



# WRITERSTALK

Volume 22  
Number 6  
June 2014

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

JUNE SPEAKER

## Nina Amir Prepping For Success

by Dave LaRoche

Is your book marketable? Will readers buy, read, and recommend it to their friends? Is it a book in which a publisher will invest, take the big risk, and what part of the marketing cycle are you prepared for?

Writing, for the writer, has become a business. We may not like that idea but today, we must think of it that way. Our book is a product, always the case, but we've been able to avoid that reality until now. With the advent of self-publishing and the demand for digital books, the publishing business has become more competitive and for publishers to remain, writers must shoulder more of the load.

First, our books must be near perfect. No more is there a publisher's editor who will hold our rewriting hand: tell us what to change, what to add or leave out.

We need to know what kind of books are selling and respond with the one that will sell. We must learn to promote, to pitch, to develop a platform. We must be sociable with the media and join reading groups. We must prepare ourselves to market our book to a publisher and then to the reading world.

Nina Amir has become an expert on all of this. She dove into the tide of publishing change several years back and surfed right along with it. She is knowledgeable and current. She will talk about writing as a business, how to be a publishing partner, and what to convey to the publishing world to gain its attention. She will show us how to view our work through the eyes of an acquisition editor. She will point the way to success.

Nina has authored the books, *How to Blog a Book* and *The Author Training Manual*, both written to inspire a sense of the business of writing and make authors into "authorpreneurs." Many of her clients have sold books numbering into the "six-figures" via deals with major publishing houses. She writes four blogs, has self-published twelve books, and founded National Nonfiction Writing Month. Nina can be our bridge, from creativity to profit.

You will want to join us on June 9 at Harry's and learn how to prepare for success in the business of writing. — WT



Nina Amir

MAY SPEAKER

## Frolic with Dialogue

by Brenna Silbory

It was a rollicking good time at our May 12 South Bay Writers dinner meeting at Harry's Hofbrau, thanks both to our lively membership and our speaker, Tanya Egan Gibson. Her self-deprecating humor made it easy to enjoy her solid advice for writing good dialogue. It was



Tanya Egan Gibson

advice worth taking to heart, given her successes both as a freelance editor and as an author whose accomplishments include a novel, *How to Buy a Love of Reading*, published by Penguin's Dutton imprint.

Egan Gibson employed hilarious examples to make her points: truly terrible dialogue featuring a murderous Yeti, an objectionable hemline, and painfully dull — if realistic — discourse about what's for dinner. "You're not scintillated by the way your spouse is talking about enchiladas — nor should you be." That lack of scintillation is precisely why we should not subject our readers to predictable dialogue, either.

Rather than adhering to strict realism, Egan Gibson wants us to place the reader in a kind of "waking dream." After all, a reader who wants realism can easily find it by setting our stories down. Dull prose that "pops the reader out of the story" breaks precisely the spell we want to cast.

*Continued on Page 8*

Coming Saturday, May 31: **Workshop on Story with Charlotte Cook**  
**Ways to Make All That Craft Work For You**

Hurry! It's not too late. Announcement on Page 16

# President's Palaver

by Colin Seymour  
President, South Bay Writers

## Our female-male ratio Is not cause for static



Of the nine California Writers Club chapter presidents who gathered for an hour during our May 3 leadership seminar in Fremont, eight were women. I didn't find the 8-1 ratio to be a problem.

But in our problem-solving activities, some of my, er, fellow presidents counted among their chapters' problems a shortage of males.

Coincidentally, a South Bay Writers member had asked offhandedly the previous day on Facebook about SBW's female-male ratio. I quickly scanned a somewhat outdated printout to find the Club was about 70 percent female. I simply can't see that as a problem, either.

I am influenced perhaps by my college's 62-38 male-female ratio way back when, which I fervently would have preferred the other way around, more like the SBW ratio.

Demographics in the population at large would suggest SBW's female majority is predictable, given the actuarial tables for people of a certain age. I see no reason to chip away at that majority, except by staying alive. I also see no reason to push hard for an increased proportion of males in SBW.

I am influenced perhaps by the weekly spelldowns in my fourth-grade class, which were girls vs. boys. There were 19 of us and only 10 of them, but they had Julie Schwartz, Carolyn Street and Patricia Emerson, and we had, well, me. Week after week they triple-teamed me, and I think they beat me more times than I beat them. It didn't matter how many mediocre boys my team had.

A surplus of males can be depressing, as many young males in China can tell you.

Whereas, if you're a community theater director, then you always need more males. Actors, like writers, are more often women, which makes bit roles for men particularly hard to fill. Our SBW world seems a lot like that, numbers-wise.

This topic induced me to look back at my dinner speaker bookings as SBW vice president for 2010-12. The rate of female presenters to males was, guess what, about 70 percent female. Current program director Dave LaRoche has also booked women more than men by a wide margin.

It does seem logical that SBW should have a female president, of which we have had none in my six years in the Club. But as long as we all play well together, gender doesn't seem very important to our functions. Again, I just don't see the problem.

I am perhaps influenced by the daily recess periods in my first-grade class, which largely were segregated into girls and boys. I say largely because I played about equally in each group despite being gently nudged toward the boys' group by authorities who perhaps feared I might otherwise be feminized forever. I was being tugged a lot harder toward the girls' group by Judy Budihas, who was a good deal larger than I was.

I don't know what the authorities were worried about. Judy may have had me prancing around, but that's because she was a fan of *Black Beauty*. So I got to be a stallion. — WT

California Writers Club  
South Bay Branch  
[www.southbaywriters.com](http://www.southbaywriters.com)

— o —  
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### Join Us

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

**Announcements and Advertisements**  
newsletter@southbaywriters.com

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by Marjorie Bicknell Johnson  
Managing Editor



## The Third R for Fiction Writers

Of course, you know the three Rs: Reading, 'Riting, and 'Rithmetic. However, for writers, the three Rs should be Research, Reading, and 'Riting, in that order.

Over the past few months, the South Bay Writers Club has concentrated on craft. We've heard speakers on voice and theme, structure, dialogue, point of view, suspense and conflict, tension, and grammar. We've attended workshops on developing plot, writing unforgettable scenes, and creating believable characters, and we capped all these experiences with a summing-up on story. But we have skipped step one: we have neglected research.

Too often, writers of novels avoid research like the third rail, picturing fussy footnotes and library books piled high under a hot and glaring desk lamp. However, with all the worlds of information available to us writers these days, research can be fun.

Whether you write fact or fiction, a sense of authenticity can set your work apart from the rest. The right research will enrich your stories from the start by infusing real-world setting and lifelike details. Make research your creative ally.

Begin by getting a library card, your ticket to Web research well beyond Google. Make friends with the librarian and ask her what specialties her library offers—everything from free museum passes to loaning eBooks to access to special websites, some off limits to Google. Santa Clara City Library, for example, has a significant genealogy collection and partners with Santa Clara University. And your secret weapon? The librarian offers advice—ask her about your specific interests.

Next, read. Read books in your genre. Read books on the history of your character's culture. Read books on topics your character knows and settings he visits. Travel with Google Earth and tourist websites to your destination—travel there yourself, if you can. You don't want to write a travelogue but you must steep yourself in what your character experiences—the feel of the air on his skin, the tastes of foods he enjoys, the sights he passes every day, how his culture shaped him. Put some words in his mouth; what language does he speak, how does he sound, and how much education does he have?

*Continued on Page 9*

### Water, water, everywhere ...

The theme for July *WritersTalk* is water. Spark your imagination: fishing, swimming, drought, thirst, boating, drowning. Fire up those poems, short fictions, memoirs, essays—and send them here. See more on Page 9.

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# View from the Board

by S. Halloran

Eight of us — President Colin Seymour, Vice-president Dave LaRoche, Secretary Sylvia Halloran, Newsletter Editor Marjorie Johnson, Publicity Chair Kim Malanczuk, Web Presence Chair Pratibha Kelapure and Members-at-Large Nader Khaghani and Sherrie Johnson — met in Santa Clara Wednesday night, May 7, 2014. We drank wonderful decaf coffee and indulged in the cookies Marjorie so kindly provided. You, too, could enjoy power and camaraderie over dessert if you join the board!

