



WRITERSTALK

Volume 20
Number 10
October 2012

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

OCTOBER SPEAKERS

Sal Pizarro, Carolyn Schuk

NEWSPAPER GATEKEEPERS

How to deal with barriers to publicizing your work

by Colin Seymour

Here's a tale to which you, members of South Bay Writers, can relate. It's about how difficult it is to persuade the local news outlets to publicize your cause, and it may whet your appetite for our October 3 dinner speakers' topic, "Capturing the Attention of the Media." *Mercury News* columnist Sal Pizarro and *Santa Clara Weekly* reporter-editor Carolyn Schuk will join me in a panel discussion at Harry's Hofbrau.



Carolyn Schuk
Santa Clara Weekly

In July, 2010 I fought unsuccessfully to get a story about our struggling East of Eden Writers Conference into the *San Jose Mercury News*, my longtime former employer. I lost.

Any kind of stirrings such publicity could have aroused might have been enough to prevent the cancellation of the 2010 conference. I wrote, fairly well I'd say, about the struggle to maintain writers' conferences in spite of the economic downturn and the downsized hopes of best-sellers aspirants.

It wasn't a far-fetched attempt. The *Merc* had run a staff-written story about our 2008 East of Eden conference, although probably too late to bolster attendance. And the *Merc* was still running sto-

ries by me about once a month in 2010. I've had more than 900 bylines in the *Merc* and have written far more articles that didn't credit me, so I haven't lost many battles like this.

Lots of you probably have, though, and this disheartening situation is getting worse.

By 2010, the *Merc* had increasingly become part of a Bay Area-wide newspaper network. At that regional level, East of Eden wasn't sufficiently newsworthy.

I sympathize with the editors. It was my job at most junctures of my 30 years in the newspaper business to determine what got into the paper and what didn't.

That also was often true of the late *Mercury News*

SEPTEMBER RECAP

Mini Self-Publishing Bootcamp

by Victoria M. Johnson

The Mini Self-Publishing Bootcamp provided by Laurie McLean and Linda Lee was a fast-paced workshop filled with numerous useful tips and advice. The two veterans spoke to a packed room of South Bay members and several guests. Their message was clear: now is the best time to be a writer and writers can be a success by self-publishing and using social media tools. Due to space limitations only a fraction of their guidelines can be included here.

McLean talked about creating a self-publishing team. This team of experts will help fill in areas that are not your strengths and they will allow you to spend more time writing. Team members include editors (several kinds of editors were mentioned), cover designers, formatters, interior book designers, marketing and social media help, fulfillment (handles shipping and returns), printers, legal and business advisors, and bookkeepers. She discussed the types of tasks each person does and the benefits of not trying to do it all yourself. However she did recommend you do it yourself the first time you self publish to learn how it's done, what's involved, and to be better informed of the task when you're ready to hire someone to do it. McLean went on to discuss the various publishing paths for authors to choose from such as ebook, print, POD, and assisted self-publishing. She spent a lot of time on social media marketing and emphasized building a career strategy. She touched on defining your author brand and building a community via reader networks.



Sal Pizarro
San Jose Mercury News

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President's Challenge

by Bill Baldwin
President, South Bay Writers

SBW's Spirited Cake Mix



I'm looking forward to South Bay Writers ending 2012 with a bang, writing-wise—and hoping to charge on into 2013 at full-throttle.

First of all, thanks to all of you who attended our first dinner meeting back at Harry's Hofbrau in September. I believe our October presentation will be equally inspiring. Thanks to Colin and Rita for arranging these exemplary programs.

And don't forget that our October dinner meeting will include our annual Literary Halloween Costume Contest—your chance to dress as a colorful author from the past, a memorable character, or perhaps an imaginative literary conceit. Have you ever dressed as an Oxford Comma?

October brings us California Writers Week—the third week in the month. The California State Assembly created this event at the request of the California Writers Club back in 2003. Branches of the CWC all over the state will be celebrating. At the very least, this would be an appropriate time to join us for our Third Friday Open Mic (Oct. 19 at the Barnes & Noble in the Pruneyard, Campbell).

November brings National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo). If you've never participated in this "write-a-novel-in-a-month" event, you might give it a try this year; we have several members who throw themselves into the challenge regularly. I'm sure they'd be delighted to have more folks urging each other on.

December means our annual holiday party—lots of food and refreshments, networking, friendship, relaxation, and a chance to chat with your fellow writers about life and writing.

Then, in January, we are hoping to offer a workshop. The plans are still under development, so stay tuned. Meanwhile, be sure to percolate your ideas. Do keep writing and reading. And share your inspirations with the club. We're looking to develop our outreach and publicity; we'd love to build multi-person teams for membership and workshop development—keep possibilities in mind. It's fun and inspiring to bring new people into the mix. Don't be shy—jump right in and join the fun! With teamwork, there's no stopping us.

I hope the upcoming months at South Bay Writers bring you insights and motivation—**and lots of fun.** —WT

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by Marjorie Bicknell Johnson

Editor



Digital age divides us

Debates about the decline of education in the US may ignore the causes. According to *The Digital Divide* by Mark Bauerlein, students today process information fundamentally differently from their predecessors.

Today's students—kindergarten through college—are the first generation to grow up with digital technology; for their entire lives, they have been surrounded by computers, digital music players, video cams, and cell phones. The average college graduate has spent less than 5,000 hours of his life reading but over 10,000 hours playing video games and 20,000 hours watching TV.

Our students' brains have physically changed and there is no going back. Dr. Bruce D. Perry, Baylor College of Medicine, summarizes, "Different kinds of experiences lead to different brain structures."

This is not a case of "What is this younger generation coming to?" as asked by parents since antiquity. In my college days, we heard the views of Socrates, as stated in the fifth century BC. "The children now love luxury. They have bad manners, contempt for authority; they show disrespect for their elders and love chatter in place of exercise; . . . they gobble up their food and tyrannize their teachers." (Note: This quote is now thought to be spurious by some scholars.)

Changes in students' brain structures mean we need to adapt our teaching methods to reach them. However, they are "digital natives," native speakers of the language of computers, and we are "digital immigrants." Not born into the digital world, we have adopted many aspects of it, but most of us retain an accent; for example, using a computer in the same way we once used a typewriter.

A native composes on the keyboard, edits on the screen, and refers to an online dictionary, thesaurus, and encyclopedia without the necessity to print out his work. An immigrant may transcribe his longhand manuscript into a word processing document and then print it out to edit it; he may use the space bar to set his paragraph indents and hit return at the end of every line.

