



WRITERSTALK

Volume 25
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April 2017

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

APRIL SPEAKER DANNI BURTON

The Fine Art of Storytelling



by Danni Burton

What compels us to keep reading or to keep listening? Is storytelling an art?

Danni Burton, the Scottish storyteller, believes it is. And, 103 ordinary people became storytellers and published authors in her first two books of inspirational short stories.

On April 10, Danni will invite us to explore our timing, reasons and goals, and potential audience for our unique and special stories. She will cover the importance of compelling beginnings, surprises, shifts, humor, and metaphors, as well as words that build rapport throughout your writing and how to bring your story out to the world.

Today, she is a mentor for families and other vintage folks writing their memoirs and stories. And, she is collecting stories from youth from 9 to 19 for her upcoming third book.

Danni shares ideas and inspiration from her 35 years as a speaker, trainer, career coach, graphologist, and Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) trainer. And, she is always happy to introduce her first two books: *My Life, My Story, My Legacy: Vintage Wit and Wisdom and Their Lives, Their Stories, Their Legacies: More Wit and Wisdom*.

Please join us on April 10 at Harry's Hofbrau to learn how she creates compelling stories. — WT

RECAP MARCH SPEAKER CLAUDIA CERULLI

Teaching and Reaching New Readers through Language

by Chess Desalls

Foreign language editions and bilingual publications offer an approach to capturing a wider audience of readers. The mechanics of this include who should translate the work, what languages to choose, and how to convey the desire to translate the entire work, or portions of the work, to the publisher.

At our March meeting, Claudia Cerulli provided both an author's and a publisher's perspective on how to achieve these goals.

Cerulli specializes in children's books and bilingual publications. A native Italian speaker, she wanted to teach her daughter both English and Italian at the same time. She began writing and translating stories about Italian culture. As others became interested in her stories, Cerulli decided to publish them.

SBW members, led by emcee and Vice President Kelly Gomez, picked Cerulli's brain on how to write and publish translations and bilingual works.

Cerulli recommended writing in the language that feels most comfortable, and then letting the publisher organize the translation. It's "important to really know the culture and the language that's spoken," she said. Cultural expressions, idioms, and rhymes can get lost in translation.

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President's Two Cents

Pamela Oliver-Lyons
President, South Bay Writers



The Fool's Errand

"My nose itch'd, and I knew I should drink wine, or kiss a fool."

—Jonathan Swift, *Polite Conversation*

Given the choice, I would do both! Kiss the fool, take the wine.

Sometimes I feel the fool before any audience greater than two. But I pick up my courage because I know being part of a community means participation and, yes, some risk. Words slip out of my mouth that I often regret. Writing is often much safer than speaking.

One of the most unused opportunities members of SBW have for participating in public discourse is through "humorous, opinionated and pertinent" messages delivered to the Editor of *WritersTalk* for the *In My Opinion* column in the form of letters. You have never seen it? That is because this column doesn't get included in *WT* unless someone (you) sends in an opinion.

The topics can be the Club's operation, direction, policy, strategy, or *WT*'s policies, practices, or content, or events, ideas, commentary related to membership interests. SBW currently has at least two activities pending in which membership's (your) commentary would be greatly appreciated. One is the upcoming election. The other is the currently in-process bylaws/policy/procedures revision, which is still under review by the Board but soon will be available on our website. These will be presented to membership (you) for a final vote.

Meanwhile, work has already started on the website itself. It is being updated and minor redesign preliminaries are to be made. Those of you attending the March dinner meeting enjoyed a fabulous cake with our new logo on it. There is a picture in this issue of *WT* (page 7) of the uncut cake with the logo. Like the logo, shown below? Write to *In My Opinion*, newsletter@southbaywriters.com. Hate the logo? Tell us why. Check out the website. Want a members' blog? Or something else?

Of course, any Board member is always available to talk to you in person about suggestions or any topics of concern. For writers, there just seems to be something so natural about the written word in public forum. We all know the written word is powerful and permanent and reaches a greater audience creating a whole conversation. Unlike spoken dialogue, you can take your words back and start again.

Last year your elected Board attended a retreat to determine, amongst other things, the direction of the club. But prior to that, it was your vote that determined the Executive Committee making those decisions. Everything really starts with the membership vote. Some organizations do not give the election vote to members. It stays within the Board itself. But this is not the case in our club. Please engage yourselves. Could we be at a crossroads of decision defining what we are? How do the candidates see the club? Ask them. Their goals? Ask.

The *In My Opinion* submission to *WritersTalk* is the perfect tool to use. Afterward, have a wine or kiss a fool! — *WT*



South Bay Writers New Logo, 2017

California Writers Club
South Bay Branch
www.southbaywriters.com

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TalkShop (closed)—Carole Taub
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SBW Mission

Educating writers of all levels of expertise in the craft of writing and in the marketing of their work.

Join Us

We have a membership category that fits you. Dues are \$42.50 for membership effective through June 30, 2017; this includes a one-time \$20 initiation fee. Dual membership, \$25; student membership, \$20. Contact Membership Chair or sign up online at southbaywriters.com.

WritersTalk

The monthly newsletter of South Bay Writers, the South Bay Branch of the California Writers Club

email: newsletter@southbaywriters.com

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Chess Desalls

Carolyn Donnell

Sayantika Mandal

Sally Milnor

Karen Sundback, Challenge Chair

Deadline

Submissions are due by the 15th of the month.

Submissions

SBW encourages writers at all levels of expertise to submit their creative works for publication in *WritersTalk*. All submissions should be sent to the above email address in the form of text or an attached MS Word file (sorry, no hard copy submissions can be accepted). Please prepare your work as carefully as you would for an agent. Use Times New Roman 12-font; no tabs; no colors; no page breaks. Send graphics separately as jpg files, with separate instructions for placement in the submission if placement is important.

All submissions will be copyedited. Managing Editor reserves the right to selection.

Suggested word limits (less is more):

Member Achievement / News (200 words)

News Items (400 words)

In My Opinion (300 words)

Letters to the Editor (300 words)

Creative Works

Short Fiction/Memoir (1800 words)

Poetry (200 words)

Essay/Nonfiction (1000 words)

Reprints

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Announcements

An announcement is information of interest and value to writers that does not provide direct economic benefit to its originator and is published free of charge.

