



WRITERSTALK

Volume 26
Number 01
January 2018

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

JANUARY SPEAKER: ED SAMs

Be Your Own Publisher!

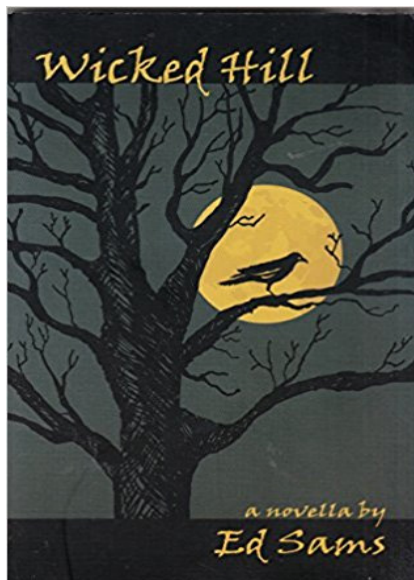
by Jamal Khan

Publishing has never been easier. Barriers to entry are lower than ever before. But how exactly does one go about setting up an American small press with a vast reach?

Get the inside scoop from Ed Sams on January 8, as he shares his experiences of twenty-five years running the Yellow Tulip Press. This small business has received national attention, with its steady stream of curious chapbooks and hysterical histories through online and periodical reviews, state alternative press archives, an appearance at New York's Lincoln Center, and an art exhibit at the San Jose Museum of Art. Sams will explain how he made his love of writing into a paying concern, and share many of the strange and funny experiences of running an alternative press in the digital age.

Ed Sams is an author whose plays have been produced locally and whose stories, poems, and articles have appeared in regional and national publications.

In 2012, Main Street Rag published his novella *Wicked Hill*. For the past twenty-five years, he and his wife Sally have published the Yellow Tulip Press, a nationally acclaimed small press with titles like *Lizzie Borden Unlocked*, *Mrs. Winchester's Windows*, and *Poe's Uncanny Housecat*. A lecturer at San Jose State University for the last twenty years, Ed is the founder of Poe Fest, where each Halloween he recites "The Raven."



Ed Sams

Where: Harry's Hofbrau

390 Saratoga Ave, San Jose, CA 95129

When: Monday, January 8 at 6pm

Admission: \$15 for members, \$20 for nonmembers.

Includes \$10 credit for dinner.

RECAP: SOUTH BAY WRITERS HOLIDAY BASH

On the First Day of Christmas, My True Love Gave to Me ...

by Marjorie Johnson
and Carolyn Donnell

Members of South Bay Writers, three dozen or more strong, congregated at Karen Sundback and Jim Moore's beautiful home to celebrate the joy of the holiday season. We saw Bill Belew and Victoria Johnson, whom we hadn't seen for years, and our newest member Lori Krein, so new that her name wasn't yet in our system. We enjoyed having time to connect and reconnect with our fellow writers in a relaxed social atmosphere.

Besides eating our fill of delicious food and laughing our way through the gift exchange, we sang the carol, "The Twelve Days of Christmas," with parts assigned by President Edie. If you really gave those gifts, have you ever wondered what they would cost?

A partridge in a pear tree and all the other 11 gifts would set you back \$34,558.65 (sans sales tax) this year. That's slightly more expensive than last year, according to PNC's annual index of the 12 Days of Christmas.

Every year, PNC calculates the real-world prices of all the gifts in the "12 Days of Christmas" carol. Their so-called Christmas Price Index rose 0.6% this year, driven by higher costs of pear trees, more demand for gold rings, and higher wages for Lords-a-leaping.

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Between the Lines

Edie Matthews
President, South Bay Writers



Start Anew!

January is a time for renewal, a time for New Year's resolutions. A time to ask yourself what do I want to accomplish in 2018? For example, your goal may be: I'm going to write a book. I'm going to finish my book. I'm going to get published. Etc.

We all set new goals at the beginning of each year. However, if you're truly serious, you need to formulate a plan. We don't want to fall victim to the old English proverb: "If wishes were horses, beggars would ride."

So, the first step is to determine precisely what it is you are going to accomplish. Once you've made that decision, the next action is to jot it down. If you keep a journal, enter it there. But even better, write it on 3x5 cards and post it where you'll see it every day. In fact, post it in several places—by your bed, so it greets you on awakening, reminding you of your commitment, and every evening it's there before you fall asleep—inspiring your imagination with visions of fulfilling your goal. Perhaps, tape it to the computer, or on the bathroom mirror. Basically, any place you're going to see it regularly.

To strengthen your commitment, read it aloud each time you view it. I.E. "Yes, I'm writing first thing every morning for an hour—sometimes longer." Or better still, "Yes, today I wrote a new chapter." (No one will think you're batty talking to yourself, they'll assume you're speaking on a cell phone.)

If at any time you miss a day and begin to feel stressed, let it go. Tell yourself a joke, or recall a TV show or movie that made you laugh. A perennial favorite of mine is *I Love Lucy's* "Vitameatageamin" scene. (It's on youtube.) Most importantly, start anew.

Place triggers that will get you started. Perhaps, a distinctive pen on your bedside table or a bestselling book. If it is a book, begin by reading for five minutes aloud.

