



WRITERSTALK

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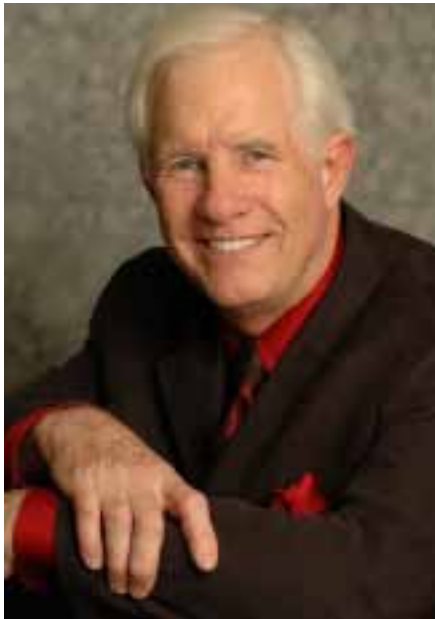
Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

JANUARY SPEAKER

Promote your book with pizzazz: Pointers from Dan Poynter

by Dave LaRoche

Here at South Bay Writers, we've been exposed to people "in the business." By way of programs, workshops, and casual acquaintance, we've listened to editors, publishers, and coaches. Each a specialist in his or her field, they have left their particular knowledge and insights. Dan Poynter is not one of these.



Dan Poynter, January Speaker

was a publisher himself. Since then, the company has expanded into other books, tapes, reports, disks, seminars, speeches, and consulting.

His seminars have been featured on CNN, his books have been pictured in *The Wall Street Journal*, and his story has been told in *U.S. News & World Report*. He is recognized as the leading authority on book marketing, promoting and distributing.

"Whether we sell out to a publisher or publish ourselves, the author must do the promotion. This has always been true. Today, however, book promotion is faster, easier, cheaper, and a lot more fun." Dan will describe the new ways to promote our books and provide us the necessary tools—all specifics, no generalities, and many supporting scenarios.

On January 12, Dan Poynter will visit with us for an extended look at self-publishing today—his focus on promotion. We will want to be at Harry's for this in-depth gander at how best to get our book in front of thousands of readers, and earn a few bucks on the way. —WT

Poynter has explored it all—from the early planning of a book to promoting the finished copy. He has studied it—the ins and outs and pitfalls. Then he's engaged it—the planning, writing, publishing, and promotion. Over the past forty years, Dan has written one hundred thirty books about publishing and promoting. He runs his own publishing company, Para Publishing; does a frequent newsletter of robust proportion; spends much of his time with seminars and speaking tours; and maintains a website covering every detail of the entire process.

It all began with a parachute. Para Publishing was founded in 1969 to collect, process, publish and disseminate critical safety information on parachute design and skydiving techniques—then a labor of love for Dan. Realizing no publisher would be interested in a technical treatise on parachutes, he went directly to a printer and "self-published." The orders poured in, and he suddenly found he

DECEMBER RECAP

Jingle Bash Huge Success

by Marjorie Johnson

A big **Thank You** to **Carole Taub**, hostess of our Jingle Bash Holiday Party. Our vivacious hostess welcomed us warmly into her home. Carole exudes energy; I think her secret is yoga. We all relaxed in the intimate atmosphere, and I talked to people I hadn't seen in years.

Our usual photographers missed the party; Dave LaRoche sent the page 5 scenes. I described some of my conversations. But 1000 words are worth one picture--right?

Continued on Page 6

Dan Poynter lands at SBW on January 12



Dan Poynter in the cockpit

Dan Poynter, writer, publisher, professional speaker, and marketing expert, is so multi-faceted that he also is a pilot, a skydiver, and a parachute designer.

Yes, he sometimes jumps out of perfectly good airplanes.

He speaks to SBW on January 12. Learn more about him at his website www.parapublishing.com. —WT

President's Palaver

by Colin Seymour
President, South Bay Writers

Confronting the political divide



All writing is political, they say. Write what you believe, we are told.

What a recipe for strife, even within our club.

Writers and journalists have always stereotypically been liberal Democrats, but you shouldn't assume that anymore. Nowadays the percentage in newsrooms is probably way less than the 90 percent or so that many suppose, and I'm led to believe a clear majority of Southern and Midwestern newsrooms these days skew conservative.

Meanwhile, back in the South Bay, I would lay odds the liberal-conservative ratio in our writers club is closer to 2 to 1 than 9 to 1. Our ratio might even be 50-50, resembling the volatile divide that characterizes today's American politics.

So I could barely resist taking part in a fascinating Facebook thread a few weeks ago on an SBW member's wall or whatever they call it now. That person was outraged that conservatives are talking about trying to prevent President Obama's State of the Union address. At the other extreme was a lone opponent of the president who said her fellow member might have pure motives in this discussion, but she was convinced President Obama does not have pure motives.

Arguments ensued.

Do I like it when SBW members argue?

Well, not when they argue about the club. We had a run of unpleasantness that permeated board functions for months at a time in fairly recent years. Some of the email wars that ensued were extremely divisive. We have been getting along well in my administration, and I try to stay on top of possible disturbances.

But on another level, yes, I like it when SBW members argue about politics.

I'm a political animal. I grew up around politics. My dad's reporting beat was Oregon government. My own political skills have been an asset to my SBW presidency in terms of dealing with people and unruffling feathers. But my feathers get ruffled by modern American politics. My novel, after all, is about a liberal sportscaster who dares to cross a conservative constituency.

There is very little true political back-and-forth these days. People are shouting in two separate hallways, and no one is listening to the other side's point of view or — as was requested in the aforementioned Facebook thread, documentation of the nasty things being said.

That works both ways, of course.

Facebook is the worst place for these political discussions, because one side always heavily predominates on inflamed threads, and it's difficult for the minority representative to be articulate amid such an onslaught.

But it is our job as writers, above all, to articulate. Not only to the world, but to one another.

I don't want to see us insulting one another in such discussions. But I do advocate having those discussions and using our intellects to seek the common ground that might make a difference in the health of our fine club, if not our great country.

— WT

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We have a membership category that fits you. Dues are \$45 per year plus a one-time \$20 initiation fee. Dual membership: \$25. 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.

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Submissions

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

Submission deadline is the 15th of the month.

Suggested word limits are not absolute; query the editor. Shorter submissions are given preference. 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)

Member Achievement and News: newsletter@southbaywriters.com

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Words from the Editor

by Marjorie Bicknell Johnson
Managing Editor



To comma or not to comma

Are there not rules for comma usage?