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Marjorie Bicknell Johnson

Managing Editor

On the Poetic Art Process

Guest Editorial by Stephen C. Wetlesen

First, it has to be clearly understood that, contrary to superficial appearances, poetic art is not poetry, in the same way ice dancing is not figure skating. Although there may be some overlap, poetry focuses on human emotions like feelings and relationships, or memories. The starting point of poetic art is entirely different. Poetic art is visually oriented rhythmic language.

Poetic art uses language itself as a painterly brushstroke, as one seeks to transform visual aesthetics or artistic theory concerning, say a real or imagined scene or event, into a form of canvas. One's words are their "oils."

Poetic art should be seen as not literature, but as an object in words. My influences have not been so much such poets as Shakespeare, Langston Hughes, or Walt Whitman; as such painters, photographers, dancers, or sculptors as Vincent Van Gogh, Matisse, Picasso, Edward Weston, Marcel Duchamp, Man Ray, Jackson Pollock, Alexander Calder, Diane Arbus, Georgia O'Keefe, Dorothea Lange, Martha Graham, and Isadora Duncan.

In the 1990s, so I read in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, some psychology researchers from San Francisco State University tested a group of visual artists versus a control group of non-artists. They took everyone down to a rocky public beach in San Mateo County and asked each participant to describe a giant granite boulder. The difference was striking: the control group said things like "a big rock," while the artists noted and mentioned cracks and indentations in exquisite detail. The language used by artists was very different from the others.

It is this painterly language of artists that forms the nucleus and core of poetic art. The poetic artist thinks, sees, and speaks (or writes) like a visual artist, and, instead of brushstrokes or a chisel, uses this language.

Although poetic art can stand alone, it also can be combined with other visual genres, or in collaboration with another visual artist.

The Basics: See, Connect, and Transform

See: Most people fancy they can see well, yet as the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius noted, human perception is "dull" – for me, too. It takes a lifetime and is enormously difficult to learn to properly "see" – I am just a neophyte. Start with small things most people do not notice. Look intensely, hard and long, say, at a flower, as Georgia O'Keefe urged. Then "paint" what is sighted. Diane Arbus simply interacted with marginalized people, who were commonly ignored, and photographed them. Poetic art is photography without a camera.

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View From the Board

by Trenton Myers, SBW Secretary

The March Board Meeting was held on March 7 at Mariani's Inn & Restaurant in Santa Clara and was attended by President Pam Oliver Lyons, Treasurer Bill Baldwin, Secretary Trenton Myers, Newsletter Chair Marjorie Johnson, Membership Chair Sally Milnor, Policy Co-Chair Dave LaRoche, Hospitality Co-Chair Carole Taub, Hospitality Co-Chair Alfred Jan, Member-at-Large 1 Janet Patey (appointed 3/7/17), and guests Kymberlie Ingalls, Sherri Johnson, and Steve Lyons.

Closed Session: The Board had a closed session to work on Board relations transparency and communication, resulting in the development of a President's Advisory Committee, composed of Dave LaRoche and Carole Taub.

Website Re-design: John Barry will start working on the website redesign mid-March. A website upgrade committee and an in-house website editor will be trained. In addition, a website maintenance contract will be negotiated. SBW received an anonymous donation of \$750 to be used for website redesign.

Ray Malus Memorial: A donation of \$50 was sent to the Ray Malus Memorial on behalf of SBW.

B&N Eastridge Book Fair: Vouchers were created to help promote the next event and board members were encouraged to pass them out to market the fair.

Grant Writing Workshop: Taught by Arlyne Diamond, the grant writing workshop will occur on April 1st from 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Members are to address checks to South Bay Writers. Reservations required; pay at the door.

Awards: The Matthew Baldwin Award and the Jack London Award will be given this year to nominees selected by the Board.

April Speaker: In April our members will have the pleasure of hearing author Danni Burton, whose focus is memoir writing.

MRMS: Per our MRMS administrator, all board members should be given the MRMS membership list and need not to go through the president. Anyone needing a list may present a request to the Board. Member privacy is the default setting on MRMS.

Next Board Meeting: The Board will meet Tuesday, April 4, 6:30 - 8:00 pm, at Mariani's, 2500 El Camino Real, Santa Clara. — WT

CWC NorCal Rep Report

by Pam Oliver Lyons

What's the buzz? Here's the rundown.

On February 4, 2017, NorCal branch representatives met at Livermore's Panera Bread from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Because of all the positive feedback from the Building Better Bridges Conference and the benefits to branches that attended, it was decided to repeat with a fall conference on October 7, 2017. A new location needs to be found as DeVry University closed.

There was a break for lunch but conversations between branches continued around the topic of "What's working?" Here is a list of the answers: writing contests for high school juniors and seniors; scholarships; critique groups; www.medium.com, Livermore Library's free online writing courses; YouTube writing classes; membership directories; newsletters; member professional

New Members

by Sally A. Milnor



Sally Milnor
Contributing Editor

I am pleased to introduce our three newest members.

Matt DeLaney joined us online. When asked what fuels his writing interests, he said: "Writing helps me savor life to the fullest. It enables me to enjoy every sensation and experience with greater depth and interest. I write stories and poetry because I feel a constant urge to do so.

Reading and writing delight me, and delight is a powerful motivator." Matt writes fiction and poetry. He says: "I've written a few short stories that have not been published. I also wrote a full novel manuscript a few years ago that I need to finish. Most recently, I wrote a short story about a lonely, unattractive young man with a disability, who tries to climb a mountain. I'm excited to share my short story with fellow writers and get their feedback." In addition to his writing, Matt enjoys exploring and studying nature. Matt's website is <https://medium.com/@practice.matt>. His email address is mtjdelaney@gmail.com.

Tatyana Grinenko joined us online, and she is interested in writing novels. When asked what fuels her writing interests, she said: "Reading or writing works of fantastic fiction that drive me to place my own fictional world on paper." Tatyana is a marketing manager, and, in addition to her writing, she says she enjoys origami, truffles, and tea.

Jamal Kahn also joined us online. Jamal's primary area of interest is in writing novels.

To Our New Members: We wish you a warm welcome and hope your membership brings you inspiration and enjoyment. **To all of our South Bay Writers:** We appreciate and need your continuing presence and support. Thank you, again, for helping to keep our Club flourishing.

