



## JUNE SPEAKER: ZOE FITZGERALD CARTER

### Heading off repercussions from what you wrote

by Colin Seymour

Allegations and mistakes you make in your memoir or novel can come back to haunt you -- and probably will if you're not wary enough going in.

Zoe Carter's memoir, *Imperfect Endings*, is about the painful decisions that she, her sisters, and others were compelled to make when her ailing mother sought assistance to commit suicide. Imagine all the repercussions Carter could have set off writing about that, from the family room to the courtroom.

Not all of us write about life and death at that level, but there is often trauma attendant to being published. At our June 14 dinner meeting, Carter will tell us how we might minimize that trauma, particularly if that publication is a tell-all memoir or similar expose. Carter will focus on "the legalities of memoir."

"This includes a discussion of what getting sued for libel actually means and how to avoid it," she says. "Also how to avoid the more common charge 'invasion of privacy.' I include a discussion of why a lawyer should vet your book, why your publisher won't defend you if you are sued, and the importance of having a wide-reaching disclaimer."

Does changing the names do any good?

"I think it can work both ways," Carter says. "I did change the names in my book and put a disclaimer on the front that explained I had changed the names -- given the fact that some of the dialogue that happened 30, 40 years ago was made up."

But that's no cure-all, she says. "People who write these thinly disguised novels  
*continued on page 2*

## May Recap May May Be Winging It

by Pat Bustamante

### FLASH

Talk about flash-writing! There was a flash-change in the Agenda for our Tuesday, May 10 meeting at the Look-out. Our chosen speaker couldn't attend due to health problems; Alice LaPlante, we hope, can be booked for some future date, as those familiar with her work are anticipating.

On short notice, our officers, as well as some inspired members, entertained us with intriguing topics and exercises, and renewed the *wandering mic's* batteries so no one missed a chance to contribute.

There were many announcements and bits of news to share at regular intervals. I leave it to the officers in charge of events-and-important-dates to fill-in at the end of this article...

### ELECTION TIME

We have major elections coming up in the club and membership renewals are

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## Turning a Blog into an eBook (Part 1)

by Rik Scott

Turning a Blog into an eBook: Part I

You've been blogging for six months or longer, and things are going well. You're seeing a daily increase in unique visitors and an even better increase in daily page reads. Your visitors are commenting on your posts, and perhaps arguing among themselves about what you have to say.

Life is sweet.

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## Candidates for SBW Office

The following are statements of 200 words or less submitted before the specified deadline by known candidates for SBW office. Candidates' statements are published exactly as received, without benefit of editing.

Nominations remain open until the time of voting, which takes place at the general meeting on June 14, 2011. Candidates will be given two minutes each to address the members at that meeting. In accordance with the bylaws, any

*continued on page 9*

## June Speaker *continued from page 1*

are not exempt from lawsuits. That can seem like a really good solution, but I don't think it always is."

Anyway, she adds, "a novel based loosely on a true story irritates me. I say either spill your guts or write a real novel."

Spill my guts and then empty my bank account by hiring a lawyer, eh? As if I haven't lost enough money on the writing project?

"I think most publishing houses with memoir do have a lawyer read through the manuscript," Carter says. "It's important that you, as the author, indicate if there's something that concerns you." In Carter's case it was a difficult sibling who was likely to be litigious.

You'd think a big-name publisher ultimately would stand behind you, especially if you don't deserve to lose, but you'd be wrong, Carter says. Even though her publisher was the eminent Simon & Schuster, the liability was hers, not theirs, and Carter saw how that can go when an in-law wrote about an abusive husband, after which he sued and won.

Disclaimers aren't as common as they ought to be, Carter says, noting a couple of notable scandals that could have been minimized by a thorough disclaimer.

"If Greg Mortenson (The Three Cups of Tea author who has admitted some fabrications) had said events were compressed to better serve the needs of the story, and 'my understanding of some events might not have been other people's' . . . it would have helped him.

"James Frey as well: If he could have said 'read the disclaimer,' I think he could have gotten away with it."

Her point though is not that we be rewarded for dishonesty but that we be rewarded for honesty.

"I do think there is a risk you run . . . in terms of offending the people you're going to have Thanksgiving with the rest of your life."

Even worse, if one part of your book gets blown out of proportion in the aftermath, "there's a risk of losing the entire story; you've pulled a thread out of the many things that happened, and that becomes the story." WT

# South Bay Writers Blog Novel Writing Contest

For lots of reasons that are well beyond the scope of any writing contest announcement 250 is the new 150. Bloggers know why this is. Ask one. But for the purposes of this contest, think flash novel. Novel in a bucket. Something like flash-fiction or flash non-fiction, um, fiction. But not just flashing.

Here's the challenge.

Write a novel that can fit in to a blog post of 250 words or LESS. It can be fiction or non-fiction.

Deadline is June 15th, 2011 midnight PST.

## First place - \$40

Winner will be announced at the SBW summer BBQ in July.

Submission should be sent by electronic mail (email) ONLY in word.doc or .docx or .rtf to:

newsletter@southbaywriters.com  
or  
wcbelow@gmail.com

Our magnificent team of regular editors will be the judges.

Winner and honorable mentions will be published in WT and ALL entries will be on the South Bay Writers Blog. Especially good entries are eligible for publication to an online network of blog sites with upwards of 3 million views monthly. WT

## Accolades

by Jackie Mutz

First of all, a congratulations is in order to the panel of eight local authors who will hold a presentation and book signing event on Sat. June 25, 2011 at 1:00--3:00 p.m. in B&N on 3600 Stevens Creek Blvd. in San Jose. Most of the participants are members of CWC. The group is diverse as are the genres. Check out the event which includes the following panelists:

1. Betty Auchard
2. Robert Balmanno
3. Martha Engber
4. Carter Multz MD
5. Audry Lynch
6. Greg Archer
7. Timothy Fitzgerald
8. June Chen



Jackie Mutz  
Contributing Editor

**Betty Auchard's** two books *Dancing in My Nightgown* and *The Home for the Friendless* placed in the Indie Excellence Awards: First Place for audio book: *Dancing in My Nightgown* with me as the reader and Finalist for *The Home for the Friendless* in two categories: one for memoir and for the book design.

