



WRITERSTALK

Volume 22
Number 5
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Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

MAY SPEAKER

Tanya Egan Gibson

Dialogue:

It's what and how they say it

by *Dave LaRoche*

"Who carries the story?" I ask. "Characters," I hear from the crowd. "How do we know these characters?" I ask, digging in and wanting to understand. "Action, description, and dialogue," comes from the crowd. Well, they seem to be certain, sound credible. I'm inclined to believe them.

"And of those three," I ask, feeling I'm getting somewhere, "Which is the most revealing?" "We know the characters from what they say," comes from the crowd. But when I yell back the old cliché, "Actions speak louder than words," a woman steps up, a woman of southern roots it turns out, and she thumps me on the side of my head with a heavy fat finger.

"In real life or film," she says, "you maybe is right, but this story you got ain't no movie and try as you might, it ain't no real life either. In a book, young man, it's dialogue reveals the character, and the character carries the story. Caint sh'al git that through yer puddin'ee head? It's sho-nuff about what the character sez and some about how he sez it. Ya' see, young man, the way ya' talk is revealin'—yo' dialect, yo' accent, and yo' timbre. You say sumpin ta me, I'll know who you is and about where you comes from."

Well, I liked the "young man" part, and the rest I'm going to find out. I'm attending a meeting of the South Bay Writers this May 12, to listen to an expert. Tanya Egan Gibson, who knows about all there is to know about characters speaking, will be there. "Good dialogue brings your characters to life. Bad dialogue turns them into zombies," she says.



Tanya Egan Gibson

Gibson is the author of the novel, *How To Buy a Love of Reading* (Dutton, 2009), as well as a freelance editor and writing teacher. Her most recent article for *Writer's Digest*, "Fiction in Focus: Learn to Use the Lens of POV to Frame Stronger Scenes," appeared in the January issue. Her articles have also appeared in *Parents Magazine* and *The Writer*. Her short fiction for young adults has appeared in *Cicada* and in literary magazines such as *Carve*, where one of her stories was nominated for a Pushcart Prize. She is currently at work on her second novel, *These Hidden Seas*. —WT

APRIL SPEAKER RECAP

Build a story
Spare no suspense

by *Colin Seymour*

Margaret Lucke didn't need PowerPoint or even a whiteboard to make us visualize the outline for her discourse on suspense and conflict for the SBW dinner meeting at Harry's Hofbrau on April 14.



Margaret Lucke

Lucke, who teaches fiction through the UC-Berkeley extension program and writes short stories and mystery novels, has a way of enumerating the categories she describes in her presentation so that her listeners

can follow every step. These include her four elements of suspense, four categories of conflict, and nuggets like "First you make them care. Then you make them wait."

So how do we create suspense? "Two avenues. One is how you structure the story. The other is how you direct the reader's experience."

It may have seemed by-the-numbers, but it turns out Lucke was sort of winging it. She had meant to hand out a 25-item guide to "The Art of Creating Suspense: How to Keep Readers Turning the Pages," but she forgot. (The handout will be available at our May 12 dinner meeting.)

Nevertheless, she got our attention and held it by pointing out that suspense is an element of all fiction, not just

Continued on Page 8

Coming Saturday, May 31: **Workshop on Story with Charlotte Cook**
Ways to Make All That Craft Work For You

Announcement on Page 7

President's Palaver

by Colin Seymour
President, South Bay Writers

When I was 25, writers club would have been big asset



If I'd drafted my memoir *Stereo Types* in my early twenties instead of my late 30s, it could have reverberated at just the right time. And if I'd been in a club like South Bay Writers, maybe it would have.

Judging by the average age of those finally getting around to their memoirs these days, I'm not the only one who got in late. And "late" is not usually synonymous with "great."

As I point out often, we're a noticeably senior bunch. I'm seen as a source of youthful enthusiasm—and I'm old enough to draw Social Security. We need to seem less senior-dominated, and we have frequently bemoaned our inability to attract a younger demographic.

So what a pleasant development this is: The club is challenged elsewhere in this issue of *WritersTalk*, by 17-year-old James Zheng, to create an environment that welcomes and includes young writers.

We frequently reassess our outreach to schools because several of us teach or have taught, but there hasn't been much interest in our overtures. It might be unbecoming of us to press the matter, but here we're merely being asked to be hospitable, and receptive, an area we're improving on all fronts in 2013-2014.

I'm not sold on high school-age students as, say, worthy members of your critique group, probably because my writing did not measure up when I was 17. But college-age writers and young professionals have a lot to offer us—think of the computer support!—and we have a lot to offer them. I only wish I'd had a resource like SBW in my youth as my writing chops began to come around.

As late as the early 1970s, people were astonished to hear that my brother and I lived with a poor black family as toddlers in the mid-1950s. It begged to be fleshed out, and I did write about it rather well in a college class. But I wanted greater mastery of my writing—which came in my thirties—before addressing the most important story I ever expected to tell. Thus, I let the story steep too long.

When I was in my early twenties, first a small-town sports editor and then a page designer at a medium-sized newspaper, I felt I was too busy to deal with creative writing. But if I'd been in a club like SBW, with people asking me what I'm writing, I'm sure the memoir about the Allens I would be writing "someday" would have provoked my mentors to provoke me.

In newspaper parlance, I got scooped. In 1979, comedian Steve Martin's first movie, *The Jerk*, opened with the line, "I was born a poor black child." Boy, did that hit home.

That's the deadline I failed to beat. *Roots* had already eroded some of the walls that had separated the races, making my story seem less bizarre than it had. *The Jerk* almost seemed like a ripoff of my story, but now my story became a ripoff of *The Jerk*.

Timing is everything, and James's letter signifies that the time is ripe for a youth movement in SBW.

We don't talk enough about mentoring among ourselves in SBW. Most of the members are bent more upon learning than teaching. Mentoring goes on more in critique groups than in general assembly. But it seems logical that younger members would inspire a greater culture of mentoring that would improve the club a lot.

It's possible that James feared we would see him as a nuisance. But we'd be foolish to see him as anything but a resource. —WT

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— o —
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We have a membership category that fits you. Dues are \$45 per year plus a one-time \$20 initiation fee. Contact the Membership Chair, Sally Milnor, or sign up online at southbaywriters.com.



WritersTalk

is the monthly newsletter of the South Bay Branch of the California Writers Club.

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Submissions

Members of the South Bay Writers Club are encouraged to submit their creative works for publication in *WritersTalk*. Please prepare your work as carefully as you would for an agent. All submissions will be copyedited to uphold our publication standards. The Managing Editor decides which submissions to publish.

Submission deadline is the 15th of the month. Suggested word limits are not absolute; query the editor. Shorter submissions are given preference. Electronic submissions should be text or attached MS Word file sent to newsletter@southbaywriters.com. Send graphics separately as jpg files.

Anything Goes—Almost (300 words)

News Items (400 words)

Letters to the Editor (300 words)

newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Creative Works

Short Fiction (1500 words)
Memoir (1200 words)
Poetry (300 words)
Essay (900 words)

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by Marjorie Bicknell Johnson
Managing Editor



Got words?

Does the title of this editorial evoke an image of a dictionary wearing a milk moustache? Those "Got milk?" commercials made someone rich, but the magic is in the graphics, not in the writing. "Got" is a workhorse verb with fifty-six definitions but no personality.

Mary got a new red dress, got a haircut, got the flu.

Bob got the job, got the money, got twenty years for embezzlement.

Harry got moving, got in on the ground floor, got to New York before noon.

The bullet got her in the leg, her tears got to me, somehow her secret got out.

She got up early, got information from Google, got ahead by sheer determination.

Got the idea?

However, too much "got" in writing leads to mental fog because got is so imprecise. And it doesn't help to replace "got" with "had" because has/had has thirty-eight definitions.

Many one-syllable verbs are as imprecise as got and every bit as ubiquitous. Take, for example, "took," taking up eighteen and a half column inches in my unabridged dictionary, and "set," setting on seventeen and a half inches, while "got" has got a paltry fifteen. However, the champion seems to be "run," running through more than three full columns — thirty-three inches with one hundred seventy-one definitions.

Got the lesson? Writers who got to the root of the problem have stronger stories because they replaced some of those "gots" with more precise and colorful verbs.

When you've got the words, send them here, newsletter@southbaywriters.com. If they're published, your words are automatically entered in the *WritersTalk* Challenge Contest. And speaking of contests, check out our Markets and Contests page. Now you've got to keep on writing.

Now that it's time to renew your membership in SBW for 2013/14, maybe I should tell you what I got out of it. I joined in 2002, shortly after signing up for a creative writing class with Edie Matthews. I had lots of experience contributing to academic mathematics journals, but I wanted to write something for fun. SBW has enabled me to become the proud author of two novels by offering opportunities to meet other writers and attend lectures and workshops on the craft of writing. Also, I have made friends among the writers, valuable contacts for support and comradery. The short explanation is, I got fun. And you will, too. — WT

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View from the Board

by S. Halloran

Eight of us – President Colin Seymour, Vice-President Dave LaRoche, Secretary Sylvia Halloran, Newsletter Editor Marjorie Johnson, Membership Chair Sally Milnor, Web Presence Chair Pratibha Kelapure, and Members-at-Large Nader Khaghani and Sherrie Johnson – met in Santa Clara on March 5, 2014. We were joined by James Zheng, who shared his perspective as a new student member of the branch.