Set small milestones. Create an outline, a plot chart, characters, names, hero's motivation, obstacles, etc. Decide how long you plan to write or how many words or pages or chapters you want to complete at each session or by the end of the week. Before finishing a session, consider what you're going to write next. Ernest Hemingway found it helpful to leave a chapter unfinished, even when he knew how it would end. That made it easier for him to continue the next day.

For encouragement, keep track of your activity. After a writing session, place a checkmark on your calendar. A bright red one!

You are striving to create a "positive" addiction. Psychologists say this can be accomplished by repeating the activity 30 days in a row. Just like an athlete that is compelled to exercise each day, you want to regularly write or at least reread, and edit your work.

Reward yourself. The best prize may be to congratulate yourself with words of praise: "Way to go!" Or "Success!" Or "Victory!"

Most importantly, delight in the process. It's interesting how often accomplished people recall with fondness their journey to achieving their success.

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www.southbaywriters.com

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SBW Mission

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

Join Us

We have a membership category that fits you. 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

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

email: newsletter@southbaywriters.com

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Sayantika Mandal

Sally Milnor

Karen Sundback

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)

Reprints

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

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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Change of Address: Send changes of address to membership@southbaywriters.com

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J. K. McDole Managing Editor



Introduction: What's Next?

It's an honor to take on the mantle of managing editor of *WritersTalk*, the monthly newsletter for the South Bay Writers.

In the footsteps of Marjorie, our exiting editor-in-chief and dedicated contributor to the club and its events, I find myself pausing over exactly how to introduce myself, as well as kick off the first issue of our 2018 spread. After I've paused long enough with no result, I discover that I'm getting up out of my chair and pacing around my office, where I work day-to-day as a freelance writer, editor, and narrative designer. When pacing gets me nowhere (or a whiff from the cat's litterbox in the corner convinces me it's time for a daily cleaning), my feet will take themselves out of the office and meander out into the hallway toward some other task. Maybe I'll check the mail. God knows I ought to finish some chores; maybe I'll graze the kitchen for a snack or cup of coffee. Sometimes I wind up wandering through the door for a stroll around my cozy neighborhood in Sunnyvale.

By this point, I'm hoping a walk will squeeze some creative curds out of the thought-cheese that is my brain. If nothing comes out, I'm going to get frustrated. And frustration will drive me back home, back into the office and right in front of a bookcase in hopes that something plucked off the shelf will speed along the process of scribbling something out.

But what if THAT doesn't work? What's next? How will the editor ever get the draft done? We come to a precarious edge here, perhaps even a cliffhanger.

And there you have it. You've learned a little bit about me, my writing process, and a glance at the ups and downs that generally go into writing. From the details given, you have a few images and sensory beats that tell you enough to get you started but (hopefully) leave you with questions that might receive answers should you keep reading.

(The litter box, by the by, belongs to a tuxedo cat named Cicero. It's wonderful to examine the relationships between writers and their pets. I'm not saying there'll be an editorial about that in a future issue -- or, maybe I am. Consider, too, submitting your own, especially if you can send some photos of those aforementioned pets.)

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Local Lit: Fifth Anniversary



South Bay Writers members Catherine Marshall-Smith and her book *American Family*, and Carolyn Donnell with her book *Blood Will Tell*, sharing a table at the Local Lit Fifth Anniversary event at the Martin Luther King Library on December 10, 2017.

Member News

by Marjorie Johnson

Penelope Cole, Marjorie Johnson, and David Strom exhibited and sold their books at the Fremont Library at the Fremont Area Writers book-signing event on December 2.

On December 3, CWC SF Peninsula Branch held their Fault Zone Uplift anthology launch. Karen Sundback was awarded second prize for her story, "The Heart's Far Reaches," in the Fault Zone competition for nonmembers of SF Peninsula. The following members of SBW had their work published in the anthology: Sheena Arora, "A Snail-Pace Race" and "Hope Under My Pillow;" and Dave M. Strom, "Super Holly Hanson In: What Goes Up."

Karen, Sheena, and Dave faced stiff competition to win places in Fault Zone and the associated contests. Congratulations!

Local Lit had its fifth anniversary on December 10, 2017 at the Martin Luther King Library. Twenty-five local authors of fiction and nonfiction shared their work, their processes, and their inspirations to an appreciative audience. SBW members Catherine Marshall-Smith (author of *American Family*) and Carolyn Donnell (author of *Blood Will Tell*) shared a table.

Have you had writing successes and accomplishments lately? Please share your good news in an email to newsletter@southbaywriters.com. — WT

A Note from Karen Sundback

Dear Holiday Bash guests,

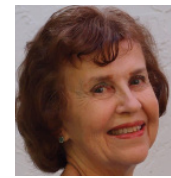
Thank you for bringing joy and kindness into our house. It was a privilege to host the winter party.

Karen Sundback & Jim Moore



New Members

by Sally A. Milnor



Sally Milnor

I am pleased to introduce our two newest members:

Tanika Brown joined us online. Tanika's primary area of interest is in writing novels.

Kaecey McCormick also joined us online, and she writes poetry, fiction and non-fiction. Kaecey is the current Poet Laureate of Cupertino.