After reading *The Digital Divide*, I watched the presenters at the July Fibonacci Conference in Hungary with new interest, noting ways in which speakers failed to incorporate the technology. Although I had prepared my talk in *PowerPoint*, I was unable to use my laptop because I lacked a cable to connect it to the projection system. My back-up DVD had lost the background color, leading to difficult-to-read yellow titles on a white screen, but after the first three slides, photographs of ruins and clean black lettering saved the day. I did remember to read my notes by glancing at the computer monitor, and I did not turn my back on the audience to read aloud the contents of the screen as many presenters did. Too many of them tried to present an entire ten-page technical paper in twenty minutes by simply copying it directly (in its original small font) into *PowerPoint*, flipping through it quickly, and speaking at warp-speed. Too bad they didn't watch Alice LaPlante present her workshop, or practice at one of Bill Baldwin's open mics.

However, the youngsters at the meeting spent a lot of time talking on cellphones and tapping on laptops rather than relating to other participants in the biennial international meeting, missing their chances to socialize and to learn from others interested in the same esoteric mathematical topics. Perhaps in a generation, we will have to teach our computer-savvy "digital native" children how to be human.

— WT

WritersTalk

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

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Submissions

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

Suggested word limits are not absolute; query the editor. Electronic submissions should be text or attached MS Word file sent to newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Anything Goes—Almost (300 words)

News Items (400 words)

Letters to the Editor (300 words)
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Creative Works

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

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Change of Address: Send changes of address to membership@southbaywriters.com

Subscriptions: Nonmember subscriptions are \$20/year. Send a check payable to South Bay Writers, P. O. Box 3254, Santa Clara, CA 95055, Attn: Membership.

Circulation: 200

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View from the Board

by S. Halloran

Nine of us met in San Jose on Wednesday night, August 29: President Bill Baldwin, Treasurer Mike Freda, Secretary Sylvia Halloran, Newsletter Editor Marjorie Johnson, Networking Chair Eléna Martina, Members-at-Large Dick Amyx and Andrea Galvacs, Central Board Liason Dave LaRoche, and Webmaster Rik Scott.

The following motions were made and passed:

- Moved: (Johnson) to charge \$15 per attendee to cover cost of food and speaker for the meeting. Passed; five aye, two abstain.
- Moved: (LaRoche) to contribute \$50 to help sponsor a NorCal branch vendor's table at the San Francisco Writer's Conference in February, 2013. Passed; six aye, one abstain.

Old Business:

- Ramifications of holding September's dinner meeting location at Harry's Hofbrau were considered. Meredy Amyx will give this month's informal presentation regarding what a writer should expect from an editor.
- October's dinner meeting: the traditional literary costume contest will be held.
- Copies of a proposed Vision/Mission statement were sent to board members, and club goals for the future will be considered next month.

New Business:

- Martha Engber has agreed to lead a workshop, venue and date to be arranged.
- Dick, Meredy and Marjorie will develop an editorial policy for *WritersTalk*.
- A committee considering the club's online presence will make full consideration of needs, conflicts and overlaps. Dick (chair), Rik, Eléna, Mike, and Carolyn Donnell will compose the core of the committee.

If you read something of interest here that you'd like to have a say in, please contact any board member for further information. It's YOUR club! – WT

Literary costume contest

Once invited to the meeting, now I pondered, thoughts so fleeting

To the question of a costume that might capture bookish lore,

Tome or author, either working, or some clever pun there lurking,

As a member, never shirking, shirking from creative core.

"Tis some contest fun," I muttered.

"Shirking from creative core Makes me boring, nothing more."

Ah, the South Bay board's talked over having fun in bleak October, And decided, fully sober, to pursue tradition more.

Eagerly I'll seek to borrow, steal or make before tomorrow

Some great costume without sorrow – sorrow gone forevermore.

Based on literary founding, costumes make our joy resounding,

Give us joy forevermore.

– Edgar Allan Halloran



Carolyn Donnell as iCarolyn in 2011
– Photo by Dick Amyx

Casey Wilson Retires From the CWC Central Board

by Dave LaRoche

No one knows what's in another's mind or where it may lead, and to speculate is a fruitless endeavor. I say this because a friend you depend upon for persuasion, good judgment and guidance can simply disappear and that important voice goes missing.

Such a friend to the Central Board was Casey Wilson, who up and resigned one day.

Casey has been involved in every success and puzzle the Central Board has seen in the last seventeen years, five of those as president. His grasp of the legacy that forms our direction, and what to do with it, seems without parallel today.

The California Writers Club, and what it is, is due to the guidance of a dedicated few. Casey is among those who have been willing to dig in, point out the problems, engage in solutions, and move us ahead. We on the board have relied on him, have expected and appreciated his opinion; and we will miss his intellect, insight, and knowledge. We will miss his thoroughness, his clarity, and his direct approach to ferreting out detail and offering appropriate conclusions. Mostly we will miss his reaction to our rambling off topic and the pounding of that damned medallion he used as a gavel to regain the focus our meetings required.

Casey has been a good friend to the Central Board and the California Writers Club—obvious to those of us working alongside him. So, on this day, let's save our memories of a director who spent a great deal of his energies making our club much better. Casey has indeed been an exceptional friend to the Central Board and the CWC. – WT

SBW meeting dates

South Bay Writers will hold its regular dinner meetings at Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose, at 6:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of every month, except December, when we will have our annual Holiday Bash. – WT

October Accolades

by Andrea Galvoacs

Several success stories are not included because the forms were unintelligible. To report your success, you must either



Andrea Galvoacs

send an email to accolades@southbaywriters.com or fill out a "Members' Good News" form at a dinner meeting. I have to be able to read it before I can write it.

Nina Amir spoke on two panels at the Fourth San Francisco Writing for Change Conference on September 15.

Carolyn Donnell's poems from the 2012 National Poetry Month Facebook Group appear online at *The Possibility Place – Poetic Riffs & Brittle*.

Clarence Hammonds was honored during National Poetry Month in *Great*

Poets Across America, as reported in August; his work appears on page 223.

Lynda D. Marcum published her memoir, *Bird on my Wall*, available on Amazon. She would love some feedback on it, so read it and contact her at LDM1276@sbcglobal.net

Eléna Martina was interviewed on TV, Spanish Channel 40, in Fayetteville, North Carolina in July.

Jana McBurney-Lin's second novel *Cherry Blossoms in our Land* received a pre-publication blurb from author and Boston Globe journalist Caroline Leavitt: "Impossible to put down – or to forget."

The poem "Rosi" from **Jacqueline Mutz's** work in progress *The Tao of Meow*, a poetry book with a cat theme, was published in July on towncats.org.