We handled the routine business of the club and enjoyed discussing the ideas that James brought to the table. We look forward to hearing future speakers at meetings and workshops.

Please note that we have increased the number of funded participants to the Leadership conference May 3. We would love to send *you* to enjoy a lovely breakfast and lunch with the brightest and best of executives in the club, from all the Northern California branches. Here's your **opportunity** – learn to be a Club officer. If you'd like to join with our attendees, please speak to Dave LaRoche.

- **Moved:** (LaRoche/M.Johnson) to accept March minutes. Passed, unanimous.
- **Moved:** (M. Johnson/LaRoche) to accept officers' reports. Passed, unanimous.
- **Moved:** (S. Johnson/Milnor) to accept committee reports. Passed, unanimous.
- **Moved:** (M. Johnson/LaRoche) to increase number of funded participants for leadership Conference from six to eight. Passed, unanimous.

Elections are coming up! Now's the time to start considering your future service on the board. –WT

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

South Bay Writers Needs More Student Representation

by James Zheng,

Student, St. Lawrence Academy

Recently, I found the South Bay Writers Club on the Internet as I was looking for a writers group that would help me improve my writings and meet new people. I was pleased to find that your group offers a student membership of \$20 a year. Happily, I joined and paid my dues using my parents' credit card.

Then, I looked for events. After going through all the workshops, blogs, photo galleries, and the leadership team, I realize there is no youth representation anywhere on the site. This got me thinking about the possibility of inviting students, especially high school students, to sit on the Executive Committee to represent the teen voice and express their needs. Another idea is to start a young writers group with adult mentors from the branch, furthering the cultivation of student writers. The South Bay Branch can become an incubator for students and serve as a model to the other branches in California.

The South Bay has long been at the forefront of technology. Many of our local students are high achievers, advanced in math and science, with strong influences from their parents who are successful lab scientists or engineers. However, I know that some of my classmates cannot write – or cannot write well. We have fallen behind as far as writing goes. We can do better. There are many discussions in California about what we can do to encourage more women to enter the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) fields in Silicon Valley. Similarly, we need to start discussions about why writing is an essential part of the humanities. Perhaps we need to pay more attention to the creative work of playwrights, artists, musicians, and designers, and how humanities and science can inform and enhance each other.

Concerted efforts should be made to increase literacy across all disciplines and among all age groups. It is time to involve a broader audience.

JamesZheng5555@gmail.com –WT

Members' News

by Marjorie Johnson

We applaud your successes – published works, talks given, book signings – any small or large triumphs related to writing. To be included in this column, please send a short paragraph to newsletter@southbaywriters.com or fill out a form at a dinner meeting.

Nina Amir's book, *The Author Training Manual*, Writer's Digest Books, has just appeared on Amazon. Its secondary title, *Develop Marketable Ideas, Craft Books That Sell, Become the Author Publishers Want, and Self-Publish Effectively*, tells it all. Nina's email is nina@ninaamir.com.

Bill Baldwin will read from his novel at "Readings on Sacred Space," First Unitarian Church of San Jose, on May 9 at 7:30 PM. You're welcome to attend.

Nancy Curtemann, Marjorie Johnson, and Jana McBurney-Lin will discuss their novels on May 5, 7:00 PM, at the AAUW Fremont Branch "Meet the Authors" event, Fremont Main Library. If you have time, pop on by.

M. J. Hahn, California Private Investigator, offered to answer questions regarding crime, sex crimes, predators, private investigators, or protection bodyguards. You can contact him at mirror3314@mypacks.net.

Audry Lynch's children's book, *Ruben's Tales of the Amazon*, won an honorable mention in the Los Angeles Book Festival. She received her award and gave a brief speech at the Awards Ceremony on Saturday, March 22 at the historic Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel.

Founding member **Tom Mach** writes from Kansas that he is Book Review Editor for the *Kaw Valley Senior Monthly*. You can contact him at tom.mach@yahoo.com and read his ad on page 18.

Tom Marlow's novel, *A Mexican Tale*, Lulu Publishing, arrived just in time for the April SBW meeting.

On Sunday, April 13th, at the San Jose Women's Club, **Edie Matthews** acted as Mistress of Ceremonies for an "Afternoon of Chamber Music," co-sponsored by the National League of American Pen Women.

Steve Wetlesen continues to have success in fulfilling commissions for his poetic art. –WT

It's No Secret: Via election, Club's direction depends upon you

by Dave LaRoche

It's no secret but it's often ignored—our club doesn't run by itself. It's not even an efficient machine in that more needs to go in than comes out. Clubs are like that, so many voices, so little administrative experience.



Dave LaRoche
SBW VP

But here's the thing: those of us who attend the stuff that comes out really like it, and we re-up as members year after year. That's because we use what we learn to our advantage, while enjoying the camaraderie. It's a lift to our writer's prestige to say we belong to the California Writers Club.

Now to the short strokes. This branch could fold tomorrow, and the CWC would skip a breath and go on. We, on the other hand, would lose a great deal. We know the advantages: the lessons, new and refreshing, the networking with peers and superiors, the writing and publishing currency that comes in the front door.

This branch and its activities will stop dead if we do nothing but eat, applaud, and go home. It doesn't run on EPG. We must get involved for the club to continue. It is a vital, exciting, and rewarding club that annually needs a fill-up of renewed energy, fresh ideas, and modified goals, and it is we who must bring them. We must take an office this election, step up to the responsibility, and bring what we know and the energy we have to the club.

Six offices will be on the ballot. You are needed for one. Select the position that best fits your interest and give me your name. I will act as the Election Administrator, collect your names, and provide a space in *WritersTalk* should you want to publish a statement. The following offices will be vacated. We must fill them.

President: provides leadership and vision, manages the team. Our President presides over board meetings, sets the agenda, and is our face to the world at our meetings and other events. He/she accesses the board for advice, urges and discovers consensus through collaborative processes, and executes direction by assigning tasks. The President gets in on the action by meeting and networking with interesting people who are making their mark in the writing or publishing world.

Vice President: plans our programs. He/she selects and recruits meeting speakers and workshop presenters, collaborates with the publicity chair in preparing promotions, and stands in for the President if necessary. The Vice President is rewarded with professional acquaintance with influential people in our local writing world.

Secretary: prepares the official minutes of meetings.

Treasurer: manages the financial operations of the branch. Collects, maintains, and disburses funds. Accounts for cash flow. Reports to our board monthly and the State on a quarterly basis.

Member-at-Large (two seats available): has no specific portfolio. Represents opinions and insights from members of the branch, such that the Board is more acutely aware of members' sentiments and ideas.

All Officers and Chairs: Work and play as a team. No single officer or chair acts without board consensus. The "running" of the club is a collaborative effort guided by rules and previous experience—occasionally challenging, often fun, always rewarding.

Use and build your skills. Meet people who can help you pursue your writing goals. Enjoy satisfaction in helping the Club while enhancing your professional life. The Club is a forgiving lot; should you make a mistake as you progress in a role, little harm done. Your ideas are welcome; you take away fulfillment and pride.

Let's have your names and the office or offices you seek: dalaroche@comcast.net. I'll talk to you about offices, answer your questions, and encourage you on. —WT

New Members

by Sally A. Milnor



Sally Milnor

I am happy to introduce our Club's two newest members.

Brenna Silbory found us online, and she writes fiction and poetry. Her blog at www.flourishingedge.com is

a reflection of the intersection of human culture and ecology in San Jose. From her blog: "A lifelong Californian, Brenna Silbory grew up in the Sierra Nevada foothills north of Sacramento, where as a kid, she spent a lot of time foraging for wild blackberries and climbing trees. Educated exclusively in California public schools, she moved to the Bay Area in 2001. Since then, she's worked as an attorney, government performance auditor, and nonprofit consultant. In 2012, she hiked the exquisite John Muir Trail from Yosemite to Mt. Whitney. Her spouse is a professional geek, and their dogs are a handful. She explores, scuba dives, has awkward social encounters, loves jazz, manages a chronic health condition, gardens poorly, volunteers, and putters around on her bicycle from her home in San Jose. Her current project is a novel set in a future California."

James Zheng is a student member who also found us online. As an Asian-American citizen living in the San Francisco Bay Area, James has always been interested in the relationships between different types of people. A peace activist, he has developed a passion for history and is fascinated with how different groups of people have interacted with each other. From Mongolian control of the Islamic world to the Agricultural Revolution, and the thought of cultural and social development through communication and collaboration, history has always been an inspiration for James. He hopes one day to become a politician in the United Nations and to help citizens in the world to resolve conflicts peacefully.

