



WRITERSTALK

Volume 22
Number 2
February 2014

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

FEBRUARY SPEAKER

Arlene Miller

The Grammar Diva

by Dave LaRoche

Contrary to popular opinion, the crucial tool in advancing civilization is not the wheel, soft Northern Tissue, or color TV – it's language. All we experience and have achieved would be lost, absent a means of communicating. This thing we call progress is built with language – our means of conceiving, sharing and advancing ideas. Its precision is critical.

So what about this language? I want to be a part of this progress and share my ideas. How do I use it? What about it do I need to know? And doesn't language need to be exact and thus broadly understood to convey the ideas I envision?

When I talk (seems often), I want my idea to rest in your brain just as I've seen it in mine. Then I must use words, construct their relationship, and punctuate my thoughts in a manner familiar and understood. If we don't know, and subscribe, to a standard of usage, those ideas I have may not transfer with the accuracy expected and their value then be lost. (Let's assume, for this article at least, they have value.)

Okay, so the foregoing is theoretical and what we need is implementation – where the apostrophes go; em dash, colon, or semicolon. Where do I locate the dependent clause that establishes the scene? Is it your or you're; its or it's; where or were; and when should I use those single quotation marks? What about agreement, what does that mean? What is parallel construction – do I need the prerequisite geometry? What is and is not capitalized and when? Which are those active verbs we keep hearing about; and why am I admonished to avoid at all cost, the dastardly dangling participle?

We are going to find out. The answers to these, and other conundrum associated with our language, will be available for the taking on February tenth. Come hear the Bay Area's Grammar Diva expound. Arlene Miller will provide the knowledge that permits ideas to carry their value with accuracy to the one or the many listening. And when ideas are so conveyed, those listeners will remain, become transfixed – or they'll scatter, displeasure descending – in either case, the conveyance understood.

Arlene is the author of four grammar books and a novel. *The Best Little Grammar Book Ever* is being used by several colleges. Arlene runs the company, Big-words101, which publishes her books; and she writes a weekly blog about grammar and "anything else to do with words."

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**Coming Attractions:
Martha Engber Workshop
March 30, 2014**

See pages 6 and 7

JANUARY SPEAKER RECAP

Ransom Stephens

by Pratibha Kelapure

Ransom Stephens is the author of two novels, *The God Patent* and *The Sensory Deception*, both published by 47North, Sci-Fi imprint of Amazon. He is an accomplished physicist who integrates science into his novels. Ransom was the featured speaker at the January dinner meeting of the South Bay Writers Club. His talk was divided into two distinct parts, "Point of View" and "The Value of Exposing Yourself." The first part illustrated the effective use of narrative point of view, and the second part focused on the marketing of a writer's work.

In order to clarify the concept of Narrative Point of View, Stephens referred to memoirs. In a memoir, the writer and the character are one and the same person, yet there is the temporal distance between the narrator and the character. In Stephen's opinion, the first person point of view is the most intimate and engaging POV, but it is also restrictive. He prefers a third person point of view with shifting focus like the cinematic view. He emphasized that every line, every dialogue, or every description at any point must incorporate at least two of the following three elements: character development, plot development, and setting. Events should carry the plot forward and take readers along for a ride. The readers should feel as though they have been through a lot with the characters.

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New date, Monday, February 10, at Harry's

President's Palaver

by Colin Seymour
President, South Bay Writers

Real Writers Feel Compelled to Write



Some of the Club's communal writing activities have attracted newcomers who "want to become" writers – that is, until it's time to actually write. Perhaps they're under the ridiculous assumption that writing is a bon vivant's pastime.

That's not why we're members of this decidedly unglamorous enclave. We're here because we have an itch that must be scratched.

In J.D. Salinger's *Seymour, An Introduction*, narrator Buddy Glass has filled out a form for his draft board listing writing as his "occupation," to Seymour's amusement. "It's never been anything but your religion," the sainted older brother scoffs with his highest praise.

Stephen Sondheim, the Broadway musicals giant, says much the same about his 1980s creation *Sunday in the Park With George*. The Sunday part is no coincidence, Sondheim says. Art is a religious undertaking.

Why does best-selling author Michael Chabon write? "I can't help it," he says.

I try to write something I'm proud of every day, and I've managed to do about half of that on the job over the past 30 years of my journalism ventures. Much of my best work in the 1980s and 1990s was credited to "Mercury News Wire Services," perhaps as many as 5,000 formative efforts to go with the roughly 2,000 pieces that have carried my byline. It's a lot easier to get cranked up when you're getting paid for it.

But writing doesn't generate revenue for most of us in the Club, and I certainly can identify. I drafted my memoir *Stereo Types* on my days off, primarily on just about every Tuesday afternoon in 1987 and 1988, and the same is true of the 76 chapters of my novel that I drafted in 76 afternoons from late 2002 through mid-2004 and the 600 installments of my boxing blog that are the basis for a third book.

Some go to church on Sundays at 11 a.m. I go to my P.C. on Tuesdays at 1 p.m. I usually sort out in my head, or even on paper, what I'm going to try to say, for far more than the two hours I'm likely to spend actually drafting something. That is why I'm usually able to do the actually writing with a sense of urgency that ideally reaches euphoria.

I'm not saying you have to write as voluminously or emotionally as I have to call yourself a writer.

But you ought to be writing regularly if you're serious about it and you really have something to say.

Dilettantes are welcome to join the Club – you've got to start somewhere – but joining is just one of many steps. The hardest part comes afterward, week after week, whether it's Sundays with George or Tuesdays with Morrie that add up to your appointment with destiny.

Real writers know that our religion is less about communal bliss than solitary confinement. — WT

Martha Engber Workshop: Build Characters Coming March 30. Sign up online today.