The following is an excerpt from the Cupertino Scene: In October, when asked what is was about poetry that originally caught her interest, she replied: "I think it was poetry's magic of capturing emotions on paper that first caught my interest. It is the same magic that keeps me returning to it. When I was a little girl, I was dumbstruck by the way poets took words, and in only a few lines, were able to put me in the experience there with the speaker." On her membership questionnaire, Kaecey says her writing is fueled by her wicked imagination. She says that, in addition to her writing, she loves visual art and any kind of creative endeavor, cooking, and outdoor activities (such as hiking, skiing, and backpacking).

Kaecey's publications are listed on her website at kaeceymccormick.com. Her email address is: kaecey@gmail.com.

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

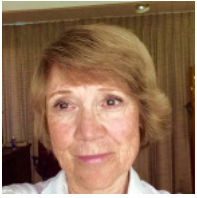
To all of our South Bay Writers: We appreciate and need your continuing presence and support. Thank you, again, for helping to keep our Club flourishing, and Happy New Year!!

— WT



View from the Board

by Karen Sundback



Karen Sundback
SBW Secretary

The October 30 meeting was held at President Edie Matthews' home. Here are the highlights of the meeting:

- **Newsletter.** Volunteer J. K. McDole will assume the helm of our proud vessel, *WritersTalk*, for the January 2018 issue and beyond. The Board wishes her well.
- **SBW Representation.** The Board assigned Dave LaRoche as our NorCal representative. Bill Baldwin will continue as our Central Board representative.
- **Website.** A note to our readers: if ever you misplace your hard copy of *WritersTalk*, our web editor, Tatyana Grinenko, keeps our website (<http://southbaywriters.com/>) current with the most up-to-date information. Check it out!
- **Meetings.** There were no dinner nor board meetings for December. Instead, the Club celebrated with a Holiday Bash at secretary Karen Sundback's house.

The next meeting of the SBW Board will be Tuesday, January 2, 2018 at 7 pm at the home of Edie Matthews. — WT

Start Anew!

Continued from Page 2

The motivation and struggle made them feel alive. So, don't fret. Don't be deterred. Keep in mind, adversary provides fodder for your story. Savor the moment, and saddle your metaphysical horse and begin your excursion. — WT

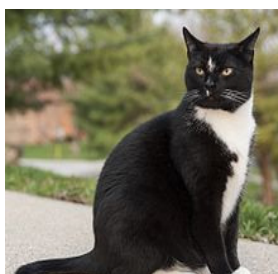
Introduction: What's Next?

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For many writers, beginnings are strange and exciting times. When you start drafting out your first lines and paragraphs, you take on the challenge of deciding what you will reveal up front and how much, versus what you plan to reveal over time as your rising action begins and builds. Sometimes, the best introduction is a sparing one -- just enough to hook the reader and keep them asking: 'what's next?'

The same excitement rings true for me as I write this right now. For the past eight years, I've worked in and out of corporate settings as a technical writer, editor, and trainer. Those positions, while engaging, provided very few opportunities to reel in eager readers, so in 2016 I decided to chase creative writing as a hobby and see where it took me. That chase led me to a South Bay Writers meeting in January 2017, and now it's brought me here: a few paragraphs from the finish line of my first editorial for this wonderful newsletter.

I'm looking forward to a spectacular new year with you and your writing. Let's dig in and see what's next! — WT



On The First Day of Christmas...

Continued from Page 1

PNC is a Pittsburgh-based financial corporation founded in 1845 and the eighth-largest bank in the US by total assets.

For 34 years running, PNC has set out to calculate the costs of every item in the carol to create a Christmas Price Index. It's more frivolous, but not that different from the government's consumer price index that tracks the costs of everyday items. PNC's sources include retailers, poultries, and dance companies.

The CPI (from PNC) increased by 0.6% year-on-year, led by higher costs for pear trees and increased demand for gold rings. Indeed, the precious metal has had a good year like many other financial assets, gaining about 11%. In addition, the index was driven up by higher wages for 10 Lords-a-leaping. PNC recorded a 2% increase to \$5,618.90 for this gig. Perhaps the clamor for higher minimum wages and a tightening labor market helped.

Back to that bill for \$34,558.65: In 2017, it would be more sensible to buy a car for your true love and put it onto your credit cards. She will love you more if you forgo housing and feeding a partridge, 2 turtle doves, 3 French hens, 4 calling birds, 6 geese, and 7 swans. Also, you don't want to be hung for not reporting those wages paid to the IRS or for letting undocumented immigrants milk the cows.

Now that all thoughts of romance have been thoroughly dashed away, we return to our recap on the party and let Carolyn's photos report our good time.

Thank you, Karen and Jim, for welcoming us into your home.

— WT



South Bay Writers Club Christmas 2017



Writing Workshop Announcement by Victoria M. Johnson



How to Write Your Novel in Two Weeks!

When: Saturday, Jan 20, 2018

9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. (One Day Only)

Where: Capitola Community Center
4400 Jade Street, Capitola, CA 95010



Discover techniques to write fast and get your first draft written in two weeks. Don't waste years trying to write your novel. Learn secrets to avoiding writer's block and write your novel once and for all!



