



WRITERSTALK

Volume 25
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November 2017

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

NOVEMBER WORKSHOP SPEAKER JORDAN ROSENFELD

RECAP OCT. SPEAKER: LAURIE ANN DOYLE

Page-Turning Tension Workshop with Jordan E. Rosenfeld

by Jamal Khan

We all have had that unforgettable experience: buried in a riveting read, turning one page after another, immersed in the world of the story, oblivious to the hours flying by. Such fleeting moments are undoubtedly among the happiest of our lives. How can we make that magic happen in our own writing?



Jordan Rosenfeld

In our upcoming workshop, Jordan E. Rosenfeld will teach you the techniques used by bestselling authors to make their books impossible to put down. Infuse your scenes, characters, and plot with tension, which combines high stakes with a gradual unspooling of revelation until resolution. Reveal too much initially, and the story slackens. Reveal too little, and the reader wonders what it is all for. But strike the right balance, and your readers will be on the edge of their seats, hungrily turning the pages. Just as a gifted comedian brings an audience to thunderous laughter with deft use of timing down to the millisecond, the talented writer structures her work in a way that the reader finds engrossing and rewarding. Learn more about techniques to accomplish this in our can't-miss workshop.

Jordan is the author of the suspense novels *Women in Red*, *Forged in Grace*, and *Night Oracle*, as well as several writing guides including *Writing the Intimate Character*, *Writing Deep Scenes: Plotting Your Story Through Action, Emotion & Theme*, and *A Writer's Guide to Persistence: How to Create a Lasting & Productive Writing Practice*. Her articles, essays, and short fiction have appeared or are forthcoming in such publications as *The Atlantic*, *The Daily Beast*, *Mental Floss*, *The New York Times*, *Publisher's Weekly*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *Scientific American*, *VICE*, *The Washington Post*, and *Writer's Digest*. She is an enormously popular instructor and has been invited to speak at many conferences.

Register today to lock in a special discounted rate that is less than half the price charged at other venues.

When: Saturday, November 4, 9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Location: Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose, CA

Register online at www.southbaywriters.com or send check to CWC South Bay Writers, PO Box 3254, Santa Clara, CA 95055. For fees, see flyer on page 5. At the door, \$65 member, \$69 nonmember.

**Special Notice: NO dinner meeting on November 13.
Instead, please come to the workshop on November 4.**

Techniques to Master Storytelling

by Chess Desalls

Laurie Ann Doyle is no stranger to speaking about creative writing. She's the instructor of a ten-week course at UC Berkeley, titled "Learning from the Masters," and she practices what she teaches. Soon after the October meeting and costume competition, Doyle presented her storytelling techniques.

Doyle focused her presentation on overcoming writing challenges, such as finding inspiration to write and drafting with imagery. The first step? Consult the masters. "Your writing can only be as good as the best books you've read," she said, quoting Pulitzer Prize winner, Paul Harding. With that in mind, Doyle invited SBW members to compare and contrast passages written by Ernest Hemingway and Gabriel Garcia Márquez.

Reading work by the masters not only sparks inspiration, their writing styles provide examples of different applications of imagery. Doyle defined imagery in terms of sensory, significant details (SSD). "Imagery is one of the most important tools of a writer," she said.

SSD engages the reader physiologically; Sensory includes all five senses. Doyle challenged the group to go beyond the visual by incorporating smell, texture, taste, and sound. Significant details are those that describe the place, setting, characters, and point to underlying meaning. Imagery can de-familiarize—make the strange seem familiar, so that the reader sees the world in a new way. But it needs to be specific enough. "The power lies in the specific," Doyle said. "It gives your perception of the world."

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Between the Lines

Edie Matthews

President, South Bay Writers



Revision

Congratulations! You've finished a novel. Now you're eager to get it published and have it zoom onto the bestseller's list. But hold off. Your job is not completed yet. Now it's time for the next critical step: revision.

Successful writers don't skip this essential process. In fact, Neil Simon, legendary playwright of Broadway hits like *The Odd Couple*, *Biloxi Blues*, and *Goodbye Girl*, named his autobiography *Rewrite*. Why? Because rewriting is what prize-winning artists do. They go back and polish the prose, the plot, and the protagonist.

Let's look at some examples. Margaret Mitchell, the author of *Gone with the Wind*, worked on her book for ten years. A former journalist, Mitchell began writing interrelated stories when she was bedridden with an ankle ailment. However, her endeavor resulted in an iconic bestseller that won the Pulitzer Prize. Despite the Depression, in the first two years, it sold over a million copies.

Fortunately, most of us are not attempting a 1,037-page epic. Yet, the task of rewriting may feel overwhelming, particularly if you've written it over a course of a few years. You may be asking yourself, "Where do I start? How should I begin?"

Here are a few guidelines you may find helpful.

First, reread your book and write an outline. Do your chapters and scenes logically transition from one to the other? Have you noticed redundancies that need to be eliminated? Would it improve your story to rearrange the chapters? How about the pacing? Consider Elmore Leonard's advice: "Leave out the boring parts."

What about your plot? Is it compelling? Does the suspense/story build? Have you raised the stakes? Will your readers want to stay up all night to find out what happens? (To improve your craft, come to next month's Page-Turning Technique Workshop on November 4 and learn the secrets.) Once you've achieved continuity, tension, and pacing, it's time to consider your characters.

Are your characters well-developed? What about the character's motivation and personality? Do they have distinctive traits? Is their behavior consistent? Do you like the names? (Originally, Scarlett O'Hara was called Pansy.) Did you change names and the old ones still crop up? Does your character have an epiphany or remain the same? (Often, characters who don't change die in the end, i.e. Gatsby, King Lear, Captain Ahab.)

