



WRITERSTALK

Volume 24
Number 7
July 2016

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

No regular SBW Dinner Meeting in July.

Come Enjoy A Scrumptious Summer Party!



Sunday, July 10, 2016 at 3PM

Outdoors at Edie Matthews'

RSVP to Edie and For Location Directions
email edie333@sbcglobal.net or call 408-985-0819

Bring A Superb Dish to Share!

(SBW provides BBQ meat and drinks.)

According to your Last Name initial:

A – H ► Appetizer or Dessert

I – R ► Main Dish

S – Z ► Salad

Y'all come on now!

No charge for this event.

Next SBW dinner meeting will be Monday, August 8
Harry's Hofbrau in San Jose

JUNE RECAP: LEEANNE KRUSEMARK

Persevere Until Someone Says Yes

by Carolyn Donnell

LeeAnne Krusemark, author, editor, speaker, and adjunct online Professor of Publishing for Harvard, among (many) other things, began her talk, "Manuscript Formatting & Submission: Do's & Don'ts," at our June 13 meeting at the Hofbrau with a comment on rejection.



LeeAnne Krusemark

Krusemark told us not to be discouraged if we don't get accepted by an agent or publisher right away. Stephen King was rejected 75 times before finding a publisher; Hitchcock, over 100.

However, while perseverance is important, narrowing down the reasons for rejection can be the critical step to avoiding the slush pile. If you don't catch their eyes or don't follow their rules of formatting – from the first sentence – you will be disqualified and will never know why.

Her very thorough list of suggestions – no, more like rules – included everything from paper size, color of ink, spacing and margins to title page: what types of information to include, or not include, when submitting.

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Presidential Memo

Linda Myro Judd
President, South Bay Writers



A Year of Editing Dangerously

Buckminster Fuller, whose first name is Richard, lived in this world with the nickname Bucky. He had various talents as an architect, designer, inventor, philosopher, and writer. He invented the dymaxion car and the geodesic dome. Now, I'm not looking for a nickname, I'm not really a nickname kind of person. And the only moniker that was addressed to me, Computer Woman, did stick for about two minutes, and was used all of two times, but it is an apt summation of my connection to all things digital.

If you'll forgive me for being so personal, having not ever met the man, Bucky was brought to my attention when I was pondering how to approach this wonderful new position of president. I do believe that we are going to focus a lot on writing on the personal level this year. I have come to the conclusion that writing memoirs is the ticket to gaining better writing skills. And if I may have a year of your attention, you may come to agree with me. I propose this is the Year of Editing. And I will be your EditBuddy for the whole year.

Now you say, "How can she do that?"

That's a good question, as we have a big club with almost 200 members. I would be pretty busy if I did this by myself.

As President, I will ask for your Participation and your kindest Patience. There is a need in any writing club for editing. Our club is a nonprofit 501(C) 3 entity with a State of California mandate to teach.

Now you say, "What!? I edit all the time."

Okay, I better get Bucky in here to rescue me. If I can figure out how to bring him into the picture of our club for a moment, I would want to hear him give his famous talk:

Something hit me very hard once, thinking about what one little man could do. Think of the Queen Elizabeth—the whole ship goes by and then comes the rudder. And there's a tiny thing at the edge of the rudder called a trim tab. It's a miniature rudder. Just moving the little trim tab builds a low pressure that pulls the rudder around. Takes almost no effort at all. So I said that the little individual can be a trim tab. Society thinks it's going right by you, that it's left you altogether. But if you're doing dynamic things mentally, the fact is that you can just put your foot out like that and the whole big ship of state is going to go. So I said, "Call me Trim Tab."

The truth is that you get the low pressure to do things, rather than getting on the other side and trying to push the bow of the ship around. And you build that low pressure by getting rid of a little nonsense, getting rid of things that don't work and aren't true until you start to get that trim-tab motion. It works every time. That's the grand strategy you're going for. So I'm positive that what you do with yourself, just the little things you do yourself, these are the things that count. To be a real trim tab, you've got to start with yourself, and soon you'll feel that low pressure, and suddenly things begin to work in a beautiful way. Of course, they happen only when you're dealing with really great integrity.

—R. Buckminster Fuller

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www.southbaywriters.com

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SBW Mission

Educating writers of all levels of expertise in the craft of writing and in the marketing of their work.

Join Us

We have a membership category that fits you. Dues are \$45 per year plus a one-time \$20 initiation fee. Dual membership: \$25. Contact Membership Chair or sign up online at southbaywriters.com

WritersTalk

The monthly newsletter of South Bay Writers, the South Bay Branch of the California Writers Club

email: newsletter@southbaywriters.com

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Our Mission

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

Deadline

Submissions are due by the 15th of the month.

Submissions

All electronic submissions should be sent to the above email address as text or an attached MS Word file. Please prepare your work as carefully as you would for an agent. Use Times New Roman 12-font; no tabs; no colors; no page breaks. Send graphics separately as jpg files.

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

All submissions will be copyedited. Managing Editor reserves the right to selection.

Suggested word limits (less is more):

Member Achievement / News (200 words)

News Items (400 words)

Letters to the Editor (300 words)

Creative Works

Short Fiction/Memoir (1200 words)
Poetry (200 words)
Essay (900 words)

Announcements

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

Advertisements

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

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Marjorie Bicknell Johnson
Managing Editor



Dash Away— But Don't Hyphen or Dot

Our June South Bay Writers meeting was devoted to manuscript submission and formatting. Be sure to follow submission requirements of the targeted editor or publication. If they request a MS Word document, don't try to substitute something written in Pages or Text; if they can't open it easily in Word, they discard it immediately. In general, make your manuscript look professional. Use black ink, the font preferred by the recipient, and double-spaced lines. Indent those paragraphs half an inch, using tabs set to 0.5 inch or automatic paragraph indenting within your word processor. Avoid ragged paragraph indents and follow a period with a single space.

That's format in a nutshell at the manuscript level, but let's look at paragraphs and sentences. First of all, short paragraphs look more attractive on the page, and anything in all caps screams at the editor as much as too many exclamation points do. In fact, how we format punctuation within each paragraph is important when the agent/editor actually reads the piece. Sometimes the devil's in the details.

