



WRITERSTALK

Volume 16
Number 9
September 2008

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club

August Recap 16 Steps to Becoming the Author of an Award-Winning Book

by Bill Belew

The August meeting began with another of Dave's jokes, the success of which was, as usual, measured by groans from the audience. "Getting worse by the month," one member observed. "Staying up all night to come up with these?" quipped another.

Announcements:

- Dave welcomed everyone and pointed out we are one year shy of celebrating our 100-year anniversary.
- We have 212 members but are expecting some attrition as renewals are now due.
- A reminder about critique groups.
- Gratuity jar for restaurant staff.
- Presented the new executive committee: Dave LaRoche, president; Bill Baldwin, vice president (also responsible for programs); Rita St. Claire, secretary; and Rich Burns, treasurer.
- Sarah Aurich is networking chair for critique groups.
- Bill Baldwin reminded us of the open mics that are ongoing.
- Cathy Bauer made a pitch to buy into the raffle to help pay for the dessert, which she selflessly prepares for each meeting. Love them brownies and cookies, we do ... with nuts. Yum!
- Membership renewal reminder from Dave. Of 212 on the rolls, 170 have already renewed. Membership means getting *WritersTalk* and discounts for workshops and conferences. Those who do not renew by August 15 will lose these privileges.
- Cathy introduced guests, new members, and successes.
- Bob Garfinkle announced the winners of the 3rd Basil Stevens Memorial Award. First place, Art Carey, of Fremont; second place, Meredy Amyx, of San Jose; third place, Don Clark, of Yorba Linda, CA.
- Orders for the anthology will be taken starting in September; fliers will be available at East of Eden. Release is scheduled for first quarter 2009.



Dahr Jamail at the SBW podium.

The speaker for the evening was Dahr Jamail, international journalist and co-recipient of the 2007 Martha Gellhorn Prize for Journalism and author of *Beyond the Green Zone*.

Jamail started by expressing his gratitude for being able to speak about the writing

aspect of his profession and not about the content, that is, his experiences in Iraq.

What led Jamail from being someone with no particular interest in writing to being an author of a published book in its second printing and under contract for a second related book?

1. A love for writing. From early on Jamail said he collected quotes, one of which was from Ray Bradbury, "If you want to be a writer, write."
2. Find something you love—in Jamail's case, mountaineering in Alaska—and write about it. Don't we often hear, "write what you know"? Jamail started freelancing for a local newspaper, writing about his mountaineering adventures and experiences as a mountain guide, and before long, he had developed a following of readers.
3. Keep your ear to the ground. Jamail heard the drums of war and found that they matched the beating of his own heart.
4. Read. In Jamail's case, he found conflicts between the mainstream American news reports and the European news reports he was reading. It irked him enough to investigate.
5. Follow your rage. When something

Continued on page 10

South Bay Writers Anthology on Sale Now

Save 20% off the cover price by placing your prepublication order today.

See page 12 for details.

President's Prowling

by Dave LaRoche
President, South Bay Writers

Publishing, Who Needs It!

I think of my work published and the gratification it brings—the recognition, applause, and “pieces of eight.” Larry King, Charlie Rose, and Oprah are on my card and the orchestra plays late into the night. Wow ... only to be published.

I read a recent “Prowl” in *WritersTalk* and not past the first phrase, I was redlining: this could be better said, and that was incorrect. I don't need this *irrelevant* stuff and nix the passive voice; too many the's, and. Umm ... but too late, this was last month's issue. Oh, if I only had one more shot at it but there it is, passing or failing judgment as if carved into stone. Publishing, who needs it!

I consider style and occasionally think I have one. Some of my stuff is sassy and I have fun with it; at other times I'm as serious as a glacier breaking off. Once in a while my characters are obscene and sometimes, I'm told, entirely without redemption. And now I'm thinking, when I publish my *Beck Street*—five wastrels howling it up in the 60's of San Fernando Valley, burning the bennie-candle à la Hunter Thompson—how will I get my children's stories on the shelf? I might use a pseudonym, but then that horde of fans from the *Beck Street* release would not wait easily, or at all, for my next—there are expectations following a good release. Publishing, who needs it!

I sign a contract for my book and my agent sees his future in blossom, wants his name on my next and the one after that. The publisher is in line and the publicist too. There's promise of an option and a big advance; schedules are mentioned and I'm obligated for years. I bought a piece from an artist several years ago: Simbari. He was hot. Of course I liked the piece and borrowed the money but it wasn't a problem because I knew he would be famous and prolific and I'd soon have it back. Shortly after, he stopped painting for the market. He had signed a contract with his publisher to paint a certain way but he was growing as an artist and he wanted to change. Simbari was forced out of sight because of expectations on a contract and only recently has reentered the scene—some twenty years later. Publishing, who needs it!

Am I an introvert? I like nothing better than to head up to Tahoe and hide out with my laptop and thesaurus for a few weeks. It's quiet, I'm alone, and my muse runs absolutely untethered. I'll cook a stew that lasts days and spend my time writing, no distractions—well, some wind through the pines. It's a solitary, if small, slice, but I love it. Ideas form, and I get words on the paper that I smile at. Yep, it's just me and my muse in a freeing relationship. I think we're in love—a soul-mate kind of union that I hope will last forever. But here's the thing: when this piece is accepted by the market (of course it's what I want), there will be interviews and signings and talks at Kiwanis. There will be road trips on the cheap and nights in



Continued on page 13

Inside

Eat, Sleep and Read 4
Copyright for Authors: Fair Use and the
Creative Commons 5
View from the Board 6
The Journey of a Thousand Miles:
Plot Rules and Plot Rebellion 7

Accolades 7
Town of Claytonville 8
Announcing the SBW Anthology 11

California Writers Club South Bay Branch

— 0 —

Executive Committee

President—Dave LaRoche
pres@southbaywriters.com
408 729-3941

Vice President—Bill Baldwin
vp@southbaywriters.com

Secretary—Rita St. Claire
secretary@southbaywriters.com

Treasurer—Richard Burns
treasurer@southbaywriters.com

Central Board Rep

Dave LaRoche (acting)

Directors

Programs—Bill Baldwin
vp@southbaywriters.com

Publicity and Public Relations—Edie Matthews
publicity@southbaywriters.com
408 985-0819

Membership—Marjorie Johnson
membership@southbaywriters.com

Hospitality—Cathy Bauer
cathy@bauerstar.com

Historian—Clarence Hammonds
historian@southbaywriters.com

Networking—Sara Aurich
networking@southbaywriters.com

East of Eden Conference—Edie Matthews and
Kelly Harrison, co-chairs
eastofeden@southbaywriters.com

Open Mic—Bill Baldwin
408 730-9622

Webmaster—Ro Davis
webmaster@southbaywriters.com

Join With Us

We have a membership category that fits you.
Dues are \$45 per year plus a one-time \$20
initiation fee. Contact the Membership Chair,
Marjorie Johnson.