See you at our next meeting on April 10 at Harry's. — WT

News flash: CWC negotiates discount for members for BookExpo New York. See Page 14.

services; county fair writing contests like San Mateo and soon Sonoma (Redwood); and Barnes & Noble book fairs.

After lunch, the Bay Area Book Fest in Berkeley June 3 - 4 was discussed. NorCal volunteers will promote the CWC; however, they also can sell their books. More details coming in May.

The last item of discussion was "How do branches resolve internal problems?" The following suggestions were made: revise branch policy and procedures; summer planning sessions for incoming and outgoing board members; thank volunteers often; have a Volunteer Hooray Day; don't let problems fester; publish Board Buzz and bylaws tips instead of President's Message; train officers and chairs; a resolution conflict program; and NorCal as a sounding board. Many branches keep MRMS confidential and don't let their members use it.

A lot of ideas to think about! Which ones do you like? — WT

TalkBooks Interviews

Kathleen Gonzalez:

A Beautiful Woman in Venice

by I. L. Silva

Drawn to Venice

“Do you want to know more about Venice?” February’s featured writer for TalkBooks is an expert on some interesting aspects of Venice. From the gondoliers to Giacomo Casanova, to women in Venetian history, Kathleen Ann Gonzalez describes Venice in an educated and interesting light.

She began by befriending some gondoliers for a summer. Sitting near the gondoliers and reading a book until they felt comfortable talking and telling their stories to her resulted in her first book: *Free Gondola Ride: A Summer with the Men Behind the Mystery*. And while traveling with the gondoliers she heard stories about Giacomo Casanova, which resulted in a second book, *Seductive Venice: In Casanova’s Footsteps*.

A Beautiful Woman in Venice, Gonzalez’s third book, was written with the intention of introducing “often overlooked Venetian women to a world of readers and travelers who can delight in their contributions and characters.” The basis for selection in this compilation was women who spent most of their lives in Venice and who did “something remarkable; who made their neighborhoods or their city a better place; women who protected others, provided succor, or inspired people; women who forged new paths.”

Using her own research as well as relying on the research of scholars, she describes the lives of women whose histories have survived, which is interesting and universally important because women were often overlooked by historians and writers recording the past.

Morosina Morosini Grimani, one of the thirty-five women described, was a dogressa married to Venice’s head of state and “held a position few women ever held, and she did so with grace and honor.” Grimani had an elaborate coronation, in which “no expense was spared.” But she also undertook good works, restoring the Church of San Sebastiano in Venice’s Doroduro neighborhood. Her image is preserved in Andrea Vincetino’s 1597 etching *Dogaressa Morosina Morosini Grimani Disembarking at Saint Mark’s*.

Another woman depicted in the chapter titled “Thanks to an Old Woman” describes how Giustina Rossi intentionally or unintentionally – the facts are murky – dropped a spice-grinding mortar on the head of a rebel, causing the rest of the motley rebels to retreat. She is depicted in *Bajamote Tiepolo’s Conspiracy*, by Gabriel Bella.

The book, *A Beautiful Woman in Venice*, is featured in a tour of Venice offered by Vonda Wells in New York, using the website, abeautifulwomaninvenice.com.

Gonzalez’s latest book elaborates the life of Sarra Copia Sulam who was initially featured in *A Beautiful Woman*. The new book is titled *A Living Memory: Immortality for Sarra Copia Sulman* and elaborates her contributions as a Jewish intellectual in the Jewish ghetto of Venice. In her literary salon she created a place for Jews and Christians to meet in spite of many hardships such as, accusations of plagiarism, pressure to convert, and robbery.

An award-winning English teacher and published academic, Kathleen Gonzalez is an accomplished writer, teacher, and traveler. She lives in Northern California and



Kathleen Gonzalez

Kathleen Ann Gonzalez has logged over 25 years as a high school English teacher and writing instructor. While she spends most of her time trying to infect teenagers with her great enthusiasm for literature and writing, she still squeezes in time to write about her work and her travels. She has written five books, one about Camp Everytown and the other four about Venice, Italy, its gondoliers and other historical figures such as Giacomo Casanova or remarkable Venetian women. Her first book, *Free Gondola Ride* (2005), chronicles her summer spent with Venice’s gondoliers, capturing their unique voices and personalities as well as Gonzalez’s own adventurous interactions with these iconic men. Her 2015 book *A Beautiful Woman in Venice* documents the lives of over 35 women who overcame obstacles to share their talents with the world. Gonzalez has published several other essays and articles over the years, including chapters in a book about teaching English as well as stories in anthologies. She has worked with the San Jose Area Writing Project since 1996 as a participant and Teacher Consultant, and she earned her National Board teaching credential in 2000. After spending her first twenty years as a teacher in San Jose public schools, six years ago Gonzalez began working at the Woodside Priory School in Portola Valley, California. Over the years she has taught numerous literature courses as well as creative writing and writing workshop, enjoying the process of guiding writers to hone their craft. – WT



Conference for Nonfiction Writers
See Page 14



Recap: Teaching New Readers Through Dual Language

Continued from Page 1

Writers can approach the publisher and indicate that the subject would be perfect for a bilingual book. This will require research into whether the intended work is aligned with what the publisher is already publishing. If it's a good fit, the writer will need to highlight what makes the work special, different, and saleable. It's essential to point out what's being offered, what it's good for, and who the ideal reader will be. While not wanting to discourage writers from querying large publishing companies, Cerulli suggested identifying small to medium-sized publishers that are more willing to explore and accept new authors.

Specific languages also factor into how

well-received a translation will be. For example, Spanish and Asian languages are most saleable on the west coast, United States. Cerulli has found Spanish to be most popular overall, followed by French and German.

Once the book is published, marketing comes into play as with other publications. Cerulli recommended getting reviews and contacting book bloggers to talk about the book. Making the book available online also allows for greater reach. Foreign language editions logically appeal to international readers. Bilingual publishing is beneficial in today's world of multiracial families, and fluency in more than one language is an advantage in and of itself.

Visit LongBridgePublishing.com to learn more about Claudia Cerulli and her writing. — WT



Claudia Cerulli

— Photo by Carolyn Donnell

On Poetic Art: S. Wetlesen

Continued from Page 3

Connect: Find surprising relationships between visual things. Another word is to “juxtapose;” we see an ethereal lunar crescent and combine it with nearby Venus and Mars. Or we find a way, as I did, to show that a sketch model is a light beacon.