California Writers Club
South Bay Branch
www.southbaywriters.com

— o —

Executive Committee

President—Colin Seymour
pres@southbaywriters.com

Vice President—Dave LaRoche
vp@southbaywriters.com

Secretary—Sylvia Halloran
secretary@southbaywriters.com

Treasurer—Bill Baldwin
treasurer@southbaywriters.com

Members-at-Large—Nader Khaghani,
member-at-large1@southbaywriters.com
Sherrie Johnson
member-at-large2@southbaywriters.com

Central Board Rep, Norcal Rep—Dave LaRoche
dalaroche@comcast.net

Directors

Programs—Dave LaRoche
vp@southbaywriters.com

Publicity and Public Relations—Kim Malanczuk
publicity@southbaywriters.com

Hospitality—Kim Malanczuk

Membership—Sally Milnor
membership@southbaywriters.com

Networking—Open Position
networking@southbaywriters.com

Open Mic—Bill Baldwin, WABaldwin@aol.com

Publishing Mentors—
David Breithaupt, dlblmlb@comcast.net
positions available

Webmaster—Media Designs
webmaster@southbaywriters.com

Workshops—Dave LaRoche and Nader Khaghani
workshops@southbaywriters.com

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



WritersTalk

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

Managing Editor

Marjorie Johnson
newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Contributing Editors

Pat Bustamante
Carolyn Donnell
Andrea Galvacs
Victoria M. Johnson
Pratibha Kelapure
Sally Milnor

Submissions

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

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

Anything Goes—Almost (300 words)

News Items (400 words)

Letters to the Editor (300 words)
newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Creative Works

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

Accolades

accolades@southbaywriters.com

Announcements and Advertisements

newsletter@southbaywriters.com

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by Marjorie Bicknell Johnson
Managing Editor



Bypass the Passive

Last month I lamented that too much emphasis on commas and grammar nits slows down a critique group. The real culprits to pursue are convoluted, wordy sentences and too many passive constructions.

A good writer varies sentence length and structure, but also must avoid complicated sentences that lose the reader, such as, "The Food Network's popularity can't be underestimated since many working people have been inspired by its cooking show hosts to prepare meals at home rather than dine at expensive restaurants or to rely upon fast food." Compare that with "The cooking show hosts on the Food Network have inspired many working people to prepare meals at home."

Passive sentences can prevent a reader from understanding what you mean. Politicians use passive voice to obscure the idea of who is taking the action. Referring to the Iran-Contra scandal, Ronald Reagan once said, "Mistakes were made." Mistakes made by whom?

A passive construction occurs when you make the object of an action into the subject of a sentence.

- Passive: The fish was caught by the seagull.
- Active: The seagull caught the fish.

In the first example, the subject of the sentence, the fish, receives the action—it was caught.

Passive sentences aren't incorrect, but they often aren't the best way to phrase your thoughts. Passive voice is often awkward or vague, so you can tighten your writing by replacing some sentences with active ones. Turn that "was plus gerund" into an action verb; compare "he was running very fast" with "he streaked." When writing fiction or memoir, the passive voice can weaken the clarity of your writing and make your sentences go on and on and on.

How can you recognize the passive voice? As a rule of thumb, look for sentences that use "was" or "were" or any form of the verb "to be." Often you can change them into active constructions by switching the word order. For example, "The metropolis has been scorched by the dragon's fiery breath" becomes "The dragon scorched the metropolis with his fiery breath."

However, not every sentence using "was" or "were" is passive. The most important thing to remember is when and how to use them for the desired effect rather than to avoid all passive constructions.

(Read on—you haven't reached the punch line yet.)

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New Meeting Date

Via Constant Contact, January 13, 2014

Dear Members and Friends of South Bay Writers,

Our first dinner meeting of the year last Wednesday at Harry's Hofbrau was lively and informative, though briefly controversial, and the momentum of the Club definitely picked up where we left off in 2013.

Unfortunately, we received bad news Thursday from Harry's. Monday nights are the only weeknight Harry's can accommodate us, and we have been forced to move quickly and book "2nd Mondays" throughout 2014. The employee who promised us a Tuesday night slot apparently overlooked a long-standing commitment to a Tuesday night client. **OUR NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10.**

What makes "2nd Mondays" attractive for us is that Harry's does not charge us \$200, as it would every other night of the week. Paying that extra \$200 would force us to raise the price of attending meetings by \$5 per person. That still would make Harry's far cheaper than any alternative of which we are aware.

When we polled members last summer regarding meeting preferences, we found low price to be a major criterion, so we are toeing that line. The poll also reflected a clear preference for weeknights over weekend days.

All that having been said, there is already some grumbling about Mondays, some of it coming from me. There are people, including some board members, who cannot attend on Mondays at all and others who simply prefer some other night.

I, for one, sing in a vocal octet that has been meeting every Monday night for several decades, and I will have to miss at least five meetings during my current term to accommodate the Club. Others may have similar complaints.

Therefore, we will continue to explore alternative sites, especially those that could accommodate us on Tuesdays or Wednesdays. But in the short run, please, let's make the best of Mondays.

Thank you,
Colin Seymour, President, South Bay Writers



Sherrie Johnson and her mobile bulletin board
—Photo by Carolyn Donnell

Bypass the Passive

Continued from Page 3

The passive construction may be chosen when it is more important to draw attention to the person or thing acted upon, as "The unidentified victim was apparently struck during the early morning hours," or "The money was stolen." The passive voice is also the style most commonly used in scientific or technical writing.

Here I have concentrated on passive sentences as examples of weak writing in fiction or memoir. Surely you have developed grammar or writing peeves arising from reading early drafts of others' work. Share your worst examples and how to correct them in an article for *WritersTalk*. —WT

Challenge Winners

Winners of the *WritersTalk* Challenge Contest for the judging period July 16 through January 15 will be announced on February 10 at our dinner meeting.

Twice a year, in February and August, awards are given to *WritersTalk* contributors. See Page 13 for details. —WT

Cumulative Index

Carolyn Donnell and Marjorie Johnson, coached and aided by Dick Amyx, have updated the *WritersTalk* sortable cumulative index, appearing on southbaywriters.com Check it out! —WT

Internet Resources

Member-at-Large Sherrie Johnson follows developments in publishing and news of interest to writers. She brought the mobile bulletin board pictured on the left to our January SBW meeting. Members can read news items there or ask Sherrie for a copy sent by email, member-at-large1@southbaywriters.com

Topics this month included whether or not to give away free e-books; a study showing that young readers still like paper books; and news regarding the purchase of Goodreads by Amazon.

Look for the mobile bulletin board at our next meeting and connect with Sherrie Johnson to learn more and to exchange information. —WT

New Members

by Sally A. Milnor

Our Club continues to flourish. I am very happy to introduce this month's five new members.



Sally Milnor

Julia Brodie found us online, and she is interested in writing non-fiction articles.

Jane M. Chai writes historical fiction.

Jane is a Stanford graduate and has traveled extensively

in Asia. She lived in Japan for two years and worked for the Asia Associated Press in New York. Jane has self-published a novel, *The Tiger and the Hare*; and, in 2013, she completed *Chasing the Dragon*, an historical novel set in Vietnam.

