



WRITERSTALK

Volume 24
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November 2016

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

NOVEMBER PROGRAM

WRITE-A-PALOOZA NaNoWriMo, WNFIN, and More

by Bill Baldwin

After last year's well-received NaNoWriMo event, SBW invites you to write up a storm this November. In honor of NaNoWriMo and WNFIN, we are sponsoring a WRITE-A-PALOOZA! On November 14, bring your writing equipment: pens and paper, laptops and tablets, chalk and slateboards, brushes and sheepskins.

In 1999, Chris Baty created NaNoWriMo: National Novel Writing Month. He wondered whether he could produce a draft novel in a single month – 50,000 words in a month? He would need to average 1,667 words a day for thirty days. This is the length of a ten-minute reading at one of our South Bay Writers Open Mics (first and third Fridays – HINT!)

In 2007, SBW's own Nina Amir, who writes nonfiction, created WNFIN: Write Nonfiction In November. Go ahead: You can call it NaNonFiWriMo (National Nonfiction Writing Month)! Unlike NaNoWriMo, NaNonFiWriMo is *not* a contest; it does *not* set a specific challenge in terms of word count. The challenge and goal is *personal*: start and finish a work of nonfiction in November. It can be an essay; it can be a biography; it can be a textbook – whatever! At the end of November you will have a completed manuscript ready for editing for publication.

But suppose poetry is your thing? Or screenplays? I propose a Write-A-Palooza! Whatever you need to write, whatever you need to do to write: South Bay Do What You Need To Month (SoBaDoWhaYoNeToMo).

On November 14 at Harry's, we will spend some time exploring our wants and needs. How many poets do we have? How many memoirists? How many playwrights? We will share briefly our own NaNoWriMo experiences and propose some possible goals for the evening. We will write, and we will share and feed back, briefly. Whatever your genre, experience, or need, you will have a chance to move forward.

But isn't writing a solitary exercise? Yes – but sometimes that's what gets us stuck. Sometimes sitting in a room with other writers, all clicking away (or scribbling away) on a common adventure can carry us forward. This one night, for a change, we will actually *write* together (or *plan* our writing success).

Join us for a unique (and hopefully profitable) writing experience. Take the One-Month Challenge: Write Whatever You Can!

For more about NaNoWriMo, visit nanowrimo.org. For info about WNFIN, visit writenonfictionnow.com. – WT

RECAP OCTOBER STORYTELLING CONTEST

Literary Costumes and Weird Tales

by Marjorie Johnson

The South Bay Writers October 10 meeting featured the traditional literary costumes contest followed by the new weird tales storytelling contest. Winners received gift cards from Santa Clara's brand-new Books Inc. at 2712 Augustine Drive in Santa Clara Square Marketplace.

The program started when contestants paraded to the front to show off their costumes. The judges chose three winners, for costumes deemed the scariest, the funniest, and the most original. Trent Myers as the Sorcerer with Luanne Oleas as the Sorcerer's Apprentice were the scariest. Marjorie Johnson as the Wicked Witch of the West was funniest, probably because her too-large hat kept sliding down to her nose. Kathleen Gonzalez as Edgar Allan Poe's Raven was most original. Kathleen found the wings at a flea market, and her black mask with its long beak was like those worn at Carnival in Venice since 1168.

The SBW Weird Tales Storytelling Contest was patterned after a storytelling contest held in conjunction with CWC East Sierra's "Howl at the Moon" event September 23 - 24, 2016. SBW Members were challenged to spin a weird and wild tale telling the stranger side of Santa Clara Valley. After all, Santa Clara Valley has the Winchester Mystery House as well as the haunted Sunnyvale Toys 'R' Us and a local CEO who attended an international meeting while wearing rollerblades.

Continued on Page 6



NaNoWriMo Logo

President's Two Cents

Pamela Oliver-Lyons
President, South Bay Writers



On Writing Clubs

"The hard part of writing at all, is sitting your ass down in the chair and writing it. There's always something better to do, like I've got an interview, sharpening pencils, trimming roses. ... Going to a writers' club?" — Jerry Pournelle, President, Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America

How in the life of such a solitary profession did anything as social as writing clubs become so popular? What about the tensions between the professional and the tenacious beginner both intent on their craft? And yet, literary groups, writers' clubs, and salons continue to exist.

Two great historical movements combined, forming the bases for the clubs we know today. The Italian renaissance salons eventually merged with the "wine of Islam" coffee bars spreading up the Balkans into Europe/Scandinavia, becoming coffeehouses. Both of these movements left in their wake a new type of shared public space between nobility and commoner, beginner and legendary writers, artists, and musicians. The French enlightenment salons, often hosted by prominent women, became institutions in Parisian Society and home to writers and philosophers like Marcel Proust, Diderot, and Voltaire.

Vienna's salon was organized by a Queen's maid, while Berlin's most famous salon was hosted by two Jewish women wanting their share in an intellectual life forbidden to them. Salons were places where writers from varied social backgrounds and genders could read their works, share critiques, and engage in conversations unfettered by constraints.

The arrival of newspapers brought an end to the Italian salons, and soon after, the coffeehouse culture had mostly replaced the salons. The coffeehouses were called "Penny Universities" because for a penny anyone could enter, get a cup of coffee, learn from other writers, and spend as much time as they wanted as long as they were not ill-mannered. The word "University" was used because university students and those who could not afford university tuition gathered, resulting in a sharing of studies, experiences, and ideas.

Soon the coffeehouse cliques grew into clubs charging fees for membership, publishing their own newsletters, and specializing into literary groups. Quite a few classics, such as Alexander Pope's *Rape of the Lock* and John Dryden's *The Hind and the Panther* (which became *The Story of the Country Mouse and City Mouse*), came out of such clubs. Writers continue to write in cafes today.