Suzy Paluzzi's poem about Los Gatos was accepted by Los Gatos Poet Laureate Parthenia Hicks. – WT

Networking Log:

Start a critique group

by Eléna Martina

I am meeting interesting people during our monthly writer club gatherings and some have expressed interest in joining a critique group. Because many existing groups currently are closed to newcomers, placing new people is impossible.

A member reached out to me and asked for help with ideas for starting his own critique group. He will give us more information later. As he was still in the initial process of organization, I supplied him with personal tips he could use.



Eléna Martina

Sharing ideas gave way to this article so if you are thinking about starting a critique group, here are a few items to consider. Your approach might be different from mine, but it will be beneficial to make group rules before inviting folks to join you.

Basic things you should consider for a critique group:

GROUP SIZE: Small? Four to six people. Large? Seven to ten people. A small group works best when everyone's material is being heard and critiqued. With larger numbers you might run into members being less committed and feeling unhappy as their work is not critiqued for lack of time. If you are going for the "everyone is invited" model, you will not be able to synchronize schedules or recognize everyone's work.

GENDER: All men, all women, or mixed group? You might want to consider if a mixed group balances all aspects of what is expected. An all-women critique group about romance writing might work, the same as an all-male critique group about military themes. I do not mean to be sexist, but most romance novels are read by women; military strategy appeals to male readers.

AGE LIMIT: I hate to say this, but age plays a role with the dynamics in a group. A college student will have little prose in common with someone who is

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New Members

by Sally A. Milnor

I am pleased to be writing this column and for the opportunity to introduce our new members.



Barbara Arnoldussen

is actively writing and has had a number of her works published over the past ten years. Among the highlights are: *What I Wish I'd Known My First 100 Days: Wisdom, Tips and Warnings from Experienced Nurses*, a book she created for nurses nearing graduation, describing the greatest challenges facing them in their future workplaces. Her second book, *RN Medication Flashcards*, is designed to fit a mobile device format. Barbara's article on Margaret Mead's last public appearance was the cover feature page of a Michigan newspaper. She completely redesigned the Stanford Center for Integrative Medicine's website; and in the fall quarter of 2011, Barbara was a writing coach for Stanford University's Graduate School of Business for thirty-two new MBA students.

Lynda D. Marcum is also an active writer. Her book *Bird on My Wall*, published with Archer Books, is a journey through her life with stories, reflections

and poetry. It is available in print and eBook format at Amazon.com and in eBook format at Barnes & Noble. In addition to her writing, Lynda has participated in community theater in the South Bay for forty years.

Jeff Heid found us on line. He has written several pieces of short fiction and is yet to be published. On his New Member's Questionnaire, Jeff beautifully writes: "There is a power to stories. I want to tell stories that do not just resonate with an audience, but leave a resonance within people, much in the same manner that sound waves resonate within a room . . . this resonance is an echo . . . that occurs after a person experiences a story . . . and hours later the person realizes that he has come to learn something about himself." This is certainly a noble aspiration for any writer.

In addition to these new members, I would like to introduce **Grace Tam** who joins us as an intern editor for *Writers-Talk*. Her starting assignment will be writing the meeting recaps each month. Grace is currently studying journalism and writing at De Anza.

We wish a warm welcome to every one of you and hope membership brings inspiration and enjoyment. – WT

Gatekeepers

Continued from Page 1

columnist Leigh Weimers, who had agreed to join our October 3 panel but passed away on August 29.

Leigh Weimers was at the *Merc* about 40 years and was a high-profile columnist who had to exercise a lot of news judgment on that front alone. The parameters changed a lot during his 40 years. What constituted a story of wide local interest in the late 1960s, and what sufficed by the new millennium, were often very different criteria, and many longtime readers were offended by the decreasing provincialism of the paper – and the less narrow focus of the South Bay.

Sal Pizarro, who became the *Around Town* columnist when Weimers retired in 2005, is stepping in for him on our panel, and Sal probably knows more about our topic than anyone. He learned how to deal with those issues in his fledgling days at the *Mercury News*, first as a sports clerk and later as the supervisor of the paper's high school sports coverage.

Fortunately, there are local media that are truly local enough to help the likes of us. And that's where Carolyn Schuk's role on the October 3 panel might prove to be the most important.

Carolyn is a writer and editor at the *Santa Clara Weekly*, which is a far more likely place to gain publicity than a major metro daily like the *Merc*. We'll discuss your hopes for success getting a write-up in a weekly. She is also adept at landing publicity in publications she doesn't work for, and that may be the most valuable advice the three of us can impart.

When this one-hour panel was decided upon, it replaced what would have been a five-hour workshop, during which we probably would have agreed, above all, to teach the attendees how to write a press release. Sal and I will brag, no doubt, about the many we've rewritten and the few that have passed muster as submitted. We'll talk a lot about news judgment, determining what's relevant to your readers and what they're too likely to ignore.

And frankly, we'll tell you what everyone else is telling you, that social media are your best bet for spreading small-caliber news. But let's face it; even today 500,000 might see the headline on a story about you in a big-city daily.

Carolyn may have some interesting anecdotes about encounters with readers. You can be sure Sal and I have some funny, and some heartwarming stories, too.

So come share your dreams with us on October 3 at Harry's Hofbrau. – WT



I Believe in Ghosts

Blow out my candles
Don't care if you make it dark –
Do what ghosts do best

Haunt me evermore
Don't care if you disappear –
I do not fear you

Rattle your chains loud
Don't care if you scream and moan –
For I Am Dead, Too

– Victoria M. Johnson



Literary Costume Contest SBW irregular meeting, October 3 (almost October 31)

Everyone is invited to come dressed up. Attend as your favorite literary character: Tom Jones, Tom Sawyer, Scarlett O'Hara, or author: Mark Twain, Edgar Allen Poe, Charlotte Bronte, though any costume or funny hat will do. There will be prizes for the best costumes.

Above, we see David Breithaupt in 2009 as the Cat in the Hat. Photo by Carolyn Donnell.

Scene on the left: SBW dinner meeting September 5 at Harry's Hofbrau, captured by Dick Amyx. Left to right: Bill Baldwin, Clarence Hammonds, Pat Bustamante, Michael Murray, Colin Seymour, and Karen Llewellyn.

– WT

Self-publishing Bootcamp

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Laurie McLean



Linda Lee – Photos by Dick Amyx

McLean stressed for authors to look around, read, and learn from other authors. “Try things out. You can do anything you want.”