To our new Members: We wish you each a warm welcome and hope your membership brings you inspiration and enjoyment. **And to All of Our South Bay Writers:** We appreciate your continuing presence and support, and we hope to see you at our May 12 meeting at Harry's! —WT



WORKSHOP RECAP

Grow great characters, Reap great stories

by Marjorie Johnson

Martha Engber grows characters from the ground up and builds writing workshops to order. She says great characters—consistent, believable, and admirable—are the most important feature of any book.

On March 30, Martha presented her workshop “In-Depth Character and Plot Development” to South Bay Writers. She began by asking, “What do you want to get out of this workshop?”



Martha Engber

She listed our rapid-fire responses as bullet points on her white board:

- Multi-POV stories
 - Character authenticity
 - True story—fictionalized
 - Develop each character
 - Character “arc” (how character changes)
 - First impression of your character
 - Keep character real in fantasy
- and added, from discussion, “Firsts,” “Meaning of memoir is ME,” and “Avoid preaching.”

First things, first: make your characters three-dimensional. You can’t write a great story without developing a great character, and first impressions matter. To make your characters live, you must know what makes them tick—every character, not just one. You must know “What defines your character?” and use your main character’s “defining detail” in the first chapter and refer to it thereafter.

Martha gave dynamic explanations and examples related to each of our concerns. When she summed up, she checked off items listed on the board—she had covered every one!

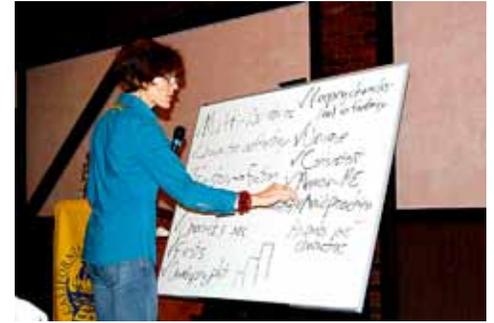
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Every character needs a defining detail, something that defines him.

—Martha Engber

Martha grows characters

Continued from left column



Martha Engber sums up

Martha showed such energy and enthusiasm throughout the entire six hours that we left fired up and ready to tackle manuscripts in our drawers of uncompleted projects. Personally, she gave me insight into what is wrong with my first chapter.

If you missed Martha’s workshop, you can peruse her book, *Growing Great Characters From the Ground Up*, which, unlike some writing books, is written in a clear and understandable style without relying upon “buzz words” learned while obtaining the MFA in writing. Her book is filled with “good stuff”—the nuts and bolts of how to develop complex and memorable characters.

However, if you missed the workshop, you missed Martha. She made the ideas in her book come alive. Contact Martha at Martha@Engber.com and read her blog posts at marthaengber.blogspot.com. —WT

Photos this page by Carolyn Donnell



Martha signs books

South Bay Writers
May Writers Workshop

May 31, 2014, Saturday

Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose

8:30 am (registration) to 4:00 pm (close)
Continental Breakfast & Lunch



Author Charlotte Cook

8 Ways to Make All That Craft Work For You

A (Former) Publisher Finds the Magic In Your Writing



Charlotte Cook

Early Bird Price (by 5.17)		Sleepy Bird Price (after 5.17)		Walk-Ins At Door	
CWC member	\$45	CWC member	\$57	CWC Member	\$63
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**Spend the Day
With Charlotte Cook**

by Dave LaRoche

Throughout this year and before, we have studied craft. We've heard, and used, techniques and maxims that better draw out character, develop scenes, add tension and conflict, deal with point of view, grammar, and more. We've filled our toolbox and now we need to build. We need to tell a story.

We want our story to begin strong and compel a continuing read; to take our reader into a world of interest and leave them a lasting memory – a truth, an entertainment, a different perspective. And, as writers, we want to win. We want recognition and we want to know we've done our best on the page.



*"Structure is like gravity . . ." – Charlotte Cook
– Photo by Carolyn Donnell*

With Charlotte Cook, we will master the art of story – how to weave the elements of craft into a demanding experience for readers. She tells us her mantra is "Compelling Story, Engaging Characters, Evocative World."

We will study arc and how to structure it, scenes dedicated to moving plot, consistent if unexpected epiphany, and that satisfying climax. These essential rudiments of story not only hold our readers under the lamp but are fun and exciting to write.

This workshop is a culminating event, the natural end to our year of craft with a teacher/editor/writer of renown. We've seen her credentials: MFA Creative Writing from Saint Mary's College; BA English Literature from UC Berkeley; further studies with Pam Houston, Lynn Freed, Jervey Tervalon, and Christopher Tilghman; Owner/Acquisition Editor, Komenar Publishing; and a lifetime of teaching and coaching. We've met Charlotte before with her presentation on structure. She's back by popular demand.

So mark your calendar and sign up. Join me and our peers on May 31st for this exciting and fruitful day. Invest in your writing career. – WT

**Compelling Story
Engaging Characters
Evocative World**

Spare no suspense

Continued from Page 1

mysteries, and much non-fiction. "Suspense is the quality that keeps the reader turning the pages."

And that, above all, is what a writer wants—and what a reader wants.

"The author's obligation is to keep you interested," Lucke said. "The reason you keep reading is you've connected with the characters. You care about them and you're concerned about them."

One takeaway for me was The Major Dramatic Question (one that drives the plot). Lucke said examples were whether Scrooge will prove human or Cinderella will escape her awful family.

Lucke insists the major dramatic question of *Gone With the Wind* is whether Scarlett will end up with Ashley Wilkes or Rhett Butler. "That's what that story was about.

Never mind all that Civil War stuff."

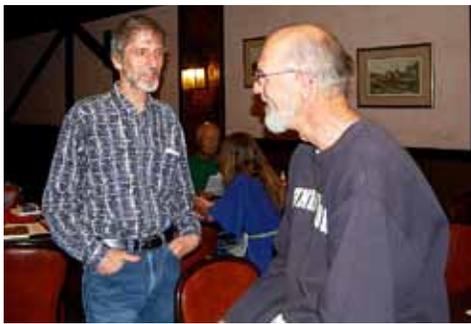
These are just a few of the astute things Lucke said to us as she presented a recipe for which the ingredients are up to us—preferably, she said, with "details that are fresh and unexpected."

Lucke's presentation resumed our emphasis on craft, of which some of us feel we can't get enough. Learning the elements of good writing seems to be the Club's primary function, and we know where to find excellent presenters, largely because we tap into a network of them in the California Writers Club.

Although a diet of nothing but craft might not be ideal, it's the one specialty of presenters that seems to be foolproof. Alice LaPlante, Charlotte Cook, Martha Engber, Nora Profit, our May presenter Tanya Egan Gibson, and our own Victoria M. Johnson—it's a long list that certainly includes Margaret Lucke. —WT



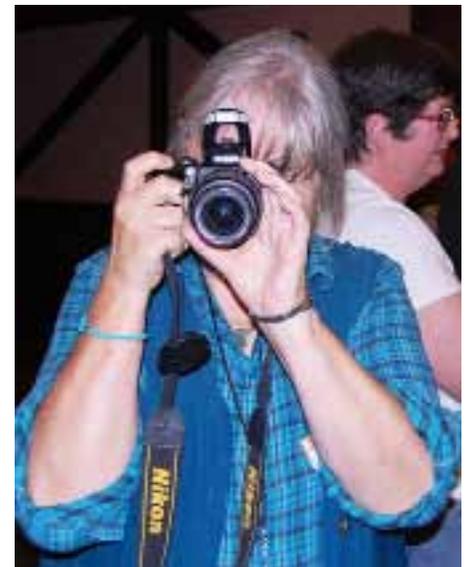
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Photo by Carolyn Donnell



Colin and Mike solve world's problems
Photo by Carolyn Donnell



Loureen and Edie networking
Photo by Carolyn Donnell



Carolyn Donnell — Shot by Dick Amyx

What Writers Know

"Write what you know," Mark Twain said. But that's bad advice because your novel is not about events, but about emotions. According to Margaret Lucke, if writers wrote only what they knew, they'd write less about sex and more about procrastination. —WT



Networking with Margaret Lucke
Photo by Dick Amyx

Dueling Photographers

Dick Amyx — Shot by Carolyn Donnell



Marjorie and Bill exchange stories
Photo by Carolyn Donnell



Brenna and Carol networking
Photo by Dick Amyx



Clearinghouse for Critique

by Dave LaRoche

Interested in joining or forming a critique group?

Contact Dave LaRoche at dalaroche@comcast.net

There is no better screen for new writing than to run it by readers who will view the work with fresh eyes and a critical modality, then respond with objective, unbiased criticism and praise. This process is ideally done in groups of writers, each with about the same level of expertise and working in similar genres. In order to approach the "ideal," I have started a clearinghouse of sorts, with which I intend to direct prospective critics or those needing a reciprocal look toward groups with openings. If you have fresh writing you want critiqued and are willing to return the same, contact me and I will see that you find a slot, or help you create a new group.