Transform: Scientists have noted that most of us have shockingly low use vocabularies. Even Shakespeare used only about 50,000 words. More than this, visual art vocabulary is vast—I have compiled

lists of thousands of terms—yet I too am nowhere near proficient. I have much study ahead. When I create a piece, I transform it to the language artists would favor.

Finally, Preparation: I commonly interview extensively, peruse photos and sometimes visit a site for a commission. I would examine a cathedral for a wedding very intensely, resulting in a work quite different from a casual backyard event.

I have only scratched the surface. There is much more.

In closing, poetic art is not easy. Some, but

not all, of my work has been inspired by Japanese haiku masters, a few of whom were much more visually colorful in language than others. Yet with haiku, it was noted in the Middle Ages that some greats worked all their lives on two or three haiku art pieces. Poetic art is in a like category. — WT



April Courses: Flash Fiction and Creative Nonfiction

by Lita Kurth

In April, I will offer two classes online. One class will focus on flash fiction and flash Creative Nonfiction (CNF). The other will offer material in poetry, fiction, and CNF.

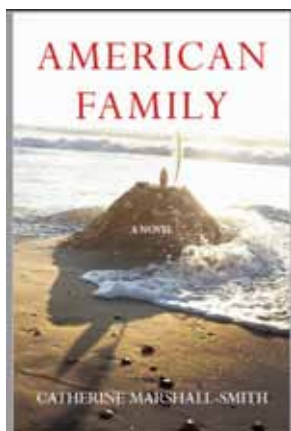
My online class is basically an email class with an optional secret Facebook group and get-together at the end. It includes lessons and feedback on the writing you do in response to prompts. I send out one lesson per week and am extremely flexible about when people send in their exercises. Students also have the option of interacting with others in the group and giving and getting feedback from them, or just interacting with me. For registration information, email me at lakurth@yahoo.com. — WT

BOOK ANNOUNCEMENT: BOOK BY SBW MEMBER

American Family

by Catherine Marshall-Smith

My novel, *American Family* by Catherine Marshall-Smith, is now available on Amazon.



What would you do if the only way to protect your child were to give her up?

RICHARD LAWSON is celebrating his third year of sobriety by moving in with his boyfriend, Michael. During the move, he is overwhelmed by the need to make amends with his ten-year-old daughter, Brady, who has been in the custody of her grandparents for the past five years, since her mom died while driving drunk. A single phone call to his former father-in-law expressing his desire to reconnect with Brady propels the juggernaut of law into motion, threatening everything that is good in both his life and his daughter's.



South Bay Writers March 13, 2017



Collage and Photos by Carolyn Donnell

Poetry Page



Pretense

Learn the etymology of meaning
Feel the presence of my light
Hear the voice fill the emptiness I'm dreaming
Note the absence of my fight
Claim the measured rest when my heart stops beating
Lose the credence that is sight
Learn the etymology of meaning
Feel the presence of my light.

– Chess Desalls



Diversity is Turning

Diversity is a turn to another as, to turn aside
Diversity is a turn to another say, not to abide
Diversity is a turn to another as, turn to away
Diversity is a turn to another as, another way
Diversity is a turn to another as, win attention
Diversity is a turn to another as, turn an option
Diversity is turn to another as, to be moving
Diversity is turn to another as to be changing
Diversity is going another way and keeps on
Diversity is going another way, you are gone
Diversity is going another way, only one way
Diversity is going another way, and I will stay
Diversity is turning another way or direction
Diversity is turning another way or an action
Diversity is turning another way not directly
Diversity is turning another way immediately

– Clarence L. Hammonds

Poem # 2927, Written at age 92

Phoenix

I wish to be buried deep inside the earth,
Where the darkness engulfs and
The worms wriggle and eat their way
Into my skin and lips,
And delve deeper,
To the nerves and desiccated organs.
I shall dissolve and disintegrate
Into the depths of earth
But remain I shall.

And then some
Exploration party will excavate my remains out,
Fossilized.

As a source of fuel,
And burn I shall
Once again.
And you will subsist,
Only when I crackle into
Flames.

Kill me now,
For life has been sucked out of me.
And I wait to be
Born again
In fire,
Like the phoenix.

– Sayantika Mandal

My Search for the Museum Muse

O Calliope, muse of epic poetry
and Erato, seducer of love poems,
do ye know about the pains of life
or about the tremors of the soul itself?
Perhaps not.

Then where shall i find the true museum muse,
that marvelous explorer of the
labyrinth of life exhibits?

If i discover him will he reveal to me
love held and love released?
Will he then disclose to me
the pain, pride, and promise of my existence?
Will he flash memories affixed in my heart?
Or am i careless or timid when deciding
which episodes i want others to see
and which i hope to bury?

– Tom Mach

Pause. Unpause

Wheels stop turning. Car brakes screech.
Lips stumble on words half-spoken.
An engine revs, firing pistons.
Waves ignite confidence.
A dose of courage.
Onward.

– Chess Desalls

April is national poetry month.



A Poem for Jessica

My beautiful blue-eyed niece
A sparkle in her eye
A dimple in her cheek
She is her own new person
Strong, true with clear eyes
Purposeful in work – wise
From the corner of my eye
I see my Mom in Jess –
alike in smile and jests
Poets, singers, and mothers
Both dog and cat lovers
Loyal to family, others
Both left their home after school –
With music, emotions
Both wrote secret poems
Daring, caring, sharing life,
Dramatic, sensitive,
Fun loving and pensive
Facing life on their own terms
Learning much as they went
Growing with pure intent
I see my mother in Jess
In our hearts, Mom lives on
In our minds, she's not gone
I see Mom in my brother
Both poets, both singers
Both lovers and dreamers
I see my brother in Jess
Full of fun, life, and love
Searching, seeking, thereof
I see Mom in Jess
I see the good and best
I see the hard life tests
And I see Don in Jess
Needing love and touch –
Loving life so much
I see Mom, Don in dreams
Still full of life, still gone
Memories faint, dreams strong
In Jess, Mom and brother
Both loving and living
Both giving, forgiving
We live in our children
Surviving our losses
And bearing our crosses
We give them their future
Whatever they will face
Whatever life they make
Life well lived – is all we ask
With our sweet love to last
With each up to the task

– Penelope Cole

The End by Penelope Anne Cole

A little joke

A smallish toke

A bit of coke

A tiny stroke

An awful choke

A final croak

The End



Daddy's Chin

He may have been boring as
a Sunday sermon to others, but when Daddy
came home from work, he was really home,
body, mind, and spirit, there to enjoy family,
the whole catastrophe.