For example, punctuate dialogue correctly, typing quotes outside of commas and periods: "It's time to go," Mary said. (Not "It's time to go", Mary said.) In dialogue, when a beat or action identifies the speaker, use a period, not a comma: "That's bizarre." John shook his head in disbelief. (Not "That's bizarre". John shook his head; and not "That's bizarre," John shook his head.)

Sometimes a dash is necessary for spice, for clarity, or for proper emphasis. In the three examples below, substituting commas or parentheses looks ugly and lacks punch:

- The influence of three impressionists – Monet, Sisley, and Degas – is obvious in her work.
- My friends – that is, my former friends – ganged up on me.
- The editor – she had been awake half the night – came down in an ugly mood.

All the dashes above are em dashes, typed with no space preceding or following. Three symbols are sometimes called dashes: em dash – ; en dash – ; and hyphen - . Notice the difference in length. Historically, the em dash has the width of the typed letter M; the en dash, N. The em dash is as long as the font size: using 12 pt type, an em dash is 12 points long (approximately 1/6 inch) while an en dash is half as long.

Most word processing programs let you type a hyphen twice to make an em dash, but it's safer to use "insert symbol." On a PC, I can't advise you, but on the iMac, all the dashes are on the underscore/hyphen key, with shift or option.

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SBW 2015/16 Board. From left to right, seated: Vice-President Jenni Everidge, President Patrick McQueen, and Treasurer Bill Baldwin. Standing: Publicity Chair Linda Myro Judd, Member-at-Large Sheena Arora, and Newsletter Editor Marjorie Johnson.

View from the Board

by Sheena Arora



On Wednesday, May 10, the 2015/16 South Bay Writers Board met for the last time. We are sad to see some members leave. However, we are excited to work with the new members. Two future SBW Board members, Suman Ganapathy and Pamela Oliver-Lyons, joined us to see our process.

- **Remember to renew** your SBW membership before you go on vacation. You can renew online, by personal check, or by cash. If you have questions or problems contact Sally Milnor at membership@southbaywriters.com.
- **Save a tree!** Now SBW members can opt for a digital copy of *WritersTalk*. Contact Marjorie Johnson at newsletter@southbaywriters.com.
- **Save the date.** July 10 is the summer picnic and BBQ hosted by SBW member Edie Matthews. Details, Page 1, *WritersTalk*. Please be gracious and remember to thank Ms. Matthews.
- **Just a reminder:** In July, there is no SBW dinner meeting. South Bay Writers will next meet at Harry's Hofbrau on August 8. The new SBW Board for 2016-2017 will meet on August 3 at Santa Clara City Library, 2635 Homestead Rd, Santa Clara, CA 95051. SBW Board meetings are open to all SBW members.

July marks a year since I have joined the SBW Board. Club members have often asked me what I gain by this—by being a SBW Board member. I have often tried to think about my answer. I can easily say that I get to meet different personalities and hash-out my ideas. I contemplate, why are we always thinking about getting something? Can't it just be about giving back?

One should remember that it is SO easy to criticize any volunteer member for their work. But in reality it is difficult to step into their shoes and do their jobs, selflessly for years, just for the betterment of the club. I ask all SBW members to see if they can carve out a little time to help our SBW Board and committee members. — WT

New Members

by Sally A. Milnor



I am happy to introduce our four newest members.

Kelly Gomez was previously a student member and a *WritersTalk* intern. Kelly, now a college graduate, has rejoined our Club as a *WritersTalk* copy editor. On her membership questionnaire, she says: "I would consider myself a nonfiction writer but am also open to the idea of fiction and memoir. Sometimes I write about memories of my childhood or current life events. Right now, none of that is published, but it is all stored on my laptop." Kelly published a creative nonfiction piece in 2012, and since then, informative online articles.

Lee Ann Kolker joined us online. Her primary area of interest is in writing novels.

Ellen Snee also joined us online. Ellen is interested in writing memoir.

Alina Ying is a student member. Alina writes poetry, and her work, "Clipped Wings of Hope Can Fly Again," has appeared in *Team HBV Newsletter*, Fall/Winter 2014, and *Vertigo Literary Magazine: Transient*, Spring 2015.

To Our New Members: We wish each of you a warm welcome and hope your membership brings you inspiration and enjoyment.

To All South Bay Writers: We appreciate and need your continuing presence and support. Thank you to those of you who have renewed your membership for the coming fiscal year, 7/1/2016 through 6/30/2017. You are helping to keep our Club flourishing.

To those who have not yet renewed: We hope you will do so soon. Officially, you are **members only through June 30**. We appreciate and need your continuing presence and support.

See you at the picnic July 10th! — WT

After Jackson Pollock

"I am art."

I am the painting who paints.

But not very well.

— Stephen C. Wetlesen

New Officers South Bay Writers 2016/17

Our new officers stepped up to the plate when we asked them. Let's all give them our support and best wishes for success.



Left to right: VP Pamela Oliver-Lyons, President Linda Judd, Treasurer Bill Baldwin, Member-at-Large Sheena Arora, and Secretary Suman Ganapathy

Happy New Fiscal Year 2016/17

by WritersTalk Staff

South Bay Writers has a new slate of officers who bring us renewed energy and enthusiasm.

- President, Linda Myro Judd
- Vice President, Pamela Oliver-Lyons
- Secretary, Suman Ganapathy
- Treasurer, Bill Baldwin
- Member-at-Large 1: Sheena Arora
- Member-at-Large 2: Sandi Taylor

News from the outgoing Board: Jenni Everidge scheduled Carey Giudici to speak to us on August 8 on editing and the importance of finding a good editor. Patrick McQueen reported from CWC Central Board that the 6th Annual California Writers Club Picnic is scheduled for Saturday, July 23, 1 - 4 p.m. at Joaquin Miller Park, Oakland. Note: CWC is state-wide; SBW is the South Bay Branch of the California Writers Club. — WT

Now's the time: suggest speakers you want to hear and topics for workshops to vp@southbaywriters.com

BOOK ANNOUNCEMENT

The Fourth Piece: Order's Last Play

by E. Ardell (Eboni Ardell Harris)

The Fourth Piece is E. Ardell's first novel, YA Science Fiction/Fantasy, to be released by 48fourteen Publishing in July 2016.