Board members who attended the May 3 Leadership Conference returned from the event inspired and enthusiastic. Help them follow through with their new ideas to improve the club and grow our membership — volunteer to be on a committee or to join the board of directors!

The upcoming election provides a chance to include some different folks in the decision-making process.

We are working for you all the time, not only to keep costs down, but to offer informative, useful speakers and to provide exciting workshops. Let us know your ideas and visions for the club — a three-year plan for success is in the works.

**Moved:** (M.Johnson/Baldwin) to accept April minutes. Passed, unanimous.

**Moved:** (LaRoche/S.Johnson) to accept officers' reports. Passed, unanimous.

**Moved:** (M.Johnson/LaRoche) to accept committee reports. Passed, unanimous.

Elections are coming up! Be a Leader! (Or at least influence one.) — WT

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## Matthews-Baldwin Award

by Colin Seymour

Kimberly Malanczuk accepted the South Bay Writers' Matthews-Baldwin Award at our May 12 dinner meeting. The award recognizes outstanding service to the South Bay Branch of the California Writers Club. Kim's yeoman work in her first year with SBW has included a major role in our membership increase of about 60 since her arrival on the scene.

And she has made our meetings so much more interesting!

Thank you, Kim. — WT

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## A Reminder to Renew

by Sally A. Milnor

The California Writers Club fiscal year ends June 30, so membership renewal time is here. We hope you will continue to enjoy the many benefits of belonging to the South Bay Writers Club:

- Receive discounts at CWC workshops and conferences statewide
- Appear in SBW Members' Gallery with your own website
- Publish your work in *WritersTalk*
- Hear knowledgeable speakers on topics of interest to writers
- Enjoy the comradeship of other writers

You may renew online at our website southbaywriters.com. While you're there, take a look at the Members Gallery and the Members Book pages. New members — please note that you can appear on those pages, too.

You may also renew by mailing a check for \$45 to CWC-SBW, P.O. Box 3254, Santa Clara, CA 95055, Attn: Membership. (Note: dual members renew for \$25; students, \$20) Or, write a check at the June 9 SBW meeting.

We appreciate your membership. Your dues and your presence at our monthly meetings, workshops, and critique groups keep South Bay Writers flourishing.

Hope to see you June 9 at Harry's! — WT

## Members' News

by Marjorie Johnson

We applaud your writing successes. To be included in this column, please send a short paragraph to newsletter@southbaywriters.com or fill out a form at a dinner meeting.

**Bill Baldwin** presented a short talk, "Introducing the Beats" to people not familiar with them, at the "Sparing with Beatnik Ghosts" event on April 17 in San Jose. **Robert Balmanno** also presented.

**Hi-Dong Chai** reported on Twitter that *Shattered by the Wars* came in as a 2014 Eric Hoffer Award finalist. "I'm so happy, happy all day."

**Victoria M. Johnson** participated in the First Annual California Bookstore Day Celebration along with several other authors. Victoria signed her new book, *The Last Techniques I Learned Before Selling Fiction*, at the Village House of Books in Los Gatos.

**Maddy McEwen-Asker's** short story, "Fingers and Thumbs Across Continents," was accepted for publication in *Greenprints Magazine*.

**Suzy Paluzzi** will read at the launch of the anthology, *Song of Los Gatos*.

**Steve Wetlesen** was wandering about at a local Japanese festival when someone asked about his "Gandalf" walking stick. From this, he got a commission for a piece of poetic art about the struggles of a koi fish pond's owner against blue heron predator birds. Look for this in the July issue of *WritersTalk*, where it will follow the theme, "Water." — WT

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## SBW Member Resources

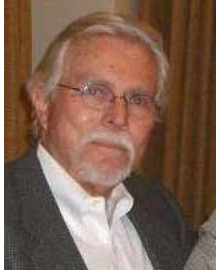
Our South Bay Writers web page, southbaywriters.com, has many features useful to members of SBW. To add a book to the Members' Books page, or to submit or update your bio for the Members' Gallery, go to southbaywriters.com and click on Membership, Member Data Update. Also, *WritersTalk* is available on line as well as its back issues with a cumulative index.

Speaking of *WritersTalk*, announce your newly published book by sending us a thumbnail jpg of your book cover and a 200-word description. — WT.



# Get up, Get Dressed, and Run

by Dave LaRoche



**Dave LaRoche**  
SBW VP

At our next meeting, June 9, we will elect officers. President, VP, Secretary, Treasurer and two Members-at-Large. These officers, with committee chairs, will plan and guide our next year. Without those seats filled, the club will falter and the value we receive diminish. All that is done or not done at SBW results from our participation. We must be involved to make it work – in time, everyone of us. This is our opportunity. We need to seize it.

- Be part of the team. No single job is insurmountable, no job too tough. Precedent and policies are established to guide us.
- Gain experience and an appreciation that may apply to your personal or professional life.
- Meet and become acquainted with others who will help with your writing career. This is networking at the next level.
- Gain the personal satisfaction that comes with doing your part and receive exceptional gratitude from peers.

Nominations will remain open right up until the voting takes place on June 9. You may nominate yourself, or have one of your “frenemies” nominate you by giving me your name. Of course, you will need to consent. Talk to me. Tell me you’re interested. Tell me you’ll run. It isn’t work, it isn’t demanding, it’s fun. You owe it to yourself and to the club you enjoy and profit from.

I’ll take your name by phone, by email, by smoke signals or semaphore. Take action. Tell me you’re ready to do your part.

At press time for *WritersTalk*, these members have announced their candidacy for office: **Bill Baldwin, Michael Hahn, Sylvia Halloran, Nader Khaghani, Sherri Johnson, Dave LaRoche, and Colin Seymour.**

Candidates’ statements are published exactly as received, without benefit of copyedit. — WT

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## Election Statement

### Secretary: Sylvia Halloran

Sylvia Halloran for Secretary ... Again.

Ten years in the club, four years on the board...  
A river of writing students, ghost writing, editing....  
Honorably mentioned poetry...  
Rejection slips from the finest in the land...  
Fourteen of twenty novel chapters finished in first draft...  
I like this life, even the rejections.

Secretary’s a great job.

Use the templates, change the dates – good housekeeping.  
A little diplomacy now and then, placed in passive voice....  
Publication every month in WT...  
People awaiting Emails packed with minutes, then votes of approval every month...  
You’d love doing it, too. I’ll put the files in order for you and you can start in July. Or make me do it another year.

## Election Statement

### Vice President: Dave LaRoche

If elected VP, I will push through a change in our operation that calls for an apprentice for all officers; not so much to assist, but to adjust for the next step. I will focus on programs that speak to us about publishing – how to get ready, the various paths, and what is needed of the author these days. As a member of the board, I will support ways to further increase our membership – adding both financial and visionary resources. I am interested in establishing salons, a gathering filling the gap between critique and membership meetings: casual, informative, five to eight people.

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## Election Statement

### President: Colin Seymour

They didn’t just beg me. They twisted my arm. If I didn’t stay on as president of South Bay Writers for 2014-2015, two people vital to the Club’s striking progress these past 11 months would bail too. It was politics, I tell you.

I suppose I twisted their arms, too. The upshot is that if the June 9 elections go our way, this Triple Alliance will remain intact for 2014-2015 and the Club will retain the considerable momentum we’ve generated. We’ve got a good thing going.

The Club’s strength in numbers far exceeds our little threesome. A strong indicator of the progress we’re all making is that our membership has increased nearly 50 percent in recent months.

I can’t take credit for that, but I can take credit for the improved ambience at our dinner meetings and especially our board meetings. We have become a much friendlier organization.

We are coordinating more and more talent, both for our members’ literary pursuits and for the club’s activities. The bickerers are gone, and camaraderie is taking hold.

The Club, like my twisted arm, is on the upswing. Pending your approval, I’ve been persuaded to keep the party going strong.