Don't overlook dialogue. Does it reveal your characters? Or are they all speaking alike? Does it progress the plot? Is it conversational? Don't hesitate to use fragments since that's how people actually speak. Summarize the obvious—like introductions and greetings, even if it requires the same amount of words. Don't bore your reader with:

"Hello," said Bill
"Hello," said Mary
"How are you?"
"Fine."
"How are you?"
"I'm okay."

A better choice: After greeting each other, Bill asked Mary, "Will you help me?"

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SBW Mission

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

Join Us

We have a membership category that fits you. Renewal dues are \$45 for membership through June 30, 2018. Dual membership, \$25; student membership, \$20. New member, \$65. Contact Membership Chair at a meeting or sign up online at southbaywriters.com or send a check to CWC-South Bay Writers, P O Box 3254, Santa Clara, CA 95055.

WritersTalk

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Deadline

Submissions are due by the 15th of the month.

Submissions

SBW encourages writers at all levels of expertise to submit their creative works for publication in *WritersTalk*. All submissions should be sent to the above email address in the form of text or an attached MS Word file (sorry, no hard copy submissions can be accepted). Please prepare your work as carefully as you would for an agent. Use Times New Roman 12-font; no tabs; no colors; no page breaks. Send graphics separately as jpg files, with separate instructions for placement in the submission if placement is important.

All submissions will be copyedited. Titles and headlines subject to change. Managing Editor reserves the right to selection.

Suggested word limits (less is more):

Member Achievement / News (200 words)

News Items (400 words)

In My Opinion (300 words)

Letters to the Editor (300 words)

Creative Works

Short Fiction/Memoir (1800 words)

Poetry (200 words)

Essay/Nonfiction (1000 words)

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Announcements

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

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Marjorie Bicknell Johnson

Managing Editor



Tock-tick—Are you daft?

Why do we say tick-tock, not tock-tick? Tock-tick sounds “all wrong,” but, is it?

The *Chicago Manual of Style*, the ultimate resource for English grammar used by the editors of *WritersTalk*, has nothing to say on the matter.

All four of a horse's hooves make exactly the same sound. But we always, always say clip-clop, never clop-clip. The grandfather clock in the hall counts out the seconds, tick-tock, never tock-tick.

If someone said “zag-zig” or “cross-criss,” you would know that they were breaking a sacred rule of language for the same reason that you have never listened to hop-hip music. You are utterly familiar with the rule of *ablaut reduplication*. You have been using it all of your life. It's just that you have never heard of it.

Reduplication in linguistics is when you repeat a word, sometimes with an altered consonant: lovey-dovey, fuddy-duddy, or nitty-gritty, and sometimes with an altered vowel: bish-bash-bosh, ding-dang-dong. If there are three words, then the vowels must have the order I, A, O. If there are two words, then the first vowel is I and the second is either A or O. Mish-mash, chit-chat, dilly-dally, flip-flop, or ping pong.

Why this should be is a subject of endless debate among linguists. It might have to do with the movement of your tongue or jaw, or an ancient language of the Caucasus. It doesn't matter. It's the law. You knew it even though you didn't know you knew it.

We native English speakers use other rules which no one ever taught us in our English classes. Mark Forsyth, in his book, *The Elements of Eloquence*, gives the rule for the order of adjectives in a paragraph that went viral on the Internet:

“Adjectives in English absolutely have to be in this order: opinion-size-age-shape-color-origin-material-purpose Noun. So you can have a lovely little old rectangular green French silver whittling knife. But if you mess with that word order in the slightest, you'll sound like a maniac. It's an odd thing that every English speaker uses that list, but almost none of us could write it out.”

As an English speaker, I love to learn this sort of thing. I was astonished that there are rules I didn't know that I knew. I like knowing that while there may be little green men on Mars, there certainly aren't green little men. You can spend the next hour trying to think of exceptions, which is useful because it will keep you from doing something foolish like working.

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The Winners: October 9 Costume Contest



Clare Mullin, prettiest; Karen Franzenburg, aka Elizabeth Barrett Browning, most literary; Luanne Olease, aka Princess and the Pea, most original; David Strom, aka Green Lantern, most original 2; and Pat Bustamante, aka Ghost Writer, scariest.

— Photo by Carolyn Donnell

Tock-Tick — Are you Daft?

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No wonder that non-native English speakers have such a hard time mastering our peculiar language. As an editor, I have found that learners of English as a second language have an additional stumbling block: when to use, or not use, the definite article “the.” This topic isn’t covered fully in the *Chicago Manual of Style*. I will take a stab at it in “When Not to Use the *the*.”

Better yet: *WritersTalk* would like to publish your peculiar short new columnar black-ink English-grammar edifying articles. — WT

When Not to Use the *the*

by Marjorie Johnson

What do you say to someone who makes written or spoken mistakes when using the word *the*? Problems arise because some languages have no articles at all, while others use an article with every noun. In contrast, English uses *the* sometimes. Native English speakers use *the* when it “feels right.”

Skipping the article *the* entirely can make a choppy-sounding sentence. She is winner of Juniper National Fiction Award. Midday, sky darkened to twilight, and brightest stars appeared. But throwing in *the* extra times doesn’t work, either: the dogs are the great pets, or, I live in the San Jose. Using the definite article *the* when not needed “sounds wrong” to the English-speaking reader, but finding rules on when to use *the* isn’t easy.