Admitting what you are will end everything you know. Embracing who you are will start a war. Life is great when you're good-looking and popular — so long as no one knows you're a *vulatto*. Being half-alien gets you labeled "loser" quicker than being a full *vader*. So it's a good thing Devon, Lyle, and Lawrence can easily pass for human — until the night of the party. Nothing kills a good time faster than three brothers sharing a psychic vision of a fourth brother who's off world and going to die unless they do something. But when your brother's emergency happens off-planet, calling 9-1-1 isn't an option. In their attempt to save a brother they barely remember, Devon, Lyle and Lawrence expose themselves to mortal danger and inherit a destiny that killed the last four guys cursed with it. In 2022, there are humans and aliens, heroes and monsters, choices and prophecies — and four brothers with the power to choose what's left when the gods decide they're through playing games.

Visit her on FaceBook, facebook.com/EArdell; Twitter, @E_Ardell; or check out her website, EArdell.com.



Clean out word clutter

The hot new craze is clearing clutter out of your home. Why not declutter our manuscripts?

Five ways to throw out word clutter:

1. Reduce long clauses/phrases. The woman, who was in the store, refused to shop. Declutter to: The woman in the store refused to shop.
2. Remove extra words. "The person who won the prize received a trophy" can become "The winner received a trophy."
3. Discard empty openers. Instead of "There is a dog in the pet store window," write "A dog is in the pet store window."
4. Dump overused modifiers. Change "When the doorbell rang, she was really afraid" to "The sound of the doorbell frightened her."
5. Remove redundancies. In "We should advance forward," delete forward.

In general: Cut anything that is vague or repetitious. — WT

Persevere: LeeAnne Krusemark

Continued from Page 1

Krusemark gave formatting details on the body of the manuscript itself, and even the binding (only use clips – no stapling or other types of binding.)

It seems that even having an extra line after a paragraph can get your submission headed toward the slush pile. Information on the cover page – first rights and other similar statements – can make or break you, and even get you into trouble if not done correctly.

Little details not only are important but also critical. You don't want to wait months just to find out you were rejected because you didn't double space – or never hear at all.

Krusemark continued from basic formatting to rules for signing contracts (never do this without an agent, even if you didn't use one to find a publisher), explanations about copyrighting and rights issues (Never, she says, do you want to sell all your rights), and tips on how to find the right publisher. *Writer's Market* and *Literary Marketplace* were two recommended resources.

After answering questions from an appreciative audience, Krusemark told us about her courses and pointed to a table filled with her course and booklets on various topics ranging from *Self Publishing vs. Traditional Publishing* and *99 ways to Market Your Book* to ideas about home businesses, loans and grants, and even couponing. A long line formed at the table with members eager to ask more questions and discuss ideas.



SBW member Woody Horn talks to LeeAnne Krusemark

– Photo by Carolyn Donnell

LeeAnne Krusemark can be found at her website www.leeannekrusemark.com/ as well as on Facebook, LinkedIn, and other social media. You can contact her by email at LeeAnneLA@aol.com. – WT

Presidential Memo: Year of Editing Dangerously

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We have some critique groups for editing that are off-shoots of the club and they are listed on the calendar in our monthly newsletter. There are many critique groups listed on Meetup.com which are close to where you live. We need to take advantage of them and a position in our club called the acquisitions editor.

Usually, this editor actively seeks written work and only recommends works for a writing project. In our club, this position will give recommendations for level of membership for new members. California Writers Club, of which we are a branch, mandates reporting active, associate, or supporting levels of membership depending upon the amount of publishing that a member reports on his membership application. The more active members, the better; after all, South Bay Writers is part of the prestigious California Writers Club. (You can check your membership level to see if it is correct by using MRMS, the state member reporting document, or by asking me.)

Our club is full of talented writers. Let's help our club grow by helping each other to improve our writing abilities and to get our works published. *WritersTalk* is a handy publishing choice. SBW TalkBooks has been using social media to promote our SBW authors and their books, which appear on Goodreads.

This is free publicity. It's time to take advantage of that free press! You have a built-in advantage at South Bay Writers: we are your writing support and the place where you can practice your marketing skills among friends.

Seek me out and let me know if you would like to go further in your editing, want a workshop on editing, or can volunteer to help others in their editing. We can all become comfortable with editing and learn where to "get rid of a little nonsense, get rid of

things that don't work and aren't true," to paraphrase Bucky. Let's be trim tabs.

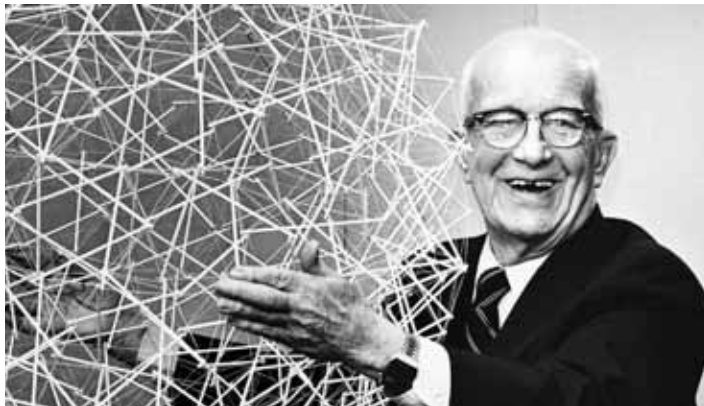
When we get really good at our writing, we can employ Bucky's word, *dymaxion*, which he associated with much of his work. His word is a portmanteau of the words dynamic, maximum, and tension, which sums up the goal of his trim tab study: maximum gain of advantage from minimal energy input.

Thanks, Bucky. I know you are up there, chuckling and showering us with your good cheer for contemplating these thoughts.

Write! Write! Write!