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## Election Statement

### Member-at-Large: Michael Hahn

I am Michael Hahn, and I would like to run for the upcoming Member at Large position for our Club. I write fiction, non-fiction, and poetry.

I am someone who is unafraid of bringing new, progressive ideas forward and conveying the thoughts of other members to the Board.

I am positive, energetic, always available for consults and to hear (and convey) any complaints.

I am a person who wants to see the Club prosper, sustain and inspire its members, and EVOLVE.

I would appreciate your support.

Thank you!

# Success by Sharing

by Colin Seymour, President

South Bay Branch, California Writers Club

I got the biggest laugh of the day Saturday – at the expense of South Bay Writers – from the 60 or so folks attending the California Writers Club-NorCal Group “Success By Sharing” Leadership Conference.

“We have a long-range planning committee,” I said by way of explaining SBW’s biggest takeaway from the six-hour event in Fremont, “but it doesn’t really have a deadline structure ...”



As the laughter subsided, they knew I would go on to say we plan to adopt a rolling three-year plan that has been working for a couple of other Northern California branches of the CWC. That was one of many good ideas our delegation – which included Vice President Dave LaRoche, Treasurer Bill Baldwin, Member-at-Large Nader Khaghani, and committee chairs Marjorie Johnson, Pratibha Kelapure, and Kimberly Malanczuk – picked up from our fellow CWC/NorCal leaders.

You’ll be hearing more about these ideas in coming months at SBW dinner meetings and reading about them in *WritersTalk*. We’re already planning a retreat to get the rolling three-year plan, uh, rolling.

But for now we just wanted you to know that we got a lot out of Saturday’s event, and we intend to make sure everyone in South Bay Writers benefits from what we learned.

By the way, don’t forget to “LIKE” us on Facebook!

Sail On! – WT

Conference Organizer Joyce Krieg,  
CWC NorCal Group



Marjorie Johnson, Joyce Krieg, and  
Pratibha Kelapure

— photo on Marjorie’s iPhone

Leaders don’t work harder than anyone else. They work much, much harder than anyone else.

— Bob Isbill, CWC High Desert Branch



## California Writers Club Annual Picnic

This one’s for the entire State, all CWC members. Here’s your chance to meet and network with CWC members from other branches. (Note that South Bay Writers have their annual picnic on Sunday, July 6, to be announced separately.)

Mark your calendars for the

### CWC Annual Picnic

Saturday, July 19, 2014, 1 to 4 p.m.

Joaquin Miller Park, Oakland

Barbecue & Potluck, Open Mic, Lit-Cake Contest

Check [www.calwriters.org](http://www.calwriters.org) for details

## California Writers Club Email Policy

We respect your privacy. We know you would like to connect with your fellow members, but we have to be careful on this. In particular, we do not want to give permission to anyone in the club to disseminate information *en masse* to our members, nor will we give out individual emails. Thank you for your understanding.

## Keynote Address: How We Turned Around our Branch

At the May 3 Leadership Conference, Bob Isbill, CWC High Desert Branch, described how they went from “code blue” – so broke that they couldn’t even pay attention – to “alive and kickin’.”

Bob gave us an overview of the now vibrant High Desert Branch and sent us home with his list of “55 Ways to Build a Better Branch.”

Did we get some ideas to apply to South Bay Writers? You betcha! – WT

## CWC Inter-Active Map

by Ray Malus

The map on the right appears on the California Writers Club website, [calwriters.org](http://calwriters.org). Online, it’s inter-active. Go to the website, click your mouse over a red dot, and see how many members that branch has. MRMS, Member Records Management System, gives an instant count.

CWC members pictured are our state officers for 2013-2014. – WT





# California Writers Club

## Officers and Appointees of the Central Board (2013-2014)

**President**  
David George  
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**Vice President**  
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**Treasurer**  
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Dave LaRoche  
South Bay

**Public Relations Director**  
Donna McCrohan Rosenthal  
East Sierra

**Member-At-Large**  
Ray Malus  
San Fernando Valley



## Dialogue:

### Tanya Egan Gibson

*Continued from Page 1*

To this end, good dialogue is “a trick, a slight of hand.” It helps the reader “feel like the detective,” so invested in putting together the pieces of the story, she cannot step away. “Your reader is not an idiot,” so an intentional gap between an otherwise consistent character’s words and thoughts becomes an enticing clue for the reader to follow.

Though eschewing strictly realistic dialogue, Egan Gibson urged us still to make our dialogue believable: characters shouldn’t sound like echoes of each other, nor speak perfect English. This believability gets trickier when a character’s natural dialect is not mainstream English. She insisted that transcribing nonstandard dialect phonetically will probably serve only to distract the reader or, worse, cause inadvertent offense. Her advice was to *say* the character has a twang, rather than spell the twang out, thus saving the reader the onerous task of laboring through unfamiliar phonetic spelling.

Audience questions touched on the related topics of shifting between differing languages, voices, and points of view. Perhaps a future SBW speaker, or panel, could further explore the challenge of writing dialogue for characters, or contexts, well outside the dominant culture, where authentic voices might be harder to hear using only standard English—phonetically regular or otherwise.

Although her examples of badly written dialogue tended to be over-the-top, Egan Gibson repeatedly insisted, “I do that,” an admission comforting to those of us who worry that we do it, too. Writing good dialogue normally starts with the not-so-good stuff, she assured us, followed by intensive rewriting and editing, until the words serve only to drive the story forward.

Egan Gibson reminded us that thoughtful feedback from a community of fellow writers is an invaluable part of the dialogue-sharpening process. After her presentation, amid cookies and conversation, it was easy to enjoy exactly such a community. —WT

*Questions for the speaker? Reach her at [Tanya@tanyaegangibson.com](mailto:Tanya@tanyaegangibson.com).*



**Tanya Egan Gibson**

— Photo by Dick Amyx

## May 12 Scenes

— Photos by Carolyn Donnell



**WritersTalk players Marjorie Johnson, Pratibha Kelapure, and Victoria M. Johnson**

— Photo by Dick Amyx

More photos on our website. Double click on Events and go to Photo Gallery.



## The Third R for Writers

Continued from Page 3

You can travel with Internet images and videos. Check out YouTube. Hear his language spoken on online dictionaries, listen to music that he likes, and see recipes for his favorite ethnic food. While you won't use all this background information in your story, knowing about it will flavor your writing with sensuous details.

Above all, use the latest resources. Two outstanding references are "Digging into the deep" by Jocelyn Kerr, *The Writer*, January 2013, pp. 11 – 12; and "Research like a Pro" by Charles J. Shields, *Writer's Digest*, March/April 2012, pp. 35 – 38.

While you are in the mood, *WritersTalk* could use articles about how you researched a piece of creative work. —WT

## July WritersTalk Theme

by Victoria M. Johnson

Your *WritersTalk* editors have selected a topic for the July 2014 issue. The theme is water. Send us a poem, flash fiction, short story, memoir, essay, or article about water. We'll even consider your photos or cartoons. Explore any facet of water that you choose. As with all submissions, please follow the *WritersTalk* length guidelines. We hope to be flooded with your work. —WT

## More news from WritersTalk:

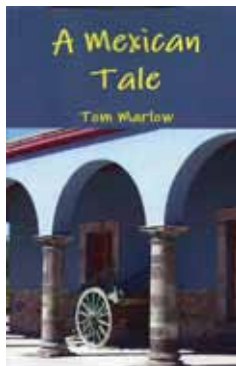
Winners of the *WritersTalk* Challenge Contest will be announced at the SBW August 11 dinner meeting. You have an entry if your creative piece was published in *WritersTalk*, February through July, 2014. See the announcement on Page 17.

For the fun of it, we have planned several themed issues of *WritersTalk*.

- July: Water;
- August: Flash fiction, 450 words or fewer;
- September: Humor; and
- October: Spooky. —WT

## A Mexican Tale

by Tom Marlowe



This is to announce the publishing (in late March) of my novel, *A Mexican Tale*.