Fee : \$67

**For more information
or to register by phone, please call:
(831) 475-6115**



Website for all details:

<http://www.cityofcapitola.org/recreation>



Never Burn Your Work

by J. K. McDole

November has come and gone, and with it departs the National Novel Writing Month, or NaNoWriMo. All across social media, authors and writers of every walk and caliber came together to share advice on writing; in the spirit of contributing, I threw together some short, informal thoughts -- a little wisdom (maybe replace the "Wri" in the abbreviation with "Wi?"), however wandering.

Throughout her lifetime, the poet Marianne Moore edited and revised her work so many times that editors and publishers cannot firmly say which print versions of her work are considered final. Her famous poem "Poetry" has dozens and dozens of different printed versions, the (assumed) complete form bearing 30 thirty lines while others had only had three. Sometimes she rewrote it with her usual defined cadence or rhythm, sometimes without. The rewrites for "Poetry" span across fifty years.

For some scholars, Moore's approach to writing is a natural one -- perhaps as natural as one can be -- owing to the constant evolution of the author throughout their lifetime. Others consider that it merits criticism, even serves as evidence of a lack of dedication to defining what is truly a completed work. For many in-between, it's mind-boggling. The idea that a piece can change so many times at the behest of the author while still preserving the legacy of their text is definitely not new, but always worthy of re-examination.



Marianne Moore
1887-1972

Grace Schulman, a contemporary and friend of Moore, relates an anecdote: a taxi ride with Moore, taken through Manhattan in the early 1960s, during which they witnessed a man burning canvases in a trash can. Moore requested the driver pull over so she could roll the window down, stick her head out, and declare to the man, "Don't burn your work." It was unclear what exactly the fellow was burning, but to Moore it did not matter. "No, don't ever burn your work," she insisted, before they drove away and the car ride returned to normal.

Whatever you write, you can change. You can rework it today, tomorrow, twenty Thursdays from the next. In fifty hours, it won't be the same; in fifty years, who can tell? At least you have it -- and though you should revise it, don't destroy it.

Source: Grace Schulman, *The Poems of Marianne Moore* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2003), Introduction. — WT

UPCOMING:

2018 San Francisco Writers Conference

Presidents Day Weekend–Feb. 15-18

at the InterContinental Mark Hopkins Hotel on Nob Hill

The 15th Annual Celebration of Craft, Commerce & Community Featuring:

California Poet Laureate/former NEA Chairman

Dana Gioia

Bestselling thriller novelist
Robert Dugoni



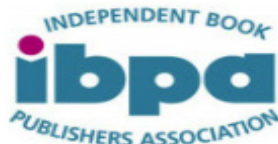
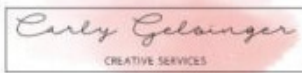
YA author **Mitali Perkins**,
featured speaker and
teacher at the SFWC Young
Writer's Special Event



Shanthi Sekaran,
author of critically
acclaimed novels *Luck Boy* and *The Prayer Room*.



2018 Exhibitors and Sponsors



Register online at
<https://sfwriters.org/>

Write That Down

by J. K. McDole

When inspiration strikes, how do you handle it? Do you put down notes? Post-its? Color-coded cards? Maybe you're one of those writers blessed with an elephant's memory: Whenever you get a brilliant idea, it stays vivid at the front of your mind until you can draft it out. In the upcoming year, take a moment to consider how you handle inspiration and whether or not you're using the right tool for organizing your thoughts.

- **Notebooks.** Whether you've got a dedicated spiral or a scratchpad and pen, this is the most traditional (and arguably simplest) way to keep track of writing notes. Notebooks come in all shapes, sizes, designs, and costs. They're not always portable or convenient, however. During an outing with a fellow writer, we had to stop in the middle of the makeup section of a department store so she could sit down, dig her Moleskine out of her purse and write down a character concept, much to the curiosity of those behind the Clinique counter (whose faces implied we should *at least* come over and buy something).
- **Note-taking apps.** I'm a big fan of **Google Keep**, a note-taking app connected to the G-Suite that brought us Google Drive (formerly Docs) and Gmail. Other writers have repped **Evernote** and **Scrivener** as handy apps for jotting things down. **Dragon Dictator** is a hands-free note-taking app that allows you to transcribe spoken dictation. Best thing about all of these apps? Through iTunes and the Google Play store, they're free!
- **A portable recorder.** When inspiration hits, consider taking the Dale Cooper approach and record your thoughts for later transcription. Digital recorders can run you a pretty penny, but the old-fashioned cassette ones still work fine. Not to mention: like note-taking apps, there are plenty of free voice recorders you can download for a phone or tablet.