Linda Myro Judd

Ed. Note: R. Buckminster Fuller wrote over thirty books, including poetry. This link is to an article about Fuller: www.brainpickings.org/2015/08/21/buckminster-fuller-trim-tab/. The site itself, brainpickings.org, is a wonderful site for articles about writers and their craft. – WT





South Bay Writers June 13, 2016 The Changing of the Guard.



Passion, Persistence, Patience:

The Three P's To Writing Success

by Tom Mach

After almost six decades as a writer, I decided to travel back in time to reexamine how I changed over the years. I did this by writing a memoir about my writing experiences in *Persistence, Then Peace*. But it was only after I wrote and published this book that I realized I left out two important ingredients toward being a successful author: passion and patience.

Lyman Abbott, a late 19th century theologian, editor, and author, once said, "Patience is passion tamed." I always knew I was persistent in anything I did, particularly in writing. In fact, that is why I made persistence the hallmark of my writing years when I wrote my memoir. However, I didn't always have passion and patience in some of the things I wrote.

I think writers are like sponges, soaking up their experiences and storing them for potential future use. That was certainly true of me. When I was six years old, I was enamored by the book *The Little Engine That Could*. It described a locomotive that chugged up a steep hill, not sure if it would make it, but it tried; it was persistent and made it. Other memories include my shyness with girls when I was twelve, writing a complete novel while in high school, and taking a girl to a high school prom via bus and subway. Memories somehow circulate in our subconscious and often resurface when we write years later.

What I soon realized as I began my memoir is how often people commented on my persistence. When someone told me I couldn't do something, I took it as a challenge. I vividly remember when, about four decades ago, I tried unsuccessfully to sell an article to a publication. I met a writer at a California Writers Club Conference and asked for her advice. She read my article and told me that I lacked the ability to write for publication. I was hurt, but I asked what she had ever written for publication. Her answer floored me: she had never published anything. (That was the last time I would ever ask a non-expert for expert advice.) I soon sold my first article to Meredith Sun Newspapers, a group of newspapers which covered several cities in the Bay Area. The editor invited me to be a stringer for the newspaper group and soon I was writing an article a week, receiving \$25 for each one.

Here is where the second "P," passion, entered my writing life. I learned it was possible to become passionate about a subject if you did enough research to understand it. For instance, I never went river rafting, yet after I poured myself into articles describing what it was like, I was excited and felt as if I personally had experienced going through rough waters on a rubber raft.

Yet there were other articles tough for me to write about even though I did the research. For instance, I wrote an article about

where to shop for bargains and feigned passion for the subject. The article was published, but had I been passionate about the subject, I could have written a stronger piece.

In my early years of writing I wrestled with writer's block. I felt stressed over not knowing where my story was heading and getting stuck. I had a passion with the problem of stress, and as a result one of my most successful articles was entitled "How To Cope With The Stress of Writing," the feature article for the July, 1981 cover story in *Writer's Digest*. I suggested this article to the editor because it was one subject I had not seen in the magazine. I was not aware that my article touched an emotional nerve with other writers also.

Getting emotionally involved with your fiction writing is very important, but I didn't realize that until much later. When I wrote my first novel, *The Boss's Son*, at seventeen, I was involved with the plot far more than the characters. I wanted to write about a young man's realization after it is too late that his father really did love him. But I couldn't get emotionally involved with it because I wasn't emotionally tuned in with the characters. As I mentioned in *Persistence, Then Peace*, it took me quite a while to get that emotional involvement.

I always believed you create a character by taking out a character sheet and describing each item, such as: male or female; name; age; height; hair color, type of nose; eye color; distinguishing facial characteristics; occupation. And on and on.

Thinking this is the way to create a character, I dutifully filled in the blanks. Thus, I would end up with copy such as this:

Susan Blanchard, a 24-year-old account executive at XYZ Advertising, ran a comb through her shoulder-length black hair as she stared in a mirror. Men her age loved her hazel eyes and petite nose and even complimented her on smooth cheekbones and fine taste in the latest fashions from Dior.

Yuk! Not only is this poorly written, but I have to ask myself where is her soul? This is a cardboard cutout of what is supposed to be a believable human being. If you really want people to be interested in your book (regardless of your plot), get them interested in your characters. It took me years to learn that unless you can truly understand the person you are creating from more than physical characteristics, your character will never be real.

What has this to do with passion? Plenty. Spanish film actress and singer Victoria Abril once said, "You can fake your age or mask it, but the passion that moves the characters has to be real." In the example I gave earlier it's not enough to say that Susan has a passion for becoming a CEO for the advertising firm in ten years. Show it through dialogue, through her action, from the things other people say about her. Also, don't give Susan a passion for a particular thing unless she would "want" it. Her passion has to be genuine, not something you "force" her to have.

As an example, in my novel *Sissy!* my character, Jessica Radford, came "alive" to me, not only in the sense of my seeing her physical attributes, but in terms of having a good idea of the nature of her soul. The opening sentences in that novel set in Lawrence, Kansas in 1862 told readers more about her than any completed page of a character profile sheet ever could:

Continued on Page 12

Miasma 1.0

by Chess Desalls

Note from the author: I invited my Facebook friends and Twitter followers to propose words to include in the below story. The words were quite random, as was the final result.

Pain lanced through my fingers as I struggled to maintain my grip. Voices from the window above concerned me more than the rumble of engines below. I croaked in the direction of my right cufflink. "Miasma, assistance please."

The cufflink flashed blue. A puff of pumpernickel and citrus preceded a wheezy voice. "How may I help?"

"Help me descend to safety before the platform crumbles. I'm not sure I can hold on longer than a few minutes."

Miasma whistled, then sighed. "One moment while I search for a response to your request." After more flashing and another whiff of pumpernickel, Miasma snickered. "Pardon my onomatopoeia, but *wow*. That drop is steep. Falling would be fatal. BAM! And then, splat!"

My nails dug into the concrete until bits of dust sprinkled my face. It took everything I had not to release my grip and ring the post of the cufflink — the computer's tiny neck. "Hurry, woman. Get me down from here."

"Why would you assume I'm female?" Miasma snorted. "It's my voice, isn't it? No wonder I've so often been the victim of gender misclassification. I bet if I were a baritone model you'd have more faith in my abilities. You and all those before you."