While *WritersTalk* defers to *The Chicago Manual of Style*, there are significant complications in the case of the comma.

In the Runaway #1 British Bestseller, *Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*, Lynne Truss notes two distinct functions for the comma: "to illuminate the grammar of a sentence, and to point up—rather in the manner of musical notation—such literary qualities as rhythm, direction, pitch, tone and flow." Her book includes hilarious consequences of incorrect punctuation.

Truss uses no comma after tone in the quote above. The comma preceding "and" in a list, called the Oxford or serial comma, is omitted in Britain. For example, the British describe the flag as "red, white and blue" while their American cousins use "red, white, and blue." However, the serial comma adds clarity, as in "serving apple, lemon, blackberry and raspberry pies." Are the flavors apple, lemon, blackberry, and raspberry—or apple, lemon, and blackberry-raspberry?

Sometimes placement of the comma changes meaning entirely. Does Truss's title indicate that someone "eats, shoots, and leaves," or is it "eats shoots and leaves," as in the case of a panda?

Some writers like to use as many commas as possible while others would like to use none. James Thurber saw commas as "so many upturned office chairs unhelpfully hurled down the wide-open corridor of readability." In *The Years with Ross* (1959), he says that *New Yorker* Editor Harold Ross seemed to believe there was no limit to the amount of clarification you could achieve if you just kept adding commas.

I once succumbed to advice to place a comma wherever one would pause when reading aloud. Asthma makes me short-winded; a reader told me she had never seen so many commas! My manuscript looked as though miniscule polliwogs swam their way across the pages.

In a creative work, however, the writer may want the comma to show a pause in the action or to indicate rhythm and flow. Truss advises us to be alert to potential ambiguity.

So, take control of those punctilious polliwogs and send your creative work to *WritersTalk*. Your printed submission is automatically entered in the semiannual *WritersTalk* Challenge Contest (see page 13). Awards for the period ending with January, 2015 will be presented at the February SBW meeting. — WT

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Dan Poynter reveals how to successfully promote your book



Bestselling author Dan Poynter is coming to Harry's Hofbrau on January 12. He's a star in the world of self-publishing. This will be a sold-out meeting. Come early to avoid long lines. — WT

News from the Board

by Marjorie Johnson

The South Bay Writers Board of Directors often meets at my house because they like my cookies. For the December 3 meeting, Secretary Sylvia Halloran, who usually writes "View From the Board," was unable to attend and asked me to take notes.

Dave LaRoche reported that Shelley Bates will speak to South Bay Writers in February, a discussion related to manuscript revision. He also pointed out opportunities for leadership as the SBW representative to NorCal. He invites YOU to step up, take control, and influence coming years.

NorCal is an enthusiastic group of members of the Northern California Branches of the California Writers Club and meets quarterly. NorCal is a great place to segue into today's local writing environment. Contact Dave LaRoche at dalaroche@comcast.net for details.

In the most recent issue of *The Bulletin: California Writers Club*, they state the mission of CWC: "Educating writers of all levels of expertise in the craft of writing and in the marketing of their work." That's the nutshell version of what South Bay Writers is all about, if you add "writers helping writers," and that's what I try to do as Managing Editor of *WritersTalk*.

At the local level, South Bay Writers provides opportunities to plan dinner meetings and workshops and influence the Club's direction in coming years. What's in it for you? You meet the movers and shakers in today's writing and publishing world.

Our board meetings are guided by a unanimous wish for the success of the South Bay branch of CWC. The club's long history has proven that members rise to leadership and seek to meet branch aspirations and goals.

Are you ready to rise? It's not too early to begin consideration of office. Remember, this board is terming out in June, and we'll need to find the next combination of volunteers to take the helm! — WT



New Members

by Sally A. Milnor



Sally Milnor

I am pleased to introduce our two newest members.

Nicholas Zhang found us online. Nicholas, a student at Monte Vista High School, is interested in writing fiction.

Sophia Luo is a student at Harker Academy, and she writes fiction and poetry. On her Membership Questionnaire, Sophia says, "Most of my poetry is about the life of students and our universal pressures and moments of happiness. Thus, I get my ideas from just going to school every day and being in class. I also find inspiration in English Class from the many works that we read and the daily discussions that we have." In addition to her writing, Sophia loves to draw "anything and everything – from abstract to realistic."

To Our New Members: We wish you a warm welcome and hope your membership brings you inspiration and enjoyment. **To all of our South Bay Writers:** We appreciate and need your continuing presence and support. Thank you, again, for helping to keep our Club flourishing. May you all have a very Happy and Successful New Year.

See you January 12! — WT



Plans for New Year

from Michael Goldeen's email

Yes, I have plans for the new year.

I am 79 now. My goal is to read all the books I put aside while I was working, to think about things, and to come up with a theory of everything. Phi Ø, Pythagoras's golden ratio, has been a recent discovery of mine. That and the principle of ambiguity help me figure out what I'm about.

My immediate target is to reinvent the wheel. It's been around too long. It cries for reinvention. I'll let you know how I get on. — WT

Three Book Announcements

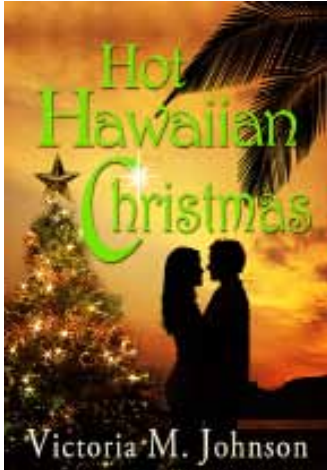
Hot Hawaiian Christmas

by Victoria M. Johnson

I'm excited to announce the release of my new novella, *Hot Hawaiian Christmas*, <http://amzn.com/B00QNR29NK>

It's Christmas in Hawaii, but Lindsay Clark's vacation turns out to be anything but relaxing. With her uncle absent, she finds

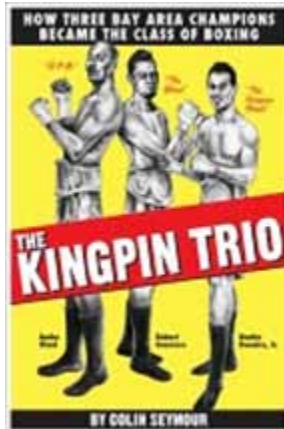
herself managing the hotel—a task at which she's normally very successful. However, Lindsay's life is turned upside down by the unfamiliar environment, Christmas festivities, and a very tempting guest—Chandler Lewis. He's the honorary Santa for the Kona Christmas parade and has a great life back home in California. Romance is the last thing on his mind. But when he meets Lindsay, he begins to wonder if life could be sweeter in Hawaii. —WT