Women had limited access to the early coffeehouses. Even so, the bluestocking and the later feminist movement grew out of "coffee gossip." Authors such as Louisa May Alcott and Elizabeth Blackwell frequented these dens of caffeinated stimulation. More recently, J. K. Rowling wrote her Harry Potter fantasy series in the Elephant House café overlooking the castle in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Literary history from the Renaissance to Starbucks is filled with both insiders and outsiders joining with a combined synergy to write. Our present-day writers' clubs come from these historical traditions. "NaNoWriMo" (na-noh-ry-moh) is the most important event for writers to share this month because it's about "sitting in your seat" to write and "writing is powerful."

"Whether it's a little girl hiding from Nazis in an attic or Amnesty International writing letters on behalf of political prisoners, the power of telling stories is usually what causes change." — Erin Gruwell, Author, *The Freedom Writers Diary*.

Happy NaNoWriMo writing! — WT

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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 \$45 per year plus a one-time \$20 initiation fee. Dual membership: \$25. Contact Membership Chair or sign up online at southbaywriters.com

WritersTalk

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Our Mission

Encourage writers at all levels of expertise to showcase their skills in the craft of writing and to submit their creative works for publication in *WritersTalk*

Deadline

Submissions are due by the 15th of the month.

Submissions

All electronic submissions should be sent to the above email address as text or an attached MS Word file. 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.

Authors retain all rights to their works. *WritersTalk* gratefully acknowledges the authors' permission to publish their works here. Contact individual authors for permission to reprint.

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)

Letters to the Editor (300 words)

Creative Works

Short Fiction/Memoir (1200 words)

Poetry (200 words)

Essay (900 words)

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.

Advertisements

Advertising of workshops, conferences, and events is accepted from other Branches of California Writers Club. Because California Writers Club is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, *WritersTalk* is not accepting advertising of events or services that benefit an individual. Also, we cannot accept political advertising of any kind.

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Marjorie Bicknell Johnson
Managing Editor



Let your computer do the work

November is the month in which many of you will attempt to write a 50,000-word novel in thirty days. The event is called NaNoWriMo, National Novel Writing Month, as explained in Bill Baldwin's page 1 article; see events listed on Page 13. Think Burning Man—for writers.

Now is the time to learn how to format your manuscript. If you type just any which-way, and then have to format those 50,000 words at the end of the month. Trust me—you'll have a mess.

You can format **once** at the beginning and then add words to the same manuscript each day. Use standard format for submission to your friend or critique group for reading, for entering contests, for submitting to an agent, or even for submitting to *WritersTalk* as outlined below:

One-inch margins all around.

Times New Roman 12 font.

Double space and align text left.

Set paragraph indent to 0.5 inch.

Word processors are not like typewriters. Do not use Enter at the end of a line—ONLY at the end of a paragraph. Use only one space at the end of a sentence, not two spaces as in the archaic days before computers. Be sure to save your work frequently.

You don't need to learn the fancy stuff: no colors, no fancy fonts, and no right justification to make your page look like one in a book. Your right margin will be ragged, but no one cares. The computer will indent your paragraphs; do NOT use the Tab key or Spacebar. Let your computer do the work—you want the right master-slave relationship.

About the paragraph indent: *WritersTalk* uses block style, spacing between paragraphs rather than indenting. Contests, critiquing, and ebook formatting need paragraph indents; *WritersTalk* simply sets indents to 0 because of the style we use.

If you use the simple formatting rules above and can export your work as a Word document, you have learned enough to submit to *WritersTalk*. You will be able to print something readable with space for writing in editing comments, and the *WritersTalk* editor will be able to prepare your work for publication without retyping it.

Now you are set up to write until your fingers feel like they're going to fall off, but remember: no editing until December. If you stop to edit every line you write, you will never make it to 50,000 words. I once knew someone who rewrote her first chapter fourteen times—and never started the second chapter. In December, you can use the editing advice on the NaNoWriMo website, and, of course, read this column in *WritersTalk*. —WT

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South Bay Writers Board News

by Sandi Taylor, SBW Secretary

President Pamela Oliver Lyons, Vice President Bill Baldwin, Treasurer Carole Taub, Newsletter Editor Marjorie Johnson, Membership Chair Sally Milnor, Member-at-Large Carolyn Donnell as well as Member Steve Lyons attended the October 4th SBW Board meeting at Mariani's Restaurant, Santa Clara.

Dave Laroche was unanimously approved as Bylaws & Policy/Procedures Committee Chairperson.

Marjorie Johnson gave us more details about the Storytelling Competition. By the time of this publication, we will have had our winners. Be sure to check out the contest winners and costume photos on the pages that follow. All prizes were \$25 bookstore gift cards, given to the most original, the funniest and the scariest costume winners and to the best storyteller.

New member Steve Lyons has updated our Twitter presence and will keep it current.

The Board has approved a marketing survey of membership to determine how to provide better service in line with our mission statement.

Vice President Bill Baldwin reported work has begun on a 2017 spring workshop. He will keep us informed; this will take four months of planning. The Board is considering a conference for 2018.

Carolyn Donnell presented a comprehensive overview of our social media footprint. By 2018, the SBW Facebook Group will be a members-only benefit.

Marjorie Johnson reminded the Board that the third week of October is California Writers Week by State decree. This is the result of Members Resolution #2170 being endorsed by the California Library Association and approved by the State Assembly on September 4, 2003.