I was youngest and Daddy would
lift me, oh, he'd lift me high,
throw me with sureness and strength I
trusted completely,
like seasons trust the sun.

He would rub his prickly chin,
course as sandpaper, on my cheek,
rub firmly back and forth,
as if to make my skin bleed.

Only a few playful strokes, though,
and I would smell him, warm and familiar,
the way his pillow smelled.

His chin-rub thing was as close to kissing me
that I ever remember, but it was
ten times better.

Daddy would set me down and then I
would scream and run away,
a wild Indian the rest of the evening,
hiding behind couches and shooting
make-believe arrows at my cowboy brothers.

– Richard Allan Burns

Another Moment

Another dry moment
chapped thoughts
curse my lips
like lemon sweat
it beads on and in
my head until
Gravity pulls from
my heart –
a water of emotion.

I look into the labyrinth
of my soul and
see you.

– j. mutz 2/10/10



Limericks



The President

There once was a president
 Who didn't like a dissident.
 "Behead that traitor!"
 Yelled the dictator,
 "Rebellions I do resent."
 --Sayantika Mandal

Timbuktu

There was a lad from Timbuktu
 His friends called him Buckeroo
 His horse named Tim
 Snagged a tree limb
 Reared, snorted, and Tim bucked, too.
 -- Marjorie Johnson



Limerick Challenge

The challenge to write a good limerick
 And not use a tired old gimmick
 Just caused writer's block.
 My brain wouldn't unlock.
 Of good ones, I only could mimic.
 -- Kathy Boyd

Nanette and Estelle

There once was a girl named Nanette
 Whose way of speaking I'll never forget
 I invited her to dine
 But she had to decline
 Saying: Sorry, I already et
 There once was a gal named Estelle
 Who chatted all day on her Cell
 So tightly she did hold it
 It became permanently molded
 To the ear of poor Estelle
 -- Ida J. Lewenstein

The Machiavellian Fib

Machiavellian politico so glib
 Now prepared with an excellent fib
 Conscience won't prickle
 Not even tickle
 When he tells her he loves women's lib.
 -- Judith Shernock

Haiku

Tea

Cherry blossom bloom
 Tea leaves float in china cup
 Koi in quiet pond
 -- Karen Franzenburg

Deep and Profound

A cat
 sat on
 a mat.
 -- Stephen C. Wetlesen

Black on White Haiku

Black on white at night
 Wear black on black by daylight
 Be seen. Be safe. Right.
 Black squirrel, white road
 Black squirrel, blacker asphalt
 Safe and vigilant
 Pretty little bird
 Flying low chirping brightly
 Cat prowling near you
 -- Penelope Anne Cole

metal and sun

metal and sun
 clanking tingles beyond the light
 find night's quiet reflection
 -- Chess Desalls

April Fool-Around

Humor fits the shoe if you like to
 Laugh or giggle now and then.
 Please get out your pencil or your pen
 And hand the reader a good yakity-yahoo.
 Life may be serious, but not every day
 We want hilarious at times: fun, joy and play.
 -- Pat Bustamante

Frederic and Me

Young Frederic, Mrs. Chopin said, was brilliant as a child,
 Even though piano lessons drove the family wild.
 At seven he began the first of many genius phases --
 That was when he started writing all those polonaises.
 I'm sure that I could never be as smart as all those folks.
 I thought that polonaise was what we put on artichokes.
 That's why you'll find his statue in a Warsaw hotel lobby
 While I'm in Cupertino writing verses for a hobby.
 -- Jack Hasling
 (Jack shares a March birthday month with Chopin.)

Life is a flutter by

Life is a flutter by
 Eternal life, a butterfly
 Monarchs paint the sky
 Life flutters
 bye

– Marjorie Johnson



The Monarch butterfly has wintered in Northern Mexico for thousands of years, and to the Aztec, symbolized eternal life.

The Best Things in Life

The best things in life are free
 From the breeze to the leaves on trees
 And the very air we breathe
 No one owns the sun in the sky
 The clouds drift freely
 With no profit motive on their minds
 The green-bellied flies
 A hot day in July
 Come with no price tag in sight
 The Earth extracts no toll
 When we sit down or stroll
 No one owns the land we use
 Mother Nature lent herself to us
 Without asking for a dime
 Songbirds ask for no royalty
 Crickets chirp without a wage
 Humans speak without being paid
 The love we give one another is free
 So is the help when we're in need
 The best things in life are all around
 Open your eyes and they'll be found
 – Alice Wu

Plum and Almond Blossoms in Haiku

Pale gibbous orb
 softly lit up before sunrise
 above tip of fir

Rain on plum blossoms
 I sniff still sweet aroma
 Perfume survives storms

Fallen plum blossoms
 Concrete driveway now white spots
 faintest purplish tinge

Bird call in plum tree
 One petal drops in slight breeze
 joins host of others

Three pink cherry trees
 Or are they some kind of plum?
 Ambiguity

Wind blown plum blossoms
 Strewn on my concrete driveway
 combine with green weeds

Petal galaxy
 Countless plum blossoms blown down
 on concrete driveway

White almond blossoms
 My eyes are somewhat deeper
 I thought they were plums

Almond blossom rain
 White petals gently flutter
 What to juxtapose?

Hummingbirds hover,
 dance between almond blossoms
 Then woodpecker knocks.

Slightest gust of breeze
 Three almond petals flutter,
 dance in unison

Squirrel spins in branches.
 Hunts old almonds or just play?
 Shakes loose one petal

High altitude haze
 One almond petal flutters
 Another moment

– Stephen C. Wetlesen



The Monarch in My Garden

– Photo by Karen Hartley

The Monarch

The Monarch Butterfly
 rested on the pink flower
 in my garden

I wanted a photo so I
 had to move swiftly
 I needed to take it quickly
 Soon he would fly away and
 land on another plant
 but now he seemed to
 wait there just
 for me

So that I could record him in
 all his glory

I hastily ran inside and
 grabbed my camera

Monarch had waited as if
 posing for the shot
 The shutter clicked and I froze
 that would be it -
 that sound would make Monarch
 fly away

But no
 Stay he did

I moved back to meditate on the wings,
 the color, the wondrous melody of Spring
 he seemed to bring me that day
 in those warm sunny moments
 there on that pink flower
 in my garden

– Karen Hartley



Member News

Sheena Arora wrote, "After five years of pain, I completed a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program in Writing from UC Berkeley Extension."