Douglas Cremer joined us online and attended our January meeting. He has always enjoyed writing, and he is interested in writing novels. Douglas was prompted to join our club to network with other writers.

Morris Kelley joined our Club at our January meeting. He is a former dancer, who now writes literary non-fiction. On his membership questionnaire, Morris says he is currently working on a novel, as he "strives to let the story dance across the page."

Karen Sundback joined us online, and she is interested in writing short stories. Karen has had numerous articles and letters published in local newspapers.

To our new Members: We extend a warm welcome to each and every one of you, and we hope your membership brings you inspiration and enjoyment.

And to All of Our South Bay Writers: We appreciate your continuing presence and support. We're looking forward to seeing you at our next meeting, February 10, at Harry's! — WT

Editor needed!

James Joyce needed an editor. The last section of his *Ulysses*, Molly Bloom's soliloquy, consists of two sentences. The first one is 11,282 words long, and the second is 12,931 words long. — WT

February Accolades

by Andrea Galvacs



Andrea Galvacs

A Winter Crop, **Pat Bustamante's** poem, was published in the winter issue of the poetry quarterly *Song of the San Joaquin*.

Carolyn Donnell's short story, "The Once and Future Queen," was a runner-up in the SF/Peninsula Branch of CWC's Fault Zone Contest.

Audry Lynch spoke about her biography *Garth Jeffers Recalls his Father Robinson Jeffers – Recollections of a Poet's Son*, at the AAUW's Authors' Luncheon.

Madeline McEwen's short story "Boys will be Boys" won third place and \$50 in the Fault Zone Contest. And, she **also** won the Coveted Baby Bird Award for her short story "The Right of Umbrage" from the San Joaquin branch of Sisters in Crime. See her self-portrait on the right.

Kate Russell completed a 50,000 word novel in 30 days, placing her in the top 14% of NaNoWriMo online. — WT



Classic California Writers

February's Featured Author: Frank Norris

by Pratibha Kelapure

Although Benjamin Franklin Norris was born in Chicago in 1870, he is known as a California writer because his writing career began and ended here. His family moved to San Francisco when he was fourteen years old, and he studied at San Francisco State University from 1890 to 1894. After a brief stint as a travel writer for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, he began writing for *The Wave* magazine. Continuing his journalistic endeavors, he covered the Spanish-American War for *McClure* magazine.



Pratibha Kelapure
Contributing Editor

Norris was influenced by Emile Zola and Edgar Allen Poe and experimented with poetry and short stories before publishing two novels, *McTeague: A Story of San Francisco* (1899) and *A Man's Woman* (1900). He is known as a writer of the naturalistic genre.

He had planned to write a trilogy titled *The Epic of Wheat* about the wheat industry in California, but it was unfinished due to his untimely death in 1902. The first novel of the series, *The Octopus*, deals with conflict between a monstrous railroad company and the wheat farmers.

Norris advocated writing with a purpose. *The Responsibilities of the Novelist*, his literary essays collected posthumously, discusses his philosophy of writing:

"How necessary it becomes, then, for those who, by the simple art of writing, can invade the heart's heart of thousands, whose novels are received with such measureless earnestness how necessary it becomes for those who wield such power to use it rightfully. Is it not expedient to act fairly? Is it not in Heaven's name essential that the People hear, not a lie, but the Truth?"

He argued that the truth in the novel is just as real as the truth on Wall Street and would hold the fiction writer to similar standards as those for a person who swindles money on Wall Street.

I read *The Octopus* and *McTeague* and appreciated both novels. I look forward to reading more, and I hope you do, too. — WT

Grammar Diva – Arlene Miller

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Arlene is a copyeditor for both fiction and nonfiction books; teaches 7th grade English in Petaluma and The Best Little Grammar Class Ever at College of Marin; and conducts corporate grammar and business writing workshops. She has been heard on KGO's Ronn Owens show, explaining the value of standardized usage.

Toddle on over and hear Arlene at Harry's on February 10 – easy to remember, the second Monday of the month – and learn about constructing good sentences

Far-North Point of View

In Ransom Stephens' *The Sensory Deception*, a polar bear tries to catch an ice floe in the melting Arctic.

"She roars again, this time straight up into the sky – sky so bright, so blue, that she scrambles up the hill toward it. She finds herself on a great sheet of ice and starts sliding backward, but her nails, her great black nails, inches long and strong as daggers, cut into the ice and draw her forward, upward.

"The wind tears into her as she crests the iceberg, and great foamy waves fire icy tendrils up and over and into her from below.

"Her senses tighten, her eyes focus; she licks her nose and tastes the air. It's salty, yes, but there's something, something she wants. . . . Hunger fills her and she drops to all fours." – WT



Ransom Stephens, January 8, 2014
Point of View and More
– Photo by Dick Amyx

Grow Your Characters

Martha Engber Workshop – March 30

By Dave LaRoche

I've heard the cries, listened to pleas, read the reviews and I get it. We want Martha back for a day and we want to build characters again – from the ground up. And we want that 45-year-old Dino back with his pet lizard – pry him away from his San Francisco lair to join us again at Harry's – if need be, he can bring his friend Tito.

Martha Engber builds her characters organically – she begins with the unfertilized egg and those who inseminate. That is, she starts at the beginning with the psychology of childhood: the trauma, the love, the forming of personality. When Dino arrives on our page, we know his behavior; he's no surprise – he's as familiar as toast and jelly – and he is real.

We know the character in our story is the story. Without a Dino, there is no life of Dino – no adventure and narrow escapes, no challenges to overcome, no discoveries. There is no story. Too often we move into plot sans a fully developed protagonist, to discover along the way who he or she may ultimately be. There are obvious problems with this approach as we miss appropriate turns and behavior, early needs and satisfactions, and why so late from the closet – to mention only a few.

This workshop is a must for fiction writers. I'm not going to miss it. I want my readers to believe my characters are real, their loves and hates, their internal strife, their duality of purpose – all familiar and understood before I begin. That, and that alone, will keep them turning the pages and recommending my book.

So, fiction writers, mark your calendar now, March 30, and plan to spend the day with Martha developing real people you will put in your books – believable folks we call characters. I'll see you there: 8:30am for croissants and coffee. – WT



Ransom Stephens Recap

Continued from Page 1

Shifting narrative focus might be jarring, but to circumvent that issue, the writer must be clear about the point of view at any given moment. The motives of the characters must be clear, and the narrative must be consistent with the POV character.