WRITERSTALK

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

Managing Editor

Richard Amyx
newsletter@southbaywriters.com
408 297-4438

Contributing Editors

Bill Belew
Una Daly
Carolyn Donnell
Andrea Galvacs (copyeditor)
Lita Kurth
Victoria M. Johnson
Jackie Mutz (copyeditor)

Submissions

Members of the South Bay Writers Club are encouraged to submit their creative works for publication in *WritersTalk*. Suggested word limits are not absolute; query the editor. Electronic submissions should be text or attached MS Word file sent to newsletter@southbaywriters.com; or mail double-spaced, typewritten copy to

Richard Amyx
994 No. 2nd Street
San Jose, CA 95112

Guest Columns

Almost Anything Goes (400 words)

News Items (400 words)

Letters to the Editor (300 words)

to Andrea Galvacs
lady_angal@comcast.net

Creative Works

Short Fiction (1800 words)
Memoir (1200 words)
Poetry (300 words)
Essay (900 words)

Accolades

accolades@southbaywriters.com

Announcements and Advertisements

newsletter@southbaywriters.com

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

Advertising is accepted on the basis of its interest and value to writers. Advertising rates for Club members, \$7 per column inch; non-members, \$10. We will assist or insist with layout.

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.

Change of Address: Send changes of address to the Membership Chair at membership@southbaywriters.com

Subscriptions: Nonmember subscriptions are \$20/year; send a check payable to South Bay Writers Club to the Membership Chair.

Circulation: 200

Copyright © 2007 California Writers Club South Bay Branch

Editor's Perspective

by Dick Amyx
Editor

Earth, Air, Fire, Water



“So,” Meredy said, “have you sent *WritersTalk* around to your editors yet?”

“Not quite,” I said. “I’m still thinking about writing an editorial.”

“Oh,” she said, “what’s your topic?”

“Beats me,” I said. Same thing nearly every month. The issue is all made up—except for this gaping white hole on page three.

Writing, as everyone knows, is easy. The hard part is figuring out *what* to write. I mean, seriously: where would Tolkien have been if the idea of a Hobbit had never crossed his mind?

About this time, our younger son Ethan returned home from his shift at Starbucks. He said hello to Meredy, and she responded by saying, “Give me six words.” I could hear it coming—as I’m sure you can—she was setting me up for one of those butthead writing exercises. Above Ethan’s head formed a balloon with the words “*Now* what the heck are they doing?” inside. (It is always good to keep one’s children on their toes.)

“Uh, earth, air, uh, fire, water,” Ethan said.

“That’s only four,” Meredy said, “but yes! Elements!”

“Of style!” I said. “*The Elements of Style*, by William Strunk, Jr., and E.B. White.”

“There you go,” Meredy said. “There’s your topic.”

And an eminently suitable topic it is. Nobody who fancies himself to be a writer should be without a copy of *The Elements of Style*, and I’ve held for forty years that anybody who fancies himself to be a writer should read *The Elements of Style* yearly to keep himself honest.

The original *Elements of Style*, self-published by Cornell University professor William Strunk some time before World War I, became known on campus as “the little book” (always said with the emphasis on “little”) because of its slim profile, and a little book it remains today, with the essentials of good writing packed into a mere 78 four-by-seven-inch paperback pages.

Its subject matter is organized under five major headings: elementary rules of usage, elementary principles of composition, a few matters of form, words and expressions commonly misused, and an approach to style (with a list of reminders).

“Vigorous writing is concise,” William Strunk said. “A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts. This requires not that the writer make all his sentences short, or that he avoid all detail and treat his subjects only in outline, but that every word tell.”

Strunk and White, as you might expect, adhere to their own principles rigorously, expressing the elements of usage, composition, and style in thirty-nine pithy rules. Do not join independent clauses with a comma. Choose a suitable design and hold to it. Keep related words together. Write with nouns and verbs. Be clear.

If you’re not familiar with *The Elements of Style*, I can’t urge you strongly enough to hurry down to your favorite bookstore and pick up a copy. It’s as entertaining as it is informative, and an essential element of any writer’s armamentarium.

Clearly, I could wax eloquent about *The Elements of Style* (or think I was waxing eloquent, anyway), but I’ll stick to Rule 13: Omit needless words! Omit needless words! **WT**

Eat, Sleep and Read Independent Bookstores in the Bay Area Part 2

by Carolyn Donnell

Last May in *WritersTalk*, I began a series of articles on independent bookstores in the Bay Area and featured the five stores in Half Moon Bay. In Part 2 I will concentrate on two stores much closer to the South Bay.



Carolyn Donnell
Contributing Editor

Drive down Lincoln Ave between Pine and Willow. Traffic slows in these blocks, with pedestrians, some with dogs, ambling down tree-lined sidewalks and over numerous crosswalks, passing historic buildings and shops that sell everything from aromatherapy to auto parts. Nestled on the east side of the 1300 block of this quaint lane are two of the more famous independent bookstores in the Bay Area: Willow Glen Books and Hicklebee's.

The first thing you see when you walk into Willow Glen Books is a four-foot tall bright red sign that says, in eight inch white letters:

EAT
SLEEP
READ

This is the motto for IndieBound, a recently formed association that supports independently owned businesses across the country. Willow Glen Books, along with Hicklebee's, is a supporting member.



Cathy Adkins opened Willow Glen Books in 1992. The store's mission statement declares: "We are dedicated to offering a one of a kind, full service, neighborhood alternative to the

Anytown, USA, bookstore." To fulfill this mission, they try to offer books not available elsewhere: local history and interest titles, books by Bay Area authors and self-published volumes by local poets. A section of the shelf space is devoted to area history ranging from California in general to Willow Glen specifically. Willow Glen Books also highlights titles by local authors and will sell a local author's book on consignment, but the author is responsible for all marketing (call the store for details).

SBW member Beth Wyman has a book there—*Hiram Morgan Hill*. A member of SBW for at least six years, Beth says, "Despite the encroachment of chain bookstores, Willow Glen Books has remained the staunchest advocate of local writers, including April Halberstadt, Jack Douglas, Marjorie Pierce, Frances Fox, Yvonne Jacobsen, Stephen Payne, George Espinola, Pat Loomis, yours truly, and many, many others."

Because the main emphasis is to offer more titles that interest their regular customers, Willow Glen Books stocks more general fiction, mystery, biography, and gender studies today, while westerns, romance, and true crime are at the end of the spectrum. Services that customers particularly appreciate include special ordering (they will order anything in print and save it behind the counter to be picked up), staff recommendations, and a frequent buyer program—spend \$100, get \$10 off on the next purchase. They also maintain a large variety of magazines, cards, journals, and gift items.

Events at the store include poetry readings on the second Thursday of the month at 7 p.m., a writers' group on the first and third Thursdays at 7:15 p.m., and a Women's Book Club on the fourth Monday at 7 p.m.

Willow Glen Books is located at 1330 Lincoln Avenue in San Jose; telephone 408.298.8141; website at willowglenbooks.com.

The second store is Hicklebee's Children's Books and Toys.

Hicklebee's is an independent bookstore specializing in books for children and young adults since 1979. Co-owners Valerie Lewis and Monica Holmes head

a nineteen-person staff with a combined experience of more than two hundred years in children's books. Their motto: "We match children to books!"

Hicklebee's is a member of, or recommends, NCIBA (Northern California Independent Booksellers Association), ABC (Association of Booksellers for Children—abcf.com), and SCBWI (Society of Children's Book Writers & illustrators—scbwi.org).