**Audry Lynch** has had a busy spring celebrating many accomplishments. She was recently profiled on the NEA website. Go to <http://www.nea.org/home/41902.htm> to view the article. In March, lectured at the Sirs Luncheon at the Three Flames, was a fifth annual Steinbeck guest lecturer in Muncie, Indiana and in April spoke at the Widows and Widowers Club of Santa Clara County at the JCC in Los Gatos. Look for her at the Authors Panel event mentioned above on June 25th.

Our WritersTalk managing editor, **Bill Belew**, saw his network of sites grow to more than 49 million page views. Bill has offered to publish the winner of the SouthBayWriters Blog Novel Writing Contest at one of his sites. Details elsewhere in this newsletter.

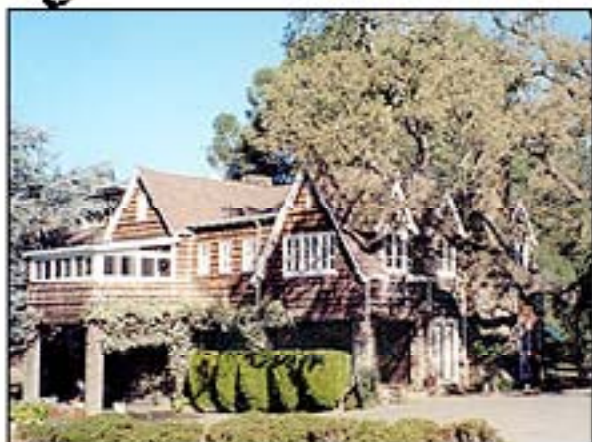
Please continue to email me at [accolades@writers.com](mailto:accolades@writers.com) with your writing success stories. Occasionally I miss a meeting and so am not privy to the news you share about your journey along the writing path. Look forward to hearing from you. WT

CWC South Bay

# Summer Writers Retreat

Westminster Manor, 512 Hemme Avenue, Alamo, CA 94507

Thursday September 1 – Sunday September 4  
Check in at 9am      Check out at 3pm



Price includes shared lodging, meals, all workshops, linen service, swimming, volleyball, ping-pong, hiking, horseshoes, meditative garden and labyrinth. Meal options with registration. Hours of writing time.

Members \$324  
Non-members \$379

## Workshops

Perfect Pitch  
World Building  
Birthing Your Book  
The Hero's Journey  
Blogging A Platform  
Writing A Book Proposal  
Character Archetypes  
Behind The Scenes  
The Profit Puzzle

Register at  
[www.southbaywriters.com](http://www.southbaywriters.com)

Register by mail with checks payable to  
CWC, South Bay Summer Retreat  
PO Box 3254  
Santa Clara, CA 95055

Reserve now; prior retreats sold out. \$174 holds your spot. Cancellations: prior to 07/28/11 receive a full refund less \$24; prior to 08/18/11 receive a refund less \$150; Cancellations after 08/18/11 are non-refundable.

# Craft on Craft: Rhetorical Devices

by Danita Craft

The power of threes can empower your writing. Just like a 3-punch combo can win a boxing match, a 3-hit power paragraph can improve your writing.

These techniques can turn tired flattened lines into triple hitters.

## Epistrophe

It's not a disease or a crumbling city of ancient Greece. Epistrophe is the repetition of the last word or words in three consecutive phrases or sentences. Here's how to use epistrophe to emphasize a point.

Her car was wrecked.

Her car was wrecked. Her marriage was wrecked. Her life was wrecked.

## Anaphora

Anaphora sounds like a clay vase or a rare species of python. It's actually the counterpart to epistrophe. Here's an example of anaphora used to expand an idea.

"I didn't want flowers."

"I didn't want flowers. I didn't want roses. I didn't want fuzzy thoughts and boundaries."

## Zeugma

Zeugma is neither a parasite, nor a trial drug for migraines. Zeugma is a construction in which a transitive verb has more than one object, or three different subjects share one verb.

Various species of Zeugma include hypozeugma and syllepsis. Here's how to Zeugmatize text.

## Syllepsis

Syllepsis is a type of zeugma that adds a touch of humor. Here's an example:

I served beer and wine.

I served beer, wine, and attitude.

## Hypozeugma

Hypozeugma makes readers wait for the verb. Hypozeugma changes this:

"Hey everybody, listen up."

to this:

"Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears." - Willy

## Epizeuxis

Epizeuxis is the repetition of a word for emphasis. Here's an example:

Max watched Carlton light the match.

Max watched Carlton light the match. Dumb, dumb, dumb.

There are more than 30 rhetorical

devices writers can use to tweak words into art. Revisit English courses and use some of these tools to play with text. Flat paragraphs deserve the flair that rhetorical threes provide.

Speaking Latin doesn't give you an edge on these techniques. You can use them without remembering their awkward names. Just remember, third time's the charm. WT



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## Renew Your Membership Now

Dear South Bay Writers Member,

It's that time of year again.

Renewal Reminder: The 2010-2011 CWC South Bay membership year ends June 30. Renewal dues \$45 keep you a member in good standing through June 30, 2012.

Benefits of membership:

Networking and fellowship with other writers

Hearing great speakers and attending workshops

Getting your creative work published in Writers Talk

Getting a free web page on the SBW website

Free advertising for writers on the SBW website

Savings on dinner at regular meetings

Savings on conferences/seminars

Please send your basic information with your check for \$45 to  
**CWC South Bay, P. O. Box 3254, Santa Clara, CA 95055, Attn: Marjorie**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Genre \_\_\_\_\_

To pay by credit card, click "How to renew" on southbaywriters.com.

Write on!

Marjorie Johnson, Membership Chairman

# Poet's Page

## TERSE ON VERSE

by Pat Bustamante

First, fun with June...

"JUNE-ior: No Breeze?"

Raising Cain was hard for Eve:  
Abel was much easier.  
Summer's here and parents fear  
An offspring might be home & bored--  
Though our children are adored  
Making manuscripts is 'breezy-er..'"

