



WRITERSTALK

Volume 26
Number 08
August 2018

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

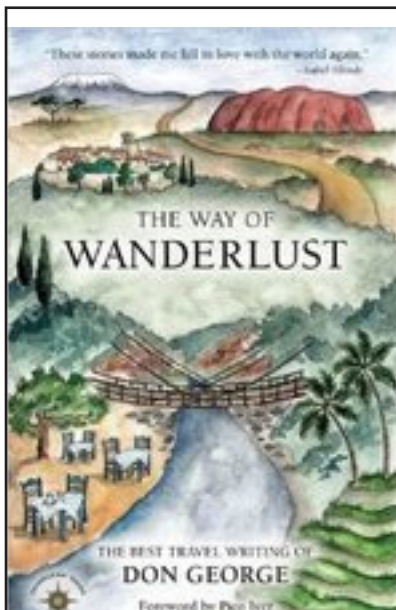
AUGUST SPEAKER: DON GEORGE

Travel Writing by Jamal Khan

Good travel writing transports the reader to exotic locales with a vividness that borders on the cinematic. Words on a page conjure the tastes, smells, sights, and sounds of a place never visited. Colorful characters emerged fully formed along the mental journey, radiating authenticity. How does a writer learn to consistently create this panoramic effect? One useful approach is to listen to the author of Lonely Planet's *Guide to Travel Writing*, now in its third edition, which may be the best-selling travel writing guide on the planet. At our August 13 dinner meeting, you will have that opportunity.

Don George has edited nine literary travel anthologies, including *A Moveable Feast*, *The Kindness of Strangers*, *By the Seat of My Pants*, *Tales from Nowhere*, and most recently, *Better Than Fiction*. He has received dozens of awards for his writing and editing, including the Society of American Travel Writers' Lowell Thomas Travel Journalist of the Year Award. After serving as the Global Travel Editor for Lonely Planet Publications, he is now Editor at Large and Book Review Columnist for *National Geographic Traveler* magazine, Special Features Editor and Blogger for *Gadling.com*, and Editor of Geographic Expedition's online magazine, *Wanderlust: Literary Journeys for the Discerning Traveler*.

During the past two and a half decades, Don has visited more than 85 countries and published hundreds of articles and essays in magazines and newspapers around the globe. He has spoken at numerous conferences and festivals, and appears on TV and radio to talk about travel and travel writing. Join us on August 13 to hear him share his experiences and wisdom.



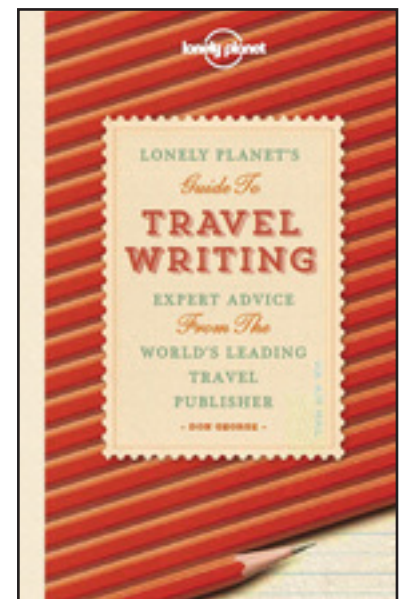
JULY RECAP: SUMMER BBQ AND PARTY

South Bay Writers Summer BBQ

by J. K. McDole

Eager to celebrate another wonderful year of friendship and fun with the South Bay Writers, the club gathered at the home of Edie and Jim Matthews for a splendid summer afternoon. What's better than good food, lots of fun, and quality time with your fellow writers? Check out Carolyn Donnell's photos on Page 6 if you want to relive the good times!

Many thanks to Edie and Jim for their hospitality! See you all at the August public meeting! — WT



Where: Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Ave, San Jose, CA 95132

When: Monday August 13 at 6pm; talk begins at 7:30pm

Admission: \$15 for members, \$20 for nonmembers.
Includes \$10 credit for dinner.

Between the Lines

Edie Matthews
President, South Bay Writers



Separate Vacations

Biking to Canada, a popular topic with my teenage sons and their dad, escalated into actuality. Not to Canada, schedules wouldn't permit it, but there was enough time for a coastal pedaling up Highway 1 to Oregon. Four more teenage boys signed up.