The Kingpin Trio

by Colin Seymour

South Bay Writers President Colin Seymour recently published his second e-book on Smashwords. In *The Kingpin Trio/How Three Bay Area Champions Became the Class of Boxing*, Colin, a veteran Bay Area newspaper reporter, chronicles the recent simultaneous and unprecedented rise to superstardom of Bay Area boxers Andre Ward, Nonito Donaire, and Robert "The Ghost" Guerrero. —WT



Stereo Types

by Colin Seymour



Colin Seymour also has published his memoir, *Stereo Types/How a Black Family and its Blond Homeboys blended their hopes in 1950s Portland* on Smashwords in 2013. He and his younger brother, who lived for three years in a lower-class black family's home as tots, renewed those bonds as adults. *Stereo Types* assesses what became of the promising young adults who came of age during the Civil Rights Movement and the extent of progress in racial relations in the second half of the 20th century. —WT

Cellphone Photos from 2014 Jingle Bash

—Dave LaRoche



Jingle Bash Huge Success

Continued from page 1



Carole Taub
Jingle Bash Hostess

Diana Szucs-Richomme has been traveling – France and Africa, among other places – to collect background for her novels.

Allan Cobb dressed as Santa; he graduated high school in Marysville, not far from my old stomping ground, Nevada City.

Edie Matthews has nearly finished her novel, working title *House of Comedy*, and she's hoping to appear in the TV series, *The Amazing Race*. How's that for book promotion?

Colin Seymour is writing a novel about sports, but I don't read the sports section. So, I listened politely until I heard that the protagonist is a **sportscaster**, a liberal who's at odds with the conservatives who dominate sports, both the athletes and the fans. Now I want to read his book.

Bonnie Vaughan is recovering from a broken arm that required surgery.

Debbie Bicknell was delighted with *The Jade Rubies* by SBW member **Valerie Lee**.

Victoria M. Johnson has recently published a romance novella. I have read that romance, mystery, and suspense are the best selling genres amongst new novels.

Judith Shernock is writing a novel about a vegetarian wolf; her stories about the wolf OR-7 have appeared in *WritersTalk*.

David Strom received the much-coveted book *Batman* from under the tree, but after some thievery during the gift exchange, he is excited to read *Spaceborn*, written by SBW member **Bonnie Vaughan**.

After several trades, **Marjorie Johnson** snagged *1421: The Year China Discovered America* by Gavin Menzies, who has visited 120 countries in the course of researching (as reported on the book flap). Look for a book review here in *WT*.

Pat Gregory, a pilot and a middle school science teacher who is writing her first novel, told me that her husband is a skydiver and knows Dan Poynter well.

I also talked briefly with **Dave LaRoche**, who brought an awesome meatloaf and recorded the event on his cellphone, and **Jeanne Carbone**, who writes for *The Almaden Times* and other newspapers. I said hello to **Tom Marlowe**, **Apala Egan**, **ArLyne Diamond**, **Gisela Zebroski**, **Valerie Lee Whong**, **Frank Rabow**, **Kim Malanczuk**, **Bill Baldwin**, **Audry Lynch**, **Louise Webb**, and **Michael Hahn**.

This year's Gift Exchange was hilarious. Just when you thought you owned a gift, someone would steal it. The most common and most popular gifts were books, chocolate, gift cards, and wine. The most unusual gifts were an electric foot massager that everyone wanted and a Native American dreamcatcher that no one wanted.

But why not? According to Native American dreamcatcher legend, the good dreams pass through the center hole to the sleeping person, while the bad dreams perish in the light of dawn. Traditionally, dreamcatchers were hung on a baby's cradleboard. If you would like to have a dreamcatcher for your very own, shoot me an email. — WT



Carole with Jingle Bash Christmas Tree
— Photos by Frank Johnson

Open Letter to SBW

Dear South Bay Writers,

I'm looking forward to kicking the club into a higher gear in January. There are two areas of emphasis on my agenda for the first half of 2015.

The first is an expansion of our club's increasing identity as an "Incubator for Success" as writers and authors. We sponsor several activities that improve our writing, including dinner speakers who teach us how to write better and how to sell our writing, and workshops that explore some of these concepts in depth.

The second is incubating a more fully formed club, and we have made considerable strides toward that end in recent months. We need to pump new life into club leadership during the next six months.

The drive from within required from our leadership to make this club hum is pretty similar to the drive you need to make your writing sing.

Some members of the club want us to fill their heads with knowledge. Others, and I'm one, tend to be teachers and mentors even as we too soak up the knowledge that so frequently comes our way. Many folks of all types – novices, teachers, advisors, mentors – are capable of leadership, the leadership the club needs to enlist.

The SBW board is looking for people with a literary passion, energy and bold new ideas, and commitment to the club's ongoing excellence. Now is the time to learn the ropes from the soon-to-be-departing leaders of the club. We are all eager to take on acolytes as soon as possible. I intend to train someone to be a better president than I've been.

Ultimately, it's up to you whether you jump in feet first the way you would dive into a writing project. These days the presence a writer needs to market his or her product is exactly the presence that I feel I bring to the presidency of the club and what several other folks who run various club activities bring as well. The sideline is no place for a successful author anymore, and this club is an excellent place to prove your presentation skills.

Let's make South Bay Writers an artistic success together.

— Colin Seymour,
President, South Bay Writers

Well Plaid

by Chess Desalls

Grear's arrow whizzed past trees, clipping a branch and ricocheting off a stone wall, before spearing the belly of its target—the bag of a bagpipe. With a slow, steady hiss, the air in the bag began to leak, right below Blair's heart.

Blair gritted his teeth as he clenched his meaty fist around the arrow and pulled it out. He brought the arrow to his nose to take a closer look, and then stormed off into the woods to find its owner.

"That's the fourth time this week," he grumbled. He swung his head from side to side, growing angrier with each step. "Who did this? Come out!"

Two eyes peeked out from behind a tree.

Blair halted. "Well, then. Show your face and explain yourself."

The head behind the tree disappeared. Taking a deep breath, Grear straightened her shoulders and stepped to the left. She held her bow in her hand and wore a scowl on her face.

"What do you think you're—" The air left Blair's cheeks, leaving them deflated, just like the bag. His lips pressed together. He squinted, looking his attacker up and down. "Why, you're just a mite of a girl."