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## Untitled

by Luanne Oleas

- Dark circles under doey brown eyes
- Ashen on your tawny skin
- Were there tears, harshly brushed away?
- Half moons of agony now waxing full
- Abused by a jet-lagged night
- Time stolen from daughters and lovers
- Lonely and sad
- The first day of school missed
- The anniversary unknissed
- All part of working for the man

## THE SOLITUDE HOURS

by Rev. Clarence L. Hammonds

"And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed." Luke 22:41 (NKJV)

The Solitude Hours, have paved the way of civilization  
They have been stepping stones; all of love and passion  
Paul was a prayer warrior. Yes, he was, he had it, too  
What you do, is plan a solitude hour; it will also help you  
Martin Luther once said, "Here I stand I can do no other."  
The Solitude Hours, can be with each sister and brother

"And He was withdrawn from them." And you do it, also  
Sometimes, with your new loyalty, it is needed, so you go  
It is your hour of prayer, any time; so you take it to heart  
Your hour of prayer, has courage to live by; so take a part  
You might not have, exactly one hour; and let it be, all day  
Keep a daily prayer in mind; it is the hour of time to pray

That is one part of these hours. Solitude it's you, alone  
However, text says, "withdrawn" every thing else, gone  
When withdrawing, do it to pray. That is called devotion  
It will be of great use, withdraw and it is showing action  
In my time of need, He is my helper, I'm in my solitude  
I keep myself praying in my solitude hour. I am no dude  
WT

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California Writers Club Annual

# PICNIC

**SATURDAY,  
JULY 30, 2011**

**1:00 - 4:00 P.M.**

**JOAQUIN MILLER PARK  
OAKLAND**



Join your fellow CWC members for an afternoon of food, fellowship and literary readings in the beautiful and historic park where CWC was born over a century ago. Open to all CWC members and guests. Hamburgers will be provided. Bring a salad, appetizer, side dish, or dessert to share, plus drinks for those in your party. Optional - bring a sample of your writing to share during our "open mic."  
For directions and details, go to [www.calwriters.org](http://www.calwriters.org)

## Recap

*Continued from page 1*

due so don't get confused and attempt to buy an officership; those come free. We want you to run. Yes, YOU!!

### GO TO IT!

We were served all sorts of challenges and inspirations for creativity, such as quoting short interesting trivia messages from real published famous authors, such as Jack Kerouac, and eventually had a chance to sum-up a life in 6 words: no, not Twitter, but following example-quotes from published material. Then many of the audience flashed back to lighthearted school-age enthusiasm. And some had to be scolded for talk-out-of-turn once or twice.

### SHORTER

Flashing-fiction gets shorter all the time..the 250 word "Novel Contest" WritersTalk is sponsoring, mentions something about a previous "150 words" sort of like, "80 is the new 50"? Or...ask Bill Belew what that means. The 6-word challenge came along later in the evening, just about as short a *Memoir* as can possibly be written.

### BLOG-IT!

There are many people who have blogs: some of them actually know what they are doing... for instance, putting new governments in Egypt, Syria, Libya and.. No wait that wasn't the point! Writers can really benefit from setting up a blog. Bill Belew can help with this if needed. Bill shared a very interesting offer he received because of his blog which has readers flocking to it. Astounding numbers! His resulting trip to New York and what he learned can happen next underscores why writers, who need to get their message/their art to as many people as possible, can do this the easy way. Blog it! Lots of fun and pay offs.

### POETRY-WINGS

Fun too, the flash-quick-course Edie Matthews gave the group for creating a poem out of many professionally-suggested mind-sets. Short notice caused interesting results!

If you missed this meeting you missed a very good stretch-of-the-mental muscles. WT

## View from the Board

by S. Halloran

Six of us – president Bill Baldwin, vice-president Colin Seymour, secretary Sylvia Halloran, membership chair Marge Johnson, Central Board liaison Dave LaRoche, and hospitality chair Danita Craft – met in Sunnyvale Wednesday night, May 4, 2011.

Officers' reports had been emailed to board members prior to the meeting.

Main topics for the evening were:

- Upcoming workshops, retreats and conferences
- Better use of website
- Newsletter format
- Barbeques and picnics
- Upcoming elections

Passed motions included:

- Approval of 4/6/11 minutes. (Johnson/Seymour)
- Invitation to webmaster Rik Scott to propose a price and time to move our website to Wordpress. (LaRoche/Craft)

All of our upcoming events – from Nina Amir's June workshop on publishing short-form writing to September's retreat at beautiful Westminster, from a session this October with Smashwords' Mark Coker to mounting the giant East of Eden Writer's Conference in late 2012 – inspire and excite us, and we hope you'll take advantage of the excellence they offer.

Summertime opportunities to connect with friends and fellow writers will be plentiful, and every connection strengthens our members and our branch. Plan to be involved and engaged as South Bay Writers explore the reasons we write and the ways we grow! WT



See page 8

## Directory of Experts

*Do you have specialized knowledge that might help a writer bring authentic detail to a scene? Send a message to [networking@southbaywriters.com](mailto:networking@southbaywriters.com) or to the club post office box and we will add your listing to our directory of experts.*

### Asia, Japan, China, Russia, Blogging

Bill Belew

[wcbelow@gmail.com](mailto:wcbelow@gmail.com)

### Astrology, Singing

Sara Aurich

[saraaurich@comcast.net](mailto:saraaurich@comcast.net)

### Astronomy, History of Astronomy

Bob Garfinkle

[ragarf@earthlink.net](mailto:ragarf@earthlink.net)

### Banking

Pam Oliver-Lyons

[polpa@prodigy.net](mailto:polpa@prodigy.net)

### Character Development

ArLyne Diamond, Ph.D.

[ArLyne@DiamondAssociates.net](mailto:ArLyne@DiamondAssociates.net)

### Engineering: Mechanical,

### Aero, Aerospace

Jerry Mulenburg

[geraldmulenburg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:geraldmulenburg@sbcglobal.net)

### Hiking, Backpacking, Scuba,

### Bicycling, Classic Cars, Running

Rick Deutsch

[MrHalfDome@gmail.com](mailto:MrHalfDome@gmail.com); 408-888-4752

### Hospital and Nursing Environment

Maureen Griswold

[maureengriswold@sbcglobal.net](mailto:maureengriswold@sbcglobal.net)

### Internal Medicine/Addiction Disorder/

### Psychology

Dave Breithaupt

[dlbmlb@comcast.net](mailto:dlbmlb@comcast.net)

### Library Science

Molly Westmoreland

[mulcarend@hotmail.com](mailto:mulcarend@hotmail.com)

### Marketing and Management

Suzy Paluzzi, MBA

[jomarch06@yahoo.com](mailto:jomarch06@yahoo.com)

### Mathematics: Teaching and History; Fibonacci Sequence

Marjorie Johnson

[Marjohnson89@earthlink.net](mailto:Marjohnson89@earthlink.net)

### Music, Art, Graphics

Benjamin Belew

[mephistoape@hotmail.com](mailto:mephistoape@hotmail.com)