Not only does critique help in buffing up your writing, it helps you produce. With others awaiting your submittal, you need either submit or apologize—either way, you're still on the hook—and it becomes quite likely you'll write and keep it up. It's like having that cricket upon your shoulder, reminding you that it's time.



Dave and Ray networking
Photo by Dick Amyx

I have materials—the dos and don'ts of critique dynamics, as well as what to look for in regard to craft. There are other materials around and books written on good operation. I've been running a group now for about seven years and am replete with experience, if I say so myself—and there are others. This means, if you are a group starter, there is plenty of help.

Interested? Send me an email or tap me at one of the meetings. I'll need to know where you are in your progress and a way to make contact. —WT

Your Source For ...

by Donna McCrohan Rosenthal
PR Director,
California Writers Club
pr@calwriters.org

If you want to get a handle on attracting potential members, ask yourself what your branch offers that they won't find elsewhere. If you can't tell them "We're your source for..." and finish the sentence with good incentives, you're missing a huge opportunity.

So what might you be the source for? Expert speakers give pep talks and wise advice, and answer questions face-to-face. Members provide success stories, lessons learned, networking and kindred souls. Yes, you can discover some of this online—but online is not in person.

Some branches have up-to-the-minute contest announcements (as do many branch newsletters). Two notices recently crossed the CWC PR desk. I cannot endorse them from personal experience, but I pass them along for you to share if you choose. They definitely seem interesting. They are:

Dare Me For Charity, a competition coming to Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, Sacramento and other cities, invites participants to win over \$1,000,000 for their organization, and the show will air this fall throughout the country on national television (<https://www.facebook.com/DareMe-ForCharity>).

Also, the new quarterly *Prose 'n Cons*TM *Mystery Magazine* seeks fiction and non-fiction manuscripts. It focuses on the mystery, crime and suspense genres and you can request guidelines at <http://www.prose-n-cons.com>.

But perhaps the best encouragement in your arsenal of inducements parallels the slogan that the California tourism folks just launched: "Dream big!"

Like them, we urge the people who join us to reach for the stars. Let's make our club the source for the tools to dream big—to write that breakthrough best-seller or to maintain that game-changing blog.

Good luck and sail on! —WT

Invitation to Renew

Dear SBW Members:

It's that time of year again. The California Writers Club fiscal year ends June 30, so please don't let your membership lapse.

You may renew online at southbaywriters.com, and while you're at our website, you may want to take a look at the Members Gallery and the Members Book pages. New members—please note that you can appear on those pages, too. You may also renew by mailing a check for \$45.00 to CWC-SBW, P.O. Box 3254, Santa Clara, CA 95055, Attn: Membership. (Note: Dual members renew for \$25, and students, \$20.)

Tangible benefits of SBW Membership:

- Discounts at CWC workshops and conferences statewide
- Appear in SBW Members' Gallery with your own website
- Publish your work in *WritersTalk*
- Hear knowledgeable speakers on topics of interest to writers



Sally at work
Photo by Dick Amyx

We appreciate your membership. Your dues and your presence at our monthly meetings, workshops, and critique groups keep South Bay Writers flourishing. We're looking forward to seeing you at our next meeting (where your membership can also be renewed).

Until the next meeting,
Sally Milnor, Membership Chair

Diets and Constipation

by Tom Marlowe

Greg and Adrian met by chance in an advanced physics class, and the two of them shared a furnished studio apartment in Santa Barbara for three months after that. Because Adrian paid a few dollars more per month, he got to sleep in the bed; Greg got the couch in the living room.

At that time, the City of Santa Barbara sponsored free concerts in the city hall plaza, a venue surrounded by an imposing white building, constructed to colonial Spanish architectural standards, its roof capped off with orange Spanish tile. On concert Sundays, Greg and Adrian would visit a local deli, grab a pound of Havarti cheese and a gallon of cheap wine, and spend the rest of the day listening to classical music under the warm California sun in the shade of the palms.

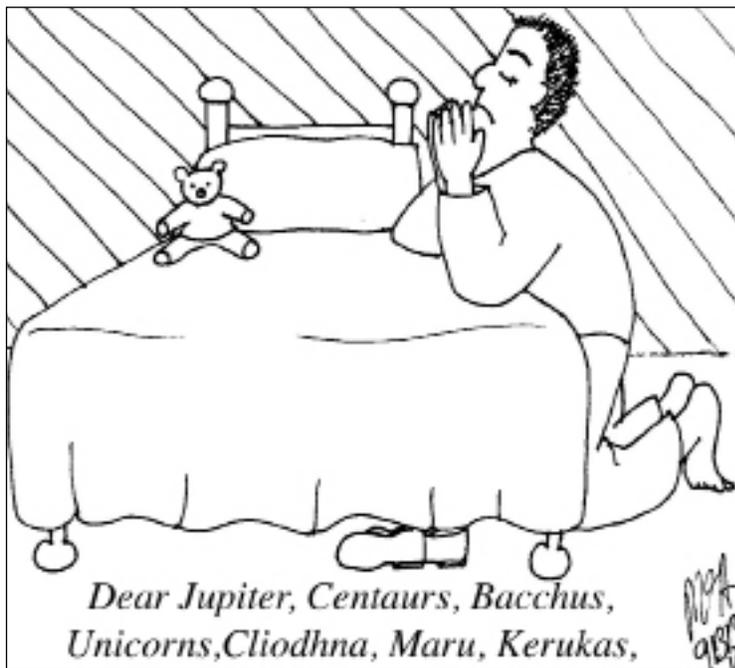
Greg was a serious health food aficionado. Trending toward a vegetarian diet, he would patiently wait for a promotional sales event at the local grocer and buy fruits and vegetables in bulk. "Cheese in the park" Sundays greatly conflicted him, but the two of them enjoyed it so much, the pattern continued during their entire stay in Santa Barbara. Adrian tried to tease Greg about it, but he had a habit of jutting his lower jaw in a manner that indicated he knew what he was doing. Every time the issue came up, the jaw would jut and that was the end of the discussion.

Greg had read a book by the controversial and deceased vegetarian Arnold Ehret, who described what he called a "mucus free diet healing system," as much about lifestyle change as it was about diet. His book contained some radically nonstandard ideas on dieting, camouflaged in scientific terms.

The fundamental basis for Ehret's diet was the concept that all diseases are just a variant of constipation. Thus, the more sickly the individual, the more constipated. As one might well imagine, fruit was a major element of the diet, and prunes were considered to be the gold standard of fruit. Shortly after Greg began to implement the diet, he found a sale on fresh prunes and bought them in five-pound lots while the price was good. After three days of eating nothing but prunes for breakfast, lunch and dinner, washed down with several glasses of water, Greg was free of all traces of constipation. Thank the stars for the Sunday concerts where the two friends would split a pound of cheese so Greg could work on getting his bowels tightened up.

Adrian was more of a junk food junkie. He and Greg had many a spirited conversation over Ehret's theories regarding constipation. Greg was a believer and Adrian was a skeptic. When Adrian was younger, he had the stomach for junk food and didn't shy away from it. He didn't care in the least that it was becoming politically incorrect. Jokes about the shelf life of Twinkies became fashionable.

Unlike Greg, Adrian was notorious for his attraction to sweets. He used to meet surreptitiously with Sarah Lee in the grocer's cold foods section a couple times a week. Sarah was a real sweet babe, and Adrian was head over heels in love with her. He was especially fond of bringing her home to lick the icing out of the grooves in her tin foil pans. The sugar high was insidiously intoxicating. Those were memorable times for the three of them,



Eric decides to expand his network.

Adrian, Sarah and Greg, but they didn't last long enough. After a few months, Adrian started working in the private sector, and Greg went back to UCLA to finish his degree. Sarah got the cold shoulder; she stayed behind in the refrigerated foods section, likely lamenting her loss.

In the last few days that Greg and Adrian spent together, they decided to share some time in the mountains north of Santa Barbara. They gave up their apartment in town, as they were not expecting to go back. Regrettably leaving Sarah behind, they headed north on State Route 154 and drove up the winding two-lane highway that would take them up and over the California coastal range through San Marcos Pass. There was a county park just the other side of the summit and they chose that as their destination.

Crossing over the summit, the two of them headed a few miles down hill and turned off the highway onto Paradise Canyon Road. Noticing a small country store off to the right a short distance up the road, they stopped to buy a few provisions to be ready for any eventuality, including the possibility of a few days' stay in the campground.

Leaving the store behind and driving deeper into the narrowing Paradise Canyon, they reached the park's campground and set up their tents. It was late in the afternoon, so they decided to get a good night's sleep and make an early start in the morning. The evening had a comforting coolness that allowed them to curl up inside the warmth and security of their sleeping bags. Surrounded by a calming isolated silence, the two of them dropped off quickly and slept soundly.