MEMOIR

An Ordinary Day

by Marcela Dickerson

Barely awake by the impertinent chime of our alarm clock, I walk barefoot to the little office next to the bedroom where I dig among the notes piled up on the desk. Finally I find the toll free customer service number, produced reluctantly at the store by the boy with the Afro, who wrote it without lifting his eyes from something more exciting on the screen of his cell phone.

Phone in hand, I review the previous night, which by far wins the award for the weirdest this year. No wonder I am sleepy — the constellations are mismatched. How else to explain these two coincidences: a memory foam mattress with a severe case of Alzheimer's and a skunk committing suicide right below our bedroom window?

"Customer service, how may I help you?"

Their office must be in the East. No one can be so cheerful this early. I start to explain the circumstances of our mattress.

"The previous mattress, which I also bought from your company, lasted seventeen years," I say. "This one is less than two years old, and the memory foam has lost all its memory. My husband says it has Alzheimer's." I continue before she can say anything. "And last night with the smell of the skunk I never could go back to sleep. I kept rolling towards my husband."

"Your phone number? Do you have a receipt?"

Off the Shelf — Edie Matthews



A bead of sweat trickled from the space between my brows and down along my nose before it dropped. "I don't have time for this. What are your instructions?"

My nostril quivered as the space near my right wrist filled with the stench of onions and rotting bananas.

Continued on Page 13

"And I have to go to work today." I don't add that I need all my brains for my job as an interpreter.

Miss Smiles continues her questions over the phone without commenting on my complaints. "Ah, yes, I see it here: purchased in 2013. No worries — you have a ten-year warranty."

That's good, I think. The mattress was quite expensive.

"I'll send you a form. After you mail it in, we'll come and inspect the mattress."

I hang up. My husband pops in.

"No corpse," he says. "The poor thing must have been fighting or escaping from some other critter."

Have I been transported to the boonies in the middle of the night? Skunks — this close to downtown San Jose? Sometimes we have had possums or raccoons. But a skunk?

I manage to get to work. My morning at the courthouse is in one of the sentencing departments, and it's a busy morning. The last case says it all.

"Mr. so-and-so," the judge says. "The negotiated sentence in your case is fifty years in state prison, followed by twenty years of parole."

I look at the man; he seems to be in his late forties. I doubt he will get out in his lifetime.

Continued on Page 13



Boardwalk

Come to the boardwalk
on a sunny afternoon
Breathe in the smells and
pop balloons
Ride the carousel and
grab a ring
once more your soul
will sing with
the joy of it all
Hold on tight when
you ride
the Big Dipper
and remember
whatever you do
don't eat first!
The Haunted House
beckons you
The noisy bumper cars too
The Skee Ball is inviting
and the Fun House
not so frightening
There's that slippery slide you
need a gunny sack
to do
and oh those funny mirrors
completely change
the look of you

The arcades are fun and
the overhead swings
provide a different view
so you look down
while you swing and sway
above the boardwalk

There's so much more
miniature golf
hot dogs and beer
better enjoy it now in
case it's awhile before
you're here again

When night falls there
may be a show
but by this time
you might be too tired
to go
After your sunny afternoon
at the boardwalk

— Karen Hartley

WritersTalk apologizes to
Karen. "Boardwalk" was in
June WT--but without its
last two verses. Oops!

The Girl

I sat across from her
on the train
She didn't speak until
I asked, "Where are you from?"
... and she said,
"the Manhattan winter
was frigid"
and she
shivered
She got off at
the next stop
I still haven't
forgotten her
— Karen Hartley

Song of Life

The sun peeks over the mountains in Palm Springs
The doves are cooing as if to say good morning
The palm trees are gently swaying
I take the trek to the coffee pot
Wait patiently
Until it is
ready
I get to sit
Have my coffee
Think or just relax
I love my morning quiet time
Before the cranberry bread is gone
Before the ducks waddle out of the stream to beg for morsels
Before I figure out what I want to do with this day
Before I have to take a shower with cool water
Before our vacation ends
I will sing the song of life
— Karen Franzenburg

To Format Poetry for *WritersTalk*

For *WritersTalk*, send your poem as you want it to appear in print, left justified or centered, written in 12 pt Times New Roman font. A Microsoft Word document is best; if you use Pages, export to Word before sending. If you send a Pages document to an editor who has a Mac, she can read it, but if she lives in the PC world, she will not be able to open it.

No colors or unusual fonts: let your words paint the pictures. Give each poem its own page and never split a long poem by inserting a page break because the second page is not always picked up when "setting the type." That's what happened to Karen Harley's poem, "Boardwalk."

For a shaped poem, say a poem about a horse shaped like a horse, all you can do is to send a PDF and hope for the best. Karen Franzenburg's shaped poem "Song of Life" was done in Pages, exported to Word, and centered; she chose her words carefully for impact upon both the ears and the eyes.

The poem "Have a Nice Day" by Clarence Hammonds looks square because the lines were almost the same length and were fully justified, like a page in a book. — WT

Have a Nice Day

Have a nice day is said, mostly everywhere
Have a nice day is said, never just in the air
Have a nice day say it to make it very fair
Have a nice day say it if not you won't dare
I say, you have a nice day and no intrusion
I say, you have a nice day, no interruption
I say, you have a nice day, allow this, too
I say, you have a nice day, let it be of you
Every day, have a nice day, this you deserve
Every day, have a nice day, this you reserve
Every day, have a nice day, be real lovingly
Every day, have a nice day, let it be joyfully
— Clarence L. Hammonds
Poem number 2,580

July Terse on Verse

by Pat Bustamante



July-On-Roars

When it gets too hot, one can get crabby;
The poem may end up a preachy-work
When it was meant to be joyful. What a jerk!
When old summer clothes may look too shabby,
It does me no good to roar and snort.
The tennis-ball poem bounds down the court,
The strongest masterpiece fades to murk
And even worse, it shrinks to flabby.