### Teaching and the Arts

Betty Auchard

[Btauchard@aol.com](mailto:Btauchard@aol.com)

### I am an expert, too...in...

Your name and email address here

## Ongoing Critique Groups

### The Arm Wavers

Meets downtown San Jose on Wednesdays  
Contact: Georgia Platts – gplatts@comcast.net

Closed to new members at this time

### Writers' Salon

Meets in Santa Clara  
Contact: Edie Matthews – edie333@sbcglobal.net

Closed to new members at this time

### Le Boulanger Writers

Meets at Le Boulanger  
Pruneyard Shopping Center, Campbell  
Contact: Karen Hartley – Sew1Machin@aol.com

All genres; open to all

### Northpoint Critique Group

Meets in Cupertino  
Contact: Valerie Whong – valeriewhong@att.net

Closed to new members at this time

### Our Voices

Meets in Santa Clara  
Meets every other Tuesday  
7:15 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Genres: Fiction, nontechnical nonfiction, memoir

Contact: Dave LaRoche – dalaroche@comcast.net

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## Stay Informed!

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

southbaywriters.com

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### Valley Writers

Meets: Valley Village Retirement Center, Santa Clara  
Mondays 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Contact: Marjorie Johnson – marjohnson89@earthlink.net

All genres; open to all

WT

## Prose and Poetry Prizes

### 2011

from *The New Writer magazine*

**Closing date 30 November**

Established in 1997, one of the major annual international competitions for short stories, microfiction, single poems, poetry collections, essays and articles; offers cash prizes as well as publication for the prize-winning writers in The Collection, special edition of *The New Writer magazine*.

*Continued below*

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### South Bay Writers Open Mic

Read from your own work, from your favorite authors, or just come to listen.

Contact Bill Baldwin  
(408) 730-9622 or email  
wabaldwin@aol.com

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Back copies of recent issues of The Collection are available at the TNW website as well as single copies of the latest issue (current copy) TNW 106 - see below:  
<http://www.thenewwriter.com/subscribe.htm>

Further information on the annual Prose & Poetry Prizes including guidelines and entry fees at: <http://www.thenewwriter.com/prizes.htm>

Writers can enter online at our secure credit card server at: <http://www.thenewwriter.com/entryform.htm>  
Or, the entry form can also be downloaded from that page on the website and sent in the post with your entry.

The winners of the 2010 Prose & Poetry Prizes are listed on this webpage:  
<http://www.thenewwriter.com/prize-winners.htm> WT

## CWC Around the Bay

Published meeting times and locations for the other CWC branches in the greater San Francisco Bay Area. Be sure to check websites first for details.

**Berkeley:** Meetings are held on the third Sunday of each month, except for July and August, at 1:30 at the Oakland Public Library Main Branch.

[cwc-berkeley.com](http://cwc-berkeley.com)

**Central Coast:** The third Tuesday of each month except December at the Casa Munras Hotel, 700 Munras Avenue, Monterey. The dinner hour begins at 5:30 p.m. and the program begins at 7 p.m.

[centralcoastwriters.org](http://centralcoastwriters.org)

**Fremont:** Meets (except in July, December, and on holiday weekends) from 2-4 p.m. on the fourth Saturday of the month at DeVry University, 6600 Dumbarton Circle, Room 204, Fremont.

[cwc-fremontareawriters.org](http://cwc-fremontareawriters.org)

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

[cwcmarinwriters.com](http://cwcmarinwriters.com)

**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).

[mtdiablowlriters.org](http://mtdiablowlriters.org)

**Redwood:** Meetings are held on the first Sunday of the month (except for holiday weekends), from 3-5 p.m. at Copperfield's Books, 2316 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa.

[redwoodwriters.org](http://redwoodwriters.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](http://trivalleywriters.com)

**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](http://sfpeninsulawriters.com)

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## Turning a Blog

*continued from page 1*

You are clearly on the way to the Blogger's Spotlight.

Here's the big question: Is it time to start thinking about turning your blog—or parts of it—into an eBook that you can sell either on your blog itself, or on some larger market like Amazon.com?

If you're like many of us, your immediate response is... "Oh, no! Certainly not yet. I've got so much work to do, and..."

...and in point of fact, you're probably right. There is a lot yet to do. But, at the same time, if you're not thinking about the eBook in your future, you are probably missing a bet.

The mistake a good many bloggers make is not looking into the future. It's understandable. Blogging is such an immediate thing, especially if you're going at it full force, and posting between one and many times a day.

The push to write, edit, and post on a daily basis can easily rob the future through a frenzied focus on the present.

My advice? Don't get caught up like that. Be thinking—and planning!—now about the future of your blog.

If your readers have shown enough interest and loyalty to keep coming back... if they are telling their friends about your work, and if the search engines are pointing new readers to you, you're doing something right. You need to be thinking of how you will cash in on your blogging success.

The first thing you'll need to do is to ask yourself some tough questions, like these:

- Despite reader interest and loyalty, are all of your posts up to the quality you'd want for a book?
- Are your posts in an order that would work for a book, or do they then need to be massaged?
- Have you considered some kind of Cover Art (yes, even an eBook needs cover artwork).

- Do the graphics you've been using to highlight your points actually belong to you?

Getting permission for material you use, when needed, is essential, and is especially important if you intend to charge for your eBook. For example, here are some points I learned about from Nolo.com describing what constitutes "Fair Use":

- **Criticism and comment** — for example, quoting or excerpting a work in a review or criticism for purposes of illustration or comment.
- **News reporting** — for example, summarizing an address or article, with brief quotations, in a news report.
- **Research and scholarship** — for example, quoting a short passage in a scholarly, scientific, or technical work for illustration or clarification of the author's observations.



- **Nonprofit educational uses** — for example, photocopying of limited portions of written works by teachers for classroom use.
- **Parody** — that is, a work that ridicules another, usually well-known, work by imitating it in a comic way.

Are you getting the idea that this can be a little tricky?

Now, if all the work is your own, and you are self-illustrating—photographing, drawing, or painting—you can ignore this portion and move on to the next steps...

We'll talk more about this, next time, but for now, do some thinking, some

Check out the  
South Bay Writers

## Blog

southbaywriters.com

planning, some dreaming. You've got something to say, and eBooks are the wave of the future.

Get started now. WT

## Open Mic Schedule

1st Fridays

Barnes & Noble Almaden Plaza

3rd Fridays

Barnes & Noble Pruneyard

4th Fridays

Borders Sunnyvale

7:30pm - Cows go home

## Meetups

Did you know that there are more than 200 members at SBW Meetup? Some of these are CWC members, many are not.