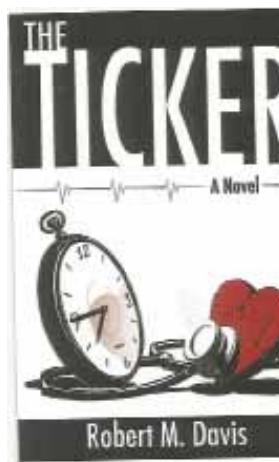
Life, love, death, renewal; a story told by the Spirits of the Sierra Madre of an earthly existence. It's a story told of intersecting lives about a traditional Mexican village.

Is it tragedy or blind fate that binds four friends together and makes the tale meaningful? You decide! —WT

## The Ticker

by Robert M. Davis

The recipe for murder becomes more palatable when seasoned by just cause.



*The Ticker*, a 69,000-word thriller by Robert Davis, balances the conflict of good versus evil, right versus wrong, and sanity versus madness on a fine grey line.

When Morgan Proffitt's cardiologist gives him life's two-minute warning, the diagnosis prompts an unusual reaction from the highly principled Proffitt. In the hours he has left, Proffitt is dead set on killing the despicable person responsible for his daughter's death.

Revenge is not his motivation. He cannot bring his daughter back.

But Proffitt can save other sons and daughters from a similar fate—and you will root that Proffitt's heart has enough ticks left to accomplish the mission.

*The Ticker* is Robert Davis's third novel and can be purchased on Amazon, Barnes & Noble.com, and eBooks. Royalties from all sales are donated to three charities: Pets in Need, Wounded Warrior Project, and Fisher House. —WT

## The Last Techniques I Learned Before Selling Fiction

by Victoria M. Johnson

Discover techniques to write with focus and purpose. Learn essential craft tips. For beginners or pros, this is a tip-filled little book that will help you improve your storytelling skills and propel your writing to the next level. Don't waste years on

the wrong book idea or floundering in writer's block. Learn secrets to avoiding writer's block and write your great novel once and for all!



When Victoria M. Johnson's first novel finally sold to a New York publisher, she took some time to evaluate what made that story different than what she had written and submitted before. Were there specific techniques she had used for the first time? Could those techniques be taught to others?

She discovered that yes; she had applied elements that propelled the story to a new level. With *The Last Techniques I Learned Before Selling Fiction*, readers can use these same techniques to enhance their stories and boost their chances of making a sale.

Topics include: Visceral idea; Conflict; Emotion; Voice; Theme; and More! Available in paperback and ebook format. —WT

# Thanks for not laughing

by Tom Marlowe

Adrian wasn't amused. Being the most junior executive in the office, he had been directed to make the long trek to Managua, Nicaragua. It had been a long trip and on arrival, he thought he was exhausted. But after he crawled into bed, sleep cruelly eluded him. He tossed and turned for what seemed to be hours. Finally, he gave up; no sense beating a dead horse, especially when you are the horse.

Adrian didn't much care for Nicaragua. What he'd already seen of Managua was simply depressing. It was drab in so many ways. There were armed guards everywhere; some with pistols, some with shotguns, some with military style carbines. Blocks and blocks of houses surrounding the tourist hotel zone gave the impression that their sole focus was the security of the occupants. The homes were protected by tall metal doors, their fences and rooftops topped by razor wire; and so far he had seen only the high rent district!

He remembered having been in Nicaragua a couple years prior on company business. He had been there with a couple of colleagues and the three of them had two days to kill after a big meeting had been postponed at the last minute. On a whim, they decided to take a chicken bus from Managua to a tourist town on the other side of the highway hill. The trip to the lakeside town of Granada was designed to fill some of the unexpected time available to the threesome.

Lodged in a suburban Managua hotel on that trip, the three had taken a taxi into the city center, and had the driver drop them off at the bus station after a brief sightseeing ride through a dreary Managua. Adrian's first trip had left him with the general impression that the capitol city was replete with buildings that weren't much more than crumbling ruins—kind of like what he imagined Detroit to be, but possibly worse in some respects. The poverty in Managua oozed out between the cracks in the sidewalks and the walls, just as the vegetation was struggling to do. The maintenance workers and wheeled vehicles could keep the weeds in the streets trimmed, but the societal poverty wasn't so easily hidden from view.

In retrospect, even more interesting than crumbling Managua was an incident that occurred on the way to Granada. Adrian and his traveling companions bought their tickets and found their bus in short order. There was about a thirty-minute wait until departure time, but the doors were open and they were allowed to hop aboard and settle into the already crowded bus. The bedraggled appearance of the exterior hadn't prepared Adrian for the even more tattered interior. What unnerved him the most was that the thing had the look and feel of a vehicle that had no more than a fifty-fifty probability of making its stated destination. The seats were a sweat-provoking vinyl: hot, humid sticky, and on the small side. Although they seemed adequately sized for the locals, they were clearly not built for super-sized gringos. Not even a gringo who had lost a little weight after a thankfully short, but exhausting, bout of Montezuma's Revenge.

Passengers continued to trickle aboard, and after a brief time, there were no other seats left but one. It was then that a tiny Roman Catholic nun came aboard and filled that last open space, right next to Adrian. He was thankful she chose him as a seat partner, mostly because of her diminutive size, even

# Off the Shelf

Edie Matthews & Marina Menendez-Pidal



*"Are you sure this is how Hemingway started?"*

for Nicaragua. She would have been considered child-size by North American standards. In the heat and overcrowding, his claustrophobia was acting up, and the nun's dimensions and demeanor had a calming influence. He tried to blend in and was trying even harder not to sweat, without much success in the dank tropical heat and midday sun. The only good news was that, unlike the sealed windows prevalent in the office buildings of North America, the windows on the bus could be opened and closed. At least Adrian could look forward to decent ventilation once they were underway.

The particular bus they were on was one of those with an evolving schedule. There was a nominal departure time, but the actual time depended on demand. As was not uncommon for the developing world 'chicken buses', this bus would leave the station when there were no more seats left to fill. Unluckily for Adrian, there was still demand left for standing room. It was then, while waiting for the final passengers, that Adrian noticed an emaciated male figure being pushed onto the bus through the front door from his posterior. He didn't have any idea how old the gentleman was, as it was so difficult to tell where the age started and the emaciation stopped. The fella doing the pushing was buff by comparison, although the body-mass index for both would probably have registered in the single digits. Adrian had the distinct impression that the two were traveling together, and the gentleman being pushed could not have gotten on the bus without the help of his traveling companion. The two stick figures found space on the floor of the bus near the driver as it pulled out onto the highway.

By then, Adrian had spent enough time traveling to get used to seeing without understanding. He watched without staring and took mental notes as the healthier of the emaciated duo had a lengthy exchange with the driver.

After a final nod from the driver's head, the healthier of the two stick figures rose from the floor and began a rather elaborate speech, moving up and down the aisle, speaking in

*Continued on Page 11*



## Thanks for not laughing

*Continued from Page 10*

Spanish. Adrian was sorry that he and his friends, the only gringos aboard, had not chosen seats closer to each other so they could collaborate. It would have been helpful to pool their limited language skills in order to interpret the monologue. He was anxious to get an understanding of whether they were being asked to shake the money out of their wallets for the benefit of the stick figures—or something more sinister.

Not seeing any weapons on board and given the fragile state of the speaker, Adrian wasn't too concerned for his physical welfare, and ultimately the speech turned out to be a simple beggar's plea for alms. Of course, the plea being made in Spanish, it fell on Adrian's deaf ears. He would have never known what was being requested if not for the fact that the stick figure repeated it in fluent English. The switch to English could have been little more than a marketing ploy obviously targeted at the three gringos aboard the crowded bus, but Adrian didn't think so.