Lee presented “Eight Elements Every Author Website Should Have.” She started out by saying every author needed a website. Lee recommends Wordpress.com for author websites because it’s free and very easy to setup and to update. Lee says flash technology is out; that means no music, and no talking on your website. She addressed a concern she frequently hears from authors about spending too much time on social media. Her response: “Ask yourself this: is what I’m doing right now getting me closer to my goal?” Her eight elements for author websites:

1. Sales page—an elevator pitch or sales copy of what you’re writing.
2. Biography page—a story-based version that gives readers an accurate sense of who you are and what you do. Include a good quality headshot.
3. Media/PR page—can include a longer resume, your bio, interview topics, speaking topics, media appearances and reviews.
4. Social Media—let visitors know where else to find you. Link to your Facebook page, have a Twitter feed, etc. Build relationships by being on multiple social media sites.
5. Blogging—this tool brings people to your website. Whatever your topic is, have relevant things to say about it. Also be sure to link your blog posts to show up on your other social media sites such as Amazon, Facebook, and LinkedIn.
6. Call to action—ask visitors to sign up for your email list. You can offer some small thing as an incentive to sign up such as a newsletter or tip sheet.
7. Sidebar—there are many interesting things you can display such as social media icons and ‘like’ buttons, a search box, latest blog posts, or you can sell ad space.
8. Contact page—always include a way for visitors to contact you, but don’t type in your email address. Use a contact box.

Lee offered a handout on content ideas for websites as well as a link to the handouts and a CWC discount to their workshops at <http://wordpressbootcamp.net/welcome-cwc-writers-special-offer/> They answered questions and the overwhelming response was to invite the two back. – WT

Longest Sentence

The 1983 *Guinness Book of World Records* claims the “Longest Sentence in Literature” is a sentence from *Absalom, Absalom!* containing 1,288 words. – WT

Resident expert speaks

by Rita Beach

For ten minutes during each meeting, a resident expert will speak about one of a variety of topics relevant to writers.

In September, Meredy Amyx presented an excellent talk discussing the role of the editor in a writer’s work. In October, Sylvia Halloran, who also happens to be our club secretary, will tell club members about the benefits of enrolling in memoir classes.

Not everyone is writing a memoir or autobiography, but most of our writings, both fiction and non-fiction, are influenced by our life experiences. Capturing those memories can often enhance our writings. Remember to arrive early and enjoy your meal while listening to our resident expert. During the break, Sylvia will be happy to answer any questions you have. – WT



Vice President Rita Beach
– Photo by Carolyn Donnell



September’s Resident Expert
Meredy Amyx speaks on why we
need editors
– Photo by Dick Amyx

It Takes Two

by Richard Scott

Some ideas are just too good to keep to oneself. I believe the One-on-One Method is such an idea.



Richard Scott

On my blog about the craft of writing, UphillWriting.org, I have commented that one of the best ways to “road test” your writing is to read it back twice before allowing others to see it.

I’ve suggested that the first read be a silent or “visual” scan, one designed to spot obvious errors. Most of us do this by habit.

The second read is “aloud”. Reading out loud, it has been noted, employs different areas of your brain, uses different “mental muscles” so to speak, and turns up errors and other problems easily missed by a strictly visual scan.

Using these two “reads” to catch grammatical, formatting, and punctuation errors, as well as noticing mistakes that a spell-checker will not find — “your” for “you’re,” or “to” for “too,” for example — is invaluable.

It should be noted at this point, however, that even when doing a deep scan of your own work, you can miss a lot. Why? Because your brain is — how to put this delicately — not always your friend. You see, you know what you meant to write, you know which word you meant to use, but your ever-helpful brain will make corrections for you, in real time, fooling your eyes. This is why you can read, read and reread a piece, become convinced that it is letter perfect, and still someone else finds errors in it.

But there is a *third* method for tuning your work. It is easy, effective, and only requires the help of a single, willing friend. I call it the *One-on-One Method*. Here is how it is done.



Ideally, two writers with similar goals (editing or strengthening their work) arrange for a phone call. One group I created uses SKYPE, a free software package available on skype.com, which allows phone calls over the Internet free of charge within the continental US. I suggest doing this over the phone rather than in person as there is one fewer distraction if you cannot see the facial expressions of your partner.

Each writer takes a turn reading aloud the work of the other (not his or her own). The authors then hear their own work in someone else’s voice. The reader can make immediate suggestions about pace, flow, logic, plot, characterization, and the like, while the author, hearing how another reader interprets the writing, gets a feeling for the reaction of the work upon that reader and is able to note needed corrections “on the fly.”

Hearing where a reader stumbles or sounds confused by your writing can be extraordinarily valuable. Hearing your work in another voice adds a dimension that you cannot get otherwise. Some like using the text-to-speech function of their computer for this purpose, and while this is better than nothing, it loses the impact gained by hearing the inflection and reaction of a living reader.

My online writing support group and I have employed this technique for over three years now, and everyone involved agrees the process is powerful and enlightening. The method is simple, strong, and effective, and one I believe any of us can benefit from. — WT

Suggested reading for those forming or involved with critique groups:
The Writing & Critique Group Survival Guide: How to Make Revisions, Self-Edit, and Give and Receive Feedback by Becky Levine. — Editor

Starting a critique group

Continued from page 5

three times his age. Pick wisely when allowing people into your group. There is nothing wrong with placing them in an age-appropriate setting.

MEMBERS: Is membership for published authors only? Non-published writers? Aspiring writers and authors? Poets only? First, determine what you feel comfortable dealing with, since you are presiding over the group. Consider that a professional group of writers will bring a firm dynamic session every time because they have experience. Aspiring writers might not be terribly interested in publishing their literary work. Keep in mind that they might need further assistance as most have no experience in professional editing and publishing.

GENRE: If fiction writing is your trade, decide whether you would be willing to put together a fiction group only. Non-fiction, memoirs, poetry, or romance writers have different needs and varied ways of looking at things.

LOCATION: Where would you want to hold meetings? I personally prefer someone’s home to a noisy bookstore. A close intimate setting is best to get to know members, but choose whatever makes you feel safe and comfortable.

PURPOSE: A critique group should have a brief mission statement — short and sweet — something everyone should abide by and feel comfortable doing. Stressing professionalism in writing and critiquing from the very beginning should be one of your goals.

Enthusiasm will keep the group together; find like-minded folk. In other words, assess who people are before you let them into your group. You do not want to be stuck with a person who does not fit in with the program.

Friends and family do not make good critics, since they are inclined to like your book. Remember that your readers are mostly those who have no idea who you are and are not invested in your life. They are not “preset” to speak well of you or your writing. Find fellow critiquers who will be kind but honest in evaluating your work and helping you create copy ready to go to final edit.