This Meetup is also connected to other writing/blogging related groups that number nearly 1,200 members! And the Meetups meet in physical locations several times a month.

### Got interest?

[www.meetup.com/South-Bay-Writers](http://www.meetup.com/South-Bay-Writers)

## Summer Retreat Registration Now Open

If you are already registered, make sure your writing buddies and critique pals register or reserve a spot.



## Candidates *continued from page 1*

unopposed candidate will be declared elected. If any office is contested, written ballots will be used. The term of office for the newly elected Board will commence on July 1.

Meredy Amyx,  
2011 Nominations and Election Chair

President  
**BILL BALDWIN**

Again I am running for President of South Bay Writers.

It can be challenging. It takes a special talent to work with diverse people who have diverse ideas of where the club should be heading.



SBW is one of the largest branches of the CWC. We've had some great accomplishments, including the East of Eden Conferences. I'd like us to build on our past successes to build an even better club than can help you succeed as writers.

I'd like to help create even better meetings, workshops, and retreats, with higher profile speakers. I'd like to promote our meetings and our Writers Talk to a wider literary audience.

And I'd like to promote some new high profile special events: An annual writing contest, an annual holiday awards banquet with special guest speaker.

And I'd to energize us all to a new level of prestige in the South Bay, perhaps including educational outreach to the wider community.

With your vote and your help, we can move South Bay Writers forward, together.

Thank you.

Secretary  
**SYLVIA E. HALLORAN**

I was that shy person sitting in back, so I could exit in a hurry. I came late to minimize conversation. I chose the side of the table closest to the speaker, to turn my back on fellow diners during the presentation. I took walks during the break so I wouldn't have to interact,

and I left quickly at meeting's end, so nobody would talk to me.

This was my pattern for years. Then I was discovered.

Last May, Meredy Amyx approached, as if she knew me. She smiled, as if she liked me. She asked if I'd run for office, as if I were capable and valuable.

I hadn't been invisible. My shadowy attitude hadn't disguised me. When asked, I found I really, really wanted to be part of the group.

I've loved attending board meetings and keeping minutes. I've loved helping plan events and seeing what's involved in a club's success. I've become friends with folks who understand how Cal Writers Club works statewide, and I've had a front row seat for interesting interactions.

I would love to continue in the office of Secretary, if you'll let me.

But I'll still sit in the back.

Treasurer  
**RICHARD A. BURNS**

I'm shy, but I participate anyway, a head-in-the-clouds writer as well as a former engineer. I'm good with adding and subtracting. What else could you ask for in a treasurer? Well, my attendance is steady, for starters. I'm scrupulously thorough and honest with club money. I have a three-year history as Treasurer, though I'd dearly love to see different character come along inspired to take on this role. (Diverse help--fresh blood--from more than a few people is the key to a great club.)

I intend to continue to generate on-time reports; keep and archive accurate records; make prompt disbursements and track new expenses; track the financial balance so it stays healthy. The key thing I add, as I see it, is to always ask your Board "How does this decision to spend money improve our members'



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writing?" I encourage expenditures that obtain top-of-the list speakers. I wish to improve on how I actively support a healthy atmosphere of optimism, good cheer, and camaraderie.

Member-at-Large  
**SALLY A. MILNOR**

Like so many of our members, I joined our Club after a wonderful creative writing course, taught by Edie Matthews. I believe the year was 2003, and we were then meeting at Harry's Hofbrau. I was impressed by the friendliness of our group, and the interesting and inspirational speakers who came to our meetings. I write fiction, poetry and haiku, and I have been very happy to see my work published, from time to time, in *WritersTalk*.



The Board Member at Large functions as a liaison between the members and the Board. For the past few years, along with our Treasurer and Membership Chairman, I have been at the registration desk at our monthly meetings, where I have met and enjoyed talking with many of our members. I am a retired attorney, and I was Executive Director of various Trial Lawyers' Associations (from 1990 through 2010). This experience should help qualify me for this position. Over the years, I have benefited from our Club, and, if elected, I will do the best I can to convey your concerns and ideas to the Board. WT

# Open Call for Stories

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## Nose Rags

by Betty Auchard

An assignment I hated even more than washing my own sheets was nose rag duty. Nobody got out of it. If a girl was old enough to follow instructions, she had to take a turn, and at eight, I was old enough.

Mavis, one of the big girls, worked with two of us little girls to make a big pile of cloth squares for any kid who had to blow. We tore soft, worn-out bed sheets into twelve-inch pieces. They weren't hemmed, so loose threads sometimes got sniffed up a nostril to cause a sneeze tickle that almost blew our brains out. Some of the more creative girls pulled the threads away from each edge to make fluffy fringe. Mrs. Stone said, "Girls, that's not necessary. Get on with it."

"But fringe is fun," Mavis said, "and it makes the torn edges look nice."

"Fringe takes too much time. Children need to blow their noses, so you've got to make hankies faster."

After Mrs. Stone was gone, Mavis said, "I don't know about you kids, but I'm making fringe anyway, because a fake handkerchief should look nice."

Since she was older, we did whatever Mavis told us to do. Besides, adding fringe made a boring job fun.

We worked as fast as we could whenever Mrs. Stone stopped by to check up on us and a lot slower when she was gone. We finally put a finished pile into bins that tilted out from the wall. They looked like Grandma Blanche's flour container. One was labeled CLEAN and the other was labeled DIRTY. The clean bin was filled to the brim with rags that we could grab anytime the need occurred.

We blew into each piece more than once, wadding it into a ball after the first blow. When we felt a sneeze coming on, we would unfold it in a big, fat hurry and hunt like mad for a dry place.

We did that over and over until there were no dry spots left and the rags had become deformed clumps. Then they were tossed into the dirty bin. While it was getting full, the clumps dried into crispy shapes that looked like my kindergarten art projects.

Used squares sometimes showed up where they weren't supposed to be. "Who dropped this on the floor?" the housekeeper would ask the air. "And



who threw this into the wastebasket instead of putting it where it belongs?" We all did our best to look innocent and never admitted to breaking the nose rag rules.

The kids with the worst colds and the messiest rags would tease others by threatening, "You'd better be nice to me or I'll touch you with my icky hankie!" A girl named Clarabelle was too lazy to go upstairs to get a fresh one. She had such a bad cold that she could hardly find a spot for blowing. "My goodness, Clarabelle," said Mrs. Stone. "Go throw that thing in the hamper."