The following morning, Adrian was completely unprepared for the heat that started early in those parts. He had become accustomed to the brisk morning air along the coast. Here in the park, the coastal mountains were an effective buffer between the heat rolling off the more arid regions to the north and the

Continued on Page 16

An E-Author's Journey

by Donna Fujimoto

Writing Young Adult Science Fiction is fun! Getting published is hard work. Having sold short stories to magazines while working on novels, I looked for a step in between these two. Someone in my critique group suggested I publish one of my manuscripts as an e-book. The next month at South Bay Writers, our speaker encouraged us to edit or contribute to anthologies. The two ideas came together in my mind: I would compile short stories into an e-book!

All right: a goal. Now for all the steps toward achieving it. First, I had to choose which stories from my writing fit the category. I wanted them to appeal to a YA audience and have a Sci Fi theme. Next, I edited them. I ran some past readers. Checked copyright issues on two previously published. Rejected one story, wrote two replacements and picked one. This took a while. At last I had a collection I thought would work, but there were only nine pieces. I had planned to do ten, but then decided that nine in a title would be easier to remember.

I played around with titles and chose *9 Slightly Strange Stories with an Uplifting Edge*. Then I had to design a cover. There are online tools and templates available, or I could have hired a designer for a reasonable fee. I like to draw, so I decided to make my own cover. Outer space was a prominent theme in my stories, so I decided to paint a nebula. I already had the supplies at home. I painted it, photographed it, uploaded it to PhotoShop, then put in some texture, flares, the book's title and my name. I shrank the image to make sure it looked good in thumbnail size.

Then came the hardest part for me: formatting and uploading. I went to Amazon Kindle because of the name recognition and because their process seemed within the grasp of someone like me, who is not a techie.

I opened an account by following the steps on the website. This process involved making decisions about my relationship with the online publisher. There are pages and pages of legal-speak to read and places to click "agree". I literally fell asleep reading, but I believe in understanding anything I agree to.

After this I printed out the instructions for formatting and uploading and followed them studiously. It took me four hours to reformat my short manuscript. A friend with technical skills offered to double-check everything for me, and she made improvements. I am profoundly grateful! Then I uploaded and proofread the e-book twice before accepting it and posting it.

Book covers must be uploaded separately. Since I am a novice at PhotoShop, the first time I uploaded the cover it took so much memory it would have soaked up profits due to the cost of delivery. So my friend helped me compress it and upload it again.

Another step is the online blurb about the book. I wrote a couple of versions, then emailed someone I trust who has read a lot of my stories and asked her for a brief description.

Hers was much better than my drafts, and it is the one I used. Again, I was grateful for the help.

Then I chose keywords to lead readers to my book as a potential choice. I picked the genre, the age level, and words or ideas I thought were interesting from each story.

It did not take long for the book with its cover picture and blurb to appear online. Wow! What a thrill.

This leads to the marketing phase. I created little miniatures of my book cover to hand out at meetings. I contribute regularly to a blog that reviews children's books, and the editor offered to announce my e-book there. Many people use social media and one-day 99¢ promotions to boost sales and increase awareness of their books.

I enjoy modest royalty payments and know my work is being read. That's the whole point. Family and friends and people I don't even know are enjoying my stories. My e-book is where agents and publishers can find it. It's fun to have it "out there" because if someone asks, "What do you write?" I can send them to Amazon.

I am working up to the skills required to upload my e-book to Smashwords so it can enjoy distribution to other e-readers and devices besides Kindle.

So if you are considering offering your book in this format, realize that it is within your grasp. Best wishes to all in this wonderful writing community. —WT

Off the Shelf

Edie Matthews & Marina Menendez-Pidal



The book is going great – I've got all the pages numbered.

State agency delays protecting gray wolf *San Jose Mercury News, April 17, 2014*



Advocates' renewed interest in protecting the gray wolf started in 2011, when a lone wolf from Oregon—called OR-7—was tracked crossing into California. Ranchers and California state wildlife officials oppose granting the species legal protections. —WT

Why OR-7 Left Oregon

By Judith Shernock

This morning I heard on the radio that OR-7 had been spotted in California. This would make a fascinating story if I succeeded in hunting him down and having all revealed to me. The editor of my magazine would see it as a coup.

With almost animal instinct I managed to locate OR-7 after just ten hours of intensive search. After years of lonely living he was willing to spill out his story. This is a verbatim report of what he told me. He even allowed me take a photograph which, if he approves, I will include.

OR-7 and I sat under a broad-leafed tree as he began his story.

"Have you heard of the expression, to collar a crook?" he asked. I nodded yes.

"Believe it or not, I was collared at just one year old, as were my six brothers and sisters. Our Ma was just teaching us to hunt and fend for ourselves when a group of Khaki two-feet knocked us all out with something they called a tranquilizer. When I woke up there was this really uncomfortable collar around my neck. My twin brother Remus was precocious and knew how to read. He told me that my collar said OR-7 and wondered if that was now my name. It used to be Romulus.

"After checking everyone out, Remus announced that we were all numbered and lettered from one to eight. The only number he didn't see was six, so that must be him. No longer Remus but OR-6. We wondered who this new enemy was who could change our names and write them on uncomfortable collars. Though the Khaki two-feet had taken their boxes, guns, and cages away with them, we still felt little

shocks when we twisted our heads.

"One of our brothers reported that he had heard the enemy say something that sounded like "Oregon Wolves." Remus immediately understood that the OR on our collars stood for Oregon. He said that they were fools who didn't know we were from the Imnaha pack that moves from Idaho to Washington to Oregon and back again. We lived among the Indians, farmers and ranchers for centuries. We are a proud pack.

"Ma had been seriously stunned by the events. Instead of teaching us to hunt, she said, "Beep-beep-eek!" over and over, for hours at a time. We had many hungry days.

"My siblings Winny and Wendy (OR-1 and -2) finally caught three tiny mice and swallowed them whole. I said "Yucky!" and walked away to a nearby meadow. It was spring and the ground was covered in bright yellow dandelions. I ate one and found it tasty. I continued to graze there until my belly bulged. Nearby were wild grapes, wheat and beets. Paradise.

"After a couple of days I went back to our lair but the only one there was Ma, looking very skinny, and saying EEK-EEK and BEEP-BEEP in a loud, strangled cry. Although I felt sad that I couldn't help our Ma, I returned to my meadow and stayed there until winter rolled around.

"Looking for a protected spot, I found a cave and saw that one of the Khakis had left the colored paper they called Map lying there. Luckily Remus found the same cave and I spent the winter with him as my teacher, learning to read the thing called Map. With my brother's help I plotted a journey to the Promised Land and suggested he join me. My twin preferred to go back to the farm where there was always a supply of fresh chickens and eggs at his disposal, as long as the farmer didn't shoot him. Then when he heard about my new eating habit he called me "traitor" and said it must be because Khaki two-feet did something extra to me that they didn't do to the rest of the pack.

"When spring came we went our separate ways, Romulus to his farm and I on the journey to the Promised Land. The path we had marked on the map took me many days. It led through four counties and along Interstate 84 and U.S. routes 26, 395, 20 and 97. I was never hungry because there were wild fruits and veggies everywhere. Finally I saw the sign. I was suffused with joy when I read, "You have arrived in California. Welcome!"

At this point my reporter's curiosity could not be restrained and I asked Romulus, "Why are you so happy to be in California?"

"Everyone wants to move to this state. It's the climate, the food, the liberal life style. Less hate, more love. They call each other Dude." He gave me a huge wolfish grin.

Trying hard not to pop his balloon of illusions I said, "You're the one and only wolf in California. All the rest are dead. Shot, so they won't attack the cows, sheep and pigs.

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Classic California Writers

Lorna Dee Cervantes (1954 -): Freeway 280

by Pratibha Kelapure



Pratibha Kelapure
Contributing Editor

Lorna Dee Cervantes, born in San Francisco, considers herself “a Chicana writer, a feminist writer, [and] a political writer.” One of the major themes in her poetry is the effect of urban sprawl on the ethnic and poor communities. The poor areas are often affected by large urban projects resulting in community displacement. Her poem “Freeway 280” on poets.org/Cervantes/freeway280 is a prominent example.

The cozy cottages embraced by the wild rose bushes stand alongside the miserable cannery. However, the wretched cannery is tolerable compared to the formidable new freeway. The “raised scar” is a metaphor for the freeway loom-

ing high above the ground. The scar will always be there, covering the deep wound suffered by the community. The “wild *abrazos*” and “man-high red geraniums” are quite empowering, yet the inhuman strength of the giant freeway quietly overpowers them. The tone is quite hopeless.

In the second stanza, the narrator lifts the tone and announces the sprouting of new grasses, reminding the readers of the resilience of nature and the spirit of the displaced community. The phrases “raised scar” and “fake wind sounds” clearly convey the poet’s disapproval of the freeway. The old trees, like the old women who come to gather the fruit and the greens growing on the ground, are the guardians of the community spirit.