Questions? Write to me at networking@southbaywriters.com — WT

A little about the NorCal group

by Dave LaRoche

Imagine a time when groups of writers residing an hour or less apart knew little of one other's existence — not when they met, events that they held, or successes they achieved. Not so long ago, this was true of branches of the California Writers Club. Excepting major events, Central Coast, half an hour south, and SF Peninsula, half an hour north, and six other branches throughout the Bay Area knew little to nothing of South Bay's activities; they could not support ours nor we theirs.

Some branches excelled with young-writer outreach, had been down that road, knew the potholes and bumps. Others were good at event promotion, some with contests, others with anthologies. The techniques and skills of leadership found in some were lacking in others. While some branches had discovered "best-methods," others were struggling.

Observed needs lead to change — thus, the NorCal Group was formed. Several representatives from each of the Bay

Area branches met in Oakland four years ago this April and envisioned a time when CWC branches, all having the same interest and goals, could share their means of attaining them.

A website was established where a calendar invited the posting of events. A page including meeting times, locations and cost was put up. A speaker page was included with contact information, speakers' expertise and what audiences thought of their presentation. And, a forum invited comment regarding the group's operation and Q&A from branches.

A writers retreat was produced, and members gathered and exchanged. A leadership conference followed and 40 branch officers and potential officers went to hear about best-methods and to share their problems and successes.

Publishing Pathways was formed, a committee intending to avoid the pain of publishing mistakes made through not knowing safe methods and reliable, honest providers. Their website was established to include trusted related information. Branch mentors were trained in the process and familiarized with the tools. South Bay has two trained mentors.

NorCal meetings are held six times a year and folks from all northern branches attend to relate their upcoming events, their recent successes, their problems and interests. With the recent addition of Mendocino Coast, we are ten.

Today, we are active — our next meeting is October 6 at the Bellevue Hotel in Oakland. When I retired after founding the Group and serving three years as the chair, Joyce Krieg from Central Coast was elected. A SoCal group has adopted similar principles and goals, with Donna McCrohan-Rosenthal of East Sierra at their helm. Both associations are formally recognized by the CWC Central Board and have a modest budget allocated annually.

These regional associations form a working-level network of communication among branches that did not exist before. The result is support: best-method sharing, event attendance, a broadening of opportunities for members, and publishing support. The future looks promising. I am your South Bay representative; others are invited and you may contact me at dalaroche@comcast.net with comments and questions. Thanks for your interest. — WT

A tip from one of your volunteer "Mentors"

by David Breithaupt

Under no circumstances in your quest to sell your books should you deal with a Larry Davis in Phoenix. He ran a large publishing/marketing/distribution organization called Intermedia Publishing Group, which I unfortunately hooked up with in early 2011. They sold one book in a year and we argued frequently. He abruptly declared bankruptcy three weeks ago. I estimate he owes me \$1400 (unsold books/royalties/broken service contract). Out of spite, he even left my name off the official creditors list given to the Arizona judge. This has complicated matters.

I have a dreary sales record: my small indie publisher retired after his hired printer became brain-damaged and lost the complete texts of my two books.

Amazon didn't pay my publisher for books sold. I have had no success with BookClearingHouse/IPBA/CreateSpace/Smashwords. This will

confirm my current belief that a fiction writer needs to understand each book he writes will cost \$10,000.

Another explanation, of course, is that my two books are unappealing duds.

— WT

Publishing Pathways

Publishing Pathways mentoring positions are available. You learn about the publishing world today and what "publishing pathways" are available to you. Then, you learn to use the Publishing Pathways website to help others decide which "publishing pathway" is right for them.

Contact Dave LaRoche at dalaroche@comcast.net and he will help with your orientation and get you enrolled. — WT

Skulls: published in time for Halloween

There are 206 bones in the human body — one more than a horse, and a hundred or so fewer than a mouse. Yet one reigns supreme in matters of mystery and symbolism: the skull.

The book *Skulls: An Exploration of Alan Dudley's Curious Collection* by Simon Winchester, with photography by Nick Mann, will be published in October 2012. This is one of the most expansive private skull collections in the world, with more than 2,000 specimens. The September 2012 issue of *Discover Magazine* gives a sneak preview with photos of the skulls of a North American bullfrog, a Gila monster, and a striped skunk. The most unusual one was that of a two-headed cow: the rare, fused skulls of conjoined twins born with polycephaly. — WT

The Whalewan

What it might look like
is anyone's guess.
I leave that to visual artists
of far greater skill
than I will ever possess.
Sunday just past noon,
late summer,
walking in the restaurant and bookstore district
of Mountain View,
California,
Silicon Valley,
I encountered
two sweet little Asian girls,
both very young,
I'd never met before,
and whose names
I never learned,
escorted by
their immigrant mother,
playing and skipping
on the street
as they walked toward,
I imagined,
their quiet mother's car.
One of them suddenly blurted out,
quite by surprise,
unexpectedly,
"I see a Whalewan –
that's a word I just made up
for an animal
with the head of a whale
and the body of a swan!"
It seemed likely
the little child
would soon forget this creative impulse
in a matter of moments.



Therefore,
I determined,
right there and then
I would preserve
the sacred memory
of this mythical beast
for all of eternity.
These modest lines
are the result.
Now I do not at all
wish to plagiarize
the fantasies
of this precious little being.
Yet I must assure
The Whalewan
never vanishes,
but is forever,
as long as there are angels
and beyond.
The Whalewan
must never leave us,
never be forgotten.

We must make a gentle world,
safe,
for all whalewans.
Whalewans must always be wanted,
feel cherished.
As I quietly
so determined,
unseen by others,
that such was one of my purposes
in all of history,
I began to choke up
and softly cry.
I am still crying.
ever so slightly,
even now,
as I type these words.
I have no children,
Never did.
Never will.
I have only the Whalewan.
– Stephen C. Wetlesen

Key Person

by Valerie Lee

Are you a key person? Do you take charge, get things done and bring people together? A key person is a leader, someone who organizes parties, groups and gatherings. They like people, enjoy being surrounded by them, and feel warm and comfortable in their company.

Recently I went home for a vacation to see my family and relatives. As I mingled, visiting and laughing happily with everyone, my sister casually mentioned, "You know, we don't get together anymore as a family. We only do this when you come home."

Stunned by her remark, I stared at my sister's lovely face and saw the truth in her eyes. My brother, standing behind

us, tapped me on the shoulder. "Yes, it's true. You're the only reason we're all here for dinner tonight."

"You can't be serious."