"I'm scared to go up there alone," she said. What a helpless baby. Mrs. Stone fell for it and said, "Betty, please take Clarabelle's dirty hankie and get her a clean one."

Some kids are smarter than adults will ever know. Barely clutching a corner of

the disgusting thing with my fingertips, I tossed it into the proper place. After grabbing a fresh one, I ran back down the stairs. The clever whiner snatched it from my hand and pushed it against her face so fast you would've thought her snout was a magnet. She didn't even say, "Thank you," which proves that being smart has nothing to do with having good manners.

Used nose rags were germ traps that probably spread our colds to every kid who lived there. Drinking baking soda in water was never going to protect us from our own germ sharing. And since throwing the nose rags away was against the rules, we took turns doing the germ-sharing job of pre-washing those crusty balls with Fels Naptha soap. After they had been rinsed and squeezed, the damp cloths went into plastic pans and were sent to the basement by the dumbwaiter. There they were washed again, that time in hot, sudsy water in the Maytag. After a good rinsing in bleach water, they were squeezed through wringers that pressed out the liquid.

It was our job to attach the wet squares to clotheslines so they could dry in the sunshine. We pinched each bundle at the corner with wooden clothespins that looked like little men with no faces or arms. In summer the hankies dried fast. In winter they freeze-dried. Mrs. Stone said, "Freezing makes them whiter and it also kills germs." I believed her because she was a grownup, but I had a feeling it was clever encouragement to help us get the job done even when it was bitter cold outside.

We kids didn't care about germs or making cloth super white. But we understood when grownups told us, "You're learning to be responsible. Messes made by you have to be cleaned up by you." We just wished the messes didn't include nose rags. WT



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Nina Amir, Your Inspiration-to-Creation Coach, inspires writers to create the results they desire—published products and careers as writers and authors. She is an author, freelance editor, and writing, blogging and author coach who has five blogs, including [Write Nonfiction NOW](#) and [How to Blog a Book](#), and writes two on-line columns at [Examiner.com](#). She is the founder of Write Nonfiction in November, a [blog](#) and challenge. Find out more about her at [CopyWright Communications](#) or at [NinaAmir.com](#).

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# JAMIE'S WORDS

by Valerie Lee

The moment I entered the hospital room I knew I was too late. I stood at Dad's bedside and looked down helplessly at his still form. His breathing was shallow and he was in a coma. The doctor had told me it was just a matter of time.

Tears ran down my cheeks as visions of my happy childhood with Dad flashed into my mind. Usually in the past whenever I was in trouble or upset, this sweet, wonderful man, unconscious in the bed was there to comfort me. After I lost my firstborn, I fell apart and never thought I would recover but Dad scolded me with gentle, loving words and somehow made my world right again. Now who do I go to for the strength and support he unselfishly gave me all his life? Somehow I thought he was invincible and would be around forever. With that assurance, I figured the world was a safer place to live in because of him. Now everything might crumble.

I had to face reality and remember what he once said, "There's a time to be born and a time to die. You come into this world alone and you'll die alone. That's what life is all about, so don't be frightened and remember that."

Well, I didn't want his life to end. I wasn't ready to say good-bye. I wanted to have a choice! How can I say a final farewell to my father, the person I love, idolize, respect and need without a fight?

I touched his face, the same one which reddened and raged in anger when I was young. The sweet face that warmed with love and concern when I had a problem. The same face that lit up and laughed when I did something funny. I took his left hand and ran my fingers on his green jade ring, the ring I gave him years ago. His big eyes had lit up in appreciation. He had hugged me tightly. "Since it's from you I'll treasure it always and consider it to be lucky."

Now I whispered, "Dad, this is Sally. Can you hear me? I'm here. I hope you know I love you." I squeezed his hand. I bent over to kiss his cheek. This time his hand tightened on mine.

I sat motionless and tried to implant in my mind the way he spoke and his words of wisdom. There had been

endless hours spent explaining life, human emotions, courage, loyalty and so much more. The list was countless in his teachings. Those were very special times with Dad and already I was missing it.

I remember when I had mischievously rewrapped an old gift and gave it to him one Christmas. Dad was young at heart. After he realized what I had done, his eyes twinkled and he laughed heartily. It was fun to play tricks on him because he was such a good sport.

Now with every breath he took, my insides churned and my heart ached. Soon God will take him from me. It was something I had to face but I didn't want to let go. I tried to hold on tightly. Death was so final and the thought of never seeing him smile or talk with me again was more than I could bear.

My brother Mark, touched me on the shoulder and whispered, "Sal, take Jamie and get something to eat. I'll stay until you come back."

I nodded and went into the lounge where Jamie, my nine-year-old, with a worried frown on his face, was waiting for me. He hugged me. "Mom, how's Grandpa? Are you okay?"

I wiped my tears with a Kleenex. "No, Jamie, he isn't going to make it!"

"Why can't I see him?"

"Perhaps later, we'll see."

"Mom, I'm hungry. Can we go eat?"

Food didn't appeal to me but I knew Jamie was hungry because he had not eaten too much on our flight from California. "Okay, let's go and get something to eat." He placed his hand in mine. We headed down the long corridor towards the cafeteria. For an instant, I was glad he was there to distract me from my despair, and grateful that I had someone to take care of.

After Jamie had a hot dog, I tried to eat a ham sandwich but it was tasteless and dry. The strong smell of medicine in my father's room was still in my nostrils and nothing was appetizing.

Half an hour later, Mark, head hung low, came into the cafeteria and sat down beside me. I knew from his expression that the inevitable had happened. "Sally, five minutes after you left, Dad passed on. Mom's with him now. You don't have to rush back

upstairs. Let her spend time with him alone. There's nothing we can do."

We embraced each other and cried. Mark said, "You know, I was holding his hand when he drew his last breath. Oh, Sal, I'm going to miss him. Why did he have to die?"

I touched Mark's handsome face and wiped his tears with my Kleenex. "It was his time. He'll always be a part of us. Didn't he tell us once we'll all die someday?"

"I know that but that still doesn't make it easy. Why does it have to hurt so much?"

"Because he's our father and we loved him, that's why. He was a good one too. We have to be brave for Mom's sake and take care of her from now on."

He stood up and wiped his eyes. "You're right! It has to be worse for her. I'll see you later. I better go upstairs and see how she is."