What the stick figure repeated for the gringos was a sad tale of woe, about an individual (the speaker) who grew up in a Georgia suburb near Atlanta. He contracted AIDS there and flew to Nicaragua in the mistaken belief that the AIDS drugs he needed that were available, but unaffordable in Georgia, were both available and affordable by state subsidy in Nicaragua. He was unfortunately wrong about the Nicaraguan state subsidy and he was slowly withering away, reduced to begging on the public buses in one of the poorest countries in Central America. Having heard his plea and this time understanding the entire speech, which was sad enough, Adrian was mostly struck by the closing line. The stick figure said in very clear English, "Thank you for listening." Then sagging and casting his eyes downward, "or at least for not laughing." It was the down-turned eyes and 'laughing' part that grabbed at Adrian's heart and wallet. The nun sharing his seat also dug deep, which surprised Adrian nearly as much as the stick figure's tale. She couldn't have had much discretionary income to spend judging by her extremely lean frame.

The incident left Adrian thinking about the confluence of existence, luck, and fate. Everyone in the bus shared the same

## Classic California Writers

### Raymond Chandler (1888-1959)

#### Color Blue in *The Big Sleep*

by Pratibha Kelapure



Pratibha Kelapure  
Contributing Editor

Raymond Chandler referred to Philip Marlowe as his "white knight in a trench coat." Marlowe is seen as a noble and honorable detective, and his honorary knighthood is celebrated by many critics. This is how Chandler introduces Philip Marlowe in *The Big Sleep*:

"I was wearing my powder-blue suit, with dark blue shirt, tie and display handkerchief, black brogues, black wool socks with dark blue clocks on them."

Blue is a color of trust, honor, and creativity. A contemporary example of this connotation is IBM, Big Blue. Blue is also considered a sign of purity as can be seen from the blue surgical masks and gowns. Many detergents are also blue in color. During the middle ages, the blue stone Lapis Lazuli was considered precious. All these positive connotations of blue indicate that Chandler intended his favorite gumshoe to be a pure and noble character. However, there are other darker connotations of blue: the term blue language refers to profanity; blue mood refers to sadness. It is not a coincidence that the negative character Geiger carries a blue notebook. The slacks that Carmen is wearing when she is first introduced are also blue.

This initial juxtaposition of blue with opposing connotations is meaningful. Philip Marlowe never makes a judgment about the nature of good and evil, and neither does Chandler in his authorial voice. In the end, Marlowe takes law into his own hands and decides to cover up Regan's murder at the hands of Carmen. The reasons for his actions are somewhat noble yet ambiguous. He is concerned about General's health and would prefer to spare the old man from any further grief. He would like Carmen to receive mental health care rather than have her molder in a prison cell. One is tempted to bestow knighthood on him for his chivalry.

However, it should also be noted that Marlowe is unable to extricate Mona Mars from the dangerous life that she is leading. He leaves her in the deadly hands of Eddie Mars and his thugs. Does this fact leave a chink in Marlowe's knightly armor? Perhaps, but one could, of course, argue that Mona is not a damsel in distress. She is fiercely loyal to Eddie, and in some sense, she is the only character who is as dispassionate as Marlowe himself. Is it any wonder that the novel ends with Marlowe's thoughts about Silver-Wig? Mona's loyalty to Eddie is equivalent to Marlowe's loyalty to General and Carmen. Both Mona and Philip know their loyalty is perhaps misplaced; however it is the choice each has made, knowing fully well that the world is a continuum of good and evil and choosing sides, or even thinking about them is futile. Perhaps this is what Chandler had in mind when he sprinkled many blue symbols in the novel. —WT

earthly time and space, breathed in the same smog laden Managua air, heard the same raucous sounds of the city, and saw the same gritty visual images through the windows of the bus. Despite the similar circumstances that brought them all together for the sharing, the outcome for all the participants was radically dissimilar.

All the individuals in that bus came together for random reasons at that particular instant to witness the plea for help; that was existence, over which they

had little control. For most of the participants, it was just another occurrence of daily life on a Nicaraguan bus; for them, that was luck. For the pair with the life threatening disease, it was goodbye; that was their fate.

The Nicaragua trip ended right after the business conference was over the next day. Adrian no longer remembered what the conference had been about, but he never forgot the events on the bus. —WT

# A Parliament of Owls

by Judith Shernock, illustrated by Donald Shernock

The collective nouns we use to describe groups of animals are called the 'terms of venery.' However, the word venery – to hunt; to indulge in sexual pleasure – has nothing to do with groups of animals. Groups of animals include a parliament of owls; a murder of crows; a dazzle of zebras; an ostentation of peacocks; a clowder of cats; a cackle of hyenas; a gaggle of geese; and a skulk of foxes. – WT

## A Parliament of Owls Or P of O

It must be said, owls are wise.  
Doesn't depend on their size.  
Feathered Gurus? Quite a surprise.



The P of O convenes where?  
How's the vote for Health Care?  
Yea, nay, or simply a stare?  
  
How do they choose Prime Minister?  
Clever bird or one who is sinister,  
Is his title Sir or Mister?  
  
Their opposition, "The Micies," agree  
Civilized owls they don't see,  
Only murderers high in a tree.  
  
The Owls quiet their beaks,  
Listen, as Topbird speaks,  
"Our reign shall endure," he shrieks.

Their hoots of approval are loud,  
He knows how to please a crowd  
And make them really proud.

"The P of O can endure  
A thousand years or more,  
We know what we stand for."

Micies, and Snakies, their ally  
Say, "We're leaving this rally,  
The Owls are not really pally.

"When Parliament of Owls convene  
It's really an impressive scene,  
But underneath they're just plain mean.



"All they want to do  
Is terrorize our crew!  
Snakies, micies, ratties, too.

"We must confess  
Natures a cruel mistress,  
Leaves us in distress.

"Though they cause pain  
We won't cease to complain,  
P of O won't always reign.

"Though Micies are clever,  
Owls with little endeavor  
Will gobble opponents forever."

– Judith Shernock





## Latest New Thing: JukePop

Via a new library collaboration, technology aids authors to write and publish, chapter by chapter. Visitors to Santa Clara County Library District's website [sccl.org](http://sccl.org) can read, a chapter at a time, books made available through self-publishing start-up JukePop.

The sheer quantity of self-published work daunts librarians and traditional publishers trying to sort through fake reviews on Amazon and industry analysis in book journals. The whole idea with serialized fiction is that you have to get the reader to come back for the next installment. If you can do that, chances are that your story is quality. The big idea: JukePop gauges how likely it is that a reader will come back for the latest installment, which gives measurable feedback if you're thinking about sinking money into a vanity press and new cover art.

JukePop titles are available in serial form at [sccl.org/episodic-fiction](http://sccl.org/episodic-fiction). — WT

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### Cupertino Cherry Blossom Festival

Three balloon clusters  
fly to Heaven connected.  
Ascent of colors.

— Stephen C. Wetlesen

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## 100 books to read in a lifetime

Writers must be readers. How many books on Amazon's list of 100 books to read in a lifetime have you read? Go to Amazon and use their search bar for "100 books to read." Besides the hundred books to read in a lifetime, they have lists of 100 other books specializing in this and that. — WT

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### Alma Mater Memories

Balloons carry off  
football stadium beer cans.  
Cal Bears Blue and Gold!

— Stephen C. Wetlesen

## Never Forget

by Pratibha Kelapure

Roger watched as his father was snatched away. He will never forget that fateful day. The moments before Papa was taken, Roger had been playing with him under the open sky. The last thing about Papa he remembers is the playful nuzzling and his bright toothy smile. Suddenly, Papa was struck by a Taser. A bunch of people ran towards him, grabbed him, loaded him onto a truck, and sped away. It happened so fast that Roger forgot to exhale for a minute. As soon as he grasped the situation, he yelped. He yelped for what seemed like an eternity as if the world had vanished. At last, someone heard him. Folks gathered around and comforted him, but no one could find any trace of his father or the truck, not that day, not for the weeks, months or years afterwards.

Most days, the pain of losing his father flows in his entire body like the blood in his veins. He thinks about their water squirting game under the hot sun. Sometimes, he feels Papa's warm breath tickling his nose. He must find Papa. The resolve keeps him going. Mama isn't so strong, though. She never did recover from the loss and now spends most of her days swatting flies with the wooden swatter that she made from the old branches. The blank expression in her eyes and her lethargic attitude is too painful to watch.