Stephens chose to talk about narrative point of view by using specific examples from his novel *The Sensory Deception*, a science fiction thriller about virtual reality technology based upon sensory saturation.

In the second part of his presentation – The Value of Exposing Yourself – Stephens described himself as the first paradigm author to emerge from self-publishing. He advised to get published in literary reviews in order to gain credibility. He also thinks it's a good idea to start with an eBook and seek an agent after the sales of the eBook reach several thousand copies. He also recommended the Scribd service, a digital library, like Netflix for books.

Stephens promoted his book by creating YouTube videos, by giving speeches all over Northern California, and by blogging on Examiner.com. He urged writers to get their writing out there in front of people who deserve it and need it.

He can be reached at Ransom@RansomStephens.com. – WT

South Bay Writers
Spring Writers Workshop

March 30, 2014, Sunday

Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose

8:30 am (registration) to 4:00 pm (close)

Continental Breakfast & Lunch

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Martha Engber

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2015: Valentine's Day Prophetic Warning

[Reporter's Note: Recently, I anonymously received the following from the 2015 files of NFA (United States National Futurism Agency). February 2014 is not at all too early to prepare for February 2015's impending Valentine's Day Massacre.]

TIME: FEBRUARY 14, 2015.

PLACE: A Joint Session of the United States Congress, Washington, D.C.

Official Washington is terrified, because Mother Nature is now here in person to implement her ignored threats. Assembled to hear Mother Nature are the President of the United States, the Vice President, the Supreme Court, the Senate, and the House of Representatives.

Mother Nature struts up to the front platform from out of nowhere. For many of these dignitaries, it is their first time seeing her.

The Speaker-of-the-House rises to open the session. He gavels forcefully to quiet the audience down. They all are gossiping on cell phones and calling their

bookies about the amazing event they are about to witness.

They still are too loud. Mother Nature rises and cracks her thunder and lightning whip.

Silence.

Then Mother Nature presents her little bargain. "Ladies and gentlemen, I have just snowed you all in. Sorry, but I will allow no exits until you hear me out. I am fed up to here with the way that you silly simian politicians of Planet Earth keep monkeying around. Using my name in vain to profiteer your big-bucks backers! But this time, I am giving you and the entire world no choices. All of your polluting motor vehicles are at this very moment rusting away, forcing you to return to employing only human and animal-propelled methods of transportation."

The entire body now is weeping so hard that no one notices when Her Excellency, Mother Nature of Terra Firma, vanishes even faster than she appeared.

The aides of all the dignitaries pull out their cell phones and call their preferred livery stable or rickshaw company.

Soon, the snow melts enough for horse-drawn snowplows to clear the streets. A few of the luckier politicians are even able to commandeer for themselves one horse open sleighs.

[Reporter's second Note: If you wish to be prepared for the impending 2015 Valentine's Day Massacre and Apocalypse, see also my blog about human and animal traffic solutions, <http://flimsyfacts.wordpress.com/2013/10/30/how-to-recycle-all-stalled-freeway-commutes/>] — WT



Year of the Horse

Happy New Year:

Gung Hay Fat Choy

by Valerie Lee

Mah Nien: 2014 is the Year of the Horse. This magnificent animal proudly gallops in, ousting the sneaky, slithery Snake, the strongest negative force among the twelve animal deities that rule the Chinese lunar calendar. The Horse reigns from January 31, 2014 until February 18, 2015, at which time the Ram will take over.

There was definitely a leader of men born in the Year of the Horse – none other than the great Genghis Khan, ruthless and forceful. Born Temujin, he was the founder and Great Khan of the Mongol Empire, the largest contiguous empire in history.







Each year is assigned an animal in a 12-year cycle, and the Chinese believe that men take on the likeness of the animal that rules the year of their birth, just as modern astrologists believe people born under a certain sign of the Western Zodiac have similar traits.

Let's take a look at the characteristics of those born in the Year of Horse: 1906, 1918, 1930, 1942, 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002 and 2014. Horse individuals are earthy, good looking with raw sex appeal, and may appear arrogant, but they are also volatile and erratic. They don't like routine and prefer being free to do anything on a whim. They are happy, friendly and cooperative; and being social with lots of energy, they need to be the life of the party and like to travel. While loyal to friends and family, they can be fickle when it comes to love; but if they can't have the one they love, why not love the one they are with? However, if they feel the reins tightening, they will trot off to greener pastures. In business, they are confident and succeed in whatever they pursue, but they prefer to be the boss. Progressive, they tend to be modern; they would throw caution to the wind, tossing out the old and welcoming in the new. New inventions and change give them opportunities to explore other things, but they take care of their responsibilities first.

The last Fire Horse year was 1966, and it will not come around again until

Off the Shelf

Edie Matthews & Marina Menendez-Pidal

Favorite Nightcaps		
William Shakespeare	mead	
Hemingway	mojito	
F. Scott Fitzgerald	gin rickey	
Margaret Mitchell	mint julep	
Ian Fleming	martini (shake, don't stir)	
Emily Dickinson	buttermilk	
Bill O'Reilly	prune juice	

2026. People in Asia considered it bad luck to have children at that time. So the birth rates dropped due to voluntary abortions because no one wanted Fire Horse children – high-spirited, hot-blooded, excitable and hard to control.

Regardless of which animal rules, most Chinese Americans look forward to Spring Festival or *Guo Nien* because it's the biggest party of all, like all the birthdays and holidays combined into one. Since the New Year celebration runs for two weeks, we start off with eating traditional Chinese dishes; the most popular is a meatless recipe that originated with Buddhist Monks, who begged for food but received only meager portions of vegetables. However, being inventive cooks, they created what is known as Monk's food or *Jai*.

Ingredients of *Jai* are a play on Chinese words, especially those symbolizing good luck. *Fat Choy* (hair-like seaweed) is wealth; *Fun See* (cellophane noodles) and *Chin Ngee* (fungus) are longevity; *Foo Jook* (dried bean curd) means blessings for each household. *Bak Ko* (ginko nut) means 100 grandchildren; *Ho See* (oysters), good tidings and successful business; *Lin Gee* (lotus seed), many children; *Gum Choy* (dried lily flower), gold and good luck; and *Hua Sung* (peanut) means birth and promotion.

Preserved fruits and vegetables also signify something: melon seeds mean many children; carrots resemble coins and symbolize golden wealth. The long vines of squash and melon plants mean a long line of descendants; lotus seeds mean productions of sons; kumquats are for good luck; and coconuts are hopes for a strong relationship between father and son.