Five situations or places where you don’t need an article:

1. Things in general. You don’t need an article when you talk about things in general. Plural count nouns don’t need *the*. Cats are great pets. I love reading books. Women love it when men send them flowers.

2. Non-count nouns. Non-count nouns (or uncountable nouns) are nouns that do not have a plural form, such as music. You can’t say, one music, two musics, or

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View from the Board

Karen Sundback is on vacation. We are working on improving communications by making new email lists. If you have problems with any part of our website, please contact a board member.

Member News

On November 4, **Cal Stevens** will conduct a book signing for his two books, *On the Other Side of Brokeback Mountain* and *The Swan of Tuonela*, in Ridgecrest, California at the Naval Weapons Center, China Lake.

Louise Webb teaches a memoir class at the Saratoga Senior Center every first and third Friday of the month, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. She has taught the class for fifteen years, and they have published a book. New memoirists welcome. Contact: louisewebb2@comcast.net

Please tell us about your writing successes. Send an email to newsletter@southbaywriters.com — WT

New Members

by Sally A. Milnor



Sally Milnor

I am pleased to introduce our newest member, Rebecca Yoder.

Rebecca Yoder joined us online, and we were happy to meet her personally at our October general meeting and Halloween

Party. Rebecca writes both Fiction and Non-Fiction. On her membership questionnaire, she said her writing is fueled by curiosity. Rebecca said she was prompted to join our Club because she is seeking knowledge about writing. She is looking for a critique group, and she would like to network. Rebecca’s email address is yoderbd@gmail.com.

We wish you a warm welcome, Rebecca, and hope your membership brings you inspiration and enjoyment.

To all of our South Bay Writers: Thank you for renewing your memberships. We appreciate and need your continuing presence and support. Thank you, again, for helping to keep our Club flourishing. — WT

PAGE-TURNING TENSION WORKSHOP

With Jordan E. Rosenfeld

Saturday, November 4th, 9 am – 2:30 pm



Create fiction impossible to put down. Infuse your scenes, characters, and plot with tension, binding it all together and enticing your readers. Learn the techniques used by best-selling authors.

- 10/10-11/3: CWC Member \$59, Nonmember, \$67
- Student (18 – 25 with ID): \$29
- At the door: \$65 Member, \$69 Nonmember (if seats available)
- Includes continental breakfast & lunch (\$12 credit)

Location: Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose

REGISTRATION

Name _____ Member ☐ Nonmember ☐
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PO Box 3254, Santa Clara, CA 95055**

South Bay Writers Halloween Party October 9, 2017





South Bay Writers Halloween Party October 2017



Techniques to Master Storytelling

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SBW members practiced these techniques during a freewriting exercise in which they wrote about their own experiences. Maybe some of the stories started will be published in a future issue of *WritersTalk*. Vibrant stories, filled with specific details—words that evoke imagery and capture the heart. Wouldn't that be a significant way to show appreciation for the October speaker?

To get in touch with Laurie Ann Doyle and learn more about her writing, visit her website, laurieanndoyle.com. —WT

Significant Smells

by Marjorie Johnson

In choosing significant sensory details, enrich your writing by going beyond the visual. You must not ignore smell, a human being's most primitive sense. A smell can be a scent, a fragrance, an odor, or a stink, but for effective use, you need a concrete reference, such as the reek of death, the stink of an outhouse, or the rich smell of brewing coffee.

In your writing, you needn't limit smell to sensual detail. An odor may evoke a visual memory or warn of danger or lead into a flashback. Smell can be a plot element; for some people, a whiff of perfume can trigger an asthma attack while the suffocating cloy of cheap cologne can cause olfactory fatigue or even a heart attack. In fact, smell can become the theme of a novel.

The best example of smell used to write a novel is Patrick Süskind's *Perfume*, the incredible story of Grenouille, a man born completely without a bodily odor. Grenouille experiences the world through his astounding ability to detect various scents and store them in his mental filing cabinet. In eighteenth century France, his astute nose is a blessing because manufacturing perfume is a lucrative trade but also a curse because perfume is needed to mask noxious odors, hygiene being non-existent in many people's lives.

Not only can Grenouille identify everyday smells, he also can identify the scents that evoke moods of trust, adoration, and lust, and he can recall all of these at will. He catalogs the smell of a brass doorknob along with the caramel scent of a baby and the heavy, heady sensation of an exotic perfume. His life's work is to capture the fresh smell of innocent hope that he smelled once on a beautiful adolescent girl. This is the story of his quest.

Süskind's realistic depictions of the smells and aromas of eighteenth century France are so evocative that *Perfume* is not the kind of book to read while eating a sandwich. After reading *Perfume*, you'll never think about your nose in quite the same way again.

For more writing ideas involving the sense of smell, read "Scent & Sensibility: The Nose Knows More Than You Think" by Marta Zaraska in November 2017 *Discover* magazine. Zaraska argues, "Among our five senses, smell receives the least respect. Yet it impacts our relationships and could even save our lives." —WT

Revision

Continued from Page 2

Next, it's time to improve the prose and eliminate words like "very" and "really." This is also where the author's voice comes in. Consider the difference between Hemingway and Fitzgerald. They were from the same era, but clearly each had his own style. Hemingway liked concise prose, while Fitzgerald created lyrical prose. Which do you prefer? Or perhaps, you're somewhere in the middle. Add a few literary devices: metaphors, similes, personification, hyperbole, synecdoche, alliterations, or parallelisms.

What about descriptions? Do you have too much or too little? Don't just rely on sight either; add other sensory details like smells, sounds, touch, and taste.