Happy 2018! Here's hoping you have tons of inspiration to jot down! — WT

Formatting Your Manuscript 101

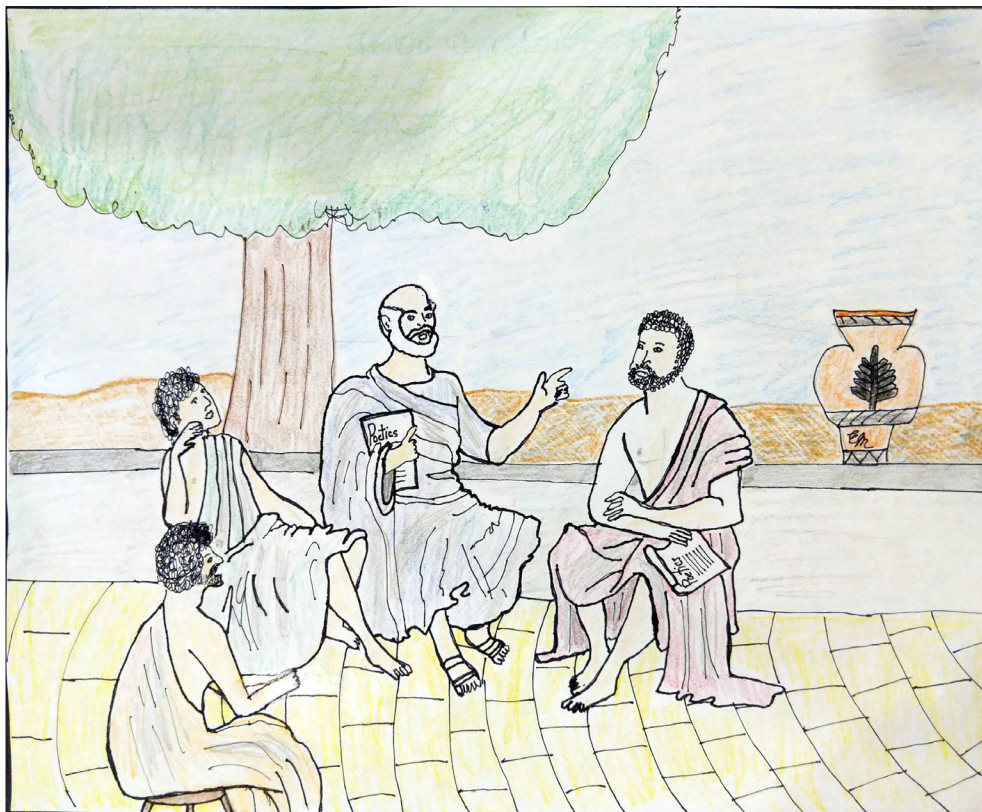
by Marjorie Johnson

Foreword by J.K. McDole

In the spirit of encouraging more submissions to *WritersTalk* for 2018, I'd like to reprint Marjorie's fantastic advisory essay on the dos and don'ts of submitting to the newsletter. These guidelines apply to our 2018 volume and beyond.

Guidelines aside, please DO send us your submissions! We love to feature creative works written by our members; also, the newsletter is an excellent way to ease into the wide, bewildering world of publishing. We're looking forward to a wonderful new volume of showcasing talented writers, and this could be YOUR year!

From January 2017



"A story needs a beginning, middle, and ending."
"Wow! Aristotle, that's radical!"

To format a submission for *WritersTalk*, open Word or Text and just start typing, using the program's default settings. At the end of each paragraph, hit the ENTER/RETURN key. The cursor will automatically move to start the next line of text, thus starting the next paragraph. When you've finished, correct your typing errors and save the document. Attach the Word doc or Text doc to an email and send it to *WritersTalk* using this address: newsletter@southbaywriters.com.

Do not ...

- Hit the ENTER/RETURN key at the end of a line of text on your screen (unless you are writing a poem). That's a habit left over from the dark ages, when we had typewriters.
- Hit the TAB key to indent a line of text. Doing so forces the editor to delete every tab you set. Take care, lest the *WT* Editor send a *genii* to disable your TAB key. Instead, set the paragraph indent in the formatting palette.
- Press the spacebar repeatedly to indent the first line of text in a paragraph or to make it "look nice."
- Use more than one font. Use only the software's default font until you know what font is required by your target

audience.

- Use colors.
- Use page breaks or section breaks or columns.
- Insert graphics or tables. Instead, please send a jpg or PDF.
- Use headers or footers or insert page numbers.
- Use the SHIFT + ENTER option.

The techniques listed above may make your work look cool to you, but the *WT* Editor's computer will growl. Too loud a growl, and the manuscript will retreat in fear and hide in the trash.

Do ...

- Set up the right master-slave relationship with your computer. More about that at the end of this article.
- Learn how to set the paragraph indent. This simple change will make your work much easier. You can hit ENTER/RETURN once at the end of a paragraph—no more using the tab key or hitting the spacebar repeatedly until you lose count.
- Put your full name on the byline. If your email is abcxyz@yahoo.com, the editor won't know who you are.
- Before hitting send, read your submission once more. Give it a thorough pass and cast out any typos that may have snuck in. Double-check that word count.

What about poetry?

Just type it left justified. Use ENTER/RETURN after each line and hit ENTER/RETURN an extra time after each stanza. If you want the poem to be centered, the *WT* Editor can center the whole thing. Please, do not make it "look nice" by typing

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 9

a string of spaces, and do not use any page breaks.

Special problems

If you work in something other than Word or Text, then send a PDF to WT. A PDF document can usually be translated to Word—if you used “plain vanilla” text: no special characters, tabs, extra spaces, graphics or tables.

What about submitting to an agent or an editor?

Read the submission guidelines for your particular agent/editor or publication. Guidelines vary; many ask for Times New Roman 12-font, double-spaced. You can use SELECT ALL and change to the required font.