The tone of the third stanza is reflective. The narrator who once was eager to get out of the binding ties of the community and to explore new frontiers has come back to find her own roots. She, perhaps, realizes the rigidity of the “open lanes” that took her away on the open road of life. Her displeasure of the old canneries is clear from the phrases: “smell of tomatoes burning,” “swing shift,” and “the greasy summer air.” Now she wonders whether the part of her that she left behind is dead or just waiting to bloom? Is it a “corpse” or a “loose seed?”

The form follows the meaning. The change in the tone, line-lengths, and the rhythm are consistent with the meaning of the poem. The lines of the first stanza are short; the phrase “gone now” conveys a sense of hopelessness. The short phrase, “The freeway conceals it,” has an air of finality to it. The lines of the second stanza are longer and deliberate. After a full one and half-line build-up, the poet quietly slips in the news about the new grasses sprouting. The tone suddenly picks up, becomes stronger, and doesn’t let up till the end of the second stanza. The narrator reflects back on her life in the third stanza; she has gained perspective. The poem ends with the words “loose seed,” implying that the narrator is optimistic.

The imagery lets a reader experience the sights and the smells of the cannery and the cozy town. I found the absence of sound in the poem a powerful poetic device, representing the silencing of the community’s voice. The only sound the reader hears is that of the freeway, and that sound is inhuman. Most readers will identify with the feelings that uber-urbanization of the landscape evokes. — WT

Out of the Fish Trap

Writing a poem is easy, like swimming into a fish trap.

Analyzing a poem is hard, like swimming out of a fish trap.

— William Stafford

You Must Revise Your Life



MEMORIAL DAY MEMOIR

I Remember Tweedle Dee

by Marjorie Johnson

Bald red bodies, bulgy closed eyes—the ugliest babies I had ever seen cheeped a pathetic plea for food. My father had removed a songbird’s nest from the shower at the forest fire camp due to open June the first, and I couldn’t let the hatchlings die.

I had seen robins feed worms to their young, so I dug up two plump earthworms, washed them, and diced them. The pieces stuck to my fingers when I tried to drop them into an eager mouth, and the tiny bird couldn’t swallow unless I poked food down its throat. I skewered pieces of wiggly worm with toothpicks and stuffed them in. Stomachs full, they finally took a nap. Soon hungry again, they opened their eyes and we bonded while I fed them raw hamburger. At twelve years old, I became their mother.

I named them Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee and tended to their needs every day for a year, changing their diet to seeds and cleaning their cage while they splashed in a pedestal candy-dish bathtub. Sometimes they escaped from their cage and flew across the living room and I caught them gently. They often perched on my fingers, a bird on each hand, and the three of us sang with music from the radio.

On Memorial Day, Tweedle Dee lay feet up on the floor of the cage, and Tweedle Dum hung his head and had no interest in food. I lined a matchbox with flower petals for Tweedle Dee and read the Twenty-third Psalm over her thumb-sized body. Afterwards, I released the grieving Tweedle Dum, who had a better chance of survival in the wild than in a cage without his companion, and watched him fly away with a flock of linnets.

My nest was empty. — WT

April Haiku Contest

by Carolyn Donnell

Are you on Facebook? Have you Liked our Facebook Page — **California Writers Club – South Bay**? If you did, you could have participated in our April activity for National Poetry Month.

We posted a different photo on each Sunday morning, and people had a week to compose a Haiku inspired by that photo.

Below are participants for the first two weeks in order of submission. Everyone is a winner!

The remaining weeks' results will come out in the June issue of *Writers Talk*. — **WT**



Week 1 Half Moon Bay

Photo by Carolyn Donnell

Land's end silver sand
Foaming sea sings with me and
My singular soul
— Pratibha Kelapure

Calm sands ocean blue
Wild green cliffs hide yellow beach
Respite for my soul
— Marjorie Johnson

The water is calm
The land breathes an earthly Psalm
My heart is then full
— Karen Hartley

Half moon aqua sea
Ice plant crawling over cliff
Coast range silhouette
— Leslie Hoffman

White foam rushing in
Turquoise ocean brings it in
Bathing sandy shore
— Richard Burns

On a foggy beach
Where the tourists often roam
Is a lost secret
— Noah, Student, 8th Grade

Where the wild grass grows
And where the mountains soar high
Is true paradise
— Noah, Student, 8th Grade

Week 2 Fish Pond

Photo below by Valerie Lee

Autumn leaves float past
Red gold scraps on dark water
Drift on hidden fins
— Keyes Harkner

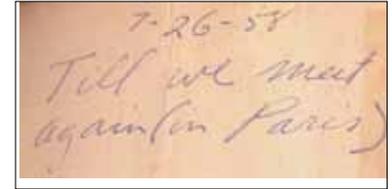
Brightly colored fish
Rainbow stripes speeding on home
Leaving soft ripples
— Karen Hartley

Blue sky in the pond
Joyful fish swim undaunted
By yellowing leaves
— Pratibha Kelapure

Azure falls cascade
Over gilded crimson koi
Lilies reflected
— Leslie Hoffman

Fish swim—astounding
In nature's cool surroundings
Colors abounding
— Richard Burns

Waves rush over rocks
Branches make shadows
Whisp'ring sapphire waterfalls
— Rachel, Student, 7th Grade



Paperback Promise

One afternoon in a used bookstore
A paperback fell onto the floor

I opened it to look inside
What was inscribed brought
Tears to my eyes:
Till we meet again -
In Paris

Written in 1958

Certain that they'd keep the date
Whoever wrote it surely believed
they'd meet again one day

And they'd laugh with joy while they
Walked along the Champs-Élysées
In the cool Paris evening breeze
They'd hug and kiss and pledge their
love

In the City of Lights with
Stars shining from above

I closed my eyes and wished them
well

Hoping that indeed long ago
The magic spell had
Found them

I took the book home with me
To daydream on the
Paperback Promise
I'd read that day

So I could believe in my own
Romantic way
That they had met again
And Paris had become
Their life, their love
Their home

And
that the City's Lights
Still shine on them
today

— Karen Hartley

What is Haiku?

The April contest called for the common 5-7-5 Haiku form: 5 syllables in the first line, 7 in the next line, and 5 in the last line, with no specific rhyme or meter.

May Terse On Verse

by Pat Bustamante



Pat Bustamante
Contributing Editor

May Colts

May colts, young horses that roll in water,
May surprise the rider when crossing a stream.
A friend had that happen. I gather it taught her
Quite a wet lesson. (As I watched, thought extreme!)
We all have our foibles, compulsions, pet actions,
May you learn to curb self-annoyance down to fractions
To achieve a disciplined writer's dream.

— Pat Bustamante

Poetry is often described as the most difficult achievement in a writer's portfolio. Yet all writers seem to have that yearning for putting matched words together that bring "AHs" from the audience. There is no single way to create a poem and whatever you put on paper or email or chant by a microphone is YOU. In fact, it should be that whatever you create—short story, memoir, novel, or poem—ought to be something you enjoy doing and keep to remind yourself, "Yes, I can!"

It's nice to have others appreciate your efforts and it doesn't hurt to get paid for it too. When I was nine, I wrote a poem about a cat who thought he was a lion, and a friend of my parents who worked for a local newspaper published it. I keep a copy in my dresser-drawer: "He pauses in the shadows hesitating/ Before his golden paw should meet the light." Those are the first two lines, and I'm still just as proud of it more than 65 years later.

The May colt may stumble but love of writing (and I love every kind of animal I've ever met, too), your art, is a treasure to protect and save through all the years. You may not win the Pulitzer but some relative, maybe several generations later, will read it and also love it. I have papers from my grandparents and even farther back in family history and love reading and re-reading them.

What your eyes see now, your ears hear, and your brain processes will be history way down the road—if you put it on paper—so your job is to keep writing. And keep the writing. A poem is a poem when you define it as one, and the rules for writing are as you interpret them simply because we humans need as many records as possible: both for proof of progress and for measurement of what is, what was, what can be, and what will be. Write for the record because your every word counts! —WT

Second hand poems

Second hand bookstores house treasures. An autograph book given to Jackie on her thirteenth birthday in 1934 contains these two pages:

A wise old owl lived in an oak
The more he saw, the less he spoke
The less he spoke, the more he heard,
We should imitate that old bird!

Papa Moses caught a skunk
Mama Moses cooked a hunk
Baby Moses ate a chunk
Holy Moses, how it stunk!



Palo Alto Take-off

Push the throttle
Engine roar
Land fall away
Leaden sky over silver bay
Salt ponds glow
Pink orange fog
Climb the winds
Through angel-hair curtains
Over ants on gray ribbons
Clouds flash mirror lakes
Shadows follow
Mountains sleeping
Swoop and soar
Blue sky freedom

— Marjorie Johnson

Aviation factoid

On April 16, 1912, American aviator Harriet Quimby became the first woman to fly across the English Channel, traveling from Dover to France in 59 minutes in a Bleriot monoplane. And forget seatbelts—she sat in an open cockpit on a lawn chair.