Valerie is very enthusiastic about IndieBound. The Declaration of IndieBound sets forth as its position "... to denounce the corporate bands which threaten to homogenize our cities and our souls" and "celebrate the powers that make us unique and declare the causes which compel us to remain independent." At indiebound/org, click on *Indie Bestsellers* to view the current bestsellers and *Indie Next List* (formerly BookSense) for recommended buys. While in this option you can find the nearest independent bookseller that has your title.

Hicklebee's many events and sponsored programs include:

- Wiggle-Friendly Stories with Margaret More on Wednesdays 11:00 a.m.
- Child or Teacher's wish list. Even have a baby register.
- Author events at the store or in your school
- Books for your school library by shopping at Hicklebee's!
- Hicklebee's book fairs

Accolades include:

- Bay Area families as the Best in Kids' Book Stores for 2006.
- Inducted into BAP's Hall of Fame for winning a Family Favorite award 3 years in a row.
- *San Jose Mercury's* Best Independent

Continued on page 13

Copyright for Authors: Fair Use and the Creative Commons

Part III of III

by *Una Daly*

In this final article of the “Copyright for Authors” series, the concept of fair use, or how to legally incorporate copyrighted material into new work, will be discussed.

When possible, it is always preferable to receive permission to use copyrighted materials, but when cost or other circumstances prevent it, fair use law may apply. In addition, a new alternative to traditional copyright, Creative Commons licensing, which allows authors to invite others to reuse their work while still retaining certain rights, will be introduced.



Una Daly
Contributing Editor

Fair use (Section 107) of the federal copyright law (Title 17) is one of the most important and least understood restrictions on the exclusive right of copyright holders to copy and distribute their work. It states that the reproduction of a work by others may be considered for the purposes of criticism, comment, parody, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research, but the true test of what constitutes fair use are the court cases that have been decided since its inception.

Assistant professor of English at Mississippi State University Brad Vice discovered this first hand when he inappropriately used material from a book published in 1934 in his short story collection. This action caused him to be stripped of the Flannery O'Connor Award for short fiction and caused his short story collection to be recalled. In an email message to *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, he wrote: “I made a terrible error in judgment by omitting to acknowledge this due to my ignorance concerning the principle of fair use.”

Four Factors of Fair Use

In deciding whether the incorporation of copyrighted material without permission constitutes fair use or copyright infringement, judges look at four factors. First, the purpose of using the copyrighted material must be examined. The use of copyrighted material

for commercial gain generally causes a more stringent enforcement than the use of such materials in a nonprofit educational context. Regardless of purpose, attribution of the copyright holder is required and disclaimers that dissociate a work from the borrowed work will not establish fair use.

The nature of a creative work is another factor that must be considered. Copyright infringement of factual information may be more leniently enforced than that of fictional work because the public may benefit from the expression of these facts. In addition, the misappropriation of unpublished work would be deemed far more damaging than that of already published work since the author has not yet chosen how or whether to publish.

The amount of the work that is incorporated can also have a strong influence on fair use interpretation, but the recognition value of what is used must also be considered. For example, if the title line from a copyrighted song is used, it will probably be more harshly treated than the use of a longer but more obscure passage. One interesting exception is in the parodying of copyrighted materials. A much larger and more memorable selection of a work may be permitted in order to clearly identify what is being parodied.

The fourth factor identified in the law is the effect on marketability of the copyrighted material. If the use of material can be found to affect the potential income of a copyright holder adversely, an infringement judgment is more likely. Parody is once again an exception here, and the claim that parody of a product made it less appealing to the public has not stood up in court.

Although the law identifies four factors, a fifth but unspoken factor has been seen to operate behind the scenes and depends on whether the use is perceived as good or bad. For example, a case involving the use of the plain, homespun Cabbage Patch Kid dolls as gruesome and evil images on greeting cards was interpreted as damaging to

the wholesome Cabbage Patch image and hence an infringement of fair use.

Creative Commons

A new form of copyright licensing allowing reuse of materials given certain restrictions was defined in 2001 with the founding of Creative Commons. This movement was catalyzed by the so-called “Sonny Bono copyright extension law” (1998), which extended previous copyright terms by 20 years, but in fact dissatisfaction with existing copyright law had been building with the rise of the Internet and the ease of exchanging music, photos, and videos in this new medium.

Creative Commons licensing allows authors to select from a continuum between full copyright “all rights reserved” and public domain “no rights reserved” when publishing their original works. Specifically, authors may choose from a set of four conditions that they can apply to their work when licensing it through Creative Commons. “Attribution,” the most lenient of conditions, requires only that others who reuse your work give you credit. “Share alike” specifies that users of your work license their works so it may be used under identical terms. “No derivatives” allows redistribution of your work but only in the original form. “Non-commercial” restricts the reuse of your work to non-commercial applications only. A number of different licensing options may be derived from combining attribution with the other three conditions and are explained in detail at the Creative Commons website.

Although Creative Commons licensing is most heavily used in the music and art industries, it is also taking a strong foothold in web publishing, including writing. It allows artists to choose less restrictive copyright options that can improve the distribution of their work while allowing them to retain important rights.

Summary

In this series of articles we have dis-

Continued on page 11

View from the Board

by *Dave LaRoche*

Your bard and accompaniment met August 6 to once again upgrade our verse. In attendance were the usual players: Dick Amyx, Bill Baldwin, Cathy Bauer, Rich Burns, Ro Davis, Marjorie Johnson, Edie Matthews, Rita Horiguchi St. Claire and yours truly, Dave LaRoche.

Rick Brost's successful exit from surgery was remembered and Tom Mach, a South Bay founder, was recognized with an Emeritus Membership. Both were sent "officiating paper."

Reports

President:

- Jamie Miller will participate as co-chair of the young writers effort (committee to be named).
- A workshop chair is needed.
- The Executive Committee is moving along with this year's agenda expecting to have it ready for the October meeting.

Vice President:

- Pre-EoE workshop will occur on Aug 17 as planned, 10 to 3 at the Lookout.
- Future programs include: Steve Bhaerman and costume contest in October, Norman Solomon in November, Holiday Bash in December, and a workshop (yet to be defined) in January.
- Due to the (EoE) conference, there will be no regular dinner meeting in September.

Secretary:

The minutes are taking on a little different look in an effort to make them easier to read.

Treasurer:

After several calls to 911 for chest palpitations, a case of bicarb and a trip to a therapist, he has resolved the quarterly reporting challenge. He has also transferred account ownership and signatory and passed out (this night) a report giving summary visibility of our financial status—which, from all perspectives available to laymen, looks darned good. He will be out of town (recuperating?) Aug. 15 thru Sept. 2.

Central Board Representative:

Everything's on course at State, including:

- Continuing review of reimbursement policy.
- Continuing review of new branch admittance policy.
- Continuing review of centennial opportunities.
- Continuing brief comments on copublishing with a commercial publisher and shared revenues.
- E-business approval.
- Unanimous adoption of officers slate 2008–09: East Sierra's Casey Wilson, President; Mt. Diablo's David George, VP; OC's Carol Celeste, Secretary; and Tri Valley's Kathy Urban, Treasurer.

Membership:

- As the PO Box is the minimal (and most economical) size, EOE contest submittals should be directed to that chair's address, at the next go-around, to mitigate the daily box evacuation and its attendant costs in time and transportation.
- Membership roll is 213 with 167 renewed for 2008–09 on this night—more renewals sought and expected.