"Honey, do you want to come?" my husband asked me. "You don't have to ride a bike, you could drive the car."

Set up camp, prepare meals, and pick up boys on busted bicycles. "No, thank you," I said. "Go and have a wonderful trip."

"Well, maybe you and the girls could go to Europe?" he suggested.

No sooner than were the words spoken and I was on the phone making reservations. In truth, I liked the idea of traveling with my daughters, (14 and 8). I knew they wouldn't question the itinerary and would follow me without a debate.

So after the men returned from their two-week bicycle odyssey bursting with stories, the girls and I flew off to Europe for five weeks.

The first six days we'd stay in London. I didn't have reservations when we arrived, only a well-studied Frommer's *Europe on \$20 a Day*.

My mother had told me of a service in the Victoria Station that will find accommodations for you. But the line was long that I'd already started calling potential B&Bs listed in Frommer's. After figuring out how to use an English phone, I started dialing. On the sixth call, I booked us a room in Clapham Commons, £17 a night with a full English breakfast, a bargain (\$10.50) even in 1982.

Each day we went sight-seeing: London Tower, Westminster Abbey, Windsor Castle, etc. and every night we went to the theater: *The Mousetrap*, *Pirates of Penzance*, *Sound of Music*, and *Cats* (before it opened in New York).

Then we boarded a bus that would take us to the Continent. I chose a Globus Tour. Safer and more efficient. It provided many of our meals and booked our hotels. It included city sights, but additional tours cost extra.

I paid for the first tour in Belgium. Our tour guide must have been part of Hitler's youth brigade. Olga barked out orders like we were new recruits: 15 minutes here, 30 minutes there. What if I'd prefer 30 minutes here and 15 minutes there? Plus, every minute, I worried we'd be back late. Tardy folks were reprimanded like they'd offended the Third Reich. "You've inconvenienced everyone!" she'd rail.

I returned to my Frommer's. I compared the cost of optional tours to going on our own. I could save 60%, and we'd be free to go at our own pace. But would we be safe?

We arrived at our hotel on the outskirts of Paris and finished dinner at 7:30. I asked Olga about taking the Metro. "Definitely not! Too dangerous," she warned. So people retired to their rooms.

I spoke to the girl at the front desk. She took the Metro home at midnight without a problem. I exchanged dollars into francs and we were off to see the City of Lights.

Continued on Page 4

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South Bay Branch
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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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 (1200-1800 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.

Advertisements

Advertising of workshops, conferences, and events is accepted from other branches of California Writers Club. We cannot accept political advertising of any kind. *WritersTalk* does not accept unpaid advertising of events or services that benefit an individual. Advertise in CWC Bulletin or in the Literary Review. See Page 14.

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

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J. K. McDole Managing Editor



Swirling Down the Pipe

Picture a beach in late California spring. The sun shines bright but the wind whips cold. At high tide, the waves swell like blue whale bellies before crashing white against the sand.

A hiking trail winds from the cliffside down to the shore. Spanning the trail is a drainage pipe: concrete, about two feet in diameter, the outside lacquered with a patina of grime, bird poop, and graffiti. People have left their mark on this pipe. Traveling beachgoers have signed in spray paint and fading permanent marker. *LULA was HERE. A + N = FOREVER.* Three huge hearts circle a bawdy declaration: *if u read this u stink!*

If you came here purely for natural splendor, worry not; the pipe won't surprise you. Even though it's man-made, it's had plenty of time to become part of the scenery. An inexorable growth of ice plants, dune grass, and slow-eroding sand waves have transformed the pipe into another component of the whole vista. If you're not looking for it, you'll miss it. Watch out for it when you're coming back up the trail.

It was a beautiful scene. I remember it well. Unfortunately, it's one of the few things I'm capable of clearly remembering right now, and it's all because I *didn't* watch out.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to share another issue of *WritersTalk* with you. As I write this editorial, I'm closing in on two months of recovery from a doozy of a concussion. While hiking up that beach trail—a steep, nigh-vertical track outside of Shark's Fin Cove in Davenport, California—I hit the top of my head on the aforementioned drainage pipe. I blacked out for several seconds, coming to when I heard my spouse calling out for me. Though I had no physical injury—hardly even a bump, much less a goose egg—we erred on the side of caution and booked it to an urgent care clinic. Several x-rays and CT scans later and I was sent home with a medical *all-clear* and orders to *rest, rest, absolutely rest*.