During this period, parents, grandparents, friends and family will be honored with gifts: oranges, candy, nuts and pastry. It's the time to promote benevolence, family unity and remembrances, and for people to pay homage to their deceased ancestors. While many will be enjoying special foods and festivities, much should be remembered and learned from the past.

Many momentous events took place during the Horse Years. On a positive note, on November 18, 1918, Germany signed an armistice, which ended World War I. In the Horse Year 1942, Joe Louis knocked out Buddy Bear in the first round, successfully defending the World Heavyweight Boxing Championship for the 20th time. In 1954, Steve Allen's *Tonight Show* premiered on NBC. In 1966, Soviet scientists landed the Luna 9 spacecraft on the pitted surface

Continued on Page 12

Bob and I Wrestling

by Richard A. Burns

From an unpublished memoir. For context, Bob and I are twins, about 12 years old here, and Ardith and Andy are our foster parents in 1957. We live with our dad on weekends.

Bob and I had knock down, drag out wrestling matches once in a while. I think this is common with brothers, and even more common with twins. I suspect we wrestled to get the best position in our mother's womb, and that sibling rivalry or whatever you want to call it continued on into our early teens. I guess, as we neared being full grown other more attractive activities started to catch our attentions.

One day, my jacket was missing. It was my favorite grey and white one with knit grey and white striped collar and cuffs. It was a fairly nice jacket in fashion at the time among the kids at school and had snaps that were big and easy to use. In fall and winter at school it was my trademark. Bob had a maroon and blue version one size bigger. Anyway, before school, I looked all over for it and had to settle for a sweatshirt instead. I didn't have a good day at school. My rhythm was all off because I was too hot in the sweatshirt. On the math quiz I only got a 94% which was my worst all year. Worse, the composition we had to write about our greatest American couldn't get off the ground. I had trouble figuring out who, and the teacher didn't like it that I wrote about Jerry Lewis. I described some of my favorite Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis movies and why I thought he was funny, but I used a lot of bad punctuation, and was only three quarters finished when time was up.

Once home, I was getting ready to fold papers, and Ardith came out and said she had found my jacket out behind the side of the house where the junipers were. It looked like it was there overnight. Well I hadn't been there, hardly ever, and I knew I didn't leave it there. Ardith then pulled out a half full pack of Camels and a book of matches from one of the pockets and said, "And I found this in the pocket. You are in one hell of a bunch of trouble, mister!" and she grabbed my arm to take me in to see Andy, who generally doled out the

physical punishment.

I was scared and angry, but I knew I was innocent so I didn't feel that bad. I was fuming when I had to stay in our bedroom the rest of the evening. I missed the Mickey Mouse club. I used the time to catch up on some reading assignment in geography class. At one point, Bob bustled in with his own jacket and laid it on his bed and was ready to shoot out of there. "Hey, Bob," I said. "You missin' a pack of cigarettes?"

"Sh! Yes." He whispered, looking around to see if anyone heard. "Where?"

"Out the side of the house, somebody said." His eyes rolled up to remember better.

"Oh my gosh. Who found them?"

"Ardith."

"Oh, fuck."

"Yes. And watch your language. You mean, 'Oh, sexual intercourse,' don't you?"

"This is no time to make fun. I've got to throw them away. Where are they?"

"Ardith has 'em. She's probably smoking one right now," I taunted. "She found it with my jacket, so I'm in the dog house. I think Andy's fixin' to strap me. You better go tell them the truth or I'll knock your block off." I was seething. I ran up to him and punched him pretty hard on the upper arm just below where it connects to the shoulder.

"Ouch!" he yelled. He placed a lazy push-away punch toward my stomach and I wound up seated on the bed. Up I jumped, but held back. I felt sorry for the punishment Bob would get from Dad if he ever found out what happened.

"One of these days, I'm going to jump all over you," I threatened, hoping to find him the next day outside and unawares.

We heard Ardith in the kitchen down the hall holler, "No fighting in the house!"

He went out to face the music and fess up, coming back quite soon crying holding my jacket and apologizing for swiping it last night when he needed a smoke. He had temporarily misplaced

his in Andy's new red Ford "fake-woody" station wagon. Now he was in trouble, but said Ardith wanted me to remain in the doghouse for the rest of the night for punching Bob in the arm. Bob was in bad trouble and would be mowing the front *and* back lawns for the next three times. I don't think the incident was ever reported to Dad, but the Andersons kept closer tabs on their cigarettes and small change after that.

The next afternoon, after my paper route, I pounced on Bob in the backyard. I had him in a head lock, and was trying to break his neck. "I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Let me go, Dick! Shoot, man, that hurts."

"Promise, you won't steal?" Just then Bob caught my right arm with all the power that anger and claustrophobia gives and bent it behind my back, feeling like his surprise move would rip it off.

"Owe. Dang you to hell." I sort of kicked him with my shin so his leg would fly out from under him, but I didn't do it hard enough and he pulled up harder on my arm.

"You give?"

"Heck, no."

"I'm going to bust it off."

"Better not." I was working to let a little sympathy sink in. I plunged hard as I could into him sideways and we were both sprawled on the grass. My arm was free and I was trying to twist his foot off. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Andy bringing in some wood for the fireplace; he turned toward us and yelled, "Don't leave no blood on my grass back there, you two." I guess he thought it was good to get something out of our system or to learn how to fight by doing it. He was a man's man, and quite pragmatic.

With a mighty heave, Bob was up and pulled me back down on the grass and his knees solidly on each of my shoulders. We stayed that way a long time breathing hard and sort of resting, him looking at me, and me getting madder. "I owe you, you thief. If you ever take my jacket for any ..." and then I flailed my legs up and threw him off.

Continued on Page 12

Deep Sketches

Cue in cop show
theme music
for
well known
detective dramas.
One day,
police artists
will be able to identify
criminal suspects
by intensely interviewing
assorted witnesses
and creating
intricate haiku
and similar pieces
to perfectly paint pictures
that flawlessly describe
the wanted culprits
on law enforcement agency
posters.

– Stephen C. Wetlesen

The Bridge of Thighs

by Judith Shernock

In Palm Springs, California, there are innumerable things to do and see: phenomenal museums, the highest aerial tramway in the world, eye opening cactus gardens and ethnic restaurants of every type and price level. Besides these wonderful attractions, in an upscale residential neighborhood, there lies a fascinating story which I heard from my son who had worked in Palm Springs as a city planner. In 2003 the story was published in six hundred papers and magazines worldwide.