Grear's lower lip jutted forward, her eyes focused on the arrow.

"I imagine you'd like this back," said Blair. He twirled the arrow with his fingers. "But first, tell me, what is your war with my instrument? You ruined my afternoon practice ... again."

"It sounded horrible," said Grear, eyeing the arrow. "You leave long breaks between your notes—they're loud and shrill ... and pitchy and ..." Looking Blair squarely in the eyes, she said, "You could use a lot more practice."

The arrow stopped twirling and stood dead still. "You don't like my music?"

Grear clasped her hands over her ears and spewed forth a raspberry.

Blair had half a mind to snap her arrow in half. Instead, he tucked it underneath his arm and pulled from his satchel a needle strung with heavy brown thread. While he mended the puncture wound inflicted by Grear, he counted the scars that the bag had accumulated. This operation sealed the fourth.

Satisfied with the fix, Blair set the needle aside and held out Grear's arrow. "It would help with my practicing if you saved your arrows for the squirrels and mice." Frowning, he left the arrow in her hand and went on his way.

That night Grear had a miserable time falling asleep. She tossed and turned, as if trying to rest comfortably on a straw tick stuffed with needles and pins. When she finally passed out, her dreams pressed in on her—dreams of Blair. She saw the hurt on his face when she'd insulted his playing, and the scars on the bag that she had caused. Both were squashed and deflated, insufferable and sad.

Grear woke up the next morning, guilty and sore, fully knowing what she must do. For that, she needed the plaid from her bed, a needle and thread, and a knife. Once she gathered each

Off the Shelf by Edie Matthews



"I don't think that's what they mean by 'Good writing is all in the execution.'"

of the necessary items, Grear laid out the plaid—her favorite tartan blanket—across a low tree stump. She smoothed out the fabric of woven wool, the weathered threads of which were dyed green, wine and gold. Using the knife, she cut off a deep corner of the plaid and shaped it to the right size. Then, with stitches as small and stiff as her own small, stiff self, she sewed the plaid so that it formed a cover that matched the dimensions of Blair's bagpipe bag.

She held a hand to her ear and listened. Off in the distance, she heard a whine, then a screech, followed by a torrent of buzzing that hiccupped wildly out of tune. It was time. Grear slipped the plaid over her shoulder along with her bag of arrows. With bow in hand, she ran to her hiding place and waited.

When she couldn't take it any longer, she steadied her bow, pulled back the string and let an arrow fly. This time the arrow stuck in a tree, mere inches away from Blair's head.

"What is the meaning of this?" Blair stumbled backward, red-faced. His eyes grew wide as he studied the arrow; from it, hung a tartan cover. Warily, he pulled the arrow from the tree and stretched the cover across his bagpipe bag. "What is the meaning of this?" he said again, this time in a whisper.

Grinning, Grear stepped out of her hiding place and drew nearer. "It's a well plaid. Put it over your bagpipe bag and it will make it well."

"Did you make this? For me?"

Grear nodded.

Blair covered the bag with the plaid, admiring its colors and perfect fit. "Thank you," he said, mystified. "But why?"

Grear smiled, pleased by how the plaid covered the bag's scars, knowing she would sleep better that night. "Go on," she said. "Try it."

Blair found that the cover gave him a better grip on the bag, the leather of which had become slippery and worn from years of being passed down from hand to hand. "I will," he said. "And I promise to practice with it every single day." —WT

Once Upon a ... Lily Pond

by Linda M. Judd

Once upon a time, in a very small valley, far, far, away, there lived a pretty yuppie princess whose favorite pastime was to visit the lily pond with her iPod and dance with all the little green frogs beneath the shade of the giant poplar trees. One day a mysterious visitor came.

One afternoon, Princess Penelope went to the lily pond to escape the late summer heat. Something was different. She found a lovely table with a dainty chair, set for High Tea, sitting next to a huge boulder at the edge of the lily pond. She looked around for all the little green frogs, but only saw one huge green frog sitting atop the boulder. A dainty plate with a bit of tea cake sat in front of him. He croaked and burped and looked pretty happy.

Princess Penelope spied delicious looking tea cakes on the table; there was half a plate left. She looked at the frog. All down his green belly she saw crumbs. Obviously, he was no ordinary green frog, he ate tea cakes.

The frog noticed that she was staring at him. "Hello, Princess Penelope," he said. "How are you?"

She gasped, her eyes opened wide with surprise to hear a frog talking, "Who are you?"

"Please allow me to introduce myself," he spoke in a melodious voice. "I am Rupert, a friend of your cousin, Prince Ralph. Please join me for this most delicious High Tea."

Her jaw dropped in a most un-lady-like fashion. After a moment, she took a breath and gathered her wits. "You must be kidding. Who put this table here? How can you talk?"

"Please don't be alarmed, Princess. Your cousin, Prince Ralph, suggested that I come here. I must thank him. He set up the High Tea."

The frog could see that he needed to further explain, "Ralph told me he had an experiment for me, set-up here, to remove the spell I'm under. He suggested that I dance with you by the lily pond."

"I came here to dance with the little green frogs, but they are not here," she declared. "Where are they? And why did my cousin not tell me about you? How do you know him? And what's so special about the lily pond?" she grilled him.

"So many questions!" Rupert sighed. "Prince Ralph is my best friend and we often chat at Goose Down Lake."

Rupert began to wonder if this was real. Ralph mentioned that he had an experiment in mind, but this was no experiment. This was a dream come true. Princess Penelope was the lovely girl of his dreams. And if his dreams came true, he would be the luckiest prince in the world. However, she didn't know that he was a prince. And it didn't seem like she was going to dance with him.

"Please have a seat and enjoy the Tea. The cakes are delicious. I would love to pour for you, but, as you can see, I am a frog. And it's not polite to pour with your feet."

"You are no ordinary frog, I'll give you that." She sat down, gracefully, because she was a princess. Deciding to enjoy the rest of the afternoon, she poured a cup for herself.

Shelf Life

— Maddie McEwen-Asker



"My novel would be a *New York Times* best seller by now — if it weren't for Facebook."

"This is lovely, sitting here by the lily pond. I'm surprised the little green frogs are gone. What happened to them, Rupert?"

"I believe they were scared off by the noisy servants."

Princess Penelope ate the tea cakes with dainty fingers and smiled with satisfaction.

"Did you bring your iPod?"

"Yes I did, and my earbuds too. I like to dance around to the music, all in a world of my own. Why do you ask?"