— Patricia Bustamante

I am told *El Nino* has finished doing damage to our weather. So far, I find the days somewhat hot but I still can tolerate them. Hot weather makes me want to put down my pen or pencil and stretch out, doze, or daydream. I have to work hard to get back to work, if that makes sense. If you have an air-conditioned home (I don't) maybe this is not a problem. But summer—"summer time, and the days are—" for me not best spent creating a new masterpiece.

We have learned, at the June South Bay Writers meeting, how to make a fabulous manuscript. I have one hundred thousand reasons for how to put off finishing that manuscript—don't ask. Those who have heard me explain that I am working on 12 novels at once are kind enough not to call me "a nut." Everyone has his or her own way to get the writing to flow. I like to switch from sad to glad, from memoir to murder-story. My poems have the same treatment. I can recite new verses in the middle of the night, my best time to create. I hope you also have a special time to create. Good luck and stick to your creative hours, whether in July or August or ANY heat wave. You'll be glad you did. — WT

Words from the Editor: Dash Away—But Don't Hyphen or Dot

Continued from Page 3

The elegant em dash is the most versatile of the dashes. The em dash separates a group of words and is often used to set off amplifying or explanatory elements. A pair of em dashes can be placed in a sentence as an alternative to parentheses, commas, or colons. Three examples were given earlier in paragraph 4.

A single em dash can show an abrupt change, but those "damned dots" (ellipses ...) do not replace the em dash. Ellipses usually indicate that something has been omitted.

- "I told you that—" Mary began, but John cut her short.
- Darkness, thunder, a sudden scream—

The en dash indicates a range. Its principal use is to connect numbers, and less often, words. For example: read pages 17–21; the conference will be August 25–28; or, the London–Paris train leaves at two o'clock. Notice that the hyphen is not used.

Hyphens are a different breed of dash; they show where a word has been split in type. Hyphens are used for compound words on the way to becoming one word, such as on line to on-line to online, and in phrasal adjectives, such as assisted-living facility. Also, hyphens are needed—sometimes—in compounds formed with prefixes: I usually have to look them up. For example, we have coauthor and coeditor, but co-worker. The most often misspelled word we see at WT is nonfiction; the word is correctly spelled with no hyphen.

Dashes are like salt in beef stew. Sprinkle in a few to perk up your piece, but only a few; using too many becomes annoying. Keep writing—and dashing. — WT

PS: For some advice on formatting poetry, see Page 10. And for your manuscript, never use more than a few lines of script (italics) because it is harder to read and may cause the agent/editor to toss your manuscript into the slush pile.



— Photo by Ruth Hottel

Bee on Lavender

purple petals sway
pollen waiting patiently
buzzing bee drops by

— Carolyn Donnell

Thoughts Expressed Through Poetic Art

by Stephen C. Wetlesen

Deep Hallucinations

Did you hear about
the delusional man
who got so mentally ill,
that he thought he was
a psychiatrist?

— Stephen C. Wetlesen

Gibbous Orb

Waxing gibbous orb.
Pale in clear blue afternoon.
Sometimes vanishes.

Waning gibbous orb,
shrouded in thin wispy gauze.
Wind gusts sing in leaves.

— Stephen C. Wetlesen

Oceanic Contemplations

Deep down
every human being
is a whale.

Like our seagoing cousins,
such as Orcas and dolphins
we are mammals
and we can swim.

— Stephen C. Wetlesen

Working with an Editor

by Leslie Hoffman
Independent Copy Editor

We know what is said about the attorney who represents himself. The writer who edits his own work is just as foolish. Yes, even an editor needs an editor.

Authors who seek traditional publishing need to meet the editing standards of their chosen publisher or literary agent and adhere to their submission guidelines. The editing process is equally important when self-publishing. A published book will only be as clean as the skill level of its editor/proofreader and the author's ability or willingness to accept and correctly transfer those edits onto the formatted manuscript prior to printing.

Before hiring an editor, decide which type of edit you require—content, line, or proof. These can be separate people or combined, but few can do all three skills well, especially not simultaneously.

Substantive/Content Development: For fiction or non-fiction, but especially for novels, this type of editor is consulted first. A substantive editor critiques your writing with emphasis on content, style, technique, organization, and presentation of the complete text.

Copy/Line: Consult this editor next to do a line-by-line proof. A copy editor looks for typos, misspellings, punctuation and grammatical errors, clarity, flow, and consistency of text. If extensive rewrites are necessary, repeat this process prior to submission.

Proofread: Prior to final printing, a proofreader reviews the galley for typos, misspellings, and punctuation, grammatical, and semantic errors.

Once an editor is selected, a Standard Editorial Agreement (contract) is advisable for both client and editor that specifies editorial tasks, deadline(s), method of payment, and any special requests.

When working with your editor, keep in mind that an editor can only suggest. The story belongs to the writer. However, once an author rejects edits or chooses to do rewrites, the editing process must begin anew. — WT



Passion, Persistence, and Patience Continued from Page 8

"Thank you, but I'm not helpless," nineteen-year-old Jessica Radford said when the stagecoach driver offered her his hand after she opened her door.

The man narrowed his eyes in surprise as he dropped his hand. "Sorry, ma'am, I was only askin'."

Jessica hoped she didn't sound rude, but men shouldn't assume all ladies were helpless. After all, she used to plow Pa's field and chop wood at home, didn't she?

Right away, the reader knows Jessica is a 21st century woman—strong and independent—and living in a 19th century time dimension. Later, the reader discovers that she has a deep concern for fairness—first, in wanting to free slaves, and later, in wanting to free women so they can have their right to vote. She is passionate about this, and I feel her passion running through me as well. What if I decided part way through my novel that Jessica becomes subservient to any man she meets. She cheerfully does anything he asks of her. It wouldn't work. Jessica would never do it.

In my memoir, *Persistence, Then Peace*, I also neglected to talk about patience. That's a big one for me because typically I am not very patient—except when it comes to children. With them, I am extremely patient, and that is something I discovered when I helped a first-grade teacher instruct six year olds on how to write their first sentences.