Open Mic:

- Santana Row meet—8 readings
- Pruneyard meet—9 readings
- Sunnyvale meet—12 readings
- Almaden meet—13 readings
- July 4th reading canceled due to bright lights and extreme noise.

WritersTalk Managing Editor:

- July issue of 24 pages included a pull-out for East of Eden Conference of 8 pages.
- Press run was 242 including 210 to members, 17 complimented to other branches, and 15 extras for a total cost of \$290.02.
- EoE should transfer money for their costs (pull-out) to the club's main account.

Webmaster and Pre-EoE Workshop Chair:

- Forum sharing with SF Peninsula has not yet occurred—mouse in their hole.
- Master lists (available, but restricted, via the web site) are updated with new membership roster annually and occasionally in chunks as warranted by Ro's rationale and the roster's

astonishing growth.

- Web registration for the upcoming workshop will close on August 14. Payment at door is acceptable.

Hospitality:

- Five raffle items totaling under \$50 will be ready for August meeting.
- Cookies, less expensive and less trouble while every bit as scrumptious as those ol' brownies, will be this month's dessert.

East of Eden Chair:

- 133 registrants, to-date, puts us "in the black" and contest numbers also changing color.
- Next week brings ask-a-pro sign-ups, press releases, and notifications to radio stations.
- Two NY agents, now including Jeff Moore, are expected (one NY cancellation left no-refund air fare to somehow recoup or swallow hard).
- Registration cancellation refund policy will be re-examined in effort to prevent negative noise among members and fans.

Networking (absent) reported a proposal to:

- Invite members interested in critique to post their review objectives and email addresses on the Forum.
- Invite would-be signers to peruse "Read-me-First" and "Critique Group Etiquette" articles.
- Establish a web-based (on Forum) critique group for those sedentaries interested in the critique but not the physical activity.

Sara seeks feedback on these ideas.

Old Business

Honorarium Guidelines—remained tabled

New Business

A motion was passed almost unanimously (Amyx abstaining) to direct newsletter advertising revenues to the editing team to be used in a manner of their choosing.

Branch Improvement (a new and continuing topic addressed as a committee of the whole)

- Edie emphasized the need to orient meeting programs toward writing and publishing as that is why members attend.

Continued on page 13

The Journey of a Thousand Miles: Plot Rules and Plot Rebellion

by Lita Kurth

Having just returned from ten days of workshops and readings during the summer residency for my MFA program, I found myself trying to put my finger on what made the difference between compelling pieces and ones that didn't quite get there. I'm still pondering, and there may be no ultimate verdict, but here are a few observations.

One of the greatest difficulties in fiction writing lies in determining what the story is, where to begin, and when and where to parcel out the pieces of the



Lita Kurth
Contributing Editor

story—in other words, structuring the plot. Beginning writers seem to master the art of beautiful sentences and careful observation long before they master plot. Exceptions may exist, of course—people who spring from the ocean of writing fully formed, riding a half-shell toward the shore of publication—but their numbers are few. For most of us, the laying out of plot is a very difficult matter. In my opinion, it's made more difficult by the promulgation of hard and fast rules that capture neither what happens in actual books nor the mysterious variety of approaches that satisfy readers.

In writing workshops and classes, one hears much lore about where and how to begin. According to a friend of mine and low-residency MFA grad, "The story begins after the brick goes through the window."¹ And to enforce that maxim, one instructor asked all her students to place their 2,000–5,000-word short stories on the table. She then removed the top five pages of each one and tossed them in the garbage. "Your story begins here," she said.²

Sometimes my first pages are merely warm-up, and readers are right to be impatient with too much singing of scales before the recital. However, as is

true for so many writing issues, more than one solution exists when you take a look at actual published works. If you want evidence of a slow wind-up, check out the beginning of Austen's *Emma*. Or slog through the tedious opening "book-end" of *My Antonia*, in which two boring guys meet on a train and chitchat. It took me years to get past that part and finally learn that afterward, a much more interesting story awaited. (Sorry to say, Cather returns us to the boring pair at the end.) I guess *My Antonia* is not exactly an argument for a slow start, but it does suggest that a slow start can at least be tolerated.

Undeniably, there's something wonderful about a story that grabs you by the tie, flings you in the car, and guns out of the parking lot before the passenger-side door is closed. Elmore Leonard's *Cat Chaser* is a bit like that. As is Octavia Butler's *Kindred* which begins, "I lost an arm on my last trip home." But although *Cat Chaser* rolled along with great speed and fabulous dialogue, toward the end it fell apart. I no longer believed the action, no longer liked several key characters, no longer cared what became of them, and found some loose ends tied up in a suspiciously too-neat way. Plot alone was not enough.

In the days before television and DVDs, when the city of London boasted at least one hundred daily papers and magazines³ and people whiled away the evenings with reading, long, slow books, even if not "literature," were welcome. You could take a paragraph to describe a teakettle as Dickens did. However, as I notice in traffic or at the grocery store, people (not including me, of course) are not so patient these days.

Does that mean we all have to write 250-page books? I don't think so. There's still room for more than one approach. Michael Chabon's lengthy *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay* (639 pages) is lovingly detailed, wide-ranging, and anything but spare. It found a pretty wide audience. And quiet little memoirs (remember Sue Bender's wonderful *Plain and Simple: A Visit to the Amish?*) garner readers too.

So why do broken rules sometimes work? Recently, I've been rereading Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, and her middle chapter, seething with non-

Continued on page 10

Accolades

by Jackie Mutz

It is hard to believe that September is upon us. I felt a little California autumn quasi chill in the air the other morning. Could be it's all in my head because my daughter headed back to school this past Monday. Or maybe I am ready for a change in weather? Back to the 100-plus degrees tomorrow as the weather person promises though. Ick! What is more exciting is the news I received from people this month:



Jackie Mutz
Contributing Editor

- Carolyn Donnell was notified that two of her poems will be published in the next journal from Story Circle.
- Kate Evans's novel *For the May Queen*, a story about a young woman's first year away from home in the college dorms, is coming out October 2008 from Vanilla Hear Press in Seattle. See beingandwriting.blogspot.com for more information.
- Maureen Griswold had her short story "Denouement on K Street" published on August 15, 2008, by the online magazine *Unlikely Stories*.
- Marjorie Johnson attended the Thirteenth International Conference on Fibonacci Numbers and Their Applications in Patras, Greece, in July 2008. She was awarded an honorary diploma from the University of Patras for her forty-five years of service to the Fibonacci Association and its academic mathematics journal *The Fibonacci Quarterly*.
- Susan Mueller is a published journal-

Continued on page 11

Basil Stevens Memorial Writing Contest Winners

First place: Art Carey (Fremont, CA), "Road Games"

Second place: Meredy Amyx (San Jose, CA), "There's the Windup"

Third place: Donn Clark (Yorba Linda, CA), "A Grand Day, 1851"

Town of Claytonville

by Valerie Whong

It had been bothering me all day—some kind of premonition I couldn't quite shake, almost like there was a dark cloud hanging over me. What was it? It blackened my mood. A feeling of anxiety washed over me like some kind of impending doom.

I had to get hold of myself and shake the bad vibes because I intended to have a good time. At least the weather was cooperating. It was a balmy spring night. I smiled. It was a perfect night for lovers. I checked my watch. It was 7:30. I still couldn't believe my luck. Things were suddenly going my way and I should have felt like a million bucks but something gnawed at my insides.