"Prince Ralph mentioned that the servants would set up speakers under the table." Princess Penelope looked and there they were. She plugged in her iPod. Instantly they were surrounded by music.

A dancing tune played. The music brought magic to the feet of anyone listening. As Rupert began to tap his big green, webby toes, Princess Penelope twirled round about the feathery ferns and danced across crunchy leaves beneath the nearby shady Poplar trees. Her dress billowed out as she spun around the trees a couple of times, dancing a highland jig.

Then Rupert began to feel something happening to his green arms and legs. Penelope had finished her third trip around the biggest tree and Rupert leaped off the huge bolder. Magically in midair, he changed into a man with curly brown hair, wearing a handsome uniform. He landed on his feet by the table.

Just then the music ended. Penelope turned to the table. She gasped, "Oh!" Before her stood a man who had the dreamiest brown eyes. She was intrigued, "Who are you?" Her eyes were curious, and her face full of questions. She felt as if she knew him.

"I am Prince Rupert, at your service."

"Oh," she said, with a happy look in her eyes. "It worked." Shyly, she put her hand out towards him, in a gesture of greeting. Rupert bowed, took her hand and lightly kissed her knuckles. Another dancing tune played.

"May I have this dance, Princess Penelope?"

She smiled and curtsied. "Yes, I would enjoy a dance with you, Prince Rupert." For the rest of the afternoon, they danced and ate tea cakes.

Continued on Page 12

The Discovery

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia (1975)

by Carina Sue Burns

One day in early May, Mom left on a midnight flight to Germany to be at her ailing mother's side. As with all the other times, I accompanied Dennis during our walk home from the school bus stop across from the open-air movie theatre.

That day, Dennis surprised me with, "See ya, I'm off to Charlie's house."

"How long are you going to hang out?"

"Till suppertime."

My obsession returned in full force and stirred up butterflies in my stomach. I thought about how I often noticed Mom remove her rings and place them down on the table next to her. And each time I stared at her beautiful and different rings, the more I wanted to try them on.

I always felt that I happened to be different, that I didn't fit in. But, while I believed the pieces to my life's puzzle were fitting, those irresistible urges—to snoop inside of Mom's jewelry box—returned. Might a piece to my life's puzzle have been missing still?

I glanced out the window to be sure no one appeared. I gulped down a glass of water in the kitchen. The dishes that Thabit cleaned this morning were stacked high in the dish rack. I knew that my job included putting them away by dinnertime, but right now the dishes didn't matter. I paced up and down the living room, psyching myself up to go into my parents' bedroom. My arms crossed over my chest and I felt my heart pound. I passed by my own room. A feeling of uneasiness overwhelmed me. Should I proceed to my room? Should I read a book or change course?

Thinking about the smart thing to do didn't work. I scuffled my feet and intertwined my hands. I fidgeted with them and got cold feet. The cuckoo clock's pendulum swung twice each second, reminding me that I could turn back, but I didn't. Instead, I kept walking down the long narrow hallway toward my parents' bedroom. I watched behind and in front of me. I passed Dennis's room, kept surveillance corner to corner, acting as if I were waiting for something or someone.

When I got to the open bedroom door, my heart raced faster. The room felt forbidden to me. The cuckoo clock chimed on the hour, reminding me that it was only 4 p.m., lots of time before Dad returned from work and Dennis got back from Charlie's. My body felt like it had a mind of its own. I bit my nails even though I had previously stopped. I probably would never have another chance so perfectly designed as this one—I persisted, determined to satisfy my urges.

The tightly shut patio doors kept out the intense afternoon sun. I flipped on the light switch to their dusky bedroom. Laundry detergent permeated the air. Dad's clothes, which Thabit had neatly folded, sat untouched near the edge of the bed. Mom and Dad's sleek beige armoire sat at the opposite end.

I eyed the alluring Syrian jewelry box, which sat opposite the hand-carved mirror. The mere sight of it made me breathe faster.

With trembling hands and the utmost care, I lifted the lid of the jewelry box. Before I touched anything, I scanned all the pieces to be sure I didn't forget what went where. I noted four small plastic bags filled with diamond rings in each one. There were a lot of diamond rings here—I wondered if they were real or just costume jewelry. Why on earth would Mom own so many? I then recalled her telling me that she bought fake diamond rings.

I pored over the pieces. I recognized two shiny gold bracelets and concluded that she had bought them at the gold *souq*. I spotted an ornate silver necklace; it looked exactly like the Bedouin jewelry that Mom bought at the gold *souq* at the time I chose my snake ring. I pored over gold rings with rubies, emeralds, and semi-precious stones. There must have been a ring for each day of the week—these couldn't all be real too. Dismissing them, I set my gaze on a filigree silver pin encased with diamonds and three black stones. It appeared antique. I guessed this one belonged to my German grandmother, whom I call Omi. Today I own this beautiful vintage gem. Every time I wear my lovely pin, I remember Omi and her exquisite taste for art nouveau.

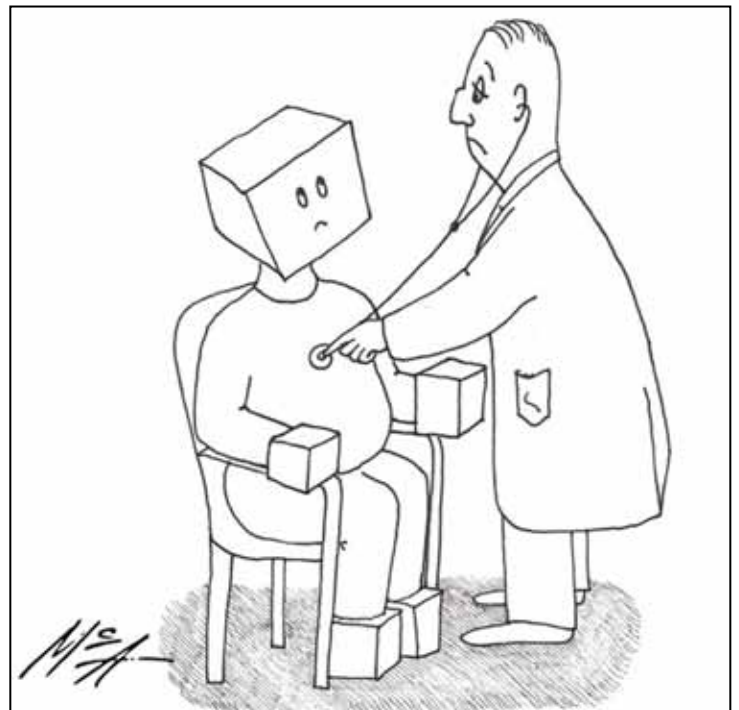
I noticed Mom's silver wedding band; the reflection of the silver caught my eye with its intriguing black etchings. I loved pretending to be married. I thought of my biology teacher and began to fantasize about someday being married to him. I slid the ring onto my ring finger—only halfway just in case it got stuck.