Penelope Anne Cole has been invited back to Barnes & Noble Eastridge for a book signing in April or May, TBA.

SBW member **Chess Desalls**, along with Steven Savage and Killian McRae, spoke on a self-publishing panel at the AOD Convention at the Santa Clara Marriott on March 19.

Marjorie Johnson's short story, "The Aspirin Bottle," took third place in the Pen Women's NorCal Writing Contest. Marjorie was interviewed about her book

Lost Jade of the Maya for Books on Air, WebTalkRadio.

Reported from EditBuddy by Linda Judd: New release from **R. L. King**, March 13, 2017: *The Infernal Heart (The Alastair Stone Chronicles, Book 9)*. Available from Amazon in paperback and on Kindle.

Audry Lynch attended the 2017 London Festival of Books where she took part in the awards ceremony at the famous five-star hotel Grosvenor House in Mayfair. Audry won an Honorable Mention for her book, *The Development of Roy Simmonds As a Steinbeck Scholar Through His Letters* (Mellen press). Each prize-winning author's book was displayed on a Table of Honor. All the winners delivered their

speeches on why they wrote their books and their journey on creating them.

Judith Shernock will attend the *LA Times* Festival at USC, where her book *Sammi the Seahorse* will be featured on April 22 - 23. She writes, "Hey, it's not New York, but it's the biggest one on the West Coast."

Dave M. Strom reported that *The Puppy Brothers in the Malevolent Mystery Meat* is online (audio version). For a link, go to davemstrom.wordpress.com under published stories.

Please send your good news to newsletter@southbaywriters.com. — WT

My Writing Certificate

by Sheena Arora

This past Thursday I received my Post-Baccalaureate Program in Writing Certificate from UC Berkeley Extension. I am thrilled that my hard, painful labor of five years paid off. Most have a nonchalant reaction to my big news; all ask the meaning of the certificate.

You register for the writing certificate and are expected to complete courses—3 required, 2 literature, and 5 electives—in five years. Berkeley offers both online and in-person classrooms. Instructors are actually interested in teaching instead of just going through the motions. Even though online classes are tedious, discussions with other students and instructors are engaging.

At one time when I slogged as I took two writing courses simultaneously, I vented to friends and colleagues. All asked me what I hoped to gain by the certificate. Some insisted that the certificate is a waste of time. A few asserted that writing classes, in general, are a waste, as writing is a natural talent.

I started analyzing my motives. Did I have zero understanding of my needs? Or was I chasing the certificate for vanity?

On their website, Berkeley promotes the writing certificate as a way of building a portfolio for application to graduate school or a pathway to writing a book. I had spent eight years completing a bachelor's and a master's degree; it is highly unlikely that I will take my old bones back to school for an M.F.A. Nor

did I start taking the courses to write the next big novel.

My problem has always been that I couldn't write. In high school in India, during the English exam when asked to write an essay for "My favorite vacation," I wrote the essay that I had earlier memorized titled "My best friend." During the third year of my undergraduate work, a question in the architecture-history exam specified, "Don't sketch, write your answer." I sketched and labeled every part of the sketch. In my workplace in New Delhi, I headed a design team of two-dozen men, yet I depended upon my immediate boss, a Harvard graduate, to write captions and synopses for all my sketches and presentations. For years, I asked my then boyfriend, now my husband, to re-check my replies to basic emails. Simply put, I just couldn't write.

I could have taken some writing classes without registering for the certificate. (The certificate registration cost was \$150.) But then most probably, I wouldn't have continued taking the writing classes. Also, I would have taken only those courses that I felt I could do. Because of the certificate, I stepped out of my comfort zone again and again.

The required courses helped me understand the basic craft of writing, active and passive voice, the art of reading others' work, and accepting that I cannot please every reader. One elective helped me explore my creative writing potential. I wrote poems; they are childish, but nonetheless they are poems.

I avoided taking the literature courses

until the end. I knew that I would need to write fiction. I had never contemplated writing fiction; I believed that I lacked the needed imagination and creativity. All my courses until then had concentrated towards memoir writing. Surprisingly, the literature class changed the course of my writi

For the literature class, for the first time, I wrote fiction. I liked the plot and characters I had created. Encouraged by my instructor's feedback, I enrolled in more fiction writing courses. Every moment in the fiction writing classes, I dreaded the upcoming assignments. I questioned if I could come up with new fiction scenarios every week. Somehow I did. I discovered my hidden potential.

I find that fiction writing is less emotionally draining than memoir writing. I find that I am happy when I write fiction. It gives me the same thrill as I get when I design. Fiction writing is another form of creativity. And none of this would have been possible had I not registered for the writing certificate. — WT



Contests and Markets

by Carolyn Donnell



Carolyn Donnell
Contributing Editor

See April Poetry Activities on Page 14

2017 San Mateo County Fair Literary Arts: Did you mean to enter the San Mateo County Fair Literary Arts contest? You have only until April 3, 11:59 PM to enter. Get busy and download 2017 Literary Arts Contest Book. NOW! Go to https://www.sanmateocountyfair.com/pdf/2017/literary_17.pdf.

Writers Digest 85th Annual Writing Competition: You still have time to enter this major contest. Deadline: May 5, 2017. <http://www.writersdigest.com/writersdigest-competitions/annual-writing-competition>

Fiction500 Contest 3: Use the image and verbal prompt on their website. Stories must be 500 words or less. Deadline is 11:59 p.m. EDT April 20, 2017, or when 500 qualified entries are received, whichever comes first. \$15 entry fee. See complete rules at <https://www.fiction500.com/contest-rules>

Hourglass Literary Magazine: Second international writing competition for Best Short Story, Best Poem, Best Essay. Contest open to authors writing in English or BCMS languages (Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, Montenegrin). Closing date: April 30, 2017. \$5000 in total prizes. \$15 per entry or 3 for \$25 (Poetry = 3 for \$15). See guidelines and submit at hourglass.submittable.com/submit

The 39th Nimrod Literary Awards: Katherine Anne Porter Prize for Fiction and Pablo Neruda Prize for Poetry. 1st \$2,000 and 2nd \$1,000. Poetry: 3 -10 pages (one long poem or several short poems; Fiction: 7,500 words maximum (one short story or a self-contained novel excerpt). No previously published works. Author's name must not appear on the manuscript. Deadline: April 30, 2017. Fee: \$20, includes both entry fee and a one-year subscription (two issues). Online submissions at <https://nimrodjournal.submittable.com/submit>

One of the oldest "little magazines" in the country, *Nimrod International Journal* has continually published new and extraordinary writers since 1956. They are dedicated to the discovery of new voices in literature, and the *Nimrod* Literary Awards are a special way to reward talented poets and fiction writers. For more information about *Nimrod*, please visit our website at www.utulsa.edu/nimrod.