He often wonders why that gang of people took Papa. Why not me instead? But he has no time for such rhetorical questions. Every day, he walks through the different neighborhoods asking, collecting leads. Most of the times, the leads don't pan out. Then yesterday he got a tip. He found out that his father works for Mr. Lawless in Bridgetown.

Today, Roger stands in front of the huge dome in Bridgetown. A bright red curtain flutters in the wind. A large group of noisy children and adults are gathered. Everyone is excited. He overhears stories about his Papa, and his ears perk up. He hears many good words. His father must be quite a skillful worker to garner such praise from these people. Roger stands proud. Why isn't Papa proud and why would he not share his fame with us? He wonders.

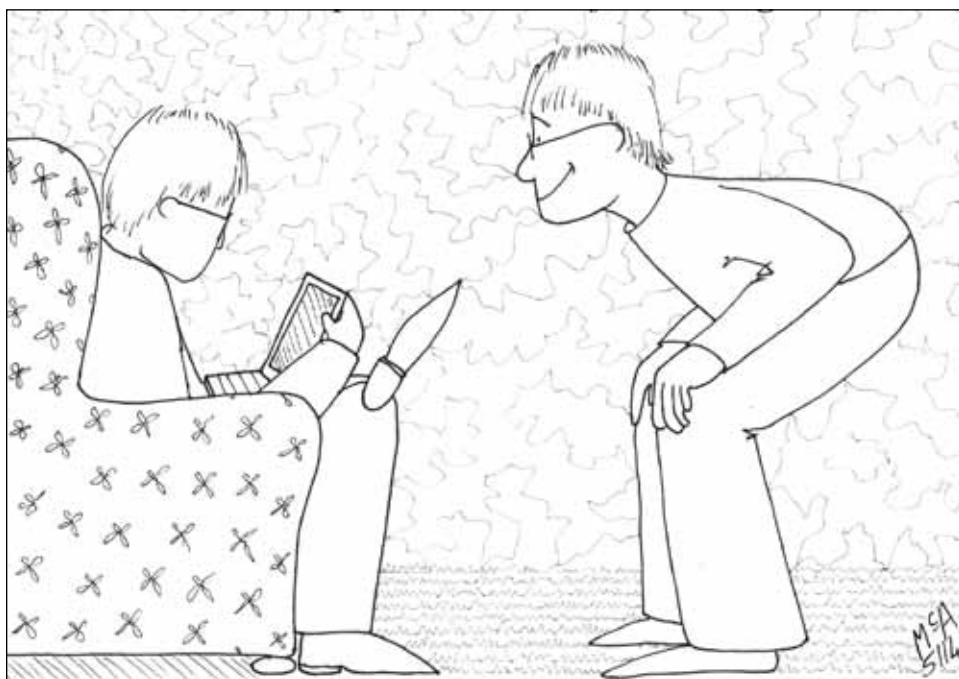
Suddenly, there are flashes of light, sounds of trumpets, followed by a colorful procession. Roger spots Papa. He is shocked to see Papa's toothless face. He also spots a sparkly man with a bull-hook following him. Roger's eyes meet Papa's, and Papa finds strength to break free from the procession.

Roger sees Papa's bloody ears, but Papa doesn't care. He raises his trunk and trumpets. Papa trumpets too. Papa always knew, Roger would not forget. Elephants never do. — WT

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## Shelf Life

— Maddie McEwen-Asker



*I sent you an e-card, and I'll spend another hour fixing your scrambled formatting.*

# April Haiku Contest

by Carolyn Donnell

Are you on Facebook? Have you Liked our Facebook Page — **California Writers Club - South Bay**? If you did, you could have participated in our April activity for National Poetry Month.

We posted a different photo on each Sunday morning, and people had a week to compose a Haiku inspired by that photo.

Below are participants for the last three weeks in order of submission. Everyone is a winner! — WT

## What is Haiku?

The April contest called for the common 5-7-5 Haiku form: 5 syllables in the first line, 7 in the next line, and 5 in the last line, with no specific rhyme or meter.

### Week 3 Poppies with bee

Photo by Carolyn Donnell

Spring sun sprinkles bright  
Gold dust at my weary feet  
Earth opens her heart

— Pratibha Kelapure

Spring forth golden fields  
California poppies bloom  
Bees drink sweet nectar

— Leslie Hoffman

The best Spring flower  
glows with radiance and beams  
shining golden light

— Kaycee Dobbs - Karen Hartley



Lone bee buzzes by  
California flowers gold  
Orange poppies bloom

— Marjorie Johnson

### Week 4 Blue Heron

Photo (below) by Cathy Bauer

How sleek and slender  
Viewing her clear blue domain  
She looks so regal

— Kaycee Dobbs Karen Hartley

White caps like horses  
Pass barnacled rocks that wait  
A bird hears fish swim

— Luanne Birch Oleas

Great Blue stands at shore  
waiting for aquatic prey  
stoic persistence

— Leslie Hoffman

Sea bird wanders as  
earthly waters soothe the urge  
to fly away home

— Elaine Webster

Waiting for a prey  
The bird and the hungry waves  
Unconcerned nature

— Pratibha Kelapure

Low tide search for prey  
Blue heron oversees rocks  
While dinner swims in

— Marjorie Johnson

The whisper of wings  
The gliding of creation  
Echoes in my mind

— Rachel, Student, 7th Grade



### Week 5 Lightning

Photo by Marjorie Johnson



Tree of light descends  
radiates briny surface  
deceptive beauty

— Leslie Hoffman

Positive Forces  
Negativity Collide  
Destruction Ensues

— Elaine Webster

Light streaks on water  
Flailing arms in the darkness  
fading to nothing

— Kaycee Dobbs - Karen Hartley

Electron highway  
Charging the spring time heavens  
Free photons flowing

— Aaron The-Icon Spriggs

Sudden flash of light  
Dark sky alone at midnight  
Takes a fancy flight

— Pratibha Kelapure



### 35mm View

Late that night at the airport  
she stood there all alone  
Staring out the window  
into the dark zone  
of the tarmac  
She was young with  
blonde waves skimming  
down her shoulders and her back

Even though her face  
was turned away from me  
I knew just by looking that  
without a doubt she had to have  
a story

I had my camera and knew  
I couldn't let the moment go  
I pointed it straight  
at the girl  
Still as a statue  
she stood

I could see the urgency in  
her form pressed like wood  
against the window

She didn't know I was there  
or that I stared at her through my  
camera lens

Writing her tale in my mind  
Waiting for noise  
to rise around me  
So the shutter's click wouldn't  
alert her to quickly move away

A large sack hung over  
her shoulder  
While her hand gripped the  
window frame  
Her heartbeat almost audible  
against the window pane



## June Terse on Verse

by Pat Bustamante



Pat Bustamante  
Contributing Editor

### June-Moon-No-Prune

A few months back the moon eclipsed.  
Red blush at midnight through gray haze slipped.  
Again the moon is full: again my wallet's not.  
Who cares. Those memories I love, I've got.  
I'll sing for my supper, mood now is upper,  
Just started new work: got a terrific plot!

— Pat Bustamante

Today belongs to you. Who is your boss, your real boss? You are! Because writers get paid (well, at least sometimes) for their art, you pick your working hours and choose which direction your ambition should head off in.

June is a busy month for many people: weddings, graduations, Fathers Day, vacation planning and a multitude of other tasks. But you will write. Maybe, three a.m.? Or in a car waiting for the green light? (But please, DO NOT text while driving ...)

Your creation starts in your head and can be inspired by almost anything big or small. Your subjects wear a multitude of masks, comic or tragic or informative to some degree. Since every one of our brains can introduce fact or fiction in some special way, we are teaching, or are a sort of tourist-guide showing off those wonders of our unique brain's landscape.

Busy, busy, yes. But don't forget to put your thoughts on paper or store them in the computer's cloud. Your brain, like the fabled crystal ball, can produce future, past, or a unique view of the present.