I frowned. *Why wasn't Mom wearing her wedding ring?* I twisted it around on my finger and then removed it. I stared more closely at the black etchings and read the inscription on the inner band: "1962." I held my breath. I focused on the date more closely.

"Nineteen sixty-two?" I whispered. But I was born in 1960! — W
"The Discovery" is Chapter 12 of my memoir, *The Syrian Jewelry Box*, awaiting publication in February, 2015. — WT

Shelf Life

— Maddie McEwen-Asker



"Worst case of Writer's Block I've ever seen."

A Circle of Haiku For Gustav Holst's "The Planets"

Mars the Bringer of War

Masculinity.
He battles to build greatness.
Cold rust tint deserts.

Venus the Bringer of Peace

Femininity.
Meadows of serene contours.
Nude sketch emerges.

Mercury the Winged Messenger

Dive into sunlight,
Celerity connects arts.
Rapidfire concepts.

Jupiter the Bringer of Jollity

Thundering laughter.
Comedy of the world spheres.
Joyous energies.

Saturn the Bringer of Old Age

Master of circlets.
Intricate moon shepherd dance.
Eons become young.

Uranus the Magician

Eyes always play tricks –
We enjoy his sleight of hand,
Misdirecting stunts.

Neptune the Mystic

Spiritual sea.
Numinous realms inflame souls.
Unsearchable depths.
Tantalizing choirs.
Siren voices woo seekers –
Songs outside meaning.
– Stephen C. Wetlesen

Threnody for the Nefarious King

Dear, dear Macbeth,
Thane of Glamis,
Of Cawdor, of Scotland,
Of hell beneath.

With thy bloody fingers,
Thou point'st to comrades,
Whil'st drinks from thy goblet
To screams and cries.

In thy blackened eyes,
Sorrowness weeps;
Sorrowness drenched
In devils' tears.

Hush, to the Lady – as
Apart he tears threads
That tie him to sanity,
To reason, to "Amen."

"Let them come!" He cries,
"My story is finished.
I know the close,
I know the start.

Fate sides with me,
No man canst touch me,
Ay, hag's words:
No man, no man!"

Prithee, poor thane,
What say you? What say you?
Thy words are empty
And bound in doubts.

Thou dwell'st a dungeon
Of riddles and 'lusions,
Eternally damnèd
By pasts and presents.

Dear, dear Macbeth,
Thane of Glamis,
Of Cawdor, of Scotland,
Of hell beneath.

Hands so shaken,
Face so white;
Worthy Macbeth,
'Tis a sorry sight.

– Chelsea Cheng

The Woman in the Church Pew

A full veil hid her face
Her head was bowed
Seeking Grace
She was alone
The church was empty
Devoid of music
Or song

She sat in the pew
Still like a statue
Her mysterious countenance
Concealed from view

Until a beam of sunlight
Broke through
The stained glass window
And shone down upon her face

I saw that her eyes were blue
A moment later she saw me too
Not knowing what to do
I rose and began to leave

She whispered to me:
"Please, stay."
I moved toward her
Thinking she'd move away
She didn't

I sat down beside her
And she lifted her veil
"I knew you'd come" she said.
My mind spun in disbelief
Who was she, and how did she know?

"I led you here, now I must go."
And so she covered her face
Once more

And moving toward the
massive sanctuary doors
Seemed to disappear right through them
Like an apparition

Looking after her I tried to comprehend
What had just happened
Then finally realized I should not question
I remained in the church a while longer
Feeling somehow different

I returned several times hoping
To find her there
However, that was not to be

So I moved on believing
she'd given me
something
Though not tangible or real
And even though I couldn't
Have known it then
Many years later
She would appear
In my life
again

– Karen Hartley



January Terse On Verse

by Pat Bustamante



Pat Bustamante
Contributing Editor

Jan. Won

Happy New Year: nerves are shot.
Too much cheer: don't feel much cheerier.
Feel much wearier, old age near-ier
(One alternative all we've got!)
Ah well. Survived! Ungrateful? Am not!

— Pat Bustamante

When I was nine years old, I wrote my first published first poem:

He pauses in the shadows, hesitating
Before his golden paw should meet the light ...

That's all of it I remember. I had a yellow alley cat who thought he was a lion. He attacked people from ambush, which didn't make him popular. His favorite place was under a settee with a ruffle that reached to the rug. "Beware for your ankles, folks, do NOT sit there!"

I was the only one who understood him. In his mind he was not "just a small yellow cat" — he was a lion! I too was a lioness, not a kitten. However, I never leaped off the back porch and landed on our milkman's shoulder — we had delivery in those days. I bet HE remembers my alley cat, if he is still around!

My poem was iambic pentameter: 5 beats to a line, "ta DA, ta DA, ta DA, ta DA, ta DA." It rhymed "A-B, A-B." This is a very old but sturdy standard for poetry. (I am feeling rather old myself, this being my 77th year.) I wish I could recall the whole poem, which was meant to surprise you when at the last line you find out the subject is a yellow alley cat, not a lion.

I don't remember what happened to my yellow cat, whose only staunch supporter in the family was me. He came as a stray; he must have moved on as a stray. He feared nothing, not even our chow-dog who kept an "armistice" in spite of the constant attacks.

Can you, dear writer, write us a memory from your childhood? Each New Year is represented as a baby; I'd like to see some *WT* "baby stories" or poems. — *WT*

BOOK REVIEW

Not Magellan

by Marjorie Johnson

Who was first to sail around the world?

Explorer Ferdinand Magellan may have captained the first expedition to circumnavigate the globe, but he was not the first foreigner to reach the islands of the modern-day Philippines. Over 100 years before Magellan's 1519 expedition, the Chinese mariner Zheng He led his famous "Treasure Fleet" to the Philippines and engaged in trade with the locals. This merchant fleet comprised thousands of crewmen sailing massive ships known as junks, some of which were so big they even carried enough topsoil to create floating farms.