The next Board dinner meeting will be at 7 pm on Tuesday, November 1 at The Original Hickory Pit, 980 East Campbell Avenue, Campbell, across from the Pruneyard. All members are welcome to attend. Please notify Pam Oliver Lyons at pres@southbaywriters.com so we can reserve a seat for you. — WT

2016 Italian Film Festival

Announcement sent by Pamela Oliver Lyons

Santa Clara University will host the screening of the Italian film, *Seconda Primavera*, at 6:30 pm on Friday, November 18, in the Santa Clara University Music Recital Hall (Franklin Street near Lafayette). Doors open at 5:45. This film is part of the 2016 Italian Film Festival San Francisco and is sponsored by the County of Santa Clara, "Sister County" of the Province of Florence, Italy.

Seconda Primavera, "Second Spring," represents a new season of passion. Four characters, each from a different generation and background, intertwine. Italian Writer and Director Francesco Calogero will attend and will be available for conversation at the opening refreshments before screening and again during Q & A after the film. Order tickets online at www.scupresents.org.

Direct questions to Pam at pres@southbaywriters.com; she has eight donated complimentary tickets. — WT

New Members

by Sally A. Milnor



Sally Milnor

I am pleased to introduce our newest member.

Trenton Myers heard about South Bay Writers from our Club member, Luanne Oleas. Trenton writes fiction, nonfiction and screenplays. On his membership questionnaire, he says, "I am fueled by writing about political, social and cultural problems through compelling characters and enlightening stories. I am mainly fueled by the magic of imagination." He's in the process of writing an epic fiction novel, a suspense novel, and a screenplay for an animation movie. He says, "I enjoy drawing cartoons and fashion, singing, doing zumba, and, obviously, writing! I am also a film buff." Trenton's email address is trentonpmyers@gmail.com.

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 November 14. — WT

Member News

Staff

The votes are in and it's now official: **Bill Baldwin** of South Bay Writers is the duly elected California Writers Club treasurer. California Writers Club is our statewide parent organization; South Bay Writers is the South Bay Branch of CWC, so Bill has a big job ahead of him.

Lloyd Free's book, *Confessions of a Day Trader*, is now available on Amazon both as a Kindle book and in soft cover.

By unanimous vote of the judges, **Karen Sundback** is the best storyteller in the South Bay. See her story on Page 8.

Valerie Lee, Clare Mullin, Gisela Zebroski, Carolyn Donnell, and **Marjorie Johnson** celebrated California Writers' Week with a book party on Sunday, October 23. Valerie presented *The Jade Rubies*; Gisela, *The Baroness*; Carolyn, *Deeper Colors*; and Marjorie, *Lost Jade of the Maya*, while Clare showed her collection of fashion design originals. Clare gave SBW a preview on October 10 when Marjorie's daughter, Jan Fey, modeled a flapper costume.

Madeline McEwen-Asker's novelette, *Spring Fever*, has been accepted for publication by MLR, that's Man Love Romance. (Ed.: "Man" is not a typo.) — WT

November No Member?

This I dedicate to a wonderful group
This gathering of writers is a jolly good troop!
If someone still has yet to pay his dues,
I have some important news
Your contribution lights a bright fuse!

— Pat Bustamante

CWC NorCal Leadership Conference Report: "Building Better Bridges"

by Pamela Oliver Lyons, NorCal Rep

On October 1, 2016 South Bay Writers members Pam Oliver Lyons, Marjorie Johnson, Carolyn Donnell, Bill Baldwin, Alfred Jan, Valerie Whong and Steve Lyons attended the California Writers Club (CWC) NorCal Leadership Conference, "Building Better Bridges," at DeVry University, Fremont. Keynote Speaker Sandy Baker, President of Redwood Writers, spoke about the "Secrets for Attracting and Nurturing Members." Following Sandy's presentation we separated into our peer-to-peer discussion groups, an opportunity to share successes, challenges, and solutions with experiences drawn from our peers.

Later, attendees individually chose from one of three sessions: "Leading the Leaders: Motivating Volunteers," "Generation Text: Attracting Younger Members," and "5 Dysfunctions of a Team: How to Overcome Them." SBW members worked as a team; in this way, we were able to cover all the topics. We hope that the shared learning will benefit our Branch as the year progresses.

Keynote Speaker Sandy Baker cited the Redwood Writers motto, "Writers Helping Writers," followed by the introductory question, "What are we doing right?" The answer was summarized by "The more we do, the more we grow. The more we grow, the more we do." Her audience was given a sneak peek at the elements that have made Redwood Writers (RW) a success, including the many connections RW has forged within their local Santa Rosa community.

Partners of the Redwood Writers' outreach project range from a local theater playhouse, a bookstore, a library, schools and restaurants to private homes functioning as literary salons.



Left to right: Pam Lyons, Carolyn Donnell, Alfred Jan, Marjorie Johnson, Bill Baldwin, Valerie Whong, Steve Lyons

— Photo by Kymberlie Ingalls

Their primary focus was always education, publishing, and marketing. "It's a full plate," one member wrote. Check out www.redwoodswriters.org for an in depth look.

The most popular choices for our attending members were in the areas of social media/newsletter/publicity and attracting younger members. If any of our readers are interested in finding out more about the conference, please contact pres@southbaywriters.com. A good source for information on the branches can be found at www.cwcnorcalwriters.org, the Northern California Group (NorCal) website.

A special "Thank you" to our NorCal Group President, Carol Bumpus, for providing this conference opportunity to learn and strengthen our relationships. We were glad to meet members of the newest NorCal branch, the North State Writers from Chico, as well as Judy Kohnen visiting from Southern California's Inland Empire Writers. — WT

FICTION

Ghostland

by Carole Taub

Where I live ghosts roam. I can't always see them. They fly by me when I'm not looking. Or not paying attention. But then, who pays attention to ghosts?