Finally, try reading your story aloud. If a sentence makes you stumble, go back and rewrite it. As Shakespeare said, the words should come "trippingly on tongue." Also, did you notice too many sentences are formulated the same way? Not surprising, since we all have our go-to-sentence structure. But it can be monotonous. Yada yada yada, yada yada yada. No problem. Go back. Vary the length, the type, and the structure. Keep in mind, short sentences can have impact too; i.e. "My father drank."

Mystery writer Jeffrey Deavers told me that he is embarrassed by his earlier books. Sad, since many first novels establish an author. Consider *The Joy Luck Club*, *The Kite Runner*, *White Oleander*, *Carrie*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *The Hobbit*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, *Catch 22*, *Doctor Zhivago*, and *Harry Potter*.

In the words of Benjamin Franklin, "Haste makes waste." So, don't be in a hurry. Don't cheat yourself of having a bestseller because you were too impatient to edit your book. Take your time and enjoy the journey. —WT

BOOK ANNOUNCEMENT SBW AUTHOR

The Untold Story of the Word

by Jack Hasling



Last month I successfully uploaded my recent work of satirical fiction as an eBook on Amazon Kindle. My book, *The Untold Story of the Word*, tells how God really created the world and what he really meant to say in the Ten Commandments.

Here is the untold story of publishing the book. I am certainly no computer geek, but I found that with a little help I was able to do it myself using Kindle Create. It cost me nothing. If, like me, you are a frustrated writer who loves to write but finds traditional publishing next to impossible and self-publishing

too expensive, this may be the answer. Go to Amazon, put in my name and the title, and you'll find my book. —WT

Comorbidity

by J. K. McDole

Three weeks after we met, while eating brunch at the Bluebird Diner down on University Road, Chelsea slumped against the table and emphatically declared that she was depressed.

"Depressed?" I asked.

"Yeah," she whined. "I know it, Letty, I can just feel it."

I poured cream into my coffee and waited for her to say something else, but she stared out the window. We were both unshowered, hastily bundled up in sweatpants and chunky scarves. Chelsea had the sleepy, idle lassitude of a figure in a Renoir painting, fitting for someone one semester short of finishing her BFA. White dog hair dusted the sleeves of her lavender hoodie; a frost of dry shampoo powdered the roots of her long blonde hair. She wore glasses and greasy chapstick. I could tell she hadn't brushed her teeth.

"I've got all the symptoms," she said. "Feelings of sadness, emptiness, hopelessness. Restlessness and reduced appetite. See, I haven't even touched my food."

I looked down at her omelette: a cheery disc of eggs and peppers that lay undisturbed beneath a blanket of cheese.

"And sleeping a lot," she continued. "I haven't even wanted to get out of bed."

"Yeah, I feel that."

"Not like this," said Chelsea, frowning. "This isn't the same as being tired, Letty. This is definitely something different. This is literally me being mentally ill."

I chewed the inside of my cheek. "So if it's serious, you saw a doc? Like, all those symptoms—the sleeping and the sadness. You went to the student health center, right?"

"No."

I peered hard at her. "Well, then, how do you know you're depressed?"

"Everything I just said is basically common knowledge," she drawled, her cheeks prickling with irritation. "You can look it up on the internet. Anyone will tell you." Chelsea scratched a yellowing zit on her chin. "One in five people suffer from depression in the United States,



"No holds, Bard."

mostly girls like us. It's comorbid with anxiety, which I probably have, too."

"Uh-huh." And then, squinting, "wait, 'girls like us?'"

"Yeah. You know."

She was right; I knew, exactly. But since we danced around it—and neither of us seemed ready to use those hard, specific words—I stayed quiet.

Chelsea pursed her lips. "Oh, and it affects Hispanic women in unclear proportions due to different cultural norms."

I stared at my coffee like I'd discovered a bug on the rim of the mug. "Uh, gotcha."

"I thought you might want to know."

"Yeah. Sure, thanks, Chels."

"I need to look at options," she sighed. "Holistic healing, self-care, coping. I have to *accept* my depression before I even consider exploring stuff like meds."

"Okay."

Still gazing out the window, Chelsea moped, "I get that you don't understand. To be honest, I didn't really expect you to."

As she said it, I was lifting my coffee to take a drink; my hand froze mid-air, fingers tight around the handle. "Um."

"Like, I get that it isn't important to you. You've got a really heteronormative brain."

My face flared hot. "That's not true, Chels. That's not true at all. I just don't think you should diagnose yourself using nothing but the internet, you know?"

Chelsea clicked her tongue—her favorite response for an unsolicited remark, usually the ones she heard from guys at the bar—and rolled her eyes.

But my face still burned, so I kept going. A knot clogged up in my throat as I rubbed the back of my wrist. "And 'heteronormative' isn't even the right word, Chels. That means when straight people basically run everything and everyone assumes everything's straight."

"Whatever."

"The word you're thinking of is 'neurotypical,' and even *that* isn't technically correct."

Chelsea dwindled in her seat. I watched her chase invisible thoughts across the table, hunting for the right one to snatch and fling back at me.

"Look," I said in my best meet-me-halfway tone. "If you feel depressed, I'm not gonna argue that. But what you're doing, reading WebMD or refreshing Tumblr all day, thinking you can diagnose yourself with a crippling illness ... it's kind of irresponsible, don't you think?"

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Comorbidity

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Her cheeks turned red; her hazel eyes were as watery as the coffee. The edge of her right eyelid twitched a miniscule warning: *don't go there.*

"I mean, it's kinda dangerous," I said. "It's about the same as a, as, uh" — my brain wheeled, searched, locked up as it tried to make a good comparison — "as, uh ... as..."