As we rode under an overhanging structure that spanned the sidewalks and the six-lane boulevard, my son asked, "Have you heard about the nude bridge?"

My imagination stalled. "How can a bridge be nude?"

"The bridge isn't nude, the people are." He smiled at his mother's innocence.

"Once upon a time," he began as if telling a tale to a child, "there was a nudist retirement colony on one side of the street. They had beautiful homes and condos, a 2,000 square-foot dining and dancing hall, and a beautiful pool and spa, but no tennis courts. They wanted tennis courts but had no room to build them. The owner of the colony bought

land on the other side of the boulevard and built tennis courts and more homes.

"The nudists wanted to cross the street to their tennis games without getting dressed. The outraged public had a fit and refused permission for the naked elderly to wander across this large thoroughfare at will. They did wear tennis shoes and socks but nothing more. The solution was a bridge crossing from their homes to the courts. The beautiful structure, designed by a famed architect, was built and as the media reported, 'New vistas open in Palm Springs.'

"Again a solution was needed. The height of the bridge was enhanced and the sides were partially covered in opaque white material, which at first cut off the view of the nudists' tops and bottoms but not their thighs. But thighs come in all sizes and shapes. The peep hole was sealed."

Dancer

Two black and white photographs
Hang on the wall
Each time she walks by
They call her to remember
Those shiny black tap shoes clacking on the
wooden stage
Costumes in blue, each a different shade
Sequins and maribu sparkling under the lights
Dancer wished it could happen every night
Daily she practiced her tapping
Lost in her own little world
She danced to the rhythm of her heart
While she dreamed of being
The lead dancer girl
dancing the title part
In recitals she tapped and twirled
To the delight of those who watched
Always wanting more
When the music stopped
There were other performances
Long ago
Those photos gone
Now packed away
With memories of Dancer's stardom
And her costumes of another day
Decades later she can still recall
The applause, the lights
The sight of all eyes on her
She's tapping, dancing,
a sea of faces smiling
Hands are clapping for her
Today she can still remember it all



She's ten years old
In the pictures on the wall

– Karen Hartley

Picturing in my mind a village of kooky aging hippies, I asked about the size and make-up of the colony.

"The place is very expensive and mostly inhabited by wealthy retired professionals. On the main campus there's even a hotel for visitors. Do you want to give it a try?" he said, grinning.

Obviously, I declined. I laughed when looking up the official title of this site – "Natural Bridge." A fitting name! – WT



Diamonds are forever

Did you know . . . There's a company that will turn your loved one's remains into a diamond. You can keep him with you forever!

February Terse on Verse

by Pat Bustamante



Pat Bustamante

Feb. Feeble?

Funny how it's hard to spell
A month that's oh so tricky to tell
How many days? Does this year leap?
Will Groundhog hide or come out to peep?
Will I write that greatest story?
My friends and I all covered in glory?
Oh well.
Feb. does prepare for Spring's bell.
I shouldn't let the small stuff floor me.

— Pat Bustamante

Ah, the Rose Bowl Parade! Do dreams come true?

Those nighttime inner-memories sometimes do provide the stuff a writer needs. I dreamt I was at a wonderful party outside a palatial house, under a full moon, as I stood on a cliff-bordered hill above the restless ocean.

I have been there. I spent eight years growing up near Santa Monica's harbor and the house was *Hargreaves House*, I think. The dream had everything I grew up desiring—a life of riches, society of celebrities with party-goodies, love of the moment... and a full moon! I have seen a succession of *ooh...ahh* full moons, and I can write stories that give my characters anything they desire. Isn't it fun to give away all the goodies you wished for as a child?

So, keep a dream-journal near your bed and list what is so important that some mysterious section of your brain sends videos to you. You will never run out of ideas to write about.

So why did I dream this? What part of me is crying out to pass along information to others--tragedies or comedies or spy-gleaned information? I believe repeat-dreams are messages: "You have been here before! You must write about it as the *chosen messenger* that you are."

Short month here, lots of work to do; I hope to see some of it in *WritersTalk*. — WT



Bargain for Love

The Salt March excited the quiet town;
Freedom light hovered on the far horizon.
Yet darkness lingered around the house when
Her first cry pierced the still of the night.

The midwife announced, "It's a girl,"
The new mother clutched the cold bedpost.
Her eyes gazing into the kerosene lamp,
She moaned faintly, "girl!" and then the light was out.

Almighty grandfather knocked on the door,
His kinglike gait and his heavy chest belied
His worn-out shoes and his empty pocket,
Emptiness that had carved a hole in his chest.

Holding the newborn in his callused hands,
He winced and smoldered under his breath,
"Girl!" One word he said! "Girl!"
Dews of terror rose in the mother's eyes.

One curt word! A slammed shut iron gate.
A tight knot crawled up her fluid breasts
And curdled the vital life force.
In a wordless voice, she sang to the baby

A loving lullaby, a song of regret.
The child cried for her birthright was denied.
Cried and cried in vain, and finally smiled.
Smiled day after day and warmed the grandfather's heart.

A minor event! Noticed by none!
The Momentous one! Her first bargain for love!

— Pratibha Kelapure



Libra the Literary Mouse

Libra, the literary mouse
Wears shorts and a pink blouse.
Computers she'll browse
In just anyone's house.

Holding thoughts tight
Her dream is to write
On paper so white
'Bout struggles 'tween left and right.

Using computer's ink
She describes the link
'Tween a politician's slink
And his most insidious kink.

Democrat's vices,
A Republican's crisis,
Simply aren't very nices.
Much worse than any mice's.

So if it's a squeak you hear
There's nothing to fear.
It's Libra with her paws so dear
Revealing news, making it clear.

— Judith Shernock

Santa Cruz Beach Forests

Monarch Butterflies.
Winter angel tree cities.
Natural Bridges.

— Stephen C. Wetlesen

New Year 2014

Rounded half orb as
Turner sunset touches hills –
Signifying change?

— Stephen C. Wetlesen

Year of the Horse

Continued from Page 8

of the moon. In 1978, Louise Brown, the world's first test-tube baby, was born in England. In 1990, at the World Cup soccer finals and with a broadcast audience of 1.5 billion, conductor Zubin Mehta presided over a unique concert showcasing the trio of operatic tenors, Jose Carreras, Placido Domingo, and Luciano Pavarotti.