When he left and was out of sight, I completely broke down. Nothing mattered as I gave in to my grief. Jamie, concerned, placed his arms around my neck. "Mom, please don't cry."

"Oh, he's gone. Grandpa's gone."

"Mom, please don't cry. Grandpa's with God. Maybe HE needs him to help him in Heaven?"

Puzzled by what he said, I looked at Jamie's tearful face. "What?"

He was so young, and innocent, yet he understood what I was going through. He had already developed compassion, depth and knowledge. I was so proud.

"Remember you said Grandpa helped people he loved. Well, he can still do that. He can continue his work in Heaven. He can help God."

I squeezed Jamie tightly to my chest and wiped my eyes. My son had taken Dad's place. He knew how to comfort me by saying exactly what my Dad would have said if he was alive. He used the right words. I prayed silently, "Thanks God, for sending Dad's words back to me through my son." WT

# Coming of Age

## (Part 1 of 3)

By: G Wayne

Coming out of the alley, I inched close beside the building and cautiously rounded the corner onto the busy sidewalk. There were no cars on the street or people passing by that seemed a threat. I stood as inconspicuously as possible in a line with other ticketholders and their lively mood was not able to break through my paranoia. People were amusing each other and joking with both friends and strangers. My attention was engaged by smiling faces and eyes that sparkled with an acute awareness. We were being joined by a mutual connection with a spiritual power that was a running total of everyone's emotions.

We worked our way into the theater at a snail's pace. Even though I was being taken by the moment, an urge to constantly look over my shoulder would not subside, neither would the sweat I wiped from my forehead even though the temperature was in the forties. I shouldn't have worried though, it was a big concert and I was hidden by the crowd like a straw in the haystack.

The pre-concert music had already started playing, its volume and clarity increased as we neared the door. My mood somehow brightened, and I began to become more a part of the general excitement. Those sultans of sensation were securing control of the crowd through the medium of music. I felt the contradiction between the physical and emotional world increase, and then drift from my mind like a feather in the wind. After passing through the ticket taker's gate, paranoia vanished and I was filled with the sweet anticipation of enjoying something I had wanted to do for a long time.

~ ===== ~

"Marge, where is Ralph? I thought he was supposed to be sleeping in his room, but it's empty."

"Maybe he's somewhere else in the house," she said with a cigarette in her hand.

"I checked all the rooms and he's not here."

"Did you check the garage?"

"Yes I checked the garage, and it is also empty. I should have checked the garbage, that's where the piece of shit belongs," he said and banged his fist on the wall. He then paced the room, stomping back and forth.

"Please, Don, calm down."

He looked at her, his body shaking with rage. "I can't handle it. Things are tough enough at work and I do not need this extra grief."

"He's not so bad," she said.

"Not so bad, yes he is and he's your blood, Marge. This bullshit has to stop. I can't control him and he doesn't listen to me. Now I have to worry that I don't know where he is? No more. Things are going to change."

"I'll talk to him when he gets home. You don't have to worry," she offered.



"Oh, he'll get talked to alright. I'm fed up, you both disgust me."

~ ===== ~

I was able to find a seat by the aisle, but my view of the stage was partially blocked by people dancing. The intimate nature of an attractive woman's behind bobbing at eyelevel only inches from my face, ignited primal urges. She sensed my attention and flashed a smile over her shoulder at me. Embarrassed, I sheepishly smiled back as she evaluated me then seemed to judge me safe. She turned and resumed her commune with the seductive spirit of rock and roll. She moved with grace and a raw passion that I am sure was projected at

me. I may have deluded myself into believing this, but she did dance very close.

The band opened with "Ride My See-saw" and the audience exploded with cheers and applause. This did make it difficult to follow the opening guitar licks, but the metaphysical energy that the musicians radiated filled the room, crystal in its clarity. I felt so alive and the moment had already far surpassed my expectations. I was experiencing a high that was intense to the point of permanently affecting my life. Believing that something like this would never end was easy, but when the last song settled the crowd and gently grounded us, we returned to how we were before the music started. I felt some surprise and disappointment at this, but mostly exhaustion.

Exiting the theater into the late-night air brought on a chill and the hardened face of reality.

It bloomed in the pit of my stomach, breeding thoughts of what would happen if I were discovered. I felt shame at going off on my own with everyone thinking I was asleep in my room. Minor defiance had been met with extreme penalties in the past and I am sure that physical punishment would be in store if I were caught. The fear that welled up within me would have kept anyone from ever going home again, although I had no other place to go. I thought of how life and reality have differences. Although the two words seem the same, life is what people hang to and reality is something you want to

stop sometimes. Like when fear caused me to imagine — no, to live my unwritten fate, over and over again.

Being guided by terror, I walked as the chance of getting caught increased with each step. I hoped that no one was looking for me and wondered if I could sneak back into my room without being punished.

Hunger and fatigue teamed with worry. I needed to rest, if only for a short while, and the brightly lit drugstore on the corner looked inviting, more so as rain began to fall. My jacket seemed to soak in more water than it shed causing my  
*continued on page 14*

# President's Challenge

by Bill Baldwin  
President, South Bay Writers

## "Awaiting the New Year"

This title might seem odd to you; but I'm not referring to the new calendar year, but the new CWC year. We have elections coming up, and in July (new?) South Bay Writers officers will take office. Don't forget to come to the June meeting for our election! And don't forget to renew your CWC membership soon.

South Bay Writers is by no means just the officers or the committee chairs. This club is you. SBW supports a variety of activities. We want to include activities that are important to you. But we need your input about what you want—and we need your help in running the club.

What are your interests? Dinner speakers? Newsletter? Workshops? Retreats? Blogging? Open Mics? Why not volunteer to help with the activities that mean something to you? This will enable you to put your own stamp on what we do.

We are always looking for new ideas and new people. Bill Belew would like to pass the Writers Talk mantle to someone new; so if you are interested in contributing to the newsletter, now is a great time. We could use assistance also with workshop development, public relations, outreach, networking, and hospitality. If you are interested in these areas, or have suggestions in other areas, we would love to have you step forward.

The board has discussed a number of ideas for future club development. We'd like to develop some special annual events, such as a writing contest and awards banquet (with a prominent guest speaker), agent panels, panels of published members. We're also beginning to explore a possible 2012 East of Eden Conference; but all these ideas need dedicated people to make them happen. If you like these ideas, why not join the team?