Write something today! Don't put it off. Put some words to the "tune of June." — WT

Finally, a crowd filtered through,  
granting my wish for commotion  
I took her picture as the ocean  
of people dispersed

Quickly tripping the shutter many times  
to capture whatever I thought I  
might find inside her mind

She never moved in spite of  
all the travelers shuffling past her  
Never turned around so  
I could see her face

I took other photos that night  
and later returned to that  
same place

The window looking out to  
the darkness of  
the tarmac

By then she had gone  
and I knew she wouldn't  
be back

I packed my camera and  
closing the carrying case  
Walked away still wondering  
who she was and why  
she'd stood so long in that place

When I finally left the airport  
she remained inside my mind

And still today I  
wish I knew the story of  
the girl I saw that night  
through my 35mm view

— Karen Hartley

*South Bay Writers*  
**May Writers Workshop**

**May 31, 2014, Saturday**

*Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose*

8:30 am (registration) to 4:00 pm (close)  
Continental Breakfast & Lunch



**Author Charlotte Cook**

**8 Ways to Make All That Craft Work For You**  
*A (Former) Publisher Finds the Magic In Your Writing*



*Charlotte Cook*

Early Bird Price (by 5.17)		Sleepy Bird Price (after 5.17)		Walk-Ins At Door	
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## Spend the Day With Charlotte Cook

*by Dave LaRoche*

Throughout this year and before, we have studied craft. We've heard, and used, techniques and maxims that better draw out character, develop scenes, add tension and conflict, deal with point of view, grammar, and more. We've filled our toolbox and now we need to build. We need to tell a story.

We want our story to begin strong and compel a continuing read; to take our reader into a world of interest and leave them a lasting memory—a truth, an entertainment, a different perspective. And, as writers, we want to win. We want recognition, and we want to know we've done our best on the page.



*"Structure is like gravity . . ." — Charlotte Cook*  
*— Photo by Carolyn Donnell*

With Charlotte Cook, we will master the art of story—how to weave the elements of craft into a demanding experience for readers. She tells us her mantra is "Compelling Story, Engaging Characters, Evocative World."

We will study arc and how to structure it, scenes dedicated to moving plot, consistent if unexpected epiphany, and that satisfying climax. These essential rudiments of story not only hold our readers under the lamp but are fun and exciting to write.

This workshop is a culminating event, the natural end to our year of craft with a teacher/editor/writer of renown. We've seen her credentials: MFA Creative Writing from Saint Mary's College; BA English Literature from UC Berkeley; further studies with Pam Houston, Lynn Freed, Jervey Tervalon, and Christopher Tilghman; Owner/Acquisition Editor, Komenar Publishing; and a lifetime of teaching and coaching. We've met Charlotte before with her presentation on structure. She's back by popular demand.

So mark your calendar and sign up. Join me and our peers on May 31st for this exciting and fruitful day. Invest in your writing career. —WT

**It isn't too late.  
Sign up online  
or at the door.**

# Contests/Markets: Some Website Listings

by Carolyn Donnell



Carolyn Donnell  
Contributing Editor

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](http://pw.org/grants)

*Fan Story:* [fanstory.com/index1contest.jsp](http://fanstory.com/index1contest.jsp)

*Writer Advice:* [writeradvice.com/markets.html](http://writeradvice.com/markets.html)

*Funds For Writers:* [fundsforwriters.com/contests/](http://fundsforwriters.com/contests/)

*Writer Magazine:* [writermag.com/writing-resources/](http://writermag.com/writing-resources/)

*Writer's Digest:* [writersdigest.com/competitions/writing-competitions](http://writersdigest.com/competitions/writing-competitions)

*Winning Writers:* [winningwriters.com/the-best-free-literary-contests](http://winningwriters.com/the-best-free-literary-contests)

If you receive in your email an opportunity to enter a contest, by all means, check it out on its website. Find out if it is a true contest, or a publisher's promotion, or — sad to say — a scam. The sites in the list above give vetted competitions.

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

## Mendocino Coast Writers Conference July 31-August 2, 2014

**WRITERS WANTED: Novelists, Poets, Memoirists, and Storytellers FOR Intensive WRITING WORKSHOP** led by the finest teachers: Scott Hutchins, Elizabeth Rosner, Malin Alegria, Sharon Doubiago, Charlotte Gullick, Natalie Serber, Pooja Menon, Sal Glynn, Charlotte Robyn Cook, Kevin Fisher-Paulson, Emily Lloyd-Jones, James Maxwell, Penny Sansevieri.

Location: College of the Redwoods, 1211 Del Mar Drive, Fort Bragg. Contact number: 707-485-4031

Conference price \$575 includes catered breakfast and lunch each day and two dinners served with amazing local wines. Discount for early sign-up. Full details on website [www.mcwc.org](http://www.mcwc.org) — WT

## Summer 2014 Oregon Coast Children's Book Writers Workshop [www.occbwww.com](http://www.occbwww.com)

This July 14 – 18, we will proudly present the twelfth Oregon Coast Children's Book Writers Workshop in the exquisite Oregon coast town of Oceanside. Our course schedule is posted on our website. The course is not only lectures, but also lots and lots of one-on-one coaching with instructors, everyday, and it's available for graduate level credit. — WT

## San Mateo County Fair Literary Stage Schedule Packed with Events

The Literary Stage Schedule for the 2014 San Mateo County Fair is packed with informative workshops, creative interactions, stimulating panel discussions, and rocking music at night — spearheaded by CWC/SF-Peninsula member **Bardi Rosman Koodrin**.

As an example of scheduled events, CWC member **Elise Miller** will moderate a panel on Women Writers Celebrate the 1960s on June 11 at 7 p.m. Join us as we celebrate with the authors of the anthology, *Times They Were A-Changing: Women Remember the '60s and '70s*. Seven authors will speak, read from recent work, and answer questions. The program includes '60s music by **Rita Beach** from Max's Opera Café.

Many workshops and lectures on writing are free with fair admission.

Several members of South Bay Writers, including **Bill Baldwin**, **Carolyn Donnell**, **Marjorie Johnson**, **Karen Hartley**, and **Jamie Miller** have entered this year's writing competitions and will appear in to the Fair's anthology, *Carry the Light*.

Be sure to check out the full week's schedule — June 7 through 14 — on the fair website <https://sanmateocountyfair.com/contests/departments/literary-arts>. And mark your calendars: check their website in March, 2015. The San Mateo County Fair offers writing competitions every year with submissions' deadline April 1. — 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

## Fault Zone: Call for entries

*Fault Zone: Diverge*, the fifth in the anthology series edited by the SF/Peninsula Branch of California Writers Club, will be published by Sand Hill Review Press in 2014. Nonmembers of SF/Peninsula can participate by entering the **Fault Zone short story contest. First Prize, \$250; Deadline: August 1, 2014.** Guidelines and submissions appear on [www.cwc-peninsula.org](http://www.cwc-peninsula.org). Click on Fault Zone, non-members. — WT

## 2014 Senior Poet Laureate

Contest open to all American poets age 50 and older. See article in the April *WritersTalk*, available on [southbaywriters.com](http://southbaywriters.com), and rules at [amykitchenerfdn.org](http://amykitchenerfdn.org). Deadline June 30, 2014. — WT

## Stoneslide Short Story Contest

Short stories up to 10,000 words. First prize, \$3,000. Deadline June 21, 2014. Go to [Stoneslidecorrective.com](http://Stoneslidecorrective.com) — 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](mailto:newsletter@southbaywriters.com) and we will add your listing to our directory of experts.*

### **Astronomy, History of Astronomy**

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

### **Banking**

Pam Oliver-Lyons [polpap@prodigy.net](mailto:polpap@prodigy.net)

### **Curriculum Development**

June Chen [junech@gmail.com](mailto:junech@gmail.com)

### **Counseling/John Steinbeck**

Dr. Audry L. Lynch

[glynch0001@comcast.net](mailto:glynch0001@comcast.net)