On a more ominous note, on April 18, 1906, San Francisco residents suffered one of the most tragic and feared natural catastrophes of all time: an earthquake that lasted 47 seconds in which 450,000 people lost their homes, with 670 dead and 350 missing. In Russia in 1918, the unsuspecting Romanovs, Nicholas, his wife Alexandra, and their five children, were all executed in their cellar. In July, 1930, police and rioters battled during an anti-British riot in Egypt. And remember the Bataan Death March on April 9, 1942, when the Japanese forced 76,000 American and Filipino soldiers on a brutal 65-mile march to a prison camp? Only 54,000 prisoners completed the grueling hike, and of these, 17,000 starved to death in the camp.

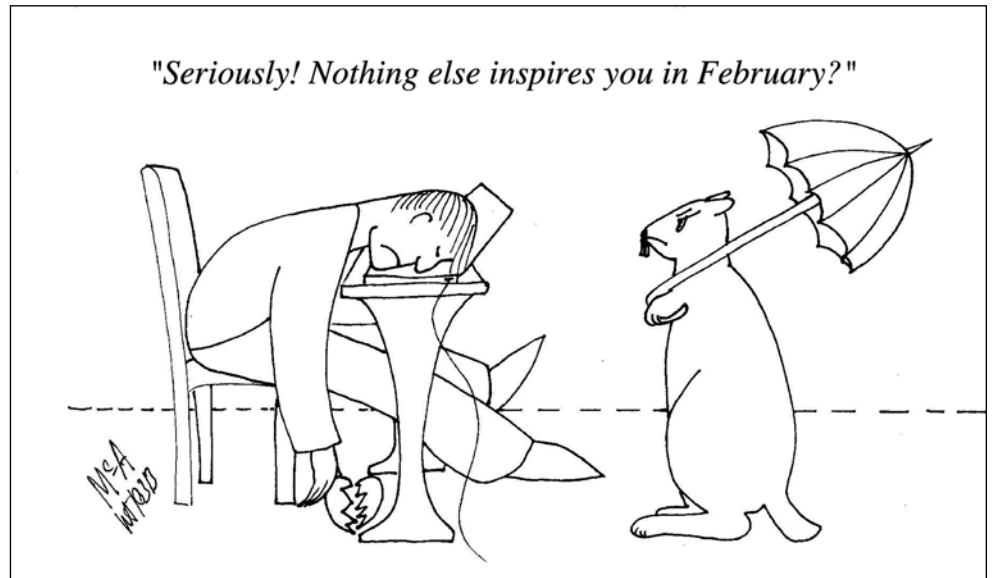
This year, 2014, brace yourself for lots of action, adventure and productivity. In our lively and high-spirited world, life will be hectic with more tension and stress. We need to take a step back and not tax our energy or drive ourselves too hard. The world's economy will be on the upswing with more attention to diplomacy, politics and the environment. This capricious year will be filled with romantic, carefree adventures. Fashions will be colorful, bold and exciting with stunning designs, yet provocative with flowing fabrics allowing freedom of movement.

The cheerful, sanguine, unpredictable horse will quicken our pulses with his energetic spirit, so proceed with caution and common sense towards money matters. Patience and perseverance will win out in the months to come. — WT



Groundhog

Cartoon by Maddie McEwen



The legend of Groundhog Day is based upon an old Scottish couplet:
"If Candlemas Day is bright and clear,
There'll be two winters in the year."

Bob and I Wrestling

Continued from Page 9

Eventually we reversed positions, my left knee on his right shoulder and my right knee on his left shoulder, and I was sort of bouncing on him, like I was riding a bronco. I wanted to make it hurt. Bob could have easily punched me in the face, but we had sort of a silent rule that there was no dirty fighting, especially no punching in the face where you could knock a person's teeth out or something. We modeled ourselves after the wrestlers we saw when Andy and Ardith watched TV.

Bob finally gave up and said again he was sorry. I said, "Promise you won't come after me when I get up?" and he promised.

As soon as he got up, he was after me and he caught me in a head lock. It was definitely a disgrace to lose a wrestling match. I slipped out right away, shoved him away as hard as I could, and ran to the side yard fast as I could into the eucalyptus trees and we sort of played chase and sermonized at each other until we were both tired of sweating and getting dirty.

We came in to the back door, separately, me first.

"What you breathin' so hard about, Dick?" asked Ardith.

"Me and Bob's been fightin'."

"You mean, 'Bob and I ...,'" Ardith said. She continued sarcastically, "You call that a fight? I been lookin' at you through the windah. Hell, if you call that a fight, we gonna be in big trouble when it comes time you and Bobby join the Army. I seen better fights in the bird-bath."

I was tired and went in to the bedroom for a lay down before dinner. It was a pretty good fight, I thought to myself. That ol' Ardith doesn't know what she's talkin' about.

Bob straggled in and did the same, laying on his bed, exhausted, coughing a little, as was his habit. "Almost had you," he said, and he started to laugh a bit. "You're pretty tough when you get mad."

"Mad? Shoot, I was just playing with you. You don't want me fightin' you when I'm mad." An unrelated dream enveloped me until the call to wash up before dinner. — WT

Sand Hill Review 2014

Sand Hill Review is taking short fiction submissions (electronic only) until May 2014; sandhillreview.org — WT

Contests/Markets: Some Website Listings

by Carolyn Donnell

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

Poets and Writers: pw.org/grants

Fan Story: fanstory.com/index1contest.jsp

Writer Advice: writeradvice.com/markets.html

The Writer Magazine: writermag.com/writing-resources/contests/

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

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

Funds For Writers: fundsforwriters.com/contests/

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



CWC Sacramento Branch Short, Short Story Contest

Category: Open. Length: up to 750 words. Open to everyone.

Awards and Recognition: First Place, \$100; Second, \$50; Third, \$25. Awards to be presented at the CWC Sacramento Branch June 2014 luncheon, winning stories published in our newsletter.

Entry Fees: \$10.00 per entry, payable by check to CWC Sacramento Branch. Writers may submit multiple entries.

Submissions: Four copies of each entry and a cover sheet must be mailed with payment to Contest Chair at the address below. Entries must be double-spaced, 12-point Times Roman font, standard 1" margin, page numbers in upper right-hand corner, printed on one side of paper only.

The cover sheet for each submission must include story title, author's name, address, phone number, and email address. The cover sheet is the only place where the author's name is to appear — Name must NOT appear on manuscript.