Blonde, gorgeous Thora, dressed seductively in a low-cut, vee-neck sweater and short, tight skirt, sat beside me in my brand new Thunderbird. I tried hard to concentrate on my driving, but I could hardly keep my eyes off the sensuous form beneath the tight dress. She winked at me, puckered her lips, and purposely ran her dainty fingers over her pearl necklace. She turned to drape a short-sleeved white jacket over her shoulders.

A slight breeze brushed against my left elbow, hanging over the window ledge. I adjusted my outside mirror and headed toward city center. Stars sparkled above. I gazed up toward the heavens and saw a shooting star.

Thora complained, "I'm warm. I'm going to take my jacket off." She folded the short jacket, placed it on her lap and leaned back. I hit a bump in the road, and reluctantly turned away from the enticing view.

A large billboard advertising a new freeway that had just been completed around the city caught my eye. The idea of driving my new car on a brand new stretch of road appealed to me. Thora must have sensed the excitement in my voice when I said, "Hey, look at that. How about it? Shall we try it?"

"Sure. Why not?" she grinned.

I raced along the turnpike, paying particular attention to the road signs

every few miles. I passed cars with noisy passengers and loud music blasting from their radios. Children in back seats laughed and waved to us as they drove by. This lifted my spirits. Thora shifted her position, and her thick lashes closed as she brushed against my right arm. Her breasts rose and fell with her even breathing. I looked in the rear view mirror. The speedometer went up to 60 mph and the city lights of Winnipeg slowly vanished from view, but I didn't care. As it got darker, I relaxed and leaned back in my seat, driving happily down the freeway, only marginally aware of exits bearing the names of familiar streets.



Illustration by Betty Auchard

Impressed by my car's magnificent performance, I hummed to the rock and roll music. I automatically reached over and drew Thora closer. I checked my watch again. We had been on the road for more than half an hour. My car floated smoothly on the road. Caught up in this ideal situation with Thora beside me, my mood lightened. I was happy, oblivious to our surroundings—until it dawned on me that we were the only car on the highway, with no street signs or exits in view. Although the road narrowed and it got darker, I wasn't concerned. I figured that eventually we would find a road or street to get off on.

I glanced at the fuel gauge, relieved that I had plenty of gas, about three-quarters of a tank. I applied more pressure on the gas pedal and the speedometer read 65. It was wonderful. Here I was with Thora, the girl of my dreams, and I was driving my new car. At 22, I found this feeling of independence overwhelming.

Fifteen minutes later, we were surrounded by complete darkness. It was

weird! Thora opened her eyes. She gazed, startled, turned and looked in every direction. Her eyebrows arched in confusion and puzzlement. "Vance, where are we? How come it's so dark? I don't see any other cars on the road."

"Don't worry! We're still on the turnpike. There don't seem to be any cut-offs. It shouldn't be much longer. Just relax." I tried to remain calm, but I was apprehensive. I stepped harder on the gas pedal and the speedometer went up to 75. I turned on the high beams and looked again at my watch. It was 8:30. I glanced toward Thora when she asked, "Can I turn on the overhead lights and put on some lipstick?" and it looked like her pupils flashed a frightening bright red. I shook my head to clear it. Were my eyes playing tricks on me? I gulped and then found my voice. "Go ahead."

Now I tried to concentrate harder on the road in front of me and sped up, hoping to encounter a policeman or something, anything to arouse attention, but nothing happened. I thought, great, when you need a cop they're nowhere to be found. Thora got through applying makeup, closed her eyes again and didn't say another word.

Moments passed slowly, and from Thora's deep breathing I could tell she had fallen asleep. Fifteen minutes later, the highway stopped. I lifted my foot slightly off the gas pedal to slow down because we had hit gravel road. Thora woke up momentarily, shifted in her seat and closed her eyes again. It was 9:00. I drove slowly. I breathed a sigh of relief when I saw a tiny, wooden road sign. "Claytonville—2 miles." I grinned, confident that everything was going to be fine. All I had to do was ask for directions, perhaps even stop long enough for a drink, turn around and head back. I thought that everything would work out after all, but I was wrong, dead wrong.

I slowed down to five miles per hour as we pulled into town center. Immediately I felt the same unease I experienced earlier. Something about this small town filled with luminous streetlights wasn't right. It was eerie. Overhead, neon signs flashed advertising small businesses. One was an ice cream shop, a real estate office and an old Chinese laundry. Since a

barbershop's door was open, I could see decorative beer light fixtures and an empty barber chair. Magazines and shaving essentials were scattered on a table next to the barber chair. It was bizarre. I scratched my head. What was going on? Why were cars abandoned? Especially vacant ones with headlights still on parked at the curbs. With the car doors were ajar and deafening music still blasting from the radios, it looked as if someone left in a hurry. Then, excited men's voices caused me to turn, but again, I saw nothing. There was no one around except for Thora next to me. I was mystified. Where was everyone? I drove slowly to search for some form of human life. I couldn't find anyone. Not one living soul. It was uncanny.

Suddenly high-pitched, loud grunts made me turn in the front seat. There was no mistaking it! Male voices. Yelling, screaming, hustling, grunting, sounds as though a fight was taking place, but how could that be? There was nothing, no life form, just a vacant ghost town under a starry sky. I shook my head. I couldn't see a thing. I broke into a cold sweat. As I sat dumbfounded, a chill ran up my spine. I searched for some sign of life but my gut feeling told me I had stumbled into a forbidden area. I knew we had to get out of here fast.

Thora woke up, stretched and yawned, "Vance, you've slowed down. Where are we? Are we going to stop?"

My heart raced, but I didn't want to alarm Thora so I said, nonchalantly, "A place named Claytonville, but no one's around. Look. Over there." I pointed to the empty cars.

Her shrill laughter gave me goosebumps. The deserted town and her odd behavior offered no comfort because I felt we weren't alone, almost as if someone was watching our every move. There was some kind of presence. Regardless, I wasn't going to stick around to find out. Our only chance of getting away was to make a U-turn and backtrack as fast as the car could go. I stepped on the accelerator and said, "Let's get the hell out of here."

Human laughter, screams and cries intensified as if we were in a secluded arena. My heart raced. For the first time in my life I was scared. This had to

be someone's idea of a joke. Thora's pupils again glowed the strange, bright red as she looked out at the vacant cars parked at the curbside.

I don't know how I did it, but moments later I managed to find the freeway. I had never been so happy to see anything before. Although we were surrounded by total darkness on the turnpike at first, I breathed a sigh of relief. I couldn't help wondering what that was all about. I turned and said to Thora, "Maybe we stumbled into some forbidden area. Do you think it has something to do with some kind of government secret project?"

Thora yawned, "I doubt it. If we had stayed, we probably would have found some people around. Now we'll never know. Really Vance, we should have stuck around."

"Not on your life. I'll come out again and check it out with Hank, Chuck and Bill tomorrow. Normally nothing scares me. Besides, I don't want anything to happen to you."

"You're being silly. Nothing would."

I wasn't convinced. I couldn't help smiling when in the distance I saw the glowing lights of the highway and said, "Let's forget about this nightmare. Let's go for a drink. I need one."