"You better believe it!" My brother grabbed a frosted éclair from the dining room table and walked away.

I stood staring at his back, shaking my head, thinking of all the many years wasted when there should have been many family events and outings. I looked at my nieces and nephews and noticed their shyness as they stood alone in their own corners. What a shame! How could this have happened?

My sister must have noticed my sad expression because she said, "At least this way we don't argue."

"We're all family! What's the problem?"

"Nothing. Just don't have the time. Too busy with our everyday lives, that's all!" She quickly turned around and ran to the stove, lifting up the boiling water kettle to make more tea.

At that point, I realized I was the key, the missing link, the person who drew them all together. Yes, I had mixed emotions, some good and some bad, but I knew one thing; they all loved me enough to come together for a family reunion dinner.

My brother walked up to me, touched my cheek and smiled. "The rest of us don't need to see each other all the time to prove we love each other. In our hearts we know it, so don't worry."

I smiled when he said, "Don't let anyone fool you. You are still the key to our family, the missing link." – WT

Terse On Verse for October

by Pat Bustamante



Oct.-To-Be

Oughta be famous by now, by gum
At least my relatives think my stuff hums!
I'll keep on sending, I'm dogged you know:
And my dog loves my every word so...

— Pat Bustamante

SO MANY ought-to-be's! The life of a writer (unless you are a not-so-dedicated part-time writer) is quite different than say, an engineer. Or a politician, or a teacher, or any line of work outside the field of arts and letters. Any occupation eating up the majority of your time—if it isn't writing—will compete.

To give an edge in this "competition," select the topic to write about that is dearest to your heart. Write your poem, your short story, or summary of a theme for a novel—or, as our recent speaker suggested, a drama. Make your own contest. Consider all the literary lights who have addressed the topic as your competition; make yours better. Do it fast and do not consider all the rules for submission to the public. That comes later; this experience is for your private tears or laughter.

This is all about emotion, burning fidelity to a cause, changing our world perhaps. You have the rest of your life to refine your 'rant' (or your song?). It could be personal or private, related to family or relationships; some secret about yourself, which makes the difference between YOU and that part of the world that has never struggled with creating literature. We write to heal or to cheer or to go into battle, and perhaps occasionally to brag. And we teach others, even if "the cause" fails. Yours can define you.

Be very proud of that—and keep sending. — WT

News Byte!

Senior Poets Laureate announced in *The Diplomat*

by Amy Kitchener

All winners of the 2012 Senior Poets Laureate Contest are listed in the expanded online edition of *The Diplomat*, along with news about the identity theft of one Senior Poet Laureate and death of another. Don't miss the link on Page 6 to William Childress's excellent "Is Free Verse Killing Poetry?" in the 9/4/12 online *Virginia Quarterly Review*.

Online issue also contains updates about *White Buffalo Gifts of the Great Spirit – Dream Catcher Volume III* and the *Golden Words* anthology. Go to amykitchenerfdn.org/2012-diploemat to read all about it. — WT

Clint Eastwood Haiku

Dialogue with chair.
Theater of the absurd.
August emptiness.

— Stephen C. Wetlesen

Invisible Elephants

by Pat Bustamante

There are sources of new information that are not limited to the media, Internet, gossipy neighbors; the informer is invisible. Much has been made of the metaphor "the invisible elephant in the room" which refers to a subject the visible people may not want to touch on, but probably should.

Last year a lot of people were informed, by invisible informants, that the world is due to end.

Good topic for discussion! All physicists know that worlds/planets do end. Sometime. Eventually.

Many, many centuries back certain prophets saw visions of our world's destruction and began to speculate: when? The Maya people, for instance, were deeply engaged with sorting out how we all got here, where we are going, what we can learn that will save us from mass destruction.

I am fascinated by the "invisible," so here is a report.

My mother's grandmother had a reputation as a palm reader and fortuneteller. On my father's side, several ancestors spoke to spirits and one of my contemporaries, cousin Merta Mary Parkinson, gained a measure of fame with her ability to contact "guiding spirits" and pass on their advice.

So I want to believe, it is bred in me! There is a "very large object," about the size of the moon, in Space right now heading our way, but NASA is keeping quiet.

What if the Maya stargazers knew something about comets and meteor showers? In August we have a famous one of the latter. A comet's orbit can be reckoned if it is a short enough time from one visibility on Earth to another, such as Halley's. What if it appears on a schedule of 2,000 years?

We know for a fact there was something in the sky "visible by day and by night" 2,000 years ago. And some big changes happened!

Maya calendars are carefully mapped out for both forward and backward in time. A "big thing" may indeed be coming because our current year 2012 is a "big calendar thing," though the reason for it is much disputed.

I cannot make tables tap and I am not sure about ghosts, but I believe an "invisible elephant" can be as real as a visible one. Something is going to happen.

Good thing? Bad thing? I hope it is a pretty comet but does not come too close. Dec. 21? Stay tuned. — WT



Girl with the Vacant Eyes

by Karen Hartley

The painting and its subject, a girl with vacant eyes, have always haunted me. That painting had mysteriously taken up space in the basement of my house. I don't know how it got there or why.

The artist had signed the painting with only one name, although the signature and the subject—that girl—led me to believe it was a woman. I first found the painting many years ago, so the artist, if still living, would now be elderly.

Each time I looked at the painting, the soft hues of pink and aqua in the girl's dress were diminished by those eyes. I could not look anywhere but into them. They focused to the side, as if looking at something peripheral—wide open, vacant under a cloak of long, black eyelashes. Maybe the mysterious girl is someone known to the artist. Perhaps it is her daughter. But I am determined to find her, and when I do, I hope my questions will be resolved. Some unbelievable things have happened since the first time I discovered that painting, so my quest for answers cannot be ignored.

One day, I went down into the basement to look for something. I had to move the painting in order to get what I needed, and suddenly I felt the girl's empty eyes lock onto mine. I drew back, overcome with a feeling I had not known before. I shivered.

I stood still for a few minutes, studying this mysterious creation. How did she end up here? Why was there no explanation? Why were her eyes so empty? So vacant of any light, devoid of any life, bereft of any soul? Who was she? What was behind those vacant, empty eyes? I climbed up out of the basement and at the top of the steps, I turned and looked back at her. She was still looking at me. I closed the basement door and vowed to return soon, to search beyond those eyes, for the story I was certain lay behind them, and the artist who painted this girl.

Several weeks passed before I ventured into the basement again. Those empty, vacant eyes haunted me. Why had the artist painted her? What did she mean to show? I had to know who the girl was, where she came from. I thought about her all the time. My thoughts

were consumed with that painting, that girl, her vacant eyes.