Of course, clean up your copy before sending it anywhere. If your manuscript has multiple typos, ragged paragraph indents, or fancy fonts in its title, you look like an amateur.

If the agent/editor asks for paper copies, use clean white paper. Colored paper makes your manuscript stand out all right—in the slush pile.

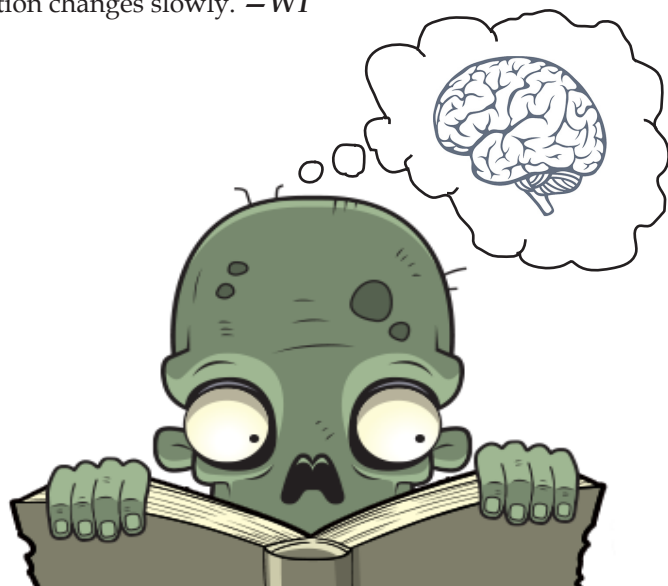
What about the promised master-slave relationship?

Learn how to format documents with your word processor. You need to know how to set paragraph indents and margins; how to center a line; how to set single or double spaced lines. Once set up, your computer lets you write quickly and effortlessly.

How to learn all this?

You could take a class or go to “Help” within your word processing program. Better yet, borrow someone’s grandchild: they learn keyboarding in school these days, and they will be thrilled to teach you how.

If you would like to look at a properly formatted manuscript or query letter, go to *Writer’s Digest* books. For example, *Writer’s Market Deluxe Edition 2017* has current information on markets as well as formatting examples. You can look at a past copy of *Writer’s Market* at the library—formatting information changes slowly. —WT



Passive Voice vs. Active Voice: Easy as ... Zombies?

by J. K. McDole

Writers, rejoice: there’s a quick, simple, perhaps comically easy way to test whether or not you’re writing in passive voice! Rebecca Johnson, the Dean of Academics and Deputy Director of the Marine Corps War College, tweeted a fantastic method to use for checking your drafts:



Rebecca Johnson
@johnsonr

I finally learned how to teach my guys to ID the passive voice. If you can insert "by zombies" after the verb, you have passive voice.

For the uninitiated, **passive voice** is a grammatical verb structure where the subject of the sentence is acted on by the verb (e.g., “the ball was thrown by the pitcher”). Its counterpart verb structure, **active voice**, denotes that the subject is doing the verb’s action (e.g., “the pitcher threw the ball”). Applying Johnson’s test to our examples requires almost no effort: The phrase “the ball was thrown by zombies” gives you a clear answer about the voice (as well as a humorous mental image that might befit a SF Giants game mashed up with *The Walking Dead*).

While most editors suggest using active voice as frequently as possible in your writing to clarify the meaning of your sentences, there are still plenty of stylistic uses for passive voice. According to the UNC College of Arts and Science’s Writing Center, it is a myth that the use of passive voice constitutes a grammatical error. “Using ‘to be’ can weaken the impact of your writing, but it is occasionally necessary and does not by itself constitute the passive voice,” the center advises. “While the passive voice can weaken the clarity of your writing, there are times when the passive voice is OK and even preferable.”

Still, it’s important to identify and be aware of how verb voice can change the impact of your writing. In her New York Times Opinionator piece on the topic, author Constance Hale (who you can meet at our upcoming March workshop!) declares: “Often a dynamic verb lurks in a clunky noun, and by excavating it we can perk up the prose. Why *put in an appearance* when you could just *show up*? Why write *take into consideration* instead of *consider*?”

So take a second look at that draft today and give it the old zombie test. Who knows? You might be able to resuscitate a lifeless piece into something that eagerly goes after your reader’s braaaaaains... —WT



Poetry Page



NEW

It's over and done
Hopefully everyone
won!
Got what they wanted
and are
happy!

It's over and done
New Year on
the horizon

New goals
New friends
New ideas
New surprises!
New beginnings!

Happy New Year
Everyone!
- Karen Hartley



Poem Series by Stephen C. Wetlesen

Poetic Art Revisited

The problem with haiku –
they are
much too long.

November 30, 2017 Haiku

One Line, Seven Syllables
Hummingbird in dead ivy.

December 4, 2017 Haiku

One Line, Five Syllables
Warm sun but wind song.

December 4, 2017 Tableau

One Line, Five Syllables
Gold leaves with red fringe.

December 6, 2017 Tableau

One Line, Seven Syllables
Concrete: fleeting bird shadow.

December 7, 2017 Tableau

One Line, Five Syllables
Bright sun, ripe lemons.

St. Luke's Church Haiku, December 9, 2017

Gingerbread houses.
Mickey Mouse ears girl dance walks.
American Yule.