In his *1421: The Year China Discovered America* (Harper Collins, 2002, 536 pages), Gavin Menzies tells us that on March 8, 1421, the largest fleet the world had ever seen sailed from its base in China. The ships, huge junks 500 feet long and built from the finest teak, journeyed more than two years and circled the globe.

Menzies, while in command of HMS *Rorqual* (1968-1970), sailed the routes pioneered by Magellan and Captain Cook. In the course of researching *1421*, he visited 120 countries, more than 900 museums and libraries, and every major seaport of the late Middle Ages. — *WT*

Love Diss

Your words echo in my head —
Love, obsession, longing.
You wanted me so terribly,
Couldn't wait to have me.
Then, disillusioned, dropped me;
Dropped me with scorn, abuse, derision;
Abandoned and forgot me.
Shut me out of your future;
Slammed the door to your life;
Accused me of shallowness and callousness —
You who never really tried to know me.
You, who,
When I didn't fulfill your fantasies,
Dismissed me utterly out of hand.

— William Baldwin

Late Quarter Moon over San Francisco Bay

Huge and red, like a slice of blood
orange,
You float up behind the Berkeley hills
As if just wiping your own blood,
Fat scimitar,
Warning of holocaust to follow,
Universal disaster,
Coagulated over the black bay

— William Baldwin

Surely I Will See

What are these spots on milkmaid-smooth skin?
What is the gray on peaches and cream?
Why are the big blues so small?
Those cannot be my eyes at all.
No snow-capped coiffure.
Fade to mouse I'm sure
is fog over sunshine.
That's the hair that's mine.
It must be the mirror.
I'll clean it with furor.
Then surely I will see
the one who used to look at me.

— Carolyn Donnell



Conferences, Workshops, Classes

CWC Tri-Valley Writers Conference

Focus: Self-Publishing, Marketing, Craft

Saturday, April 18, 2015, all day, at Four Points by Sheraton, 5115 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, CA 94588. Discount Prices for Early Bird Registration: Members, \$115; Nonmembers, \$140; Students, \$80

The Tri-Valley Writers Conference is a full day event on the art and business of writing for writers. Held Saturday, April 18, 2015 from 7:30am to 6:00pm, it will feature three tracks of speakers, events, writing contests, and networking opportunities for people who share a passion for writing. The event is organized by the Tri-Valley Writers Branch of the California Writers Club and sponsored by a grant from the Alameda County Arts Commission to promote and nurture our vibrant community of writers. Our speaker lineup includes authors, editors, marketing experts, and innovators in e-publishing. Visit www.trivalleywriters.org —WT

San Francisco Writers Conference

The 2015 San Francisco Writers Conference will be held at the Mark Hopkins Hotel in San Francisco, February 12 – 15. This four-day event includes many prominent presenters, agents, and publishers. Visit sfwriters.org —WT

Self-Publishing 101

Classes with Linda Myro Judd, Book Designer, start in January. Bring your short story, poem, or book excerpt and your laptop. Learn how to make a print-ready book-style layout. Fridays, Jan. 9 to Mar. 27, 1:30 – 3:30 pm, Willow Glen Community Center, 2175 Lincoln Ave, San Jose. \$10 for WGCC members; \$18, nonmembers. Register at (408) 448-6400 or sanjoseca.gov/prns. —WT

Saturday Workshops

Write Your Novel In Two Weeks!

Saturday, January 24, 2015, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Los Gatos Adult Recreation Center

Discover techniques to write fast and get your first draft written in two weeks. Learn how to prepare for the two-week event, how to execute during the two weeks, and how to fine-tune your masterpiece. For beginners or pros, this is an exciting and motivating workshop that will help you improve your storytelling skills. Don't waste years trying to get your novel written. Learn secrets to avoiding writer's block and write your novel once and for all! —Victoria M. Johnson

Social Media For Authors And Poets

Saturday, February 7, 2015, 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Los Gatos Adult Recreation Center

Social media has become a crucial element for authors and poets in promotion and branding, finding opportunities, and fundraising. But those new to social media may not understand what platforms are best for them and what they can do once they are up and running. Some don't understand the benefits of social media at all while others have opened accounts but don't know what they're doing there. This workshop will discuss a variety of social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, YouTube, websites and more! —Victoria M. Johnson

To register for either class, visit <http://www.lgsrecreation.org> or call (408) 354-8700. —WT

Once Upon a ... Lily Pond

Continued from Page 8

Finally, Princess Penelope sat down with a smile on her face and remarked, "What a delightfully magic afternoon."

Prince Rupert leaned against the large boulder and returned her look with a grin of his own.

Seeing that the princess was happy, the little green frogs returned from hiding in the lily pond and leaped around joyfully.

Penelope was still curious, "How did you become a frog, Rupert?"

"Well, let's just say that I was in the wrong place at the wrong time, and I didn't want to kiss the Witch."

Penelope wondered about the experiment, the lily pond, and the magic. Rupert, the man, was here instead of a large green frog. Perhaps Rupert was the magic. Or was it the iPod?

After all, the little green frogs were still leaping about like little green frogs!

Prince Rupert and Princess Penelope may have lived happily ever after, but you never know in today's economy if you're going to find the perfect yuppie palace. —WT

Friday night at SBW open mic

by Valerie Lee

On Friday night I went with Carolyn Donnell to the open mic at the Willow Glen Library. It was nice seeing the regulars, Bill Baldwin, man in charge; Woody Horn, timer; and Pat Bustamante the poet. There weren't too many people there so I knew it would be easy to read a few pages from one of my books, but when it was my turn, I changed my mind and said, "You might wonder why I haven't been to club meetings on Mondays? It's because I've joined Toastmasters and that's the night they meet."

As the author of two books, *The Jade Rubies* and *A Long Way to Death Row*, I needed to know how to market them, and promote, promote, promote. To do that properly, I had to become a persuasive speaker and learn how to inspire so that the listeners would want to buy them. Believe me, it's not easy! I had a hard time because I do not like talking about myself, but that's the first speech that you have to give when you join Toastmasters.

After that I had a chance to explain what my books are about. With *Jade Rubies*, it was easy since it's about human trafficking, the selling of two young girls and what they have to endure and how they survive. This is a topic that none of us want to even think about and yet even today, it's happening all around us.

Continued on Page 14

For NaNoWriMo 2014 winners

by Carolyn Donnell



Carolyn Donnell
Contributing Editor

National Novel Writing Month is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that believes your story matters.