The next time I opened the door to the basement, I expected to be looking into those eyes, just as I had last time. She was not in the same place. I was alarmed. Had someone else who lived in the house moved the girl? Where was she? I paused, took a deep breath. The next moment, I saw the top of her head. She had been moved into a corner. I felt involuntarily pulled as I hurried to the painting—to her. One more step, and again, those empty, vacant eyes locked onto mine. I could not look away. I could not move. It was always quiet in the cool basement and now, the silence that surrounded me was frightening.

I stood transfixed, now level with her eyes—those eyes with nothing behind them. They bored into mine, causing me to once more shiver against the chill of the basement's dampness, and the cold, hard aura that surrounded the painting of that girl.

A few minutes later, I thought I'd felt a breeze. It seemed to float in through the open window, and wind itself around, finally blowing between me and the painting. I was almost certain I saw the girl blink. Was I imagining it? When I felt the soft wake pass by me, I intuitively knew it held a message. I leaned into the fading ethereal whisper, and as it diminished, I understood. My intuition was telling me I had to find the artist, and the girl. I had to know.

Stunned and shaken, I backed away and turned, took the steps two at a time, hurrying to reach the comfort of daylight. I stood outside for a few minutes, caught my breath and tried to understand what all this meant. I needed to know what had happened—to both of them. At the same time, I also realized this mystery might never be solved, but I was determined to try.

Back in the house, I was told I looked pale—like I'd seen an apparition. What had transpired in the basement a few minutes ago, and why not any other time I'd been down there? Had I really been “seeing” things—“seeing” the girl all this time? Was this a dream? Whatever it was, I knew I would be down there again soon. I was preparing to move, and there were things in the basement that would go with me. Now I knew the painting of that girl with

those vacant eyes would surely be one of those things.

Today I live in another house and it doesn't have a basement. The girl with the vacant eyes now lives under the stairwell. I pass her everyday. For years, she was always the same. Her eyes fixed, her focus blank. A beautiful girl with a porcelain-like face and long, silky hair. Recently, when I came downstairs, the painting was laying on the floor. When I picked it up, I noticed something different. The girl's lips had changed. From the original youthful, full, rosy blush, they were now a thin, straight line of pale gray. The ends of her hair were now brittle. In frightened disbelief, I dropped the painting. At that moment, I again wondered what the artist looked like and pondered an interesting question: perhaps the artist slipped through a portal and painted the girl, so that like the picture in Wilde's long-ago Faustian tale, she wishes the girl will age, her eyes will dim, they will someday close, but none of that will happen to the artist.

I have not forgotten the message—that whisper in the breeze. I will persevere. I can only hope that some day I will find out who this girl is—this girl whose eyes are bereft of any soul. If I find her, I will also find the artist who gave her life—or—who chose to pass through a portal and make a deal for her own eternal youth. —WT

How to know if you're dead

Remember the controversial Chinese exhibition in which real human bodies, treated by “polymer preservation,” had been carefully dissected to display bodily systems—the skeletal, muscular, nervous, circulatory, digestive, respiratory, urinary, and reproductive systems? Those cadavers live on, with useful lives.

For other secrets of the dead, you don't want to miss *Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers* by Mary Roach. Learn about practicing surgery on the dead; body snatching; human crash dummies and the ghostly but necessary science of impact tolerance; crucifixion experiments; medicinal cannibalism; and beating-heart cadavers—how to know if you're dead. —WT

Conferences, Workshops and Contests

Contests: see next page

Some websites with ongoing lists of writing competitions include *Poets and Writers* at pw.org/grants; and *Writers Digest* at writersdigest.com/competitions/writing-competitions – WT

Writer's Digest Conference West October 2012

This is the big one – first time on the West Coast. Three storytelling events in one location; hundreds of sources of inspiration.

As a writer, you know the importance of exposing yourself to a variety of perspectives and soaking up the inspiration, knowledge and creative energy that comes from being face to face with your fellow storytellers. Not to mention the practical and career-boosting benefits of putting yourself in the same room with industry experts, agents, editors, and people who have found success in your chosen field.

We've scheduled three phenomenal creative conferences to unfold over the course of 5 days in one location, the Loews Hollywood Hotel in Hollywood, California, on October 17 - 21, 2012. Contact www.writersdigestwest.com

– WT

San Francisco Writers Conference February 2013

Major names in publishing attend the SFWC and take personal interest in projects discovered there. Speakers for all levels/genres; substantial early discounts available. February 14-18, 2013 at the Mark Hopkins Hotel, San Francisco. Visit www.SFWriters.org – WT

Memor Class

by Woody Horn

The memoir class, "Writing Down Memory Lane," will meet at the Camden Community Center, Union Avenue, Tuesdays 1:00 - 2:30 p.m., beginning October 2. Contact: 559-8553. Beginners welcome. – WT

Blog Your Way to a Book Deal Workshop: Nina Amir

October 27 from 2 - 5 pm

Cost: \$45.

During this workshop you will learn why and how to blog a book, get help with a blog (if you have one), discuss setting up a blog, plan out your blogged book, get your publishing questions answered. Learn how Nina blogged her way to a book deal, how Julie Powell (*Julie & Julia*) and other bloggers are doing the same – and how you can, too. Nina Amir, author of the bestselling *How to Blog a Book, Write, Publish and Promote Your Work One Post at a Time* (Writer's Digest Books), will be offering this workshop in her home in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Register and get more information at <http://www.copywrightcommunications.com/Workshops.html> or call 408-353-1943. Limited to 10 people.

I want my books to be read

by Nina Amir

Becoming an author today takes more than just writing a great book or being a great writer.

Most traditional book publishers look for nonfiction writers with an author platform, a base of potential readers that know them as an expert in their field or on their subject. A platform is built from speaking, writing, blogging, and appearances on radio and television shows.

Like nonfiction authors, fiction authors stand a better chance of being published if they have an author platform as well. The reason for this is simple: A platform ensures writers can sell books. Why? They already have fans.

If you plan on self-publishing your book, it also behooves you to build an author platform. That very same fan base represents readers ready to run out and purchase your book as soon as you say it has been released. Without a built-in readership, it becomes much more difficult to sell a lot of books. If you don't sell books, your writing doesn't get read.

Do you have an author platform? Do you know what one is or how to create one? A platform consists of one or more of the following:

- numerous appearances on radio, television, Internet talk shows, news shows and podcasts
- a popular blog (lots of readers) and frequent guest blog posts for other bloggers
- a well-known presence in on-line forums and social networks
- popular videos or podcasts and frequent interviews on other peoples' podcasts
- a multitude of articles or books in both print and Internet publications
- an extremely large mailing list
- frequent talks and presentations to small, medium and large groups
- a bestselling book
- thousands of followers, friends and connections on social networks.