Note: Here's where you need submission formatting (see *WT* February 2017). *Nimrod* also takes entries by postal mail. Include a cover sheet containing major title and subtitles, author's name, full address, phone, and email. Author's name should not appear on manuscript. Manuscripts should be stapled or bound with a heavy clip. "Contest Entry" should be clearly indicated on both the outer envelope and the cover sheet. The results will be posted on *Nimrod's* website. Manuscripts will not be returned. Each entry must be accompanied by a \$20 fee, checks payable to *Nimrod*. \$20 includes both entry fee and a one-year subscription (two issues). Send to *Nimrod Journal*, Literary Contest—Fiction or Poetry, The University of Tulsa, 800 S. Tucker Dr., Tulsa, OK 74104.

Tom Howard/John H. Reid Fiction & Essay Contest: \$4,000 in prizes. Deadline: April 30, 2017. Award: \$1,500 each for top story and top essay. Ten Honorable Mentions, \$100 each. Fee: \$18 per entry. <https://winningwriters.com/our-contests/>

Sites that list ongoing competitions:

- <https://www.poets.org/academy-american-poets/>
- <http://www.pw.org/grants>
- <https://winningwriters.com/> <http://www.writermag.com/writing-resources/contests>
- <http://thewritelife.com/27-free-writing-contests/>
- <http://fundsforwriters.com/contests/>
- <http://www.freedomwithwriting.com/freedom/>

Good luck, and let us know if you score. — *WT*

The WT Challenge

What is it? Once a year in October, awards will be given to contributors to *WritersTalk*. You need take no special steps to enter this competition; if your piece in one of the designated genres is published in *WritersTalk*, you are a contestant in the Challenge. (Eligibility limited to members of South Bay Writers.)

Genres:

Fiction: 500 – 1800 words
Memoir: 500 – 1800 words
Essay/Nonfiction: 500 – 1000
Poetry: 30 – 200 words

Judging Periods: Work published in *WritersTalk* in 12 months preceding the October SBW general meeting. (2017 only: work published Jan. – Sept. 2017. Work published Oct. – Dec. 2017 goes into next judging period.)

Prizes: Two winners will be selected from each genre. First prizes, \$50 cash, 2 free entries into the next *CWC Literary Review*; second prizes, \$20 cash and one free entry into *Literary Review*.

Judging: Judging will be done by *WritersTalk* contributing editors and other club members. No one will judge a category in which he/she has an entry. — *WT*



SBW Monthly Writing Contest

by Carole Taub

APRIL THEME: WATER

Integrate *water* into your story from a mysterious part of your past. Create a mystery where water is part of the landscape. Dance in the rain. Lose your umbrella through a gust of wind and suddenly come face to face with your future lover. On a fishing expedition, create your own *Moby Dick*. Surf the waters and allow your creative juices to flow!

Water must play an integral part in the story. All genres are welcome. Maximum word count: 1000. Use Times New Roman or Courier New, 12-font. Entries for "Water" due by April 1, 2017. Submit to Carole Taub at 777777ps@gmail.com. — *WT*

News from California Writers Club

Ads in CWC Bulletin

by Bob Isbill (760) 221-6367

Want to increase your visibility? Sell your service? Promote your book? Increase speaker engagements? Pump up your web traffic? Or just send a greeting?

Each issue of *The CWC Bulletin*, published three times a year, reaches 2,000 published and aspiring writers in 21 CWC branches throughout the state and is published on www.calwriters.org

Now we are accepting writing-related advertising from businesses, CWC members, and individuals who wish to reach our target market at reasonable prices. See calwriters.org for details and how to format your ad. -WT

You may advertise in the CWC Literary Review or The CWC Bulletin

Go to www.calwriters.org for details

BookExpo New York

by Donna McCrohan Rosenthal
pr@calwriters.org

The CWC has arranged for an exciting member discount, approved by the Central Board at its January meeting – a discount of 52% for the BookExpo New Title Showcase exhibit, June 1 – 4 at the Javits Convention Center in NYC. The New Title Showcase is an official exhibit of BookExpo. We are working with the Combined Book Exhibit who manages the New Title Showcase for BookExpo, the major book industry event in the US.

CWC members will display their books at a significant discount: A print book display will cost \$150 (published rate \$315); an ebook display at \$150 (published rate \$315); or a combo rate of \$210 (published rate \$525). The cost includes the physical display of your book with full cover showing, a fully searchable online catalog and database, and listing in the New Title Showcase print catalogue and/or ebook electronic display. To participate, members will register and pay directly with Combined Book Exhibit, https://secure.combinedbook.com/cbe_reseller/cwc/. Registration deadline: May 13. –WT

CWC Around the Bay

Published meeting locations and times for other CWC branches in the greater San Francisco Bay Area. If you want to attend one of their meetings, first check their websites for details.