My eyesight is nil, and so I depend upon my hearing, which isn't the best either. My other senses are keen, though. Usually accurate. But I'm at a point that I can't hardly rely on anything.

Now I'm rambling, and I'll get on with what I want to tell you in a minute. But first I want you to understand that this is the first time I've ever admitted to my deficiencies. I don't wear glasses and refuse all thoughts of having my ears checked. You see, I don't believe in any doctor's ability to help me.

But I do believe in spirits. I learned about them a very long time ago. I discovered that if I hid in one particular corner at Agnews Insane Asylum, behind the garbage cans, and under one of their oversized beds, I could watch them. That was before my eyes started failing me. Their power ... that was what filled me up,

and what I can't get enough of. But as hard as I tried I couldn't do it. You see? I've always been a loner.

Climbing on top of an old Ford pick-up, all beat up, chrome rusty, in a ditch on Old Monterey Highway, I guess it was a car graveyard, well anyway, that was where I attempted my first flying maneuver. No one was with me, but I checked just the same before taking the leap. I wasn't hurt. Nothing ever hurts.

They don't know what failure is. Not like I do. I want to have that fun too. Creep around, fly from here to there without being seen. Without making a sound. Doing all that ghostly stuff.

They're really not interested in scaring anyone. They actually scare themselves. That's the truth. And it's a secret. So don't tell anyone.

I don't mind if you want to call me the ghost voyeur. I'm probably the only one in town. It's just that, well, they're everywhere. Always on the prowl. Lurking about. Looking for ... hmmm? What are they looking for? I know they don't like chocolate, and they completely turn around and fly the other way if there's so much as a hint of tobacco.

Continued on Page 10

Costumes and Weird Tales

Continued from Page 1

SBW Storytellers and their tales are listed here in order of appearance: Marjorie Johnson, "Nosey the Banty Chicken;" Karen Sundback, "Billy Jo loved Peggy Sue;" Pamela Oliver Lyons, "Hick's Hex;" David Strom, "The Poet and the Supersplainer;" Penelope Cole, "Baby-sitting Ghosts;" Carole Taub, "Ghostland;" and Pat Bustamante, "Muerto Rancho Murder."

We heard Marjorie speak "chickenese" and Pam howl like an albino coyote, but the high point of the evening was when Karen Sundback's character, Billy Jo, took out his glass eye and used it as a shooter in a game of marbles. And as a one-minute finale, Steve Wetlesen read us a haiku.

Karen Sundback, Best Storyteller by unanimous vote, received a Books Inc. gift card and bragging rights. Bill Baldwin, host of SBW Open Mic, was head judge, and Woody Horn used his years of experience timing readers at SBW Open Mic to be the official timer. —WT

October 10 Literary Costume Winners



Left to right: Marjorie Johnson, *The Wicked Witch*; Kathleen Gonzalez, *The Raven*; Luanne Oleas, *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*; and Trent Myers, *The Sorcerer*.

Photo by Carolyn Donnell



Best Storyteller Karen Sundback receives her award from SBW President Pam Lyons.

October 10 SBW Storytellers



Left to right: Pat Bustamante, Karen Sundback, Carole Taub, David Strom, Marjorie Johnson, Penelope Cole, and Pamela Oliver Lyons.

Photo by Carolyn Donnell

South Bay Writers Club HALLOWEEN 2016



—Photos by Carolyn Donnell

Billy Joe loved Peggy Sue

by Karen Sundback

Billy Joe loved Peggy Sue Sorenson. He loved everything about her. Her baby blue eyes. Her soft curly hair that made her look like a lamb. Her smile that always brightened his day. His only problem was that Peggy Sue didn't know he existed. Oh yes, they were in the same math class together. And he was brilliant in math. But she never batted an eye in his direction.

Billy Joe had a plan. Peggy Sue's father taught creative writing; Mr. Sorenson was renown for his excellence in teaching. His plan was to enroll in his class and bowl over Mr. Sorenson and impress Peggy Sue. Only it turned out that Billy Joe couldn't write. His stories sounded like bad jokes from the locker room. Billy Joe was a disgrace to Mr. Sorenson, a disgrace to the entire writing class.

To make things worse, every day on his way home, Billy Joe walked past the Sorenson's house. But one day, Peggy Sue was sitting on her front porch. To his amazement, she called out to him, "Billy Joe, whatcha got in that bag?"

"Marbles." He replied cautiously.

"Marbles? Aren't they for children?"

He grinned. "The bars won't let us play billiards. So instead we play high stakes marbles." He lifted his heavy bag and added, "And as you can see I'm pretty good. It's all physics, you know."

She was intrigued. Even though she was an accomplished writer, she was failing math and physics miserably. "Would it help me learn physics?"

"Of course! You need a flat surface. We could play at my house."

She shook her head. "I don't think that my parents would let me go to your house. They aren't home, but will be any moment."

He thought carefully and replied, "We don't want any distractions if you're to understand physics."

"We can play in my bedroom. But we'll keep the door open, so we can hear my parents come home."

"Will your dad be upset if he finds me in your bedroom?"

She tossed her curls. "Of course not! He knows that I could use help with physics."

And so she let him in, and they walked

down the hall to her pretty girl bedroom with its lacy curtains. He set up the marbles on the parquet floor below the window. They huddled together on their knees as Billy Joe formed a large circle with string and placed 10 marbles in the center. Then he said, "Now. Watch this!" With a flourish, he popped out his glass eye into his hand and used it as a shooter. With a demonic furor, he shot his glass eye against the central marbles until the room was filled with the sound of marbles barreling everywhere. He was so lost in his shooting frenzy that he did not hear the footsteps behind him nor did he feel the swoosh coming down on his head nor did he hear the deadly thud nor did he see his blood seeping onto the floor. But afterward, the house became very quiet.