But the world little noted nor long remembered her feat because the news of the day was dominated by the sinking of the Titanic on April 15, 1912. —WT



Constipation

Continued from Page 10

cool, humid ocean breezes rolling off the Pacific from the south. He shed his sleeping bag as soon as the sun hit the east side of his tent. Trying to read Thoreau's *Walden* in the shelter of his tent, he found the heat unbearable. It was still early, about 8 am, when Adrian left his canvas castle behind to sit at a picnic table in the shade, trying to read the Thoreau classic, absorbing its admonition to "Simplify, simplify, simplify."

Greg had the same idea and soon he was at the table with his own read, the two of them looking like a couple of librarians at an author's new release convention.

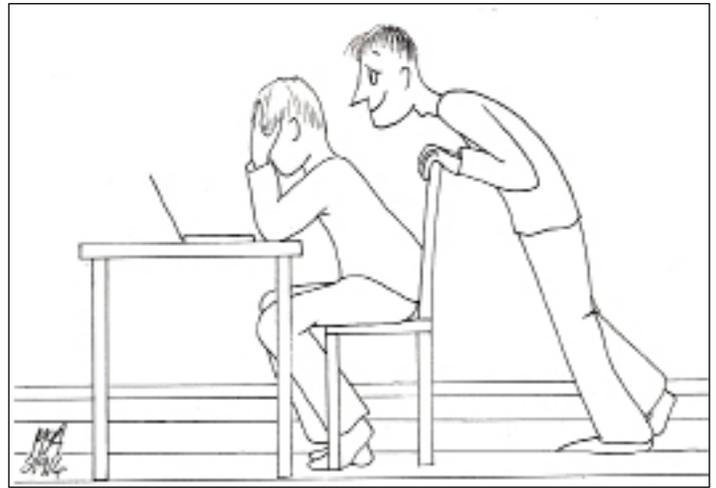
Shortly after, flies became an issue. During the cool of the previous evening, there wasn't a fly to be found, but in the warmth of daylight they were massing for their frontal assault on the newly arrived fresh meat—that would be Adrian and Greg.

In a virtual frenzy of flight, they moved at speeds approaching the limits of the ability of the eye to follow them. When they landed on exposed skin, the persistent creatures were absolutely unable to resist taking a nibble and then they were off, wings flapping invisibly and in overdrive. Constantly buzzing and lightning quick, they were impossible to defend against.

No longer able to concentrate on their reading, the pair decided to hike to a rumored swimming hole, a mile or so up the canyon. The forward motion seemed to leave the flies flustered as to their victim's location. Leaving the biting bullies behind like a bad memory, Adrian and Greg hiked up the narrowing terrain into beautiful Southern California mountain country.

Rounding a bend in the trail, they came into an opening with a meadow and a large pool of cool clear water. After the long hike in the midmorning heat, they were more than ready for

Cartoon by Maddy McEwen-Asker



Gordon coined the term, back seat writing.

the cool wet of the mountain meadow pond. Quickly stripping to their essentials, they jumped in and rejoiced in the canyon nectar. No question about it: it was refreshing, made even more appealing by leaving the flies behind.

The two lingered on in the coolness, swimming until their arms and legs were starting to complain from all the exercise. When their skin had started to curdle, they knew they had finally had enough of the refreshing wetness.

"What do ya think Greg? Time for some Havarti and jug wine?"

"Past time, buddy. Let's get to it."

Thoreau could wait. —WT

Why OR-7 Left Oregon

Continued from Page 12

"Better be careful. Folks won't know you're a vegetarian by the way you look, so sleek and furry."

"I'll be extra careful," he promised. "Any suggestions?"

"Stay in the hills and meadows and away from the animal farms. If you let me take a photo I'll write an article about you for my magazine. That may help keep you safe. Deal?"

"Deal," he said.



Romulus is a vegetarian

Here's his photo. If you see him be aware that he eats only veggies. He is not a danger to you or anyone else. If all goes well, there will be further adventures of Romulus to report.

Stay posted. —WT

Confusing Words

Arlene Miller, The Grammar Diva who spoke to SWB in February, has posted blogs on commonly confused words at BigWords101.com. You know what those words are: lay and lie, affect and effect, among and between, allusion and illusion—there are lots of them. She will cover most of the common ones in these posts. —WT



Nauseous is not poisonous

A person who feels sick is not nauseous any more than a person who has been poisoned is poisonous.

According to editors and writing teachers, nauseous and nauseated are not interchangeable, even though both have the root *naus*, Greek for ship.

Nauseous is an adjective meaning inclined to vomit. Nauseated is a verb that takes an object, as, I was nauseated by the thought of rotten food. A ship produces seasickness; the sick person is not nauseous—he is nauseated.

However, in common usage, we say nauseous when we mean nauseated. —WT

Contests/Markets: Some Website Listings

by Carolyn Donnell



Carolyn Donnell
Contributing Editor

Here's a list of major sites that keep an ongoing list of contests and other monetary opportunities. Some are free to enter; some are not. Be sure to check all deadlines and follow all rules.

Poets and Writers: pw.org/grants

Fan Story: fanstory.com/index1contest.jsp

Writer Advice: writeradvice.com/markets.html

Funds For Writers: fundsforwriters.com/contests/

Writer Magazine: writermag.com/writing-resources/

Writer's Digest: writersdigest.com/competitions/writing-competitions

Winning Writers: winningwriters.com/the-best-free-literary-contests

And here's a new one: **Remixing: Poetry Contest**

Robert Lee Brewer, emcee for *Writer's Digest* 2014 PAD Challenge, has another contest for poets: "Remixing." Must use his poems from *Solving the World's Problems* as starting point. Extended deadline: May 15. Top prize: \$500. More at robertleebrewer.blogspot.com/2013/09/remixing-worlds-problems-challenge-for.html

Good luck and be sure to let us know if you have any good news. — WT

Tribute: Lawrence DiStasi

by Pamela Oliver-Lyons

Lawrence DiStasi, author of the noteworthy nonfiction book *La Storia Segreta*, will be honored by a "Tribute to Lawrence DiStasi" presented by the Italian American Heritage Foundation's La Divina Book Club. He writes non-fiction books on the Italian American experiences. His book, *La Storia Segreta*, about the internment of Italian Americans during WWII, has caused political change and an apology from the White House. He will answer interviewer's questions about his books and his writing process.

I would like the SBW to be aware of this event on May 22nd from 1 to 3 p.m. at IAHF, 425 N 4th Street, San Jose. — WT



California poppies by Carolyn Donnell

California Bookstore Day

California Bookstore Day on May 3, 2014 is a statewide party—as big and varied as the state itself. More than 90 stores in more than 80 zip codes are putting their bells on and throwing out the welcome mat. Think Record Store Day, but for book nerds.

Each Independent Bookstore will have its own party. The headline attractions are the just-for-us books you cannot get on any other day at any other place. There will also be readings, prizes, food, and drinks. Famous authors, artists, and poets writing live poetry will be present at some stores.

Independent bookstores nearby—and there aren't many—include Hicklebees, San Jose; Books, Inc., Palo Alto; Bay Tree Bookstore, Santa Cruz; and Bookshop, Santa Cruz. — WT

Summer 2014

Oregon Coast Children's Book Writers Workshop

www.occbwww.com

This July 14 – 18, we will proudly present the twelfth Oregon Coast Children's Book Writers Workshop in the exquisite Oregon coast town of Oceanside. Our course schedule is posted on our website. The course is not only lectures, but also lots and lots of one-on-one coaching with instructors, everyday, and it's available for graduate level credit.

— WT

WRITERSTALK

Challenge

What is it?

Twice a year, in February and August, awards are 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.*

Genres

Fiction, 500 – 1500 words

Memoir, 500 – 1200 words

Essay/Nonfiction, 500 – 1200 words

Poetry

Judging Periods

January 16 through July 15

July 16 through January 15

Prizes

One winner will be selected from each of the eligible genres. Each winner will be awarded a cash prize of \$40.

Judging

Judging will be done by *WritersTalk* contributing editors and other Club members whom the contributing editors may ask to assist.

* Eligibility for the *WritersTalk* Challenge is limited to members of the South Bay Branch of the California Writers Club. — WT

Fault Zone: Call for entries

Fault Zone: Diverge, the fifth in the anthology series edited by the SF/Peninsula Branch of California Writers Club, will be published by Sand Hill Review Press in 2014. Nonmembers of SF/Peninsula can participate by entering the *Fault Zone* short story contest. **First Prize, \$250; Deadline: August 1, 2014.** Guidelines and submissions appear on www.cwc-peninsula.org. Click on Fault Zone, non-members. — WT

2014 Senior Poet Laureate

Contest open to all American poets age 50 and older. See article in the April *WritersTalk*, available on southbaywriters.com, and rules at amykitchenerfdn.org. Deadline June 30, 2014. — WT

Stoneslide Short Story Contest

Short stories up to 10,000 words. First prize, \$3,000. Deadline June 21, 2014. Go to Stoneslidecorrective.com — WT

Directory of experts

Do you have specialized knowledge that might help a writer bring authentic detail to a scene? Send a message to newsletter@southbaywriters.com and we will add your listing to our directory of experts.