"Leticia," Chelsea interrupted. "You don't really give a shit about me."

Now we were both on fire, blushing and unquestionably mad. I never understood why we always came to instant shoot-outs, verbal bullets. "Of course I do."

"No, you don't."

"I just bought you brunch, Chelsea, of course I care."

"You *don't*."

My hand flapped above the table like a dark flag. "You're the only person here who knows, Chels, the only person I've told, the only one who —" but I still couldn't say the words. Instead, I flustered. "You're the only one who knows about me."

She glowered at her plate. "That doesn't mean you actually *care*."

Silence settled between us. We were too mad to look at each other, so we stared at her omelette. Chunks of green pepper stuck out of the fold like crooked teeth.

I couldn't take any more; something about the omelette made me give in. I slid my hand across the table and held it up to her so she could see the calluses, the nibbled nails. The old wrist scars peeking out from the sleeves like fat white stripes. My thumb cuticles bleeding raw.

She leaned back against the seat. My stomach started to tighten, a cold-pit sensation, like I was dropping. I waited for Chelsea to say something, but she just sniffed and looked at the scars.

"Do you think I'm depressed?" she asked, pure melancholy.

I listened to each word as if I was hearing myself speak from far away. "I don't know, Chels. I don't know. I seriously don't know what to tell you."

The silence spread back over us. Chelsea took my hand in her own, two pale birds folding across the brown slash of my palm. I watched her turn it over like a child rotating an antique, her thumb rubbing each knuckle, every wrinkled dip between. Reassuring my fingers one by one, as if to say, *it's all right. You and me, together, maybe we'll be okay.* —WT

MEMOIR

Turtle Liberation

by Penelope Anne Cole

Maybe you remember the plastic turtle "homes" from the pet store ages ago. I remember them. I don't know if each of us three kids, my brothers and I, had our own painted turtle or we just shared one. It was either a round or oval shaped clear plastic bowl-type home for pet-store turtles. It had a place for turtle food and water, a ramp to crawl down to a moat-like swimming circle. It even had a plastic palm tree for a bit of foliage. I doubt any of the many turtles back then were happy in their clear plastic bowl homes. I doubt they lived long and prospered.

Then some forty years later, our next door neighbor had a couple of turtle tanks full of small turtles. I liberated two of them for my daughter. Yes, I got two so they wouldn't be lonely. These two were hand-sized turtles, not the half dollar pet-store size. This time, I was determined to do a better job for our turtles than the plastic containers of years gone by. I got a nice, big tank for Skittles and Bittles — and, yes, my daughter named them!

I even got an attractive pedestal for the tank. Then filled the tank about one-third full of water and found several flat rocks to make a platform for the turtles to sun themselves in the reptile lamp light. I got the right kind of turtle food and they were all set up.

But the tank got pretty dirty real fast. So I cleaned it, which meant taking everything out. First the turtles, then the rocks, then I emptied the water and scrubbed and rinsed the tank. I re-filled it, replaced the rocks, and set up the lamp. Meanwhile, Skittles and Bittles were swimming around in the kitchen sink. They were okay there, but seemed crowded in the smaller space. I put the turtles back in their tank, but for the next week's clean-

ing, I decided to put them in the bathtub. They really liked it there — lots of room to swim around.

So each week after that Skittles and Bittles went into the tub, rocks and all, while I cleaned their poop tank. Then it dawned on me — they eat and then they poop. What a concept! What if I fed them in the tub while I'm cleaning their tank? Then they'd poop in the tub — which is much easier to clean than the tank. And maybe, just maybe, their tank would stay cleaner longer.

So I tried that and lo and behold, the tank did stay cleaner long. Yay! I didn't have to clean the tank quite as often, but it was still an additional chore that I had taken on at the request of my daughter. Yes, as a single mother, I wanted my daughter to have pets. But we already had two cats and two dogs. We really didn't need two turtles. They weren't soft and cuddly. They didn't stir me to go walking. They didn't do tricks or come on command. Yes, it was entertaining to watch them swimming around and basking on their rocks. I cared that they lived. Though, more and more, I came to believe that Skittles and Bittles were imprisoned in their tank — not their true habitat. And I was also enslaved as their caretaker. I felt guilty depriving them of a native life. And I felt guilty about those feelings, too. So I started to plot and plan for the end of our mutual enslavement.

I had noticed the middle school where I walked my dogs was enlarging their Nature Center to include a large pond. I had an "Aha" moment. Maybe their nature pond needed a couple of turtles? My daughter was still in elementary school and had gone on field trips to the nature center. We decided to ask the nature center director if we could re-home our turtles there. He said yes. He already had a couple of turtles, but he would take ours, too. I set up an appointment and went home. There's not

Continued on Page 14

California Towhees

When there was no one else around, they came
to play hooky in my garden.
They hopped the fence, first Bonnie then Clyde, and
Beneath the passion-vine, they gambled
a cut-throat game of pumpkin rinds.

I like the distraction of their little feet,
the blithe way they sneak into an unsuspecting yard.
The pergola is an accomplice; all the bean-poles are complicit.
They mumble *sotto voce*,
my two safe-crackers on the wing.

So unassuming, too, their colors:
two dun cloaks of ortolan brown.
The copper-coin shade of the feathers
wagging immodestly beneath their tails.

Look! the big one has something in his beak:
a flower petal, swindled off a rose.
Here on the pavement, he swaggers two-step
and leaves the evidence for me to find.

Nothing else of greater value was brought
No pecked nut, no noosed green vine
No sunflower head pickpocketed of its seeds

Only the floral-pink, an alibi left to be dissected
As if to say: *sorry, not sorry*
Don't tell them you saw us here.