Billy Joe was never seen again. The police had no leads. His family was devastated. Palo Alto High School offered grief counseling to all its students and staff. Peggy Sue never told anyone about that fateful afternoon. But she felt so guilty that she organized a vigil for him, where everyone in the community mourned. Everyone except for Mr. Sorenson. Mr. Sorenson thought Billy Joe's disappearance a great way of improving the class, and, as he fingered the glass eye, wondered why he hadn't thought of it sooner. — *WT*

FICTION: CHILDREN'S STORY

Nosey the Banty

by Marjorie Johnson

A chicken lives in a tree in my backyard, a special chicken. She just flew in one day. She sticks around because I feed her sunflower seeds. She comes when I call her. I named her Nosey because she gets into everything.

Nosey's a banty chicken — that means she's small, half as big as most hens, and she looks more like a dust mop than a chicken. She has fluffy feathers on top of her head and on her feet. Her feathers are silver, like my hair. When she lays an egg, she sings, "Cut-cut-cut ... cah-dah-cut!"

I like to hold her in my lap and pet her. She feels like a kitten. But I never let her come into the house because she poops too much.

Nosey doesn't like squirrels in her yard. She puffs out her feathers to make her-

self look bigger ... cluck, cluck, cluck ... wings out ... bick, bick, bick ... and chases squirrels. But if a cat comes into the yard, Nosey hides in the bottlebrush tree.

One day, it was time for the South Bay Writers meeting. Nosey was napping in her tree.

"Hey, Nosey, I'm going out," I said. "Keep those squirrels out of here." She didn't answer but I knew she heard me.

A little later, a strange man snuck into Nosey's yard. He pried open the patio door and went into the house with a big bag.

Nosey came down from the tree and cocked her head to one side, then the other. She followed the man into the house. He was putting shiny things into his big bag!

Nosey fluttered over his head, like a silver blur, and laid an egg mid-air. "CAH-DAH-CUT!"

"Help! I'm under attack!" The man slapped the egg and smashed it. Egg white ran down his forehead into his eyes and egg yolk stuck to his fingers.

"Help! I'm bleeding! The house is haunted!" He ran out the back door.

Nosey made herself comfortable on top of the refrigerator. She preened her feathers and took a nap.

Then I came home.

"Nosey, what are you doing up there? You know you can't come in the house!"

"Cah-cah-cah," she said, but she didn't sound sorry. Then she told me about the strange man.

"You mean, this bag?"

I looked in the bag — my gold necklace!

"Nosey, you're a Hero! Come here!"

I held her and stroked her feathers. — *WT*

Duke and the Pinball Machine

Continued from Page 9

"And then," he said, his voice rising, "and then, Ah killed a man. Ah, a man of the cloth, with these two hands, killed a man." As if to add credence to his story, he rolled his palms down, then back up again.

A flush of heat washed over me, my mouth went dry, the hair on the back of my neck stood up, and my balls retreated. Oh, shit, I thought. Demons, why couldn't you have left me alone just this once. I didn't say anything.

"Ah, a man trained to preach a gospel of brotherly love," Duke lamented. "Ralph, do you know what the Bible means when it speaks of brotherly love between men?"

"I think so," I said.

"Ralph, yuh've done me good, talkin' to me tonight." Duke fixed me with a look of kindness and sincerity. "Would yuh know what Ah meant if Ah said Ah loved yuh?"

Bong. The lights lit up. I looked in the mirror and saw that Duke and I were the only patrons at the bar. Why in hell am I so god-dam slow to pick these things up? I'd know exactly what you meant, I thought. "I'd know exactly what you meant," I said.

"Good," Duke said, having thus wound up his pitch. "Ralph, there's a place Ah know. Will yuh go there with me?"

"No," I said, hoping that my gulp wasn't audible.

Duke slid backward off his stool and slammed one intimidating fist down on the bar. "Then Ah fight alone, and Ah die alone," he declared.

"Duke," I said, as firmly as possible, despite feeling like I was quivering from head to toe. "I don't know how you're going to fight and die, but you're leaving here without me."

After a pause that seemed to last minutes, Duke turned and strode out the door. I sat and nursed my beer and mentally kicked myself in the ass for having parked behind the building. I decided to run a few more balls through the broken pinball machine. Better that, I thought, than to step out the door right into Duke's ever-lovin' arms.

I turned and slid off my stool and was about halfway to the machine when the door exploded open and Duke came whirling into the room. "Where am Ah? Where am Ah?" he shouted, looking directly at me. I froze as if rooted to the floor.

Screwing up the last dregs of my courage, I said, "You're standing in the middle of Ruthie's Lucky Inn at the corner of Twenty-Fourth and William."

"Oh. Oh," he said, looking more confused than contentious. "The lights were so bright outside Ah thought Ah was downtown. Are yuh sure yuh won't go with me, Ralph?"

"Yes, I'm sure, Duke," I said.

He turned and went out the door and I continued on to the pinball machine. After a couple of balls with my hands shaking so badly I couldn't coordinate the flippers, I went back to the bar for a refill. The bartender raised his chin toward the door. "Qué chico," he said, handing me a paper bag with a six-pack in it. "Maricón. Why pay for it? Have one of these."

"What the hell," I said, "all anybody has to do is play for fifteen minutes and they'll beat my score."