"But what constitutes rest?" I asked the doctor as he led us out to the clinic lobby.

"I'm not going to be hiking or swimming, rest assured, but what about writing?" (I had, during the doctor's exam, failed to remember both my birthday and my phone number; why I was suddenly worried about my daily word counts, I couldn't really say.)

"Oh, no writing," the doctor replied, "and keep reading to a minimum. No screens,

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View from the Board

by Marjorie Johnson



Marjorie Johnson
SBW Secretary

The next meeting of the South Bay Writers Board will be at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, August 7 at President Edie Matthews' home. The meeting is open to interested South Bay Writers members. Get more

details by contacting Edie Matthews at president@southbaywriters.com or myself at secretary@southbaywriters.com.

We will be in full swing again in August. The June 5 meeting didn't have a quorum, and the July 3 meeting was cancelled. Anyone having items for the agenda, or fresh, new program ideas, should contact Edie Matthews.

SBW Membership continues to grow. We hope you will grow with us and enjoy our speaker programs. Put yourself and your publications on our Member Gallery on our website. Continue to belong to the premier writing club founded by Jack London in 1909.

If you forgot to renew, go to southbaywriters.com today and send \$45 via PayPal. The 2017-2018 fiscal year ended June 30. Take advantage of the grace period to avoid the extra \$20 initiation fee—we don't want to lose you. — WT

Critique

by Dave LaRoche

Writers want readers glued to the page, it is said. We want their excited approval, outstanding reviews, and strong recommendations to their reading friends. We get those by creating a good story, writing it well, and publishing.

Critique, in my view, is the most critical component of "writing it well." It puts fresh eyes to the paper returning a comparison to acceptable standards of craft; allows a compelling interest reflected, or not, and an honest response with suggestions from writers who want you to win—all of this wrapped in a shawl of social camaraderie.

Of course we reciprocate, and in doing we learn—more, better, and best. In both ways—giving opinion and receiving the same—we learn about the fascinating revelation of story in a manner consistent with keeping our reader "glued to the page."

Interested in critique? Talk to our president. — WT



New Members

by Sally A. Milnor



Sally Milnor

Please check our next issue for more in-depth information about our new additions to the club!

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 for helping to keep our club flourishing. — WT



Separate Vacations

Continued from Page 2

We strolled the Champs Élysées, viewed the Arc de Triomphe, and climbed the Eiffel Tower.

From then on, the girls and I went our own way, quite often encountering our tour group being herded and ordered about. Other members of our tour questioned me, and before long, the younger ones joined us.

It was perfect in Italy and Spain: one of the gals spoke Italian and the other spoke Spanish. So much fun!

This did not please Olga because more people joined us or went on their own.

On the bus between countries, she accused me of being a unfit mother, dragging my children on a rigorous trip around Europe.

I responded, "In America we don't dump our kids with grandparents and go off for months at a time. (She did.) We raise them ourselves and include them. This is an adventure and education, they'll never forget."

A few days later, chaos erupted on the bus. Sick of Olga's tyranny, several passengers screamed at her. I didn't partake. Like a reporter, I took notes in my journal.

The final days, Miss Gestapo was as sweet as saccharine. Too late, Olga. No tip for you. — WT

August Member News

by Marjorie Johnson

Congratulations, South Bay Writers, on your many publications this month. Please let *WritersTalk* know when you have something published or have other writing triumphs. It is a great pleasure to announce your writing news in this column.

American Opioid Podcast: Jamal Khan has been working on a research-backed fictional narrative about the opioid crisis. He is recording the narrative in audio form as a free podcast called *American Opioid*. The podcast will consist of several seasons, and the first season is scheduled for August. As a Presidential Management Fellow, Jamal worked on opioid policy issues for the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs during the Obama Administration.