– J. K. McDole

Enclowned

A Circle of Senryu
Unintended mirth
Everything is circus
White House acrobats

How entertaining
Never ending carnival
Cirque du Washington

Light hearted country
Japan calls this "Floating World"
All may turn out well

Comedy is free
What is life without vaudeville?
Jesters advise kings

Colorful parades
What innocent merriment
Bad hair always wins

No longer boring
DC swings each day and night
Who could not love it?

Crave abstract sculpture?
See Alexander Calder
statues in movement

Music never stops
House and Senate chamber tunes
Who needs instruments?

– Stephen C. Wetlesen

The Falling Dream

Standing on the cliff
Leaning over
Looking down
at

The jagged rocks
The roiling water
The dark depths
below

Down
Down
Down
to

Certain death

Poised for
Ripping
Sinking
Drowning

Lift me
Save me
Wake me
up. . .

– Penelope Anne Cole



P
o
e
t
r
y

Flowers Cascade

Flowers cascade down
Tumbling over rocky hills
English countryside

– Carolyn Donnell



Dream Song

Slumber sings
Time evaporates
Inhibitions disappear
Wrapped in a featherbed
Set me free
Play the dream song

– Karen Franzenburg

Friend

A friend is someone
who is there
when no one else has
time to spare
to listen to your thoughts
A friend is someone you think of
when certain words come up:
happiness, joy and a
special kind of love

A friend is someone with who,
no matter how old be
they or you
childhood days can be recalled

A friend is someone who
though as you grow and
find your own way,
still finds a place in
your thoughts each day
and will never
be forgotten

– Karen Hartley

Taking Charge

by Kevin Carroll

"The best day of your life is the one on which you decide your life is your own. No apologies or excuses. No one to lean on, rely on, or blame. The gift is yours – it's an amazing journey – and you alone are responsible for the quality of it. This is the day your life really begins."

~ Bob Moawad

Most of us, I would think, like to be in control of our lives. I know that I prefer being the driver of a car rather than a passenger. I like the idea of making my own decisions. I don't like to rely on GPS technology. Before heading out the door to an unfamiliar destination, I rely on Google Maps to give me the confidence that I know where I'm going and how to get there. Honestly, the thought of letting others control me is a bit unsettling, as it should be for any adult.

I'm well aware that this can be difficult for some people. For whatever reason, and I'm sure there are many, some individuals allow others to control them, even though they may resent them for doing so. This can sometimes lead to blaming other people, or past experiences, for who the person is today. Carl Jung challenged us all when he wrote, *"I am not what happened to me, I am what I choose to become."*

Dr. Seuss issued a similar challenge in his own poetic way: *"You're on your own. And you know what you know. And you are the one who'll decide where you go."*

It is easy for us to resent how others treat us. We want to be respected. We want to be appreciated for what we do. We want others to recognize the goodness, which exists in us. Despite these desires, however, it is not at all uncommon for someone to perceive, perhaps in error, that others lack respect for them, don't appreciate them, or fail to see the genuine goodness, which is so much a part of who they are. This can be incredibly disheartening.

We cannot change how people treat us. We cannot control what people say about us, nor the tone with which they speak to us. We can, however, change how we react to these things. This is where we can begin to take control of our lives – and when we do, incredible change happens. No longer do we look for others to blame. No longer are we seeking excuses for the way things are. No longer do we allow others to control our feelings and moods. We take full ownership of these things.

It is our responsibility to take charge of our lives, and it is our duty to maintain control of our moods and emotions, never allowing others to dictate these things for us. I recently saw this prayer, which, perhaps, might be an excellent way to begin each day:

"This is the beginning of a new day. God has given me this day to use as I will. I can waste it or use it for good. What I do today is important, because I am exchanging a day of my life for it. When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever, leaving in its place something that I have traded it for. I want it to be gain, not loss; good, not evil; success, not failure; in order that I shall not regret the price I paid for it."

~ Author Unknown

We all have the potential to control our own lives. It is our

When Not to use the *the*

Continued from Page 4

three musics; you don't use *the* with music. I love listening to music. She's afraid of heights.

3. **Names.** Names of holidays, countries, companies, universities, or languages are all proper nouns. You don't need to use an article with a proper noun.

- Holidays: I got my mom a necklace for Mother's Day. Everybody wears green on St. Patrick's Day.
- Countries: I live in Canada, but I am going to Europe on my vacation. Exceptions: the United States, the Czech Republic, and the Philippines, in which *the* is part of the name.
- Companies: Bill Gates founded Microsoft.
- Universities: Her son graduated from Harvard.
- Languages: I am studying Russian. In Brazil, people speak Portuguese.

4. **Places, locations, and streets.** Streets, some locations, and some places do not need an article. I left my book at home. He was found guilty of murder and sent to jail for life. My office is located on Main Street, but my office is located on the main street. I go to church on Sundays. He's staying at Hotel Auburn in room 221.

5. **Sports.** Sports and other physical activities do not need an article. I love to go skiing in the winter. I play football every day after school.

Places where you do need to use an article: Let's go to the movies. What time do you need to be at the airport? She doesn't like to go to the doctor or the dentist. She's afraid of heights, so we couldn't go to the top of the Eiffel Tower. Here, *the* is needed as the definite article.

Some places where using an article depends upon local usage: In Northern California, we drive up Interstate 5; in L. A., we take the 5. In Britain, we are in hospital; in California, we are in the hospital.

Writing rules for how to use *the* is devilishly difficult.