"Nah," the bartender said, "I'm going to pull the plug and put an 'Out of Order' sign on it. You've earned it."

My internal demons, I realized, had beat as rapid a retreat as my balls at the news that Duke was a killer. I took the six-pack and left. —WT

Ghostland

Continued from Page 5

Alcohol? They never touch the stuff. Sex ... my guess is that they either lost interest or don't know what it is.

But they hold my interest—all the time. Once I discovered one doing push-ups on a pig's head. Julius had just made his daily visit to his office building in Los Gatos when I saw the pig. I'd squatted real low to the ground, flattening myself so I was like a pancake. No way could they see me. Watched the ghost come flying out of one of the pig's nostrils. Did a quick ghost-loop around the pig, and then landed on top of his baldhead. That pig knew something. Soon as that ghost started his pushups, the pig began bobbing his head, up and down, like he was bobbing for apples.

You'd think they'd take a break from all of their ghostly duties, right! No can do, my friends. Even in the harshest of winters or the heat from the sun, they always have a mission, something to do. There was a time back in 1976 when San Jose got over three inches. It was below freezing, snow abounding, branches limp from the accumulation, and one of the elder ghosts had frozen. Stiff as a pitchfork, and seriously white. Guess the rest didn't give a care, or if they did I couldn't tell.

Now I got something to tell you, and you have to swear to the all mighty ghost above you won't let a snippet of this out. Not to

anyone. You know how I've been *voyeur*ing all around, and trying my best to become one of them? All right, well truth is I am a complete failure. Worse than you would have ever thought me to be. It hurts me so to have to tell you this, no one else knows. Now you got to promise. Do you give me your word you won't tell? Here goes: I am a ghost too; I was dropped off over Hope Street with all the others, only they wouldn't let me go to their School of Ghosts. Said I didn't have the right credentials, that I knew too much. And when I asked them exactly what I knew too much of, they flew off.

And I never learned how, you know, to fly. Can you teach me how to fly?? —WT



Poetry Page



Tickling the Ivories
Painting and Photo by Karen Hartley

Tricks and Treats: S J Chamber Orchestra Halloween Concert

by Steve Wetlesen, Poetic Artist

By permission and with approval in writing from the San Jose Chamber Orchestra's own Maestra, Ms. Barbara Day Turner, here is my haiku cycle commissioned for the San Jose Chamber Orchestra's Halloween Concert held Sunday evening, October 30, 2016.

Tricks and Treats: A Chain of Haiku Sketches

Pirates with angels.
Children in garish colors.
Candies sweeten hearts.

Strive for the worst taste -
tackiest contest costumes!
Losers have more fun!

Do vampires prowl
predawn realms that never sleep?
Are fairy tales real?

Red tinge crescents set
on stark empty horizons.
Mysterious joy.

Some October moons
rise as warm pumpkin lanterns.
Do deep eyes spot them?

Verse past their own graves.
Japanese near end of life
left final haiku.

Yet what do dead souls
think of tonight's performance?
Eternal viewpoint.

– Stephen C. Wetlesen



Tickling the Ivories

I walked into the room
that day

It was my lunch hour
and I couldn't wait
to sit down
read and eat

A few pages in
I heard the sound
I looked around to find
where it came from
I turned my ears to
the melody

In the adjacent room
he was playing
the piano

The music was lovely
so I got up to see

He must've been a
student yet his
fingers touched the keys
with such an angelic peace
he was truly gifted

I stood in rapt attention
hearing every note he played
the ivory keys obeyed
his touch
his face showed how much
he loved it

He tickled the ivories for
many minutes while
I stood and listened

Returning to the office
my mind was full
with the absolute beauty
of what I'd heard that day

Many weeks later I went to
my paints and canvas
wanting to create a
piece that would always
remind me of the gift
I'd received
that day

I discarded any
principles
and swished the paint
onto the canvas
in whirls and swirls

white and black
for the keys
and gold for the
joy in what that
experience had
meant for me

Now when I look at
that painting
I always remember
that wonderful day
when I heard
him play

He tickled the ivories in
a way like no one
I'd ever heard before
and the melody
he played
stayed with me
for a long, long
time

– Karen Hartley

Shelf Life – Maddie McEwen



Paula Poet skipped to test the
timing of her terse verse.

A Worthy Invitation: Submit to the CWC Literary Review

by David LaRoche

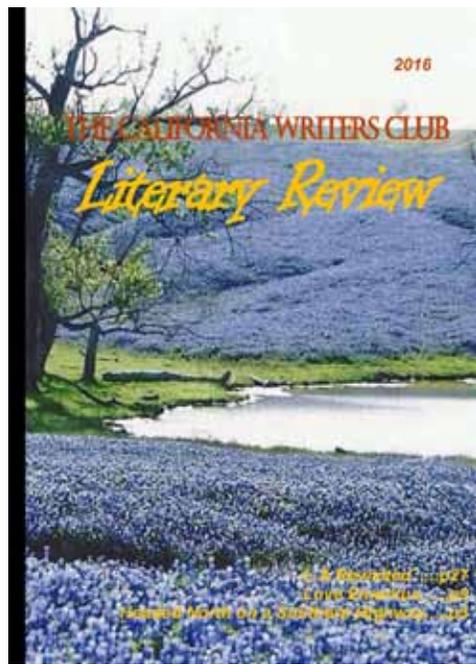
I am a writer. You are one, too. Writers are creators. People who create want others to benefit in some way. That's the thing that drives them. We want people to benefit from reading what we write, to become more informed, entertained, uplifted, and to enjoy in some way. We want to be published. It's the thing that drives us.