Berkeley: 2:00 third Sundays, Oakland Public Library Main Branch. cwc-berkeley.org

Central Coast: 5:30 third Tuesdays, Point Pinos Grill, 77 Asilomar Boulevard, Pacific Grove. centralcoastwriters.org

Fremont Area: 2:00 fourth Saturdays at DeVry University, 6600 Dumbarton Circle, Room 120, Fremont. cwc-fremontareawriters.org

Marin: 2:00 fourth Sundays, Book Passage in Corte Madera. cwcmarin.com

Mendocino Coast: 6:00 third Wednesdays, Mendocino Hotel. writersmendocinocoast.org

Mount Diablo: 11:00 second Saturdays, Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. cwcmtdiablowriters.wordpress.com

Napa Valley: 7:00 second Wednesdays, venue is changing. napavalleywriters.net

North State: 6:00 third Mondays, Butte County Library-Chico Branch. northstatewriters.com

Redwood: 2:30 first Sundays, Flamingo Conference Resort & Spa, 2777 Fourth Street, Santa Rosa. redwoodwriters.org

Sacramento: 11:00 third Saturdays, Cattlemen's Restaurant, 12409 Folsom Blvd., Rancho Cordova. cwcsacramentowriters.org

San Francisco/Peninsula: 10:00 third Saturdays, Sequoia Yacht Club, Redwood City: check website <http://cwc-peninsula.org/>

Tri-Valley: 2:00 third Saturdays, Four Points by Sheraton, 5115 Hopyard, Pleasanton. trivalleywriters.org

Conferences

National Nonfiction Writers Conference

The Seventh Annual Nonfiction Writers Conference returns May 3 – 5, 2017. As a reminder, this is a virtual event featuring 15 speakers over three days, all conducted by teleseminar (no travel required!). As one of our partner associations, South Bay Writers will be provided a special 33% off discount code, plus a scholarship for one attendee. The code will be sent to SBW President Pamela Oliver Lyons.

You can learn more about us at <http://NonfictionWritersConference.com> and <http://NonfictionAuthorsAssociation.com> – WT

Tri-Valley Writers 2017 Conference

Saturday, April 22, 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Four Points by Sheraton, 5115 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton. Keynote speaker: Bestselling Author Anne Perry. Check website www.trivalleywriters.org/conferences/conference2017 – WT

National Poetry Month 2017 Activities

Check out the following sites:

- NAPOWRIMO: similar to NANOWRIMO but for poetry. <http://www.napowrimo.net>
- *Writer's Digest* has had APRIL PAD (prompt a day) for several years now. Last year the URL was www.writersdigest.com/editor-blogs/poetic-asides/poetry-challenge-2016. Try substituting 2017 for 2016 or if that doesn't work, check www.writersdigest.com and search for 2017 April PAD Challenge.
- Santa Clara County Poet Laureate blog at <https://poetlaureateblog.org>
- Cupertino Poet Laureate site at www.cupertino-poetlaureate.org/
- Poetry Center San Jose at <http://www.pcsj.org>
- Poetry at San Jose State University at <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/poetry>

See 30 ways to celebrate at <https://www.poets.org/national-poetry-month/30-ways-celebrate-national-poetry-month> – WT

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>April 2017</h1>						1 Grant Writing Workshop 1 – 4 pm Santa Clara Library Homestead RoadSC
2	3 2P Valley Writers	4 6:30P SBW Board, Mariani's, Santa Clara	5	6	7 7:30P Open mic Barnes&Noble Almaden, San Jose	8
9 10A Our Voices	10 2P Valley Writers 6:00P SBW Dinner Harry's Hofbrau	11	12	13	14	15 D e a d l i n e WritersTalk
16	17 2P Valley Writers	18	19 7:30P Open mic SF Peninsula, Reach and Teach, San Mateo	20	21 7:30P Open mic SJ Rosegarden Library, 1580 Naglee Ave- NOTE CHANGE	22
23 10A Our Voices	24 2P Valley Writers	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Future Events:

SBW Board meets Tuesday, May 2: Mariani's
SBW Dinner Meeting, Monday, May 8, Harry's

SBW/CWC Events appear on this calendar page.

WT does not take advertising. See page 14.

Ongoing Events

Critique Groups

Our Voices: Meets at Bel Bacio in San Jose and various places every other Sunday 10 AM. Genres: Fiction, memoir, nontechnical nonfiction. Contact: Dave LaRoche at dalaroche@comcast.net

Valley Writers: Meets at Valley Village Retirement Center, 390 N. Winchester Blvd, Santa Clara, Mondays 2 PM. Marjorie Johnson, marjoriej358@comcast.net

Your Critique Group: Send info to newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Do you belong to a critique group? Please send details to *WritersTalk*.

SBW Board Meetings

Board meets in the week preceding the dinner meeting. Contact Pam Oliver-Lyons at pres@southbaywriters.com.

Details April 4, 2017: 6:30 PM dinner; Board meeting 7 - 9 PM, Mariani's Restaurant, 2500 El Camino Real, Santa Clara. RSVP for member guests.

Open Mics

South Bay Writers Open Mic: Read from your own work, from your favorite authors, or just come to listen. First Friday evenings, B&N Almaden. Third Friday evenings, Willow Glen Library or Rosegarden Library. See calendar for schedule. Contact Bill Baldwin (408) 730-9622 or email WABaldwin@aol.com

CWC SF Peninsula Open Mic: Third Wednesday of every month, 7:30 PM at Reach and Teach, 144 West 25th Ave., San Mateo

Ongoing discussion groups

TalkShop: Group is full.

SBW TalkBooks: discussion group focusing on books written by SBW members. TalkBooks is on sabbatical. Contact newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Facebook Group: Members of South Bay Writers can join our Facebook group—South Bay Writers Club.

You may advertise in the *CWC Literary Review* or *The CWC Bulletin*

Go to www.calwriters.org for details and/or see page 14.

Poetry Readings

Poets@Play: Meets at Markham House History Park, 1650 Senter Rd., San Jose, Second Sundays most months, 1 – 4 PM. poetrycentersanjose.org

Poetry Center San Jose: Meets at Willow Glen Library, 1157 Minnesota Ave., San Jose, Third Thursdays, 7 PM. poetrycentersanjose.org 408-808-3045

Well-Red Poetry Reading Series: Second Tuesdays, 7 – 9 pm, at Works San Jose, 365 South Market Street. Featured reader followed by an open mic, if time allows. www.pcsj.org

SBW Recommends ...

If you know of a regularly occurring event for writers, send an email to newsletter@southbaywriters.com.



California Writers Club
South Bay Branch
P.O. Box 3254
Santa Clara, CA 95055
www.southbaywriters.com

MAIL TO

Address Correction Requested

**South Bay Writers
April Regular Meeting**

6 pm, Monday, April 10

**Harry's Hofbrau
390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose**

The Fine Art of Storytelling

**Danni Burton,
The Scottish Storyteller**

WritersTalk deadline is always
the 15th of the month.

Regular dinner meetings are
second Mondays 6 – 9 PM
except July and December.



Harry's Hofbrau

From Highway 280, take Saratoga Avenue North.
Harry's is on your right near Stevens Creek Blvd.