At South Bay Writers, we publish articles in *WritersTalk* and would like to discuss fine points of grammar. If you know other rules to help those who learned English elsewhere, please send us a write-up (no *the* needed). — WT



right to do so, as long as, in doing so, we don't infringe upon the rights of others. Assuming responsibility for ourselves can be terrifying at times. It can also be extraordinarily liberating. It is helpful for all of us to remember that some of the best days of our lives have not happened yet. There is so much for which to be grateful.

"The bad news is ... time flies. The good news is ... you're the pilot!"

~ Michael Altshuler

— WT

Contests and Markets

by Carolyn Donnell



Are you looking for contests or other places to submit your work? Here you go!

- **Writers' Digest: Poetry Awards.** Deadline: 11/6/17. This one's coming up soon! The only *Writer's Digest* competition exclusively for poets. Enter any poem 32 lines or fewer for your chance to win \$1,000 in cash. Go to www.WritersDigest.com.
- **Writers' Digest: Short Short Story Competition.** Early Bird deadline: 11/15/17, save \$5. Regular Deadline 12/15/17. It's your chance to win \$3,000 in cash, get published in *Writer's Digest* magazine, and a paid trip to the ever-popular *Writer's Digest* Conference! URL above.
- **Nimrod International Journal.** Call for submissions for Spring/Summer 2018 issue, deadline: 11/5/17. For complete guidelines and to submit online go to <https://nimrodjournal.submittable.com/submit>.
- **Children's & Young Adult Book Awards.** Early deadline 01/01/18; final deadline 04/15/18. Must be published no more than three years prior to the deadline for Literary Classics International Book Awards, two years prior to deadline for Top Honors Awards and Young Author Awards. http://www.clcawards.org/CLC_Award_Guidelines.html
- **Tom Howard/John H. Reid Fiction & Essay Contest.** Accepts published and unpublished work, fiction and nonfiction. Submit: Oct. 15 – Apr. 30. Total prizes \$5,000. <https://winningwriters.com/our-contests/tom-howard-john-h-reid-fiction-essay-contest>
You can signup for their free literary contests listings at <https://winningwriters.com/the-best-free-literary-contests>
- **The Tishman Review's 2018 Edna St. Vincent Millay Poetry Prize.** Submissions Oct. 1 – Nov.15. No previously published works, or works accepted for publication elsewhere. See website for more info. www.thetishmanreview.com/contests/submit-your-work/
- **Entropy.** Looking for a small press to submit your poetry collection or manuscript? Check out Entropy, who has been interviewing small presses and adding them to their Small Press Database. Also find press details, links to websites, and submission guidelines. <https://entropymag.org/category/where-to-submit/>
Check out <https://entropymag.org/category/small-press/?tag=poetry>
- **Into the Black.** They say they are "A Short Fiction Contest With a Big Prize." They are launching a short story contest that uses speculative fiction as a tool to imagine a future of economic security and reward the winner with financial stability. See all details at <https://medium.com/economicsecproj/into-the-black-a-short-fiction-contest-with-a-big-prize-f91cd6553967>

Sites that list contests:

Freedom With Writing.

<https://www.freedomwithwriting.com/freedom/uncategorized/19-free-writing-contests-with-cash-prizes-up-to-10000/>

Writers Post Call For Submissions.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/58414389316/?fref=nf>

Poets & Writers. www.pw.org/grants

The Writer Magazine.

<https://www.writermag.com/writing-resources/contests/>

Let us know if you find interesting contests, publishing opportunities, or marketing venues. Be sure to share your successes with us in Member News. — WT

NaNoWriMo is here!

November is National Novel Writing Month. The challenge: Write 50,000 words in the month of November. It's great fun, and who knows? You may actually have a novel by the end of the month, or at the very least, a manuscript that needs editing. You should try it, at least once.

Read all about it at <https://nanowrimo.org>

North State Writers Anthology

CWC North State Writers is accepting poetry, memoir, and short story submissions (published or unpublished) for its 2018 Anthology. This is an opportunity for unpublished writers to be published and published writers to add to their resume. Entrants must be a member of the North State Writers or one of the CWC NorCal Branches (SBW qualifies).

Deadline December 31. Stories 750 – 5000 words, poetry 30 lines or fewer; maximum three submissions. Entry fee \$15 for each submission. See <http://www.northstatewriters.com/nsw-anthology.html> for details of what, where, and how to submit your entry and payment. — WT

DeAnza Class on editing *Red Wheelbarrow*

From Lita Kurth: Starting in January 2018, there will be a class in editing the De Anza campus literary magazine, *Red Wheelbarrow*. The course is EWRT 65, meeting 4:00 – 5:30 Monday afternoons. The online option is EWRT 65AX. — WT

Literary Review Submissions

CWC members may submit one or two of their published or unpublished works September 1 thru November 30, 2017 for the 2018 issue of the CWC *Literary Review*. Email entries to davegeorge7@comcast.net with "CWC Lit-Review" in the subject line. In the body give author's name, email address, and branch affiliation; title(s), word count(s), and genre(s).

Include the following statement: "I, (name here), own and convey the right to publish this/these work(s) (title(s) here) for this one-time publication in the CWC *Literary Review*."

Attach submission(s) separately, if 2 entries. See guidelines at www.calwriters.org where you can pay the \$10 fee via PayPal. Or you can mail a check to CWC Central Treasury, California Writers Club, Box 201, Danville, CA 94526.

News from California Writers Club

Ads in CWC Bulletin

by Bob Isbill (760) 221-6367

Want to increase your visibility? Sell your service? Promote your book? Increase speaker engagements? Pump up your web traffic? Or just send a greeting?