The *CWC Literary Review* is such a publishing vehicle. It transports our stories to the eyes of at least 4000 readers — our members, their significant (or insignificant) others, all the eyes in the household. That appeals to me. It's drive fulfillment.

Most writers know others in the business — editors, agents and publishers. We call those relationships a network. We use the network to pass along news. The *CWC Literary Review* is news, and gets passed along — the stories and writers included. That, too, is appealing

All members of the CWC are invited to submit their work — two pieces, ten bucks. The work sees a selection board, and the good stuff gets in. We have no particular theme, most content is acceptable. We do look at the technical stuff. When assessing fiction and memoir, we chew over story and character development, realism, pacing, grammar, and reader engagement. Minor errors can be fixed. With essay we add information, persuasion, and factual interrelationships. And for poetry we want to be moved with an emotional experience: poignancy, humor, grief, sadness, disgust — maybe less of the latter.

Writing, they say, is easy. Good writing is a challenge to imagination, memory and skill. Being published is likely the most challenging of all. In the *CWC Literary Review* the odds are better — better than *Glimmer Train* or the *Perfume River Poetry Review* if only due to the numbers. Well, yours are better; mine, a conflict of interest.



So, what's this about? I, personally, invite you to submit your stories, essays, and poetry to the *California Writers Club Literary Review*. We will grow the *Review* in size and prestige, and later into the commercial market. It is good for you to be published in the *Review*, in the forefront of all that success. It is good as a CWC member to be offered this unusual opportunity. It is also good for the Club as a whole — as its credibility grows, so does it membership. It's a win-win-win, a third more than usual.

Take a look at www.calwriters.org and follow the directions to our submission window and guidelines. Cough up the ten, and begin your journey to fame.

Thanks for reading along, and good luck with the selection board.

Dave LaRoche, Editor

California Writers Club Literary Review

ARTICLE

Where do the commas go?

by Marjorie Johnson

Link sent by Dick Amyx:

<http://qz.com/773738/how-non-english-speakers-are-taught-this-crazy-english-grammar-rule-you-know-but-youve-never-heard-of/>

Many non-native speakers struggle with English grammar. And no wonder; its idiosyncrasies can turn into traps even for the most confident users. But worse, some of the most binding rules in English are things that native speakers know and use but are not written into grammar books or style guides — rules they don't know they know, even though they use them every day.

On September 20, 2016, the BBC's Matthew Anderson pointed out on Twitter a "rule" about the order in which adjectives must be put in front of a noun. Judging by the number of retweets, this came as a complete surprise to many people who thought they knew all about English.

Anderson gave a quote from *The Elements of Eloquence: How to Turn the Perfect English Phrase*, by Mark Forsyth:

"Adjectives in English absolutely have to be in this order: opinion, size, age, shape, color, origin, material, purpose Noun. So you can have a lovely little old rectangular green French silver whittling knife. But if you mess with that word order in the slightest you'll sound like a maniac."

It's an odd thing that every English speaker uses that list, but almost none of us could write it out. And as size comes before color, green great dragons can't exist. — WT

Contests and Markets

by Carolyn Donnell



Carolyn Donnell
Contributing Editor

I have collected several contests for you from those that have passed by my desk recently.

17th Annual Writer's Digest Short Short Story Competition. You have until November 15 for your chance to win \$3000 and publication in *Writer's Digest*. See <http://www.writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions/short-short-story-competition>

Masters Review Fall Fiction Contest.

Win \$2000 and publication. Deadline: November 15. Emerging writers only. (Self-published writers and writers with story collections and novels with a small circulation are welcome to submit.) \$20 entry fee. <https://mastersreview.com/fall-fiction-contest-2000-publication/>

The Writer magazine's contest, "Our Darkest Hours." Write a 2,000-word fictional short story using any nuance, definition, or understanding of the word "dark." Deadline: 11/15/16. Grand prize: \$1,000 and publication in the magazine. Second: \$500, third: \$250. Submit at <https://writermag.submittable.com/submit/66220>. See other contests at <http://www.writermag.com/writing-resources/contests/>

WOW! (Women on Writing) FALL 2016 Flash Fiction Contest.

Deadline: November 30. WOW! hosts writing quarterly. Maximum words: 750; minimum: 250. (The title is not part of your word count.) Open prompt: write about anything; open to any style and genre. <http://wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php>

See **other ongoing lists** at:

<http://www.pw.org/grants>

<http://www.writermag.com/writing-resources/contests/>

<http://thewritelife.com/27-free-writing-contests/>

<https://www.writingclasses.com/contests>

<https://winningwriters.com/the-best-free-literary-contests>

Have fun, and let us know if you score. – WT

NaNoWriMo Events November, 2016

FIRST Minute Kick-off

When: Monday, October 31, 11:00pm – Tuesday, November 1, 12:30am

Where: IHOP, 4200 Great America Pkwy, Santa Clara, CA 95054,

Description: We gather for some warm-up activities and snacks, then wait for the clock to strike midnight, then begin WRITING.

Support groups continue at San Jose and Santa Clara sites through at least the end of the year on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

San Jose drop-in

When: Tuesdays, 9:00am – 11:30am
Begin: Tuesday, November 1

Where: Barnes & Noble, 5353 Almaden Expy, San Jose

Description: Regulars pull tables together on right side; no power outlets.

Santa Clara drop-in

When: Thursdays 11:30am – 2:30pm

Where: Chromatic Coffee, 5237 Stevens Creek Blvd, Santa Clara

Description: Sharing the large table near the back.

Organizing a critique group

by Marjorie Johnson

Organizing a critique group isn't easy, but it's doable.

While you are writing a whole month with NaNoWriMo, take the opportunity to meet some people. Come December, you will have a common problem: editing and taming those rough 50,000 words.