Next morning, around 9:00, determined to get to the bottom of this mystery, I took the same route with my three buddies. However, after driving nearly an hour we didn't run into the small town. "What the hell? What's going on? Where is Claytonville? It has to be here. This is about the right location. I'm certain of it." I stopped the car and stepped out. Everyone else followed. We began walking around the vacant stretch of land searching for the town of voices and lights I had seen the night before.

Big, burly, brown-haired Chuck teased, "God, man, are you sure you came here last night? Where is this place with all the empty cars?"

"Yeah. You tell us this cock and bull story, get us all excited, and now you can't deliver. How can we ever believe anything you say, dude?" Bill ran his fingers through his blonde hair and shook his head.

Redheaded Hank smirked. "Shit. I

want to see a real ghost town. Are you sure you weren't a little drunk out on your date with Thora? Maybe you were under her spell." He chuckled.

I didn't laugh. This was no laughing matter. I tried to retrace my tracks from last night, certain I was in the right place. First the perimeter, then the highway split up, total darkness and then the lit up town. If there was a presence here last night, there had to be some kind of evidence, clue, something. I bent down, hopeful that I could prove that I wasn't making this whole thing up. Touching soil, searching under a tree, I couldn't find anything out of place. No cigarette butts, paper scraps, old used tissues, anything.

"Hey man, you're nuts. There's nothing out here. Definitely not a ghost town, that's for sure! I feel like an idiot. What are we searching for anyway?" Chuck picked up a soiled paper cup and said, "Will this help?"

I took it from him, convinced that it was a sign of what I had seen. "See, I told you something was going on out here."

"Shit. That's only a piece of junk. It means nothing. Could have been here a long time. Or someone could have driven through and just tossed it out their car window. That paper cup doesn't prove a damn thing. Let's get out of here. Let's not waste our time hunting for a phantom town," Hank spat in disgust.

Bill, concerned, touched my shoulder. "Dude, I hate to ask, but are you sure this is the right location?"

"Of course." It didn't matter what I said because I could see I was losing my credibility. "Hey, guys. This is no joke. I did see a ghost town. Why would I drag you out here for nothing?"

The men walked back to the car. Hank said, "Okay. Convince me. When you find this ghost town," he chuckled, "let us know." He jumped into the back seat, leaned back and closed his eyes. "Shit, I had a hell of a night and now we came out here for nothing. I could be watching the football game right about now."

I didn't want to give up, and continued to look, kicking the ground trying to envision the whole episode. This wasn't just my imagination. Places like this aren't here one minute and then gone

the next. They don't just disappear. How bizarre! Twelve hours earlier a noisy, lively town without people stood at this site. Was I going out of my mind? If I couldn't find anything concrete, that's how it was going to look. Surrounding us was just emptiness, barren land with many trees stretching miles and miles as far as the eye could see. I couldn't believe it. How could I be wrong? This was becoming worse than a nightmare! Defeated and discouraged, I headed back to the car. "Come on guys. I know this looks bad but you have to believe me. It was like I said it was. Something strange was going on out here last night. If you don't think this is for real, we'll pick Thora up and she'll tell you I'm not kidding. After all, she was with me." I smiled, confident that she would set the guys straight.

Chuck's head popped up from the back seat. "You're on. I'd like to see what Thora looks like. I heard she's a knockout. What do you say, guys?"

An hour later, at Thora's apartment, no one answered when I rang the doorbell. Chuck tried the doorknob, pushed and it opened. He said in astonishment, "Hey. How many women leave their doors unlocked? Maybe she's expecting someone."

We all stepped inside.

Bill said, "Hey, where is she? Are you sure this is the right place?"

"Of course I am. I dropped her off here last night, didn't I?"

Thora's apartment was empty except for two large bags of garbage in the middle of the living room. Hangers were visible in the closet.

"What the hell? Looks like someone left in a hurry. Vance. Okay, the joke's over. We fell for it." Bill scratched his head, puzzled.

I had to admit I was feeling the uneasiness again. Was all this tied together somehow? I stared at Bill but I couldn't speak; nothing would come out.

From behind me I barely heard Hank laugh, "God! Look at him. He's losing it. Even this woman is something out of his imagination. We better take him to a doctor fast."

I struggled to break free when someone grabbed me and tossed me into the back

seat of my car. Hank took the wheel. As he sped up to pass a black car on the highway, I tapped on the window because of the words I saw on the car's license plate. But no one paid any attention to me when I yelled for them to stop. If they had, they would have seen "Claytonville USA." WT



Valerie Whong is the author of *The Jade Rubies*.

Journey, continued from page 7

action and sporting the enticing title "Time Passes," is definitely one of those approaches that should not work. But it's a beautiful chapter. Even though the key subjects, the key characters, are entities such as "wind," "imagination," "air," and "light," except for one cleaning woman who does no more than clean up a house (without sex or violence), it's still beautiful and poignant.

These successfully broken rules can be dumbfounding, but when I contemplate the examples from published literature and workshop pieces that "worked," I feel they carried the writer's true conviction. They felt as if the writer believed his or her words and had lived deeply in that world (even if it was an imagined world and to live in it was empirically impossible).

Without a doubt, it's important to master plot if you want to publish more than beautiful fragments, but maybe more important is to delve down and bring forth something that feels alive to you. It might be sweet, precious in a vulnerable way; it might scare you or make you a little sick. It might have obvious imperfections that readers will note. But most will forgive, and such a book will be worth working on. WT

¹ Our name is legion.

² As reported by Kristen Iverson in an East of Eden workshop about six years ago.

³ Yes, it really did. I looked it up.

Recap, continued from page 1

- makes you mad enough, do something about it. Jamail became "outraged" when he saw the inconsistencies in the news reporting and decided to do something, go somewhere, find out for himself.
6. See for yourself. "I wanted to see for myself," Jamail said, so he headed for Iraq.
 7. Set goals. He had a plan: to look around in Iraq and send email about and photos of what he saw to his 130+ contacts back in Alaska.
 8. Dig deep. His trip to Iraq was self-funded. So, why can't you write about what you want to write about? Go where you want to go? What's holding you back?
 9. Have the right equipment. A ticket, laptop, camera, and small recorder are what Jamail carried.
 10. Just go and do it. "I started down the path and writing opportunities happened," he shared.
 11. Be flexible. He found his first interpreter in an Internet café at a hotel.
 12. Follow leads. A friend recommended that he post his material on the internet site electroniciraq.net. As it happened, BBC used electroniciraq.net as a source, and hired Jamail to write more.
 13. Live the dream. BBC offered to pay him to find what he cared about, what he was interested in, and he got to investigate it.

Perhaps it's inevitable that with a subject like Jamail's, both the talk and the questions that followed veered off into history and politics. There are three more steps in Jamail's journey, but he also observed:

- "Mainstream media is not interested in important stories as they happen." He felt he had stumbled upon news of torture months before it was reported openly.
- "Mainstream media is driven by something other than on-the-ground reporting."
- "Someone will run the stories if you try hard enough." In this case he found European outlets.
- "A writer can't help but be biased, to lose his/her objectivity."

Writing as an unembedded reporter

and offering biased observations, Jamail was awarded the 2007 Martha Gellhorn Prize for Journalism.

A few more steps:

14. During three and half months locked in a room with his girlfriend, he wrote his book.
15. He pored over his journals and blogs to create the first manuscript, which was eventually trimmed down to two-thirds of its original size.
16. The book got published for a better price than the publisher had initially offered him because he decided to let an agent negotiate the fee.