If you'd like to contribute but aren't sure you can make a full formal commitment, why not discuss your ideas with us anyway? We can tailor your contribution to what you can offer. The more people helping out, the merrier, I think. Your ideas will be appreciated! WT



## Coming of Age

*continued from page 13*

teeth to chatter. It wasn't my idea to buy it, although I had to wear it alright. I noticed the racks of snacks and the shelves all stocked with things that made my stomach growl. They were only a few feet away, just on the other side of a pane glass window with the words "Hairfoot Pharmacy" printed across the top. After a careful examination of what was happening on the street, I went quickly to the entrance and walked in. There were bells mounted on the aluminum doorframe that jingled when tapped by the electrically opened door. They seemed from another time and in contrast with the present, not a part of this modern world.

The man behind the counter held a paper towel to his mouth while leaning over with his elbows on the counter.

"Are you okay?" I asked.

A trickle of blood ran from his lip, "I just got robbed; the guy shot me!"

"What, what happened?"

"He put a gun in my face and pulled the trigger."

That was more than I could handle, I was overloaded with problems of my own and then I walked into a failed drugstore robbery. "Excuse me for saying so, but you don't seem very hurt for someone that was shot in the face."

"Ya, I know," the man beamed, grinning proudly with blood running down his chin, "He shot me with a 25 auto and it stuck in my denture."

"That's something that doesn't happen every day," I remarked.

"I know," he said, even louder and prouder than before, "When he shot me, the pain stopped at my gums. I felt around and there was a bullet stuck in place of my top-left front tooth. I spit out the tooth, then picked out the bullet with my thumb and threw it on the counter. The guy went nuts! He looked at me as if I was superman or somethin'. His gaze was as comical as it was pathetic, and then he stared at the gun. He didn't seem to know what to do for a while, but eventually he started shivering, and threw the gun at me. He then ran out of the store moaning like a little girl. The man did shoot me, but he didn't get a dime, I'll tell ya!" he added, "I hope they let me keep the gun as a souvenir."

"Did you call the cops?" I asked.

"Ya, they should be here any second now."

My hand went to my pocket, "Oh no, I left my wallet in the car." The words trailed over my shoulder while exiting. (*to be continued...*) WT

## California Writers Club South Bay Branch

— o —

Executive Committee

President—Bill Baldwin

pres@southbaywriters.com  
408 730-9622

Vice President—Colin Seymour

vp@southbaywriters.com

Secretary—Sylvia Halloran

secretary@southbaywriters.com

Treasurer—Richard Burns

treasurer@southbaywriters.com

### Central Board Rep

Dave LaRoche

### Directors

Programs—Colin Seymour

vp@southbaywriters.com

Publicity and Public Relations—Edie Matthews

publicity@southbaywriters.com  
408 985-0819

Membership—Marjorie Johnson

membership@southbaywriters.com

Hospitality—Vacant

Meetups - Bill Belew

wcbelew@gmail.com

Networking— Vacant

networking@southbaywriters.com

Open Mic—Bill Baldwin

408 730-9622

Webmaster—Rik Scott

webmaster@southbaywriters.com

Workshops—Nina Amir

workshops@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

Bill Belew  
newsletter@southbaywriters.com  
408 712-3268

### Contributing Editors

Nina Amir  
Danita Craft  
Pat Bustamante  
Lisa Eckstein  
Rik Scott  
Victoria M. Johnson  
Jackie Mutz

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### 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

Bill Belew

111 W. Arques Ave.

Sunnyvale, CA 94085

### Guest Columns

Almost Anything Goes (400 words)

### News Items (400 words)

### Letters to the Editor (300 words)

to Bill Belew  
newsletter@southbaywriters.com

### Creative Works

Short Fiction (1800 words)  
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### Announcements and Advertisements

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by Bill Belew  
Editor

## Getting Discovered

Writers want to be discovered, too!



exposure online.

Being somewhat the moody type, I went to a local coffee shop in Sunnyvale and worked there for a while. I worked just as hard, I think. But, try as I might, nobody discovered me there either. But, I did get some exposure online.

Then I went to an even bigger coffee shop/restaurant in Sunnyvale and, you got it...worked there, worked hard, but nobody discovered me.

Then I started organizing Meetups. I started with nobody. Then I got a few people to come. Then I got another group, and another. And the number of people coming to Meetups I organized grew. I now run a dozen groups and there are more than 4200 members. Almost 1200 of them are specifically interested in writing (fiction and non-fiction) and blogging. The rest are loosely connected to getting exposure online. Something I know a lot about – please see above.

Because of my meetups, I started getting invited to speak at other's Meetups – in San Francisco, in Oakland, in LA! Sure enough, at one of the Meetups (Oakland) there was a marketing/pr/agent type sitting in the back of the room shaking his head and smiling in a sort of disbelief each time I made a point. Afterward, he grabbed me by the arms and said, "Are you crazy? Giving all this information away for free?"

A couple of months later he and I came to terms about how he would represent me. Coast-to-coast workshops, clients, recordings, and the like

## Newseditor

followed. And there is a lot more in the works.

So what?

My question to the readers and writers of WritersTalk... "What are you willing to do to be 'discovered?'"

Are you willing to go online? Get out of your comfort zone? Make appearances? Get yourself out there?

There are several options to get you started here in this issue. See page 8.

There are two Bills eagerly waiting to hear from you.

There's a writing contest. See page 2.

Members of SouthBayWriters and readers and writers of WritersTalk get exposed to opportunities.

The next step, however, is yours to take.

Get discovered! And make a difference.

Bill

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## Our Board Needs You (or Someone You Know)!

Our new SBW board will take office on July 1, minus a Vice President (at this point.)

Nobody has stepped up to run for Vice President. The VP is also the program chair.

We are looking for a member-at-large and several director positions are open. Please see the side-bar next to the president's message

If you are willing to serve in any of these capacities or can suggest someone, please contact Bill Baldwin: WABaldwin@aol.com or (408) 730-9622. Thanks!!



**California Writers Club**

South Bay Branch  
P.O. Box 3254  
Santa Clara, CA 95055

[www.southbaywriters.com](http://www.southbaywriters.com)

**MAIL TO**

Address Correction Requested

Zoe Fitzgerald-Carter  
Avoiding Libel  
In Memoir Writing  
Tuesday June 14, 6 p.m.  
See front cover for details.

WritersTalk deadline is always the  
15th of the month preceding the  
month of issue.