December 11, 2017 Haiku Painting

Sushi Restaurant.
"To God Be the Glory" hymn.
Off hours clarinet.

December 13 Early Morning Sketch

One Line, Seven Syllables
Traffic noise, skunk scent and frost.



February Poetry Request

Love is in the Air

WritersTalk wants your best romantic poetry for the February 2018 issue. Send us your sonnets, ballads, haiku and tankas. Limericks are accepted as well, though mind that we have a few rules about language and explicit content!

Show the club your most profound (or flippant) declarations of love, friendship, and mirth this year! — WT

Coming in March

Workshops for the South Bay Writers



Constance Hale

Dazzle an Agent: Secrets to “Wicked Good Prose”



March 24, 2018 - 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM

Harry's Hofbrau ~ San Jose

In a three-hour workshop, Constance Hale leads you through a series of hilarious exercises to perk up prose. Using evocative readings, hilarious challenges, and wacky contests, writers will stretch new muscles, disabuse themselves of bad habits, and duke it out in a war of words. We'll also talk about how to cultivate that most elusive of literary elements: the writer's voice. This session is perfect for writers of fiction, nonfiction, and memoir who want to take their prose to the next level. No grammar competency required, but a sense of humor is a must.

- Early bird: till February 28, CWC Member \$49. Nonmember \$59
- Till March 18th: CWC Member, \$59; Nonmember, \$67
- Student (18 – 25 with ID): \$29
- At the door: \$65 Member, \$69 Nonmember
- Includes continental breakfast & lunch (\$12 credit)

Name _____ Member ☐ Non-Member ☐

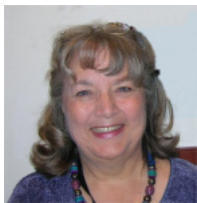
Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone/Cell _____ Email _____

**REGISTER ONLINE AT WWW.SOUTHBAYWRITERS.COM OR send
check to CWC South Bay Writers, PO Box 3254, Santa Clara, CA 95055**

Contests and Markets

by Carolyn Donnell



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

- **Writer's Digest**

Self-published Book Awards and the Annual Writing Competition. <http://www.writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions>

- **Winning Writers:** both contests accept published and unpublished work.

Tom Howard/John H. Reid Fiction & Essay Fiction/ nonfiction contest. Oct. 15-Apr. 30

Wergle Flomp Humor Poetry contest. Seeks humor poems. No fee! Aug 15-Apr 1

- **Wordrunner eChapbooks**

Seeks Fiction, Memoir, Poetry for Annual Anthology (online). Deadline: Jan. 31, 2018. echapbook.com/submissions.html

- **Ingram Spark and NaNoWriMo**

Ingram Spark's offer for a special discount is still good until Mar. 31, 2018. <http://tinyurl.com/ya5hmj9l>

- **SPR (Self-Publishing Review) Book Awards 2017**

Deadline: March 1, 2018. See all the details at <http://www.selfpublishingreview.com/spr-book-awards-2017/>

- **Second Annual Water Sedge Poetry Chapbook Contest**

Deadline: January 31, 2018.

<http://writersrelief.com/watersedge-poetry-chapbook-contest/>

- **WNBA Women's National Book Association**

The 2018 Writing Contest is open until March 1.

<http://www.wnba-books.org/contest/>

- **Children's & Young Adult Book Awards**

See details on the two awards at http://www.clcawards.org/CLC_Award_Guidelines.html

Contests Found on Facebook

Request to join our FB group - South Bay Writers Club - at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/5486894361/>

- National Association of Memoir Writers
- Freedom With Writing
- Writers Post Call For Submissions
- Authors Publish
- WOW! Women On Writing
- Women's Fiction Writers Association

Contest Web Listings:

- Poets & Writers: <https://www.pw.org/grants>
- The Writer magazine: <https://www.writermag.com/writing-resources/contests/>
- The Write Life: <https://thewritelife.com/writing-contests/>
- Reedsy: <https://blog.reedsy.com/writing-contests/>
- Funds For Writers: <http://fundsforwriters.com/contests/>
- New Pages: <https://www.newpages.com/classifieds>

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

How Did NaNoWriMo Go?

If you successfully completed NaNoWriMo in 2017 or years past, the club would love to hear from you! Please send your reviews and editorials on writing and drafting process to the *WritersTalk* newsletter and we'll share your thoughts with our readers. Excerpts from your projects are welcome, too!

Submit today at newsletter@southbaywriters.com! — 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

Conferences and Events

by Margie Yee Webb

Sierra Writers Conference

January 20, 2018, Grass Valley CA

<http://www.sierrawritersconference.com/>

"Writers all ... join us for a day of learning, sharing, growing and being inspired to craft your words into the stories, articles and books that only you can write. Also, get the information you need to market yourself and your work."

Auburn Winter Storytelling Fest

January 27, 2018, Auburn CA

www.foothillstorytellingguild.com

Children's Hour – Workshop – Open Telling – Liar's Contest – Evening Tellers Showcase – presented by Foothill Storytelling Guild.

CapRadio Reads: Authors On Stage

January 29, 2018, Sacramento CA.