Let me tell you what I learned about patience when it came to writing. I never realized what a magazine editor goes through until I became one myself, as editor of a new magazine called *Software Supermarket* and later as an editor of a lifestyle magazine. Freelancers flooded my mailbox with story ideas, and some would not hesitate to later bug me about whether I accepted their article. I was overwhelmed with editorial duties and these queries about their status irritated me. I had expected these freelancers to show some patience.

But patience is necessary to writers in another way. We need to be patient with ourselves. Our first drafts of anything will have to be rewritten more than once. Rarely do we achieve perfection on the first try. In my earlier days, I didn't rewrite, and in my later years I rewrote a lot. I would tell readers of my historical trilogy that I rewrote scenes as many as seven or eight times. Sometimes I would throw out several pages, even whole chapters, to make it better. Make sure it's the best you can do, send it off to a reliable editor, and then patiently wait until she comes back to you with all sorts of suggested changes.

If you learn the rules of good writing, have the patience to improve, and never forget the importance of passion in your writing, you'll eventually succeed. But be persistent. — WT

Ed: Tom Mach was SBW's founding member, way back in 1987. Tom now lives in Lawrence, Kansas. If you are interested in receiving a copy of Persistence, Then Peace, go to Tom's website at www.Tom-Mach.com. His email address is also on that site if you wish to contact him.

Contests and Markets

by Carolyn Donnell



Mom Egg Review:

Mom Egg Review Vol. 15: Submissions open May 15 to August 15. Send poetry, fiction, and creative prose for the 15th annual print issue. They publish work by writers who are mothers or by others about motherhood. Submit work not published previously online or in print. \$3 fee for each submission. See complete info at <https://themomegg.submittable.com/submit>

Some sites that list competitions:

www.aerogrammestudio.com/2015/12/01/short-story-competitions-in-2016/

www.newpages.com/classifieds/big-list-of-writing-contests#june

www.pw.org/grants

<https://winningwriters.com/>

www.writermag.com/writing-resources/contests

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

<http://fundsforwriters.com/contests/>

www.freedomwithwriting.com/freedom/uncategorized/10-free-writing-contests-fellowships-with-prizes-of-500-to-25000/

www.poets.org/academy-american-poets/american-poets-prizes

www.dystopianstories.com/writing-competitions-2016/

Have fun, and be sure to let us know if you score! — WT

An Ordinary Day

Continued from Page 9

After a quick lunch, my afternoon assignment is in the juvenile department. Again, there are many cases. However, here I interpret for the parents or guardians, as most juveniles speak English. A tall lanky teenager with a young and pretty mother is last. The female judge compliments him for an excellent performance in everything he was ordered to do. She gives him a diploma and a \$5 fast food award and asks about his plans for the future.

"My grades are quite good. I made it to the soccer team," the teenager says. "I'm the forward, and thanks to my goals, we're third in the high school soccer competition. I'm invited to a soccer workshop at UCLA in Los Angeles tomorrow."

All of us have the same thought: "Who knows? We may have helped him become a soccer star."

At night, I thank heaven for this day, while I think that at my tender age with a birthday close by, life is still really worth living. — WT

Miasma 1.0

Continued from Page 9

"Stretch your leg farther to the left. You'll feel something on the wall, sticking out of place, just like your proboscis."

I ignored the insult aimed at my nose. "A foothold?"

"Of sorts." More bananas stunk the air.

My fingers relaxed when my foot caught the edge of a brick jutting from the building, but only for a moment. "Is the foothold strong enough to support my weight?"

"Certainly." Instead of rotting garbage, the cufflink oozed citrus and pumpeknickel once again.

"Is that your breath?"

Miasma huffed.

I coughed. "Never mind. What's next?"

"My breath," he muttered. "As if that has anything to do with me getting you out of this mess. Next you'll be calling me a blatherskite."

"Miasma. What's next?"

"Yes. Right. Coolio. We'll have you

grunted in no time." The cufflink flashed blue again. "One moment while I run your search."

"Who programmed this thing? The words, the attitude—"

"Excuse me, sir. If you've finished insulting me as if I'm not here, you might be interested to know that I've found a plethora of options. Would you like me to list them in alphabetical order, by price, or by relevance?"

"I want you to help me off the side of this building without me falling and crushing my skull. Now."

"Right. Brilliant. Luminous, even. Please allow me a moment while I narrow the search results."

I shook my head, flinging drops of sweat along the wall. Breath puffed in short bursts in and out through my nose. Fortunately, the air filled with the spiciness of autumn.

"Ah ha!"

"What is it?" I grunted through clenched teeth.

"While we've been having this delightful

conversation, the authorities have been on their way. If you look below, you'll find a life net stretched out and ready to catch you. Simply let go of the platform."

I inhaled, sniffing out a traitor. "If I fall, you fall with me."

"I'm not worried. My parts aren't squishy."

My shoulders tensed. I grimaced in the direction of the cufflink. Trapped and unsure whether he was laughing at me. I knew something else, though. That would be the last time I'd buy tech from a gypsy in a flea market gazebo. — WT



California Writers Club: CWC News

Be Seen Statewide in the CWC Bulletin

Deadline for advertising submissions for the August issue is Friday, July 29, 2016. The spring issue is in press.

All ads submitted must be self-edited, print-ready, and will be published as received. Capacity for advertising will be determined by the Editor-in-Chief. All ads must be emailed as a jpg file to Bob Isbill at advertisingCWC@gmail.com. Details at CalWriters.org.

Checks or money orders, made payable to CWC Central Treasury for submitted ads, must be mailed to: HDCWC, The Bulletin Marketing Department, 20258 Hwy 18, STE 430, PMB 28, Apple Valley, CA 92307. — WT

Your ad will be seen by 2,000 writers.

SBW TalkBooks

Free Publicity Buzz

SBW TalkBooks is a book club that selects books written by SBW members for its monthly group read. This is a two-location event: the book is discussed online and the author is interviewed in person.

Join Meetup.com to receive advance notice of the book, the author meeting location, and online links. Join Goodreads.com to follow along with the book discussions during the month.

On the last Wednesday of the month, we meet for the live interview. We host and write-up each interview for social media and post on Twitter and Facebook. This creates additional book buzz for the author and the book to reach new readers.