Did you finish NaNoWriMo in November? Below is a list of offers from sponsors. Some provide discounts for just participating, everything from a free copy of your manuscript to discounted software and memberships. See details at nanowrimo.org/sponsor-offers

You can follow post novel-writing-month activities on the nano blog at nanowrimo.org/nanowhat; sign-in and find your region:

USA, California, South Bay. Can also follow post-NaNoWriMo activities and possibilities at "A Farewell to 30 Covers, 30 Days 2014" on blog.nanowrimo.org

Post NaNoWriMo Sponsor Offers:

Create Space — Two free paperback copies of a finished book for NaNoWriMo winners

Blurb — FREE softcover book, Kindle-formatted ebook, and chance to win free editorial services

Scrivener — 50% off Scrivener for NaNoWriMo winners and 20% off for all participants

FastPencil — Start NaNoWriMo book project today for FREE — and win a free publishing package

Storyist — 50% off Storyist for Mac for NaNoWriMo winners, 25% off just for participating

BookBaby — Get a free copy of "The End. Now what?!"

Swoon Reads — Looking for NaNoWriMo Young Adult Romance Manuscripts

Aeon Timeline — Winners save 40%. All participants save 20% off our normal \$40 price

Lulu.com — professionally printed FREE HARDCOVER book.

Zoetic Press — Submit your work to Zoetic Press

Evernote — Three months of Evernote Premium for all NaNoWriMo winners

Scribophile — Join. Post first chapter to get free month Premium membership; winners get 2 months free

StoryBundle — Twelve books on writing craft, productivity, and business — name your own price

Ulysses III — Write your novel with Ulysses III and bestselling author David Hewson

4thewords — Winners get 60% off + 3 free months; participants, 30% off + 2 free months

Bibliocrunch — FREE *A Self-Publishing Guide for NaNoWriMo Writers: You're Done! Now What?*

Bookow — 50% off bookow's automated service (normally \$80) for winners, and 25% off for participants

Inked Voices — Helps writers find, form, and run online critique groups.

KOBO Writing Life — Free book of prompts for all Wrimos; ten free eBooks for NaNoWriMo winners.

JukePop — What to do with your NaNoWriMo story? (Only send first chapter) — WT

Essay Contest: "April"

from Marcella Simmons, Editor/Publisher

The April issue of *The Cahaba Literary Journal* will blossom into a beautiful butterfly about the last week of March 2015. To celebrate its debut, we are sponsoring an essay writing contest. All essays must be about April — it can be about your cat named April, your secret love named April, or something that happened in April. Go to <https://cahabariverliteraryjournal.wordpress.com/> for details. — 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/Haiku

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

Writer's Digest Events 2015 by Carolyn Donnell

Writer's Digest Short Short Short Story Writing Competition: **Deadline: January 16.** The top 10 winners announced in July/August 2015 *Writer's Digest*; the top 25 manuscripts printed in a special competition collection.

The 23rd Annual Self-Published Book Awards: **Deadline: April 1.** Winners announced in March 2016 *Writer's Digest*.

The *Writer's Digest* 84th Annual Competition: **Deadline: May 4.** Winners announced December 2015 *Writer's Digest*.

An ongoing **prompt contest** happens every other month. Submit a short story of 750 words or fewer based upon that prompt. The winner be published in an upcoming issue of *Writer's Digest*.

See www.writersdigest.com/competitions/writing-competitions — 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

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Disorder/Psychology

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Marjorie Johnson marjohnson@mac.com

Private Investigator/Police work/Crime

M. J. Hahn mirror3314@mypacks.net

Teaching and the Arts

Betty Auchard Btauchard@aol.com

Telecommunications Technology

Allan Cobb allancobb@computer.org

Television Production

Woody Horn 408-266-7040

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 10 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

Riders Do Right

Meets at Vallco Shopping Center, second floor, Food Court near Burger King, Noon, second Thursdays. Any genre. Contact Pat Bustamante, patatat@hotmail.com

Your Critique Group

For consideration, send information to newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Ongoing 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

range, five to seven minutes: that's what Woody does.

Woody also is the Timer for Open Mic. Now I see him looking at his watch so I guess it's time to wrap it up. I end by saying, "If there are any of you interested in marketing your book, be sure to check out Toastmasters. It might be just what you looking for."

At the end of the Open Mic meeting,

Woody's lovely wife Marjorie announced it was their 56th anniversary. She brought out a cake box and sliced pieces of delicious red velvet cake and handed them to us to celebrate their big event.

It was a nice evening and I will have to make it a point to attend the SBW open mic again soon. — WT

Be sure to check out all these opportunities available from SBW!

Friday night at SBW Open mic

Continued from Page 12

Charles Ng's book is more difficult since he's on death row, now at San Quentin Prison, after being found guilty of killing eleven people with Leonard Lake in Calaveras County in 1984.

Since my first Toastmaster's manual consists of ten speeches, I only talked about *The Jade Rubies* once. How they get us involved with the club is very clever. As members there are many various roles that you have to participate in, like Word Master, Ballot Counter, and Grammarian. The "Ah" counter catches all the no-no words like ahs, ohs, buts and you know. And then there is the Timer who makes us stay on track within our time

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|
| January 2015 | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | | | | 7:30p Open mic Barnes & Noble Almaden, San Jose | |
| 4 10:00A Our Voices | 5 1:30p Mystery Circle 2p Valley Writers | 6 | 7 7:30p SBW Board Meeting | 8 Noon Riders Do Right | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 2p Valley Writers 6:00p SBW Dinner Harry's Hofbrau | 13 | 14 | 15 Deadline <i>WritersTalk</i> | 16 7:30p Open mic Willow Glen Library 1157 Minnesota Ave | 17 1:30p WT Editors Powwow |
| 18 10:00A Our Voices | 19 2p Valley Writers | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 2p Valley Writers | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
| Future Flashes | | SBW Board meets February 4 | | SBW Dinner meeting February 9 | | |

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

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

For more info, contact Karen Phan
at phan_karen@yahoo.com or go to
poetrycentersanjose.org/calendar



Come to meetings Stay informed

At meetings, the portable bulletin board keeps us up-to-date on news about publishing or other topics important to writers.

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/>

CWC bags: Only \$10 each



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

South Bay Writers Anthology



\$10 at the meeting or on
amazon.com

South Bay Writers Coffee Mugs



\$10 each or three for \$20



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
January Regular Meeting
6 p.m. Monday, January 12**

Harry's Hofbrau
390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose

Promote Your Book with Pizzazz

**Dan Poynter
January Speaker**

Come early – This will sell out

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.