Astronomy, History of Astronomy

Bob Garfinkle ragarf@earthlink.net

Banking

Pam Oliver-Lyons polpap@prodigy.net

Curriculum Development

June Chen junech@gmail.com

Counseling/John Steinbeck

Dr. Audry L. Lynch

glynch0001@comcast.net

Engineering: Mechanical, Aerospace

Jerry Mulenburg

geraldmulenburg@sbcglobal.net

Growing Great Characters from the Ground Up

Martha Engber martha@engber.com

Internal Medicine/Addiction

Disorder/Psychology

Dave Breithaupt dllbmlb@comcast.net

Marketing and Management

Suzy Paluzzi, MBA jomarch06@yahoo.com

Mathematics/Fibonacci Sequence

Marjorie Johnson marjohnson@mac.com

Private Investigator/Police work/Crime

M. J. Hahn mirror3314@mypacks.net

Teaching and the Arts

Betty Auchard Btauchard@aol.com

Telecommunications Technology

Allan Cobb allancobb@computer.org

Television Production

Woody Horn 408-266-7040

CWC around the bay

These are published meeting locations and times for other CWC branches in the greater San Francisco Bay Area. If you're thinking about attending one of their meetings, be sure to check the website first for details.

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

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 204, Fremont. cwc-fremontareawriters.org

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

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

Mount Diablo: 11:30 second Saturdays, Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. mtdiablowlriters.org

Napa Valley: 6:30 second Wednesdays, Napa River Inn. napavalleywriters.net

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, Belmont Library, 1110 Alameda De Las Pulgas, Belmont. sfpeninsulawriters.com

Tri-Valley: 11:30 third Saturdays, Four Points by Sheraton, 5115 Hopyard, Pleasanton. trivalleywriters.com

Ongoing critique groups

Our Voices

Meets at Le Boulanger in the Pruneyard in Campbell every other Sunday 11 am. Genres: Fiction, nontechnical nonfiction, memoir. Contact: Dave LaRoche – dalaroche@comcast.net

Valley Writers

Meets at Valley Village Retirement Center, Winchester Blvd. in Santa Clara, Mondays 2:00 to 4:00 pm. Contact: Marjorie Johnson at marjoriej358@comcast.net

Emperor's Mystery Circle

Meets at Emperor Norton's, 7508 Santa Teresa Blvd, San Jose, 1:30 pm., first Mondays. Mystery genre. Contact Pam Oliver-Lyons, polpap@prodigy.net

Karen's Critique Group

Meets at The Hick'ry Pit, Campbell, 10 am to Noon, second and fourth Tuesdays. Fiction, non-fiction or memoir only. Three openings. Contact Karen, Sew1Machin@aol.com

Riders Do Right

Meets at Vallco Shopping Center, second floor, Food Court near Burger King, Noon, second Thursdays. Any genre. Contact Pat Bustamante, patatat@hotmail.com

Your Critique Group

For consideration, send information to newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Get your book reviewed now!

A free book review, to appear in *the Kaw Valley Senior Monthly*, is available to members of SBW.

If you've published a book (except poetry) including any book published since 2012, send a review copy to "A Look at Books," c/o Tom Mach – Book Review Editor, PO Box 486, Lawrence, KS 66044. If you have any questions, go to www.TomMach.com and press the Contact Me button on the site and Mr. Mach will get back to you.

Ongoing writing groups; Open Mic

Writing Group: A Chapter at a Time

Mondays, 9 a.m. to noon, Barnes&Noble Almaden. Contact Nader Khaghani, workshops@southbaywriters.com

Open Position: Networking Chair, committee members. Network with social media. Contact SBW President.

South Bay Writers Open Mic: Read from your own work, from your favorite authors, or just come to listen. See calendar for schedule. Contact Bill Baldwin (408) 730-9622 or email WABaldwin@aol.com

Need a critique group? An article on finding or founding critique groups appears on page 9 here in *May WritersTalk*. Contact Dave LaRoche at vp@southbaywriters.com or at dalaroche@comcast.net

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May 2014						
				1	2	3 Leadership Conference
4 11A Our Voices	5 9A Chapter at a Time 1:30P Mystery Circle 2P Valley Writers	6	7 7:30P SBW Board Meeting	8 Noon: Riders Do Right	9 7:30P Open mic B&N Almaden, San Jose	10 10:30A WT Editors Powwow
11	12 9A Chapter at a Time 2P Valley Writers 6:00P SBW Dinner, Harry's Hofbrau	13 10A Karen's Critique D e a d l i n e <i>WritersTalk</i>	14	15	16	17
18 11A Our Voices	19 9A Chapter at a Time 2P Valley Writers	20	21	22	23 7:30P Open mic Wil- low Glen Library, 1157 Minnesota Ave	24
25	26 9A Chapter at a Time 2P Valley Writers	27 10A Karen's Critique 7:30P SBW Board	28	29	30	31 Charlotte Cook workshop on Story All day. See page 7.
Future Flashes						
June 4 SBW Board	June 9 SBW Regular Dinner Meeting	July 6 SBW Picnic-BBQ				

Tutor needed:

Microsoft Publisher '96 and up. Pay negotiable. Contact Pol 408-693-9250.

Editor needed: Local area monthly newsletter editor needed. Must be expert at MS Publisher. \$ Nego. Call Steve at 408-693-9070.

Your ad could go here

\$7 per column inch for SBW members
\$10 per inch for nonmembers

CWC bags: Only \$10 each



Offered during our monthly meetings. Collect yours before supplies run out!

South Bay Writers Coffee Mugs

Available at Meetings



\$10 each or three for \$20

South Bay Writers Anthology



\$10

At the meeting or on
amazon.com

Where is it? For locations of critique and writing groups, poetry readings, and meetings of other California Writers Club branches, see Page 14.

Poetry readings

Poets@Play

Second Sundays: Check for times
Markham House History Park
1650 Senter Rd., San Jose

Poetry Center San Jose

Willow Glen Library
3rd Thursdays, 7:00 p.m.
1157 Minnesota Ave., San Jose

Free and open to the public. For more information, contact Dennis Noren at norcamp@sbcglobal.net or go to poetrycentersanjos.org/calendar

Stay informed

Read Constant Contact notices in your email for meeting and event announcements. SBW members are listed automatically; nonmembers who wish to be listed go to <http://southbaywriters.com/wordpress/ mailing-list/>



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

MAIL TO

Address Correction Requested

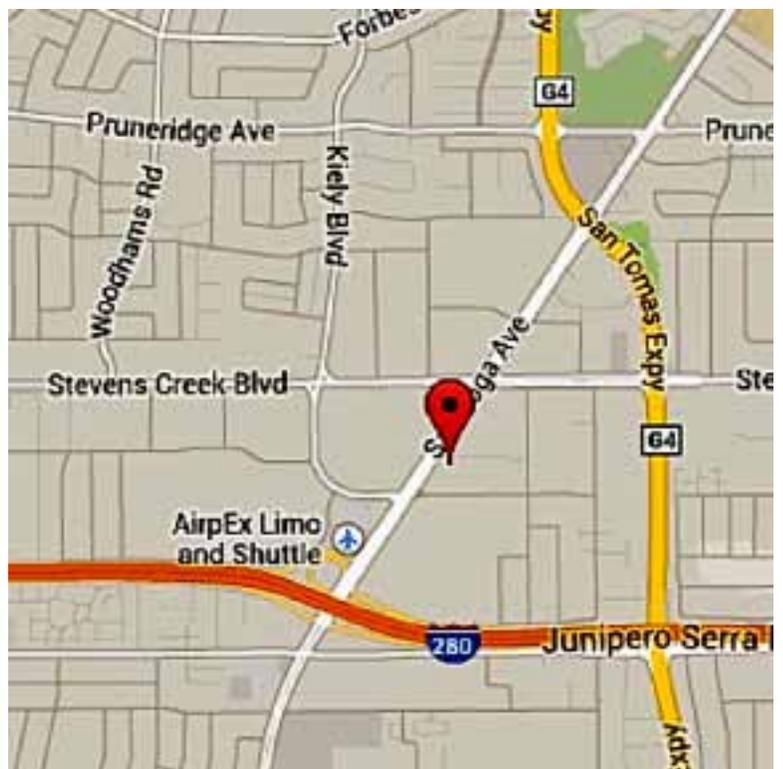
South Bay Writers
May Regular Membership Meeting
6 p.m. Monday, May 12

Harry's Hofbrau
390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose

Tanya Egan Gibson
Dialogue:
It's what they say
and how they say it

WritersTalk deadline is always
the 15th of the month.

Regular dinner meetings are
second Mondays 6 – 9 pm



Harry's Hofbrau

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