TalkBooks currently meets at 7:30 pm at the Santa Clara City Library on Homestead Road.

If you are an SBW member who has published a book, send a jpg of the cover and a descriptive paragraph to the editor at newsletter@southbaywriters.com. We will publish your book announcement in *WritersTalk*.

Contact Linda Judd at lindyjudd@yahoo.com for a TalkBooks Author's Kit and for availability to schedule your TalkBooks event. — WT

CWC Around the Bay

Published meeting locations and times for other CWC branches in the greater San Francisco Bay Area. If you want to one of their meetings, be sure to check the website first for details.

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

Central Coast: 5:30 third Tuesdays, Point Pinos Grill, 77 Asilomar Boulevard, Pacific Grove. centralcoastwriters.org

Fremont Area: 2:00 fourth Saturdays at DeVry University, 6600 Dumbarton Circle, Room 120, Fremont. cwc-fremontareawriters.org

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

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

Mount Diablo: 11:00 second Saturdays, Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. cwcmtdiablowriters.wordpress.com

Napa Valley: 7:00 second Wednesdays, venue is changing. napavalleywriters.net

North State: 6:00 third Mondays, Butte County Library-Chico Branch. northstatewriters.com

Redwood: 2:30 first Sundays, Flamingo Conference Resort & Spa, 2777 Fourth Street, Santa Rosa. redwoodwriters.org

Sacramento: 11:00 third Saturdays, Cattlemen's Restaurant, 12409 Folsom Blvd., Rancho Cordova. cwcsacramentowriters.org

San Francisco/Peninsula: 10:00 third Saturdays, Redwood Yacht Harbor: check website <http://cwc-peninsula.org/>

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



CWC Picnic: Sent by Nancy Curteman, Fremont Branch CWC

CWC Picnic: Saturday, July 23, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m., Joaquin Miller Park, Oakland

Club history lore is that the founding of the California Writers Club (CWC) emerged in part from picnics and companionship of Jack London and his writing friends up in the Oakland Hills home of Joaquin Miller. Over the next few decades, CWC helped to build the Woodminster Amphitheater, Writers Memorial Grove, and the Cascades stairs in the park. Thus we have a long and wonderful relationship with Joaquin Miller Park

So it feels just so right to have our annual picnic at Joaquin Miller Park in Oakland on Saturday, July 23, 2016. We will start the picnic at 1:00 pm at the Fire Circle Picnic Area, same place as last year. The Club will provide hamburgers, hot dogs, buns, paper plates and condiments. Please bring a side dish to share. Bring your own liquid refreshments, but no hard liquor. Sodas, water, beer, and wine are okay.

We will have a cake-decorating contest, so if you want to participate, decorate a cake, or cookies, or whatever with a literary theme. We will also have an Open Mic session, so bring something to read to your fellow picnickers. The picnic is open to all CWC members and their guests. So feel free to bring along friends, spouses, significant others. See calwriters.org for directions to the park.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| July 2016 | | | | | 1 7:30P Open mic Barnes & Noble Almaden, San Jose | 2 |
| 3 10 AM Our Voices | 4 1:30PM Mystery Circle 2PM Valley Writers | 5 7 PM SBW Board meeting | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 3PM Annual SBW Picnic/BBQ | 11 2PM Valley Writers | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 7:30P Open mic Willow Glen Library, 1157 Minnesota Ave | 16 Deadline <i>WritersTalk</i> was yesterday |
| 17 10 AM Our Voices | 18 2PM Valley Writers | 19 | 20 | 21 7 PM Poetry readings | 22 | 23 1PM CWC Picnic Joaquin Miller Park Oakland |
| 24/31 31: 10 AM Our Voices | 25 2PM Valley Writers | 26 7 PM TalkShop | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| Future Flashes | | | | | | |
| SBW Dinner Meeting Monday August 8 | August SBW Board Meeting TBA | | DID YOU FORGET? RENEW YOUR SBW MEMBERSHIP ONLINE | | | |

Ongoing Events

Critique Groups

Our Voices: Meets at Bel Bacio in San Jose and various places every other Sunday 10 AM. Genres: Fiction, memoir, nontechnical nonfiction. Contact: Dave LaRoche at dalaroche@comcast.net

Valley Writers: Meets at Valley Village Retirement Center, Winchester Blvd, Santa Clara, Mondays 2 PM. Marjorie Johnson, marjoriej358@comcast.net

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

Your Critique Group: Send info to newsletter@southbaywriters.com

SBW Board Meetings

Board meets in the week preceding the dinner meeting. TBA. Contact Linda Judd, pres@southbaywriters.com.

Open Mics

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

Ongoing discussion groups

TalkShop: Discuss topics of interest to writers—challenges, problems, and tips. Meets last Tuesdays, 7 pm. Contact Carole Taub at 777777ps@gmail.com

SBW TalkBooks: discussion group focusing on books written by SBW members. Meets last Wednesdays, 7:30 PM, Santa Clara Library, Homestead Road. For more information, read article on Page 14 and send email to newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Note: TalkBooks will resume in August.

Poetry Readings

Poets@Play: Meets at Markham House History Park, 1650 Senter Rd., San Jose, Second Sundays most months, 1 – 4 PM. poetrycentersanjose.org

Poetry Center San Jose: Meets at Willow Glen Library, 1157 Minnesota Ave., San Jose, Third Thursdays, 7 PM. poetrycentersanjose.org 408-808-3045

Well-Red Poetry Reading Series: Second Tuesdays, 7 – 9 pm, at Works San Jose, 365 South Market Street. Featured reader followed by an open mic, if time allows. www.pcsj.org

SBW Recommends ...

If you know of a regularly occurring event for writers, send an email to newsletter@southbaywriters.com.



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

MAIL TO

Address Correction Requested

Sunday, July 10

SBW Annual Picnic/BBQ

Details on Page 1

Monday, August 8

Next Regular Meeting

Harry's Hofbrau in San Jose
390 Saratoga Avenue

WritersTalk deadline is always
the 15th of the month.

Regular dinner meetings are
second Mondays 6 – 9 PM
except July and December.



Harry's Hofbrau

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