Get acquainted over coffee with two or three people. See if they'd like to try meeting to discuss mutual works in progress, a chapter at a time. Then agree to a time and a place and discuss the ground rules.

As writers, we tend to be protective of our work and to be sensitive about what we write. The idea of a group of people finding fault with our novel, short story, or memoir is scary. But when we slave over a piece, we often lose perspective. Reading our pieces aloud to someone else is the one best thing we can do toward editing it. The readers' feedback should help authors find direction and check if their pieces are communicating with readers.

As an example, one critique group of four people met every other week at 6 p.m. Each member hosted a meeting on a

tating schedule with a potluck light meal. They got down to business at 7:00 and tried to finish by 9:00.

Because of time constraints, they limited the piece to be presented to 2,500 words, emailed to the others a week in advance. Each member printed the piece, read it thoroughly, and redlined any grammar, punctuation, or sentence structure corrections, which were **not gone over** at the meeting. They wrote comments and suggestions on the back of the last page and gave the redlined copy to the author **after the discussion**. When each author finished reading his/her piece aloud, each member in turn offered comments that focused on plot, character development, believability, emotional impact, and so on.

Since the goal of the group is to encourage the author and help improve his or her skills, **negative comments must be presented in a positive manner**.

Compatibility is one of the most important components of a critique group. Each member must be sincere, open minded, and receptive. Authors who read **must not comment or defend** their work during the discussion; a simple "thank you" will suffice, and the author can choose which comments "work" for his manuscript later.

Try it—you'll like it. – WT

News from California Writers Club

CWC Central Board

by Bill Baldwin

The Central Board met on July 24, 2016. SBW gave our proxy to Evelyn LaTorre of the Fremont Branch.

This past year, with David George as President of California Writers Club, we created two new branches, Coastal Dunes and North State, and in November we will charter another new branch, San Joaquin Valley.

The new CWC President is Joyce Krieg of the Central Coast Branch. VP is Donna McCrohan-Rosenthal; Secretary, Elizabeth Tuck; Executive Member-at-Large, Jeanette Fratto.

Joyce Krieg's vision for the coming year is to clarify and improve the relationship between the Central Board and the local branches; move forward with the idea of a CWC Scholarship; make greater use of social media; and clarify Jack London's role in the founding of the California Writers Club.

The next meeting of the Central Board will be on January 29, 2017, location to be determined (San Jose, San Francisco, or Oakland). – WT

Shelf Life –Maddie McEwen



Angela Agent read the query but stopped at "Dear Sirs."

Guess what? Agents come to writers' conferences.

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, Redwood Yacht Harbor: check website <http://cwc-peninsula.org/>

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

Conferences

Poets & Writers LIVE

San Francisco, January 14 – 15, 2017

Join Poets & Writers at the San Francisco Art Institute (in Russian Hill near Fisherman's Wharf) for two days of sound advice, practical information, and inspiration. P&W has put together a celebration of creativity that includes readings, lectures, multimedia presentations, panel discussions, and writing workshops.

Presenters include US Poet Laureate Juan Felipe Herrera; best-selling novelist and author of *Purity*, Jonathan Franzen; author of *The Orchid Thief*, Susan Orlean; acclaimed poet Kay Ryan; writer and activist Ishmael Reed; and renowned poet Jane Hirshfield. Publishing professionals include editors Ethan Nosowsky, Jordan Bass, Steve Wasserman, and Rusty Morrison; and agents Danielle Svetcov, Anna Ghosh, and Jennifer March Soloway.

Don't miss it!! Go to Poets & Writers' website www.pw.org/live – WT

San Francisco Writers Conference

Mark Hopkins Hotel, San Francisco, February 16 – 19, 2017

www.SFWriters.org

This is our biggest local conference--your chance to meet an agent and take in-depth classes of interest to writers. Free events, including Jon Agee Children's books session. 100+ presenters--authors, editors, publishers & literary agents from New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco Bay Area.

2017 San Francisco Writing Contest is NOW accepting entries.

Yes, it's expensive, but you get what you pay for. Substantial early discounts and special room rates. Attend with a friend and split cost of hotel room.

For event/class details and online registration, contest rules, and subscription to SFWC Newsletter, go to www.SFWriters.org today. – WT

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 6:30P SBW Board Meeting, Hickory Pit, Pruneyard	2	3	4 7:30P Open mic Barnes&Noble Almaden, San Jose	5
6	7 2P Valley Writers	8 Election Day	9	10	11	12
13 10A Our Voices	14 2P Valley Writers 6:00P SBW Dinner Harry's Hofbrau	15 Deadline <i>WritersTalk</i>	16 7:30P Open mic SF Peninsula, Reach and Teach, San Mateo	17	18 7:30P Open mic Willow Glen Library, 1157 Minnesota Ave	19
20	21 2P Valley Writers	22	23	24	25	26
27 10A Our Voices	28 2P Valley Writers	29	30	November 2016		
Future Flashes						
Monday, December 8 Holiday Party, TBA						

Ongoing Events

You send it. We calendar it.

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 Nov. 1: 6:30 PM dinner; Board meeting 7 - 9 PM, Hickory Pit, 980 East Campbell Ave., Campbell, across from the Pruneyard.

Open Mics

South Bay Writers Open Mic: Read from your own work, from your favorite authors, or just come to listen, first and third Friday evenings. 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. **Note:** TalkBooks needs a leader.

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

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
November Regular Meeting
6 PM, Monday, November 14

Harry's Hofbrau
390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose

NaNoWriMo
Write a Novel in a Month
Write-A-Palooza

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.