event registration and/or application.

Either way, the primary means of notification to members will be through email.

No matter the origin, event appearances are valuable opportunities to build reputation

and awareness both as individuals and as a group. With that in mind it's important to understand that event appearances are professional commitments. Every effort should be made to arrive on time and to avoid early departures. Although no event can guarantee a favorable outcome, building our reputation as reliable partners at events is crucial to establishing LIAG as a credible organization.

For outdoor events organized by LIAG, LIAG will provide our tents. Tables may or not be provided. Authors will be responsible for chairs, book stock, sales management, and table presentation material.

For outdoor events referred by LIAG, or for instances when authors wish to try an outdoor event on their own, it's important to consider some basic material requirements. As an author you should have some type of folding table, a comfortable folding chair, and some type of cart for transporting your materials. You may also wish to purchase a small personal pop up tent to provide protection from sun and rain. Such tents are readily available at various stores for approximately \$65.

Please keep in mind that many of these opportunities are spread by word of mouth. If you happen to see something or have participated in an event that is book friendly, pass it on to our Event Coordinators so that we can share such news with all members.

LIAG Promotional Resources for Members

To assist members in their promotional efforts and to help build awareness of LIAG and its members, the group offers four promotional resources as part of membership: event posting to the calendar on the LIAG website (through the aforementioned Member Web Update Day), access to the group Facebook page, access to the member contact list (as mentioned in the section "We Connect as a Group"), and - coming in 2019 - access to an exclusive LIAG promotional email list (details will follow in 2019).

LIAG Facebook page

Upon acceptance of membership, all members will have access to the LIAG Facebook

page for posting of events. Although there is no specific review of content before it appears on the page, any and all Board members have the reserved right to edit or delete a post if deemed inappropriate or damaging to LIAG, following any intermediary steps to remedy the nature of the post.

All members are encouraged to “like” and “share” posts.

While social media is not an end-all marketing or promotional solution, it is an integral part of building awareness. For those who may be new to social media or its internal workings, as an example let’s take a look at how Facebook works.

The internal mechanisms at Facebook rely on three factors: “shares”, “likes”, and the relationship between these two. The more *likes* a post receives the higher it will appear on the wall feed of people linked to whom you are linked (friends or following) on Facebook, and thereby increases the chance of the post being seen. Remember that posts you see in your feed are ranked by popularity (likes), not by date. In contrast, the more *shares* a post receives means the more wall feeds on which the post will appear.

While the like and share processes are separate actions note that *both* must be enacted to effectively increase the spread of a post. A post must garner likes to be seen by its initial audience so that it can then have a chance of being shared by that audience to a secondary audience. It is this relationship that produces the oft-sought phenomenon of a post going viral.

In short, likes increase popularity while shares increase spread. An “unpopular” post (few likes) will unlikely be seen even if shared; conversely, a “popular” post (more likes) is a good candidate for spread via sharing.

Use of LIAG Promotional Email List

Email is perhaps one of the most effective means for marketing.

The LIAG Promotional List is not to be confused with the Member Contact email list used to communicate with other LIAG members. The LIAG Promotional Email list will be for just that, promotional use to the outside world.

The list will go “live” in 2019 and will be a complimentary service for members.

Outline of Yearly Calendar Events

January

- Membership Renewal Drive
- Appeal for participation in LIAG Presentation and Workshop Catalog
- January 15th - Member Update Day
- First Wednesday - Winter hiatus

February

- Continue Membership Renewal Drive
- First Wednesday active
- February 15th - Member Update Day
- February 28th - deadline for Presentation and Workshop Catalog submissions
- Founder's Award nominees submitted to membership for vote

March

- Conclusion of Membership Renewal Drive
- Announcement of Traveling Bookstore calendar
- First Wednesday active - Presentation of Founder's Award
- March 15th - Member Update Day

April

- First Wednesday active
- April 15th - Member Update Day *and* yearly Member Contact Update

May

- First Wednesday active
- May 15th - Member Update Day

June

- First Wednesday active
- June 15th - Member Update Day

- General Membership meeting

July

- First Wednesday - Summer hiatus

- July 15th - Member Update Day

August

- First Wednesday - Summer hiatus

- August 15th - Member Update Day

September

- First Wednesday resumes activity

- September 15th - Member Update Day

October

- First Wednesday active

- October 15th - Member Update Day

November

- First Wednesday active

- November 15th - Member Update Day

December

- First Wednesday - Holiday Dinner

- December 15th - Member Update Day

...and that's another successful year!