Each issue of *The CWC Bulletin*, published three times a year, reaches 2,000 published and aspiring writers in 21 CWC branches throughout the state and is published on www.calwriters.org

Now we are accepting writing-related advertising from businesses, CWC members, and individuals who wish to reach our target market at reasonable prices. See calwriters.org for details and how to format your ad. -WT

You may advertise in the CWC Literary Review or The CWC Bulletin

Go to www.calwriters.org for details

You, in the Literary Review

by Elisabeth Tuck, Mt. Diablo, and Scott Evans, San Joaquin Valley, CWC Literary Review Editors

The CWC Literary Review is under new management.

You may have heard that Dave La-Roche, who started the CWC Literary Review at least six years ago, has retired from that post. The best compliment to him is that a team of six has agreed to produce the next *Lit Rev*! Imagine the work Dave did if it now takes six of us! Big shoes to follow in. Dave now has a well deserved opportunity to work on his own pursuits. Thank you for everything, Dave.

So, members, polish up a story, poem, essay, or memoir piece, check out the guidelines at <http://calwriters.org/publications/#submit>. Follow the guidelines, and submit, submit! Submissions will be accepted Sept. 1 - Nov. 30.

Writing is hard work isn't it? But so satisfying. -WT

CWC Around the Bay

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

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

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

Fremont Area: 2:00 fourth Saturdays at Round Table Pizza, 37408 Fremont Blvd., Fremont. cwc-fremontareawriters.org

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

San Joaquin Valley Writers, 12:30 second Saturdays, University of Pacific community room

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

Wanted: Information on Conferences

Send information on conferences and other events of interest to writers to newsletter@southbaywriters.com for consideration for inclusion on this page.



Turtle Liberation

Continued from Page 10

much to do to prepare turtles for moving to their new home. We put them in the cat carrier because it had a handle. And drove the two blocks to the school after classes ended.

We followed Mr. Brian with our turtles to the pond. There were actually two ponds. Mr. Brian said he thought the deeper pond would be best for them since it had logs for sunning and lots of natural food. We knelt down and put the first turtle in the water. Skittles immediately dove down and was gone in seconds. Then we released Bittles. He started swimming out on the surface of the water then turned to look at us – almost as if to say goodbye and thank you. And then he too dove under water, gone from sight.

We waited at the edge of the pond for a few moments, hoping to catch a glimpse of our turtles enjoying their new home and freedom. But we didn't see them again. They were free and wild now. They weren't ours – they belonged to nature again. We were quiet on the drive home. It was a one of those happy, sad days. I put the turtle tank on the street with a "free" sign. From time to time, we'd watch the Nature Center Cams to look for Skittles and Bittles and wish them the best in their new, free life.

On the Nature Center website, there's a picture of a turtle lounging on a log – is it Skittles or Bittles? -WT

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
November 2017			1	2	3 7:30P Open mic Barnes&Noble Almaden, San Jose	4 9A – 2:30P Workshop Harry's Hofbrau Jordan Rosenfeld
5 10A Our Voices	6 2P Valley Writers	7 7:00P SBW Board, Edie Matthews' home Santa Clara	8	9	10	
12	13 2P Valley Writers	14	15 7:30P Open mic SF Peninsula, Reach/ Teach, San Mateo	16 D e a d l i n e W r i t e r s T a l k was yesterday	17 7:30P Open mic SJ Rosegarden Library	18
19 10A Our Voices	20 2P Valley Writers	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 2P Valley Writers	28	29	<i>Holiday party Sunday, December 10. See webpage.</i>		
Future Flashes				Come to November 4 workshop!		

Future Events:

SBW Board, 7 PM Monday, October 30, Edie's house
Jordan Rosenfeld Workshop, Sat., Nov. 4, Harry's
No November or December dinner meeting

**SBW/CWC Events
appear on this calendar page.**

Ongoing Events

Critique Groups

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

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

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

Do you belong to a critique group? Please send details to *WritersTalk*.

SBW Board Meetings

Board meets on Tuesday, 7 PM, in the week preceding the dinner meeting. Exception: This year, the November board meeting will happen on Monday, October 30. Contact Edie Matthews at pres@southbaywriters.com.

Open Mics

South Bay Writers Open Mic: Read from your own work, from your favorite authors, or just come to listen. First Friday evenings, B&N Almaden. Third Friday evenings, Willow Glen Library or Rosegarden Library. See calendar for schedule. Contact Bill Baldwin (408) 730-9622 or email WABaldwin@aol.com

CWC SF Peninsula Open Mic: Third Wednesday of every month, 7:30 PM at Reach and Teach, 144 West 25th Ave., San Mateo

Ongoing discussion groups

Facebook Group: Members of South Bay Writers can join our Facebook group—South Bay Writers Club.

Add your discussion group here.

**You may advertise in the
CWC Literary Review or
*The CWC Bulletin***

Go to www.calwriters.org for details

Poetry Readings

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

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

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

SBW Recommends ...

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



California Writers Club

South Bay Branch

P.O. Box 3254

Santa Clara, CA 95055

www.southbaywriters.com

MAIL TO

Address Correction Requested

South Bay Writers
9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Saturday, November 4, 2017
Harry's Hofbrau
390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose

Page-Turning Tension
November Workshop
with
Jordan E. Rosenfeld
(No Monday meeting in Nov.)

WritersTalk deadline is always
the 15th of the month.

Regular dinner meetings are
second Mondays 6 – 9 PM
except July, December, and
workshop months



Harry's Hofbrau

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