But what if you don't want to do any of these things? What if you want to write your book and never lift a finger to build platform, which equates to promoting yourself or your book?

You wouldn't be the first aspiring author to rebel or simply to put his or her foot down and refuse to do any of these things. In every workshop or class I teach, at least one person raises a hand after a few hours and says, "What if all I want to do is write my damn book?"

I reply, "Do it, but don't expect to sell a lot of books. Don't expect a lot of people to actually end up reading it besides your family and friends."

In other words, if you are not the type of writer who wants to promote yourself or your work and build author platform, but you want to write the book of your heart, by all means do so. Many writers have a book about which they feel passionate. They feel it is their purpose to write this book. The idea truly lies close to their heart. If this describes you, don't go to the grave with that book still inside you simply because you've been told by me or someone else that you have to have a platform or you'll never sell a single copy.

Write that book already. Almost every book will find at least a small market.

– WT

Directory of Experts

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

Astronomy, History of Astronomy

Bob Garfinkle ragarf@earthlink.net

Banking

Pam Oliver-Lyons
polpap@prodigy.net

Character Development

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

Counseling/John Steinbeck

Dr. Audry L. Lynch
glynch0001@comcast.net

Engineering: Mechanical,

Aero, Aerospace

Jerry Mulenburg
geraldmulenburg@sbcglobal.net

Growing Great Characters from the Ground Up

Martha Engber martha@engber.com

Internal Medicine/Addiction Disorder/Psychology

Dave Breithaupt dlbmlb@comcast.net

Marketing and Management

Suzy Paluzzi, MBA jomarch06@yahoo.com

Mathematics: Teaching and History/Fibonacci Sequence

Marjorie Johnson
marjohnson89@earthlink.net

Teaching and the Arts

Betty Auchard Btauchard@aol.com

Telecommunications Technology

Allan Cobb allancobb@computer.org

Television Production

Woody Horn 408-266-7040

Thanatologist: Counseling for Death, Dying, and Bereavement

Susan Salluce susansalluce@yahoo.com

Contests and Conferences

Please send announcements of contests and conferences to newsletter@southbaywriters.com.

CWC Around the Bay

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

Berkeley: 1:30 third Sundays, Oakland Public Library Main Branch. cwc-berkeley.com

Central Coast: 5:30 third Tuesdays, Bay Park Hotel, 1425 Munras Avenue, Monterey. centralcoastwriters.org

Fremont: 2:00 fourth Saturdays at DeVry University, 6600 Dumbarton Circle, Room 204, Fremont. cwc-fremontareawriters.org

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

Mount Diablo: 11:30 second Saturdays, Hungry Hunter, 3201 Mount Diablo Boulevard, Lafayette. mtdiablownwriters.org

Redwood: 3:00 first Sundays at Copperfield's Books, 2316 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa. redwoodwriters.org

Tri-Valley: 11:30 third Saturdays, Oasis Grille, 780 Main Street, Pleasanton. trivalleywriters.com

Sacramento: 11:00 third Saturdays, Tokyo Buffet, 7217 Greenback Lane, Citrus Heights. cwcsacramentowriters.org

San Francisco/Peninsula: 10:00 third Saturdays, Belmont Library, 1110 Alameda De Las Pulgas, Belmont. sfpeninsulawriters.com

Contest and Call for Submissions

*Editors: Kate Farrell, Linda Joy
Myers, Amber Lea Starfire*

Where were you in the 60s and 70s? We are seeking women with telltale stories of that extraordinary era for a unique anthology: *Times They Were A-Changing: Women Remember the 60s and 70s*. Prizes will be awarded to the top three works, though all entries are eligible for publication. First: \$300, publication, and 5 copies of the anthology; Second: \$150, publication, and 3 copies of the anthology; Third: \$75, publication, and 2 copies of the anthology. **Deadline: January 15, 2013.** Entry fees: \$20 for prose, \$15 for poetry. For complete guidelines and to enter, go to www.timestheywerereaching.com — WT



WRITERSTALK Challenge

What is it?

Twice a year, in February and August, awards are given to contributors to *WritersTalk*. You need take no special steps to enter this competition; if your piece in one of the designated genres is published in *WritersTalk*, you are a contestant in the Challenge.*

Genres

Fiction, 500 – 1500 words
Memoir, 500 – 1200 words
Essay/Nonfiction, 500 – 1200 words
Poetry

Judging Periods

January 16 through July 15
July 16 through January 15

Prizes

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

Judging

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

* Eligibility for the *WritersTalk* Challenge is limited to members of the South Bay Branch of the California Writers Club; judges may not judge in any category in which they have an entry. — WT

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 6:00p Regular Dinner Meeting COSTUME CONTEST	4	5 7:30p Open mic Barnes & Noble Almaden, San Jose	6
7	8	9	10 Submission Deadline <i>WritersTalk</i>	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 7:30p Open mic Barnes & Noble Pruneyard, Campbell	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30 7:30p SBW Board Meeting	31	October 2012		
Future Flashes						
November 7 Regular Dinner Meeting						

Your ad could go here
 \$7 per column inch for SBW members
 \$10 per inch for nonmembers

Stay Informed
 Read the Constant Contact notices in your email to receive meeting and event announcements. If you are not receiving those announcements, send your name and email address to webmaster@southbaywriters.com

Poetry Readings

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

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

Free and open to the public. For more information, contact Dennis Noren at norcamp@sbcglobal.net

Ongoing Critique Groups

Our Voices
 Meets in Santa Clara, every other Thursday 7:15 p.m. Genres: Fiction, nontechnical non-fiction, memoir. Contact: Dave LaRoche – dalaroche@comcast.net

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

Note:
 Come to a South Bay Writers dinner meeting to look for others who may want to form a critique group.

Members Books

Go to southbaywriters.com to see the members' gallery and members books. Add your book to our website.

South Bay Writers Anthology



\$10
 At the meeting.
 On the website.
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



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

MAIL TO

Address Correction Requested

October Regular Monthly Meeting
6 p.m. Wednesday, October 3

Harry's Hofbrau
390 Saratoga Avenue
San Jose
Dinner and speaker \$15

Literary Costume Contest

PANEL:

Sal Pizarro and Carolyn Schuk
Newspaper Gatekeepers:
Capture the
attention of the media

WritersTalk deadline is always
the 10th of the month.

New Location
New Date
First Wednesday



Harry's Hofbrau

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