### **Engineering: Mechanical, Aerospace**

Jerry Mulenburg

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

### **Growing Great Characters from the Ground Up**

Martha Engber [martha@engber.com](mailto:martha@engber.com)

### **Internal Medicine/Addiction**

#### **Disorder/Psychology**

Dave Breithaupt [dlbm1b@comcast.net](mailto:dlbm1b@comcast.net)

### **Marketing and Management**

Suzy Paluzzi, MBA [jomarch06@yahoo.com](mailto:jomarch06@yahoo.com)

### **Mathematics/Fibonacci Sequence**

Marjorie Johnson [marjohnson@mac.com](mailto:marjohnson@mac.com)

### **Private Investigator/Police work/Crime**

M. J. Hahn

[mirror3314@mypacks.net](mailto:mirror3314@mypacks.net)

### **Teaching and the Arts**

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

### **Telecommunications Technology**

Allan Cobb

[allancobb@computer.org](mailto:allancobb@computer.org)

### **Television Production**

Woody Horn

408-266-7040

## Poetry Center San José

### June 2014 Events

#### **Well-RED Reading Series**

Wednesday, June 11, 7:00 pm

Works/San José

365 South Market Street, San José

#### **Poetry Readings,**

##### **Willow Glen Library**

Open mic to follow

Thursday, June 19, 2014, 7:00 pm

Willow Glen Library

1157 Minnesota Avenue, San José

#### **Poets at Play**

Second Sunday, 1:00 to 4:00 pm

Edwin Markham House in History Park

1650 Senter Road, San José

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

**Central Coast:** 5:30 third Tuesdays, Point Pinos Grill, 77 Asilomar Boulevard, Pacific Grove. [centralcoastwriters.org](http://centralcoastwriters.org)

**Fremont Area:** 2:00 fourth Saturdays at DeVry University, 6600 Dumbarton Circle, Room 204, Fremont. [cwc-fremontareawriters.org](http://cwc-fremontareawriters.org)

**Marin:** 2:00 fourth Sundays, Book Passage in Corte Madera. [cwcmarinwriters.com](http://cwcmarinwriters.com)

**Mendocino Coast:** 6:00 third Wednesdays, Mendocino Hotel. [writersmendocinocoast.org](http://writersmendocinocoast.org)

**Mount Diablo:** 11:30 second Saturdays, Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. [mtdiablowriters.org](http://mtdiablowriters.org)

**Napa Valley:** 6:30 second Wednesdays, Napa River Inn. [napavalleywriters.net](http://napavalleywriters.net)

**Redwood:** 2:30 first Sundays, Flamingo Conference Resort & Spa, 2777 Fourth Street, Santa Rosa. [redwoodwriters.org](http://redwoodwriters.org)

**Sacramento:** 11:00 third Saturdays, Cattlemen's Restaurant, 12409 Folsom Blvd., Rancho Cordova. [cwcsacramentowriters.org](http://cwcsacramentowriters.org)

**San Francisco/Peninsula:** 10:00 third Saturdays, Belmont Library, 1110 Alameda De Las Pulgas, Belmont. [sfpeninsulawriters.com](http://sfpeninsulawriters.com)

**Tri-Valley:** 11:30 third Saturdays, Four Points by Sheraton, 5115 Hopyard, Pleasanton. [trivalleywriters.com](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:polpap@prodigy.net)

### **Karen's Critique Group**

On sabbatical. Fiction, non-fiction or memoir only. Contact Karen, [Sew1Machin@aol.com](mailto:Sew1Machin@aol.com)

### **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](mailto:patatat@hotmail.com)

### **Your Critique Group**

For consideration, send information to [newsletter@southbaywriters.com](mailto:newsletter@southbaywriters.com)

## South Bay Branch Announcements

### **Writing Group: A Chapter at a Time**

Mondays, 9 a.m. to noon, Barnes&Noble Almaden. Contact Nader Khaghani, [workshops@southbaywriters.com](mailto:workshops@southbaywriters.com)

**Open Position: Networking Chair, committee members.** Network with social media. 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](mailto:WABaldwin@aol.com)

**Need a critique group? An article on finding or founding critique groups appeared on page 9 in May *WritersTalk*, available online at [southbaywriters.com](http://southbaywriters.com). Contact Dave LaRoche at [vp@southbaywriters.com](mailto:vp@southbaywriters.com) or at [dalaroche@comcast.net](mailto:dalaroche@comcast.net)**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1  11A Our Voices	2  9A Chapter at a Time 1:30P Mystery Circle 2P Valley Writers	3	4  7:30P SBW Board Meeting	5	6	7
8	9  9A Chapter at a Time 2P Valley Writers 6:00P SBW Dinner, Harry's Hofbrau	10	11	12  Noon: Riders Do Right	13  7:30P Open mic B&N Almaden, San Jose	14
15  D e a d l i n e WritersTalk 11A Our Voices	16  9A Chapter at a Time 2P Valley Writers	17	18	19	20	21
22	23  9A Chapter at a Time 2P Valley Writers	24	25	26	17  7:30P Open mic Wil- low Glen Library, 1157 Minnesota Ave	28
29  11A Our Voices	30  9A Chapter at a Time 2P Valley Writers	June 2014				
Future Flashes						
June 4  SBW Board	July 6  SBW Picnic-BBQ	July 19  Statewide CWC picnic				

#### Tutor needed:

Microsoft Publisher '96 and up. Pay negotiable. Contact Pol 408-693-9250.

**Editor needed:** Local area monthly newsletter editor needed. Must be expert at MS Publisher. \$ Nego. Call Steve at 408-693-9070.

#### Your ad could go here

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

#### 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.

#### 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 Karen Phan at phan\_karen@yahoo.com or go to poetrycentersanjos.org/calendar

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

## MAIL TO

Address Correction Requested

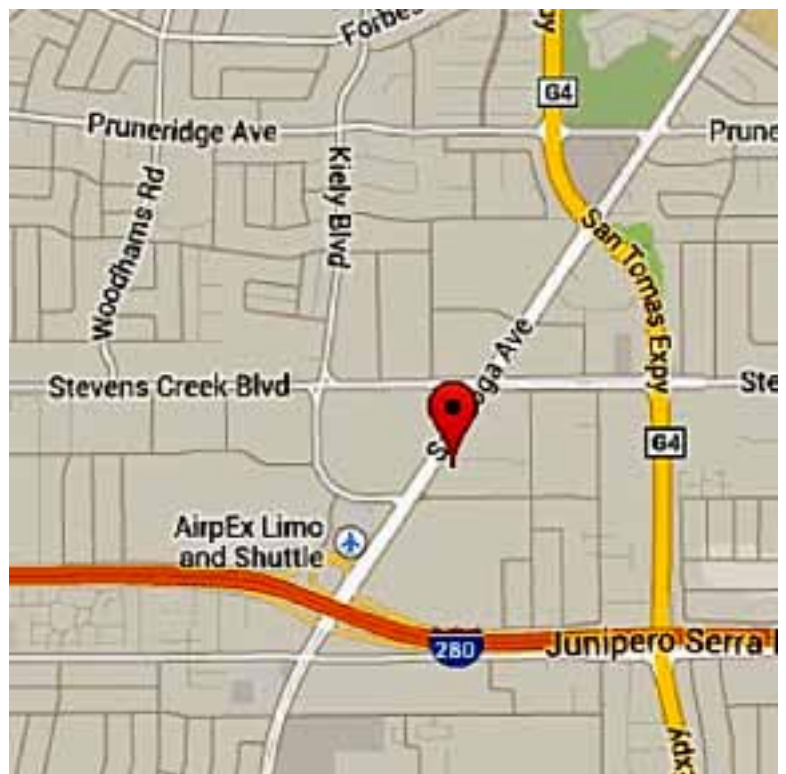
**South Bay Writers  
May Regular Membership Meeting  
6 p.m. Monday, June 9**

Harry's Hofbrau  
390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose

**Nina Amir  
Prep yourself  
and your book idea  
for success**

*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.