<http://www.capradio.org/events/capradio-reads>

Allen Pierleoni, Authors On Stage Coordinator, interviews New York Times Bestselling Author Alafair Burke about her new novel, *The Wife*, and her law and writing careers. A Capital Public Radio event.

Continued on page 14

News from the 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

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.

Conferences and Events

Continued from Page 13

San Francisco Writers Conference

February 14-18, 2018, San Francisco CA

<https://sfwriters.org>

They also have a Writing Contest (<https://sfwriters.org/2018-writing-contest-overview>). The 2018 San Francisco Writing Contest is accepting submissions! All fees and entries must be received by 5:00 pm PST on January 12, 2018.

Authors on the Move!

March 10, 2018, Sacramento CA

<http://saclibraryfoundation.org/authors-on-the-move/>

"Sacramento's Premier Literary Event – Save the Date!"

WNBA SF Pitch-O-Rama

March 31, 2018, San Francisco CA

<http://wnba-sfchapter.org/pitch-o-rama-2018/>

Women's National Book Association – San Francisco Chapter Pitch-O-Rama: Meet the Agents and Editors. Pitch-O-Rama delivers the 4 Ps that lead to publication: Polish, Pitch, Promote, Participate.

Pen to Published 2018 Redwood Writers Conference

April 21, 2018, Santa Rosa CA

<http://redwoodwriters.org/2018-conference/>

"Join your fellow writers along your path to publishing success at the 10th Redwood Writers Pen to Published Conference."

The Belize Writers' Conference

(Fiction, Nonfiction and Memoir)

April 23-28, 2018, Ak'bol Yoga Retreat on Ambergris Caye, Belize

<http://www.joeygarcia.com/events/>

—WT



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 2p Valley Writers 8p SJ Poetry Slam Gordon Biersch	2 SBW Board Meeting Edie Matthews' Home	3	4	5 7:30p Open mic Barnes&Noble Almaden, San Jose	6
7	8 2p Valley Writers 6:00p SBW Dinner Harry's Hofbrau	9 7p Well-RED at Works	10	11	12	13
14 10A Our Voices 1p Poets@Play, Markham House	15 2p Valley Writers DEADLINE: <i>WritersTalk</i> Submission	16	17 7:30p Open mic SF Peninsula, Reach and Teach, San Mateo	18 7p Third Thursday, PCSJ, Willow Glen Library	19 7:30p Open mic Wil- low Glen Library, 1157 Minnesota Ave	20
21	22 2p Valley Writers	23	24	25	26	27
28 10A Our Voices	29 2p Valley Writers	30	31	<div>January 2018</div>		
Future Flashes						

Future Events:

SBW Board Meeting: Tuesday, January 2, 2018 at 7 pm
Edie Matthews' home
February: SBW Dinner Meeting on February 12, 2018

**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. Contact Edie Matthews for more information on how you can attend 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. www.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.poetrycentersanjose.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

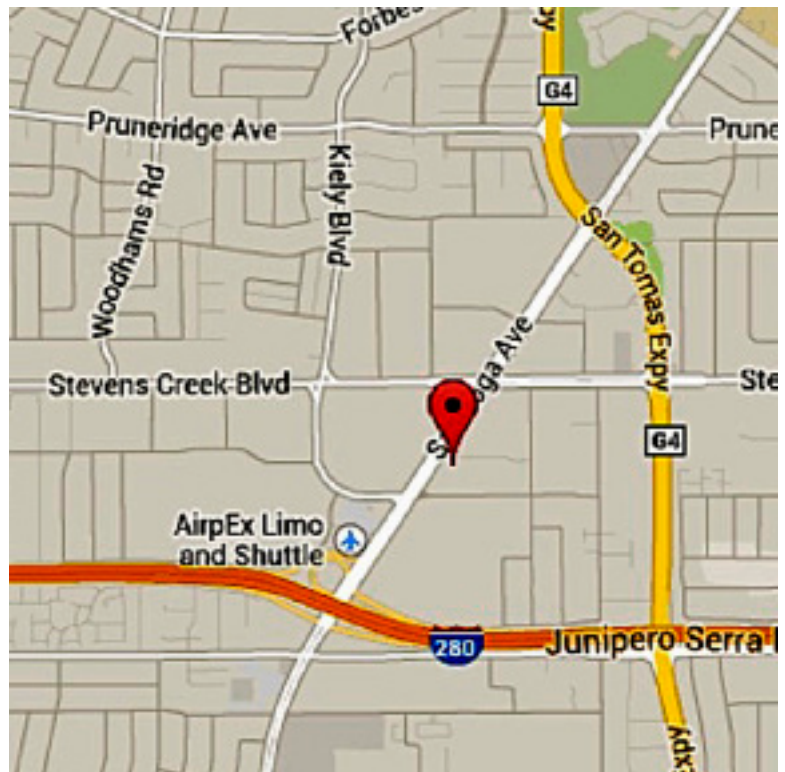
**South Bay Writers
Regular Dinner Meeting
6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Monday, January 8, 2018
Harry's Hofbrau
390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose**

Be Your Own Publisher!

**Ed Sams
January 2018 Speaker**

Please send contributions and submissions for *WritersTalk* by or on the 15th of the month!

Regular dinner meetings are second Mondays 6 – 9 PM of every month 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.