Entries must be original and unpublished in any format. Send submissions to: CWC Sacramento 2014 Writing Contest, Contest Chair, P.O. Box 582138, Elk Grove, CA 95758. Deadline: Postmarked by Monday, March 31.

Questions? Please contact Margie Yee Webb at Margie@CatMulan.com — WT

2014 Senior Poet Laureate

Contest open to all American poets age 50 and older who are U.S. citizens. Deadline June 30. Rules at www.amykitchenerfdn.org. — WT

Please send info on contests/markets to newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Call for Submissions

by Lita Kurth

If you write flash fiction, mini-memoir, or non-rhyming narrative poetry under 500 words, please submit a few pieces to www.flashfictionforum.com, the (free) submittable site for our bimonthly reading series in downtown San Jose. Previously published work is fine because we don't publish; we simply select people to read at our events. Our Facebook page, Flash Fiction Forum, has updates at <https://www.facebook.com/flashfictionforum>. — WT

WRITERSTALK

Challenge

What is it?

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

Genres

Fiction, 500 – 1500 words

Memoir, 500 – 1200 words

Essay/Nonfiction, 500 – 1200 words

Poetry

Judging Periods

January 16 through July 15

July 16 through January 15

Prizes

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

Judging

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

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

Imagine Your Way Into the Lives of Your Ancestors!

One-day creative retreat: Enjoy a one-day getaway at the Saratoga Country Club, Saturday, February 22, 9 am to 3 pm. For both experienced & aspiring writers.

Rebecca Gaspar, content strategist, will teach you how to use online tools* to find out about your heritage. Then, award-winning writer and Stanford writing teacher Alice LaPlante will lead fun, hands-on exercises to use what you find in fresh, short pieces of either fiction or nonfiction. *Laptop is required.

Explore your family's history and your creativity in an intimate, warm, and congenial atmosphere. Breakfast and lunch will be served overlooking the beautiful hills of Saratoga. Cost: \$150. Reserve by email: LaPlanteWorkshops@gmail.com

Call for submissions: Anthology on Sisterhood

For the last few years, SISTERS Consignment Couture in Sonoma has produced events where local authors present readings on the theme of sisterhood. To capture some of that magic, we will publish an anthology of writings on sisterhood.

Send eloquent, vivid, original works that share meaningful experiences and depict what having a sister means to the writer; unpublished; prose up to 2,500 words; poem up to two pages; no submission charge. Payment \$10 and publication.

Email work as a Microsoft Word attachment to info@wordforest.com; "Anthology submission" in the subject line.

Deadline: Saturday, March 8, 2014 — International Women's Day! — WT

Directory of experts

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

Astronomy, History of Astronomy

Bob Garfinkle ragarf@earthlink.net

Banking

Pam Oliver-Lyons polpap@prodigy.net

Curriculum Development

June Chen junech@gmail.com

Counseling/John Steinbeck

Dr. Audry L. Lynch

glynch0001@comcast.net

Engineering: Mechanical, Aerospace

Jerry Mulenburg

geraldmulenburg@sbcglobal.net

Growing Great Characters from the Ground Up

Martha Engber martha@engber.com

Internal Medicine/Addiction

Disorder/Psychology

Dave Breithaupt dllbmlb@comcast.net

Marketing and Management

Suzy Paluzzi, MBA jomarch06@yahoo.com

Mathematics/Fibonacci Sequence

Marjorie Johnson marjohnson@mac.com

Teaching and the Arts

Betty Auchard Btauchard@aol.com

Telecommunications Technology

Allan Cobb allancobb@computer.org

Television Production

Woody Horn 408-266-7040



Poetry readings

Poets@Play

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

Poetry Center San Jose

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

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

CWC around the bay

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ongoing critique groups

Our Voices

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

Valley Writers

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

Emperor's Mystery Circle

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

Karen's Critique Group

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

Your Critique Group

For consideration, send information to newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Ongoing writing groups; Open Mic

Writing Group: A Chapter at a Time

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

Open Position: Networking Chair, committee members. Contact SBW President.

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

San Francisco Writers Conference

Website: <http://www.sfwriters.org> **Dates:** Feb. 13-16, 2014

Fee: \$795 at the door.

Participants have access to more than fifty "how to" sessions, panels, and workshops. The conference features traditional publishing houses as well as the latest e-publishing, social media, and self-publishing information. **Don't miss it. – WT**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>February 2014</h1>						1
2 11A Our Voices	3 9A Chap at a Time 1:30P Mystery Circle 2P Valley Writers	4 7:30P SBW Board Meeting	5	6	7 7:30P Open mic B&N Almaden, San Jose	8
9	10 9A Chap at a Time 2P Valley Writers 6:00P SBW Dinner, Harry's Hofbrau	11 10A Karen's Critique	12	13	14	15 Deadline <i>WritersTalk</i>
16 11A Our Voices	17 9A Chap at a Time 2P Valley Writers	18	19	20	21 7:30P Open mic Wil- low Glen Library, 1157 Minnesota Ave	22
23	24 9A Chap at a Time 2P Valley Writers	25 10A Karen's Critique 7:30P SBW Board	26	27	28	
Future Flashes						
March 4 SBW Board Meeting	March 10 SBW Regular Dinner Meeting	March 30 Workshop Martha Engber				

HAND-HOLDER WANTED
Computer tutor to fill gaps in my software knowledge in 2-hour sessions at my home. Facility with smart phone, music, and/or WordPress blog a plus. Pay negotiable. 408-578-1539

Free Review of Your Book
 Contact Tom Mach at tom.mach@yahoo.com for details. Tom Mach is a book editor for *Kaw Valley Senior Monthly*, Kaw Valley, Kansas.

CWC bags: Only \$10 each



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

South Bay Writers Coffee Mugs

Available at Meetings



\$10 each or three for \$20

South Bay Writers Anthology



\$10

At the meeting or on amazon.com

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

Your ad could go here

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

Stay informed

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



California Writers Club

South Bay Branch

P.O. Box 3254

Santa Clara, CA 95055

www.southbaywriters.com

MAIL TO

Address Correction Requested

South Bay Writers
February Regular Membership Meeting
6 p.m. Monday, February 10

Harry's Hofbrau
390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose

Arlene Miller
Grammar Diva:
Crucial Writing Tools

Note new date: Feb. 10

WritersTalk deadline is always
the 15th of the month.

Regular dinner meetings are
second Mondays 6 – 9 pm



Harry's Hofbrau

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