I learned some important lessons about writing a book from Jamail, the most important of which is just do it. WT

Sept-ic

Did you ever write
A “flop-eroo”?
Hard to assess, by you.
One’s work is like one’s
Precious child
(And who will admit
Their kids run wild?)

— Pat Bustamante

Copyright, continued from page 5

cussed the history of copyright from the original concept set down by the framers of the U.S. Constitution, who recognized the need to balance the rights of “authors and inventors” with the progress of “science and useful arts,” to more modern interpretations of copyright licensing. An understanding of the issue of copyright and licensing options is a critical element in the practice of our craft.

I hope that this has whetted your appetite for further information, some of which can be accessed from the links below. WT

References

1. copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html
2. fairuse.stanford.edu/Copyright_and_Fair_Use_Overview/
3. creativecommons.org/

AUTHOR’S NOTE: The author of this article is an educator and not an attorney. The legal information contained here is not meant as a substitute for seeking legal advice in specific situations.

Announcing the SBW Anthology

by *Meredy Amyx*

The SBW anthology project team is pleased to announce that orders are now open for the first-ever anthology of work of the South Bay branch of CWC: *Who Are Our Friends? and Other Works by South Bay Writers*.

The title story, by Swann Li, was published in the January 2008 issue and won a *WritersTalk* Challenge award.

Publication of the anthology is planned for the first quarter of 2009, to coincide with CWC’s centennial year. Target release date is February 1.

Work is currently under way in the long process of preparing copy for print. It began with a month of organizational work on the part of the core project team, following on decisions made and criteria set by the SBW Board: determining budget, devising process, inventorying all possible candidate content, and recruiting volunteers. The teams met and established their working methods and ground rules.

While design work was going on in one quarter, content work was moving forward in another. The editorial panel of nine SBW members spent the months of June and July reading and evaluating

Accolades, continued from page 7

ist, but like so many writers, worried that she could not write her thoughts in a way others could understand. So she started a monthly newsletter that began with her brother and now has a readership of seventy-five individuals who love it, which proves she can do the same with the novel she is writing. Keep it up!

- Steve Wetlesen has received yet another commission for a memorial piece of poetic art for a departed individual’s memorial service. Keep up the good work, Steve!

It is a good feeling to see one’s work almost in print. Another reason for you to send me your good news about those writing accomplishments. Email me at accolades@southbaywriters.com. See you at the East of Eden Writers Conference September 6th. WT

selections and arriving at its collective recommendations for those to be included. Most of the candidate contributions came from issues of *WritersTalk* published from January 2005 to June 2008. There were also forty direct submissions for consideration.

Meanwhile, correspondence was going out to all authors whose work was on the semifinalists list to make sure they were willing to have their previously published work considered and to confirm pertinent details.

The months of August and September were allocated for copy preparation. Each of the selected finalists has undergone a careful scrutiny by one or more members of the four-person editorial team, with consultations and exchanges—sometimes many!—with authors to get every little thing right. During this same period, more correspondence let the authors know the status of their work and requested bios for the back of the book.

A cover design was created, the order form designed, plans drawn up for promotional announcements, and an online order process established.

At present, production work has begun with the creation of page formats and templates and the handoff of edited, polished pieces to be laid in. At the same time, frontmatter and backmatter are being drawn up, including table of contents, preface, and introduction.

The last copy preparation stages will involve thorough, repeated checking of page content and format. Everything that can be done for the quality of this book will be done. Our aim is to have a book that the club will be proud of, both to showcase members’ work and to attract purchasers.

CWC members enjoy an advance-order privilege that will allow them a 20% discount off cover price if they order during 2008. As of January 1, 2009, the cover price of \$12.50 will be in effect.

All contributors whose work is included in the anthology will receive two courtesy copies. Additional copies can be ordered at the regular price.

You will find an order form on page 12 of this issue. Forms will also be available at East of Eden and at monthly meetings. You may order online at our website, southbaywriters.com. WT



The South Bay Branch of California Writers Club Presents

Who Are Our Friends?

And Other Works by South Bay Writers

An Anthology from *WritersTalk* 2005–2008
And New, Previously Unpublished Works



CELEBRATING CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB'S CENTENNIAL YEAR — 2009

Stories • Poems • Memoirs • Essays
by 35 authors from the South Bay Branch of CWC

PREORDER NOW

MEMBER DISCOUNT PRICE:
20% OFF COVER PRICE
Offer good until **Jan. 1, 2009**

Price goes up to \$12.50 in 2009

MEMBER PRICE

ONLY **\$9.95**

on prerelease orders placed in 2008
(publication: first quarter 2009)

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

No. of copies _____ @ \$9.95 each Merchandise total: \$ _____

+ California sales tax 8¼%: _____

+ Shipping & handling (see table): _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Qty	S & H
1-2	3.60
3-4	4.00
5-6	4.30
7	4.70
8-9	5.00
10	5.40
11+	Inquire

Make checks payable to **SBW Anthology** and mail to
SBW Anthology, PO Box 3254, Santa Clara, CA 95055

or order online at southbaywriters.com

President's Prowling, continued from page 2

hotels, and making nice to strangers with sweaty palms. It will be a tight schedule I had little to do with and, worst of all, my love affair is kaput. Life has become pushy and crowded and loud. Publishing, who needs it!

Fame and fortune are the author's dream, but may be his nightmare. Celebrity, I've come to learn, is when you give your keys to the locksmith for a hundred copies and your agent spreads them generously around. Your door is open and your soul belongs to the market. Publishing, who needs it!

Karen says—and I listen to her in spite of what you hear—she says you can only do the best you can do at a given point in time, and then you have to let it go and move on. So I will make myself a promise never to read a "Prowl" once it has been published and to adopt a broader look at success. Let's all get published soon, and often again, knowing that after the carnival has packed up and moved on, our muse is waiting lovingly, and not gone. WT

Autumn Whispers

A final burst of brilliance in a dimming sky
A song before leaving, silver swallows reply
A falling fading flower, cooling breezes sigh
A wistful burnished Autumn whispering Good-bye.
— Sally A. Milnor

SBW Anthology Needs Marketing Ace

The SBW anthology will go to press early in 2009. The club needs a capable and reliable person who has the sales and marketing experience to help with promotional activities such as the following (plus your own ideas, of course):

- Work with the SBW treasurer to maintain a list of orders and payments for order fulfillment.
- Propose and develop potential sales outlets and serve as liaison with them.
- Set promotional schedules.
- Work with the anthology core team to design promotional materials.

Bookstores, continued from page 4

- Bookstore in Silicon Valley award (3 years).
- California Association of Teachers of English, Award of Merit.
- CRA/IRA Literacy Award California
- *Metro Newspaper*, Best Children's Bookstore
- *San Francisco Chronicle*, Best Bookstore Award
- *San Jose Mercury's* Best Children's Bookstore Award

Hicklebee's is located at 1378 Lincoln Avenue in San Jose; telephone 408.292.8880; website at hicklebees.com. WT



View from the Board, continued from page 6

- As the board's "Powder Puff," Rita will note and formally track action items—none noted at this meeting.

Adjournment occurred at 9:00 with the understanding that there will be no board meeting in September unless special circumstances warrant one. Dave will notify.

Your board remains active and interested. Should this article prompt suggestions, please send them to your president at president@southbaywriters.com. WT

**WRITERSTALK
Challenge**

What Is It?

Twice a year, in March and September, 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
- Memoir
- Essay
- Poetry

Judging Periods

February 16 through August 15
August 16 through February 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; judges may not participate in the competition.

**WritersTalk Challenge
Awards to Be Made in
October**

Because there will be no general meeting in September, the *WritersTalk* Challenge awards for the judging period February 16–August 15 will be made at the October meeting.

**Professional Proofreading
& Light Editing**

- Articles • Book Manuscripts
- Book Proposals • Correspondence & More

Contact Jane at
408.723.0968

Directory of Experts

Do you have specialized knowledge that might help a writer bring authentic detail to a scene? If you are willing to share your expertise, send a message to networking@southbaywriters.com or to the club post office box. We will add your listing to our directory of experts.

Asia, Japan, China, Russia

Bill Belew
belew@panasianbiz.com

Astrology, Singing

Sara Aurich
saraaurich@comcast.net

Astronomy, History of Astronomy

Bob Garfinkle
ragarf@earthlink.net

Character Development

ArLyne Diamond, Ph.D.
ArLyne@DiamondAssociates.net

Character Traits

Jeannine Vegh, M.A. M.F.T.I.
ladyjathbay@sbcglobal.net

Computer Dingus and Full-Time Nerd

Jeremy Osborne
jeremy_w_osborne@yahoo.com

Counseling

Dr. Audry L. Lynch
GLYNCH7003@sbcglobal.net

Death Care

Rick Brost
rickpatrickb@sbcglobal.net

Doctors' Office Environment, OB-GYN

Dottie Sieve
pdrsieve@yahoo.com

Central Coast Writers Branch 2009 Writing Contest

For poetry and short stories.

Winners' awards: \$500 and publication (print and on-line) in the *Homestead Review* (Hartnell College).

Entry Fees: \$15 per short story and \$5 per poem.

Submission period: August 15, 2008 through November 15, 2008.

Guidelines and Info:
www.centralcoastwriters.org

Engineering: Mechanical, Aero, Aerospace

Jerry Mulenburg
geraldmulenburg@sbcglobal.net

Growing Great Characters From the Ground Up

Martha Engber
marthaengber.com
marthaengber.blogspot.com

Hospital and Nursing Environment

Maureen Griswold
maureengriswold@sbcglobal.net

Internal Medicine/Addiction Disorder/Psychology

Dave Breithaupt
dldbmlb@comcast.net

Mathematics: Teaching and History; Fibonacci Sequence

Marjorie Johnson
Marjohnson89@earthlink.net

Police Procedures

John Howsden
jwhowsden961@yahoo.com

Profile Writing

Susan Mueller
susan_mueller@yahoo.com

Teaching and the Arts

Betty Auchard
Btauchard@aol.com

Television Production

Woody Horn
408-266-7040

Creative Writing Workshop Santa Clara Adult Education

Two five-week sessions beginning September 8th and October 13th Monday nights 7-9 pm. Come exercise that writing voice! Contact Jackie Mutz at j_mutz@yahoo.com or see www.scae.org for details.

Bruce Meisner Photography & Digital Design

- Author Face Shots
- Business Cards & Brochures
- Book & CD Covers
- Web Pages

408.947.9175
www.bmeisner.com

CWC

Around the Bay

These are the published meeting times and locations for the 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: Meetings are held from 10 a.m. to noon on the third Saturday of each month, except for July and August. Unless otherwise noted, our meetings are held at Barnes & Noble bookstore, in Jack London Square, Event Loft, Oakland.
berkeleywritersclub.org

San Francisco/Peninsula: Meets on the third Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to noon at the Belmont Library, 1110 Alameda De Las Pulgas, Belmont.
sfpeninsulawriters.com

Central Coast: Meets on the third Tuesday of each month except December at Buzzard's Backyard BBQ, adjacent to the Travelodge, 2030 N. Fremont, Monterey. The dinner hour begins at 5:30 p.m. and the program begins at 7 p.m.
centralcoastwriters.org

Mount Diablo: Meets the second Saturday of each month, except July and August, at 11:30 a.m. at the Hungry Hunter Restaurant, 3201 Mount Diablo Boulevard, Lafayette (corner of Pleasant Hill Road and Highway 24).
mtdiablowriters.org

Tri-Valley: Meets the third Saturday of each month, except July and August, at 11:30 a.m. at the Oasis Grille, 780 Main Street, Pleasanton.
trivalleywriters.com

Sacramento: Meets at 11:00 a.m. the third Saturday of every month, except July and August, at Luau Garden Chinese Buffet, 1890 Arden Way, Sacramento 95815.
sacramento-writers.org

Marin: Meets on the fourth Sunday of every month at 2 p.m. at Book Passage in Corte Madera.
cwcmarinwriters.com

Redwood: Meets the first Sunday of the month, from 3 to 5 p.m. at Marvin's Restaurant, 7991 Old Redwood Highway, corner of William St., in Cotati.
redwoodwriters.org

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5 East of Eden	6 East of Eden
7 East of Eden	8	9	10	11	12 7:30P Open Mic Borders Books Santana Row, San Jose	13 10:30A Editors' Powwow
14	15 WritersTalk deadline	16	17	18 7:00P Open Mic Barnes & Noble 3900 Mowry, Fremont	19 7:30P Open Mic Barnes & Noble Pruneyard, Campbell	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 7:30P Open Mic Borders Books Sunnyvale	27
28	29	30	September 2008			
Future Flashes		October 14 Annual Costume Contest Steve Bhaerman				

Stay Informed!

Sign up for the SBW Email List to receive meeting and event announcements.

www.southbaywriters.com

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

For Fremont Open Mic contact
Jeannine Vegh
ladyjatbay@sbcglobal.net

or

Bob Garfinkle
ragarf@earthlink.net

SBW Poets

The San Jose Poetry Center is turning its eyes toward SBW with an interest in showcasing our poets at its monthly readings. PCSJ's host and member of South Bay Writers Linda Lappin is making a personal request. Are you a poet? Would you like to read your work? If your answer is yes, contact Linda by email at captainlappin@netzero.net and have a look at PCSJ's website, www.pcsj.org

SBW Writers' Forum

Events
Conferences
Contests
Networking
Resources
SBW Author Events
and News at

southbaywriters.com

San Jose Poetry Slam (Est. 1998)

8:00 p.m., \$6.00

First Tuesday: Open Mic with music by Rebelskamp

Second and Fourth Tuesdays: Poetry Slam with music by Jay Rush

Third Tuesday: Head-to-Head Poetry Bouts with special guests.

At The Britannia Arms
173 W Santa Clara
Downtown San Jose
www.sanjosepoetryslam.com

Poetry Center San Jose Readings

First Gallery downtown
Willow Glen Books

Cosponsored by the
Creative Writing Department at
San José State University

Free admission.

See www.pcsj.org for featured guests and details.



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

MAIL TO

Address Correction Requested

No Monthly Meeting in September

Instead, go to the

East of Eden Writers Conference

September 5, 6, and 7, 2008
in Salinas, California

Walk-in registrations accepted;
day rates available!

southbaywriters.com

Order your South Bay Writers Anthology

now!

See page 12