Series 1963 A: An Anthology of California Writers started as a group-write to tell the life story of a dollar bill. The book, available on Amazon, is a delightful collection of stories, each about a dollar bill. Writers from SBW, as listed in the table of contents: **Judith Shernock:** "Wan Dollar, Wan Dollar," **Marjorie Johnson:** "The Dollar Piranha," **Pat Bustamante:** "Finders Weepers," **Karen Sundback:** "The Lucky Dollar," **R. L. King:** "A Single Impression," **Chess Desalls:** "Winter Advance," **Frank Johnson:** "The Short Snorter," **Karen Hartley:** "An Unexpected Discovery," **Valerie Lee:** "The Incomparable American Dollar Bill," **David Strom:** "Super Holly Hanson In: The Dimensional Dollar!" **Bill Baldwin:** "Passing into the Abyss," **Bill Baldwin:** "Many Happy Returns?" **Carolyn Donnell:** "It's a Fake!" and **Karen Franzenburg:** "Lucky." The book is dedicated to contributors Frank Johnson and Ray Malus who passed during its publication.

Two of **Carolyn Donnell's** paintings appear in the summer issue of *The Literary Nest: Texas Gold* in the Fiction section and *Hakone* in the Poetry section. **Pratibha Kelapure** has released the largest volume ever in the history of this online journal—another venue for your creative work and well worth a look. (theliterarynest.com/issues/vol-4-issue-2/)

Kymberlie Ingalls' memoir, "A Long December," and **Marjorie Johnson's** story, "The Case of the Nicotine Aspirin," appear in the 2018 *CWC Literary Review*.

During the first week of July, **Marjorie Johnson** attended the Eighteenth International Conference on Fibonacci Numbers and Their Applications in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, where she gave the invited opening remarks. The conference was dedicated to **Frank Johnson**. Frank's portrait photo of Fibonacci appeared on the conference program as well as on the commemorative mug. Fibonacci was the famous mathematician Leonardo Pisano who introduced Arabic numerals and the concept of zero as a placeholder to Europe in 1202. If you don't think that was special, try to divide using Roman numerals. Of course, the Fibonacci numbers are 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, —WT



Statue of Leonardo Pisano aka
Fibonacci
Sculpture by Giovanni Paganucci,
1863
Photo by Frank Johnson, 1978,
Pisa, Italy

South Bay Writers Club BBQ July 2018





ESSAY

Christopher Isherwood and I/Eye/Aye

by Bill Baldwin

Christopher Isherwood is best known for his Berlin Stories, the basis for the musical *Cabaret* and its character Sally Bowles.

I have been told that it is important for the “I” to say “aye” to itself, but I have not yet arrived at the satori necessary to do so.

My writing mentor, Christopher Isherwood, has often been accused of being a passive observer—in other words, of being merely an “eye” rather than an “I.”

This perhaps should not surprise us, since perhaps being an “I” is overrated. For starts, Isherwood was gay at a time when being gay was a criminal offense in England, where Isherwood grew up. That was a prime reason that Isherwood moved to Berlin to join his fellow gay Englishman and sometimes lover W. H.

Auden.

More profoundly, Isherwood, who had grown up rebelling against religion, eventually moved to Santa Monica, California and became a follower of Swami Prabhavananda and a member of the Vedanta Society.

He then had to consider what his “I” actually was, and to do that he had to observe himself, using of course his inward eye. His “Eye” had to consider his “I.”

His readership has been limited both by his gayness and his spirituality. But could following his own path have led him any other way?

Using his “Eye” to understand his “I” enabled him to say “Aye!” — WT

GET THE WORD OUT: RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

ALL current members of South Bay Writers should have renewed for 2018-2019. Please encourage any friends and former members you know to check and make sure their membership has been renewed!

Three Ways to Renew Your Membership:

- **Credit card:** renew online at South Bay Writers.com
- **Pay in person:** cash or check at the next meeting
- **Mail:** send your basic information with a check for \$45 to:

CWC South Bay Writers Club
P.O. Box 3254
Santa Clara, CA 95055

When I Was Far Out

by Luanne Oleas

I used to be one “boss chick.” This does not mean I was the top fowl in management. It means I graduated in the early 1970s, when gals were chicks and guys were dudes.

You can tell a lot about a person just by glancing at their high school yearbook. No doubt it would reveal we are all the same. Some entries might be more personalized, but we all have this one:

“Dear <insert name>,”

To a really nice person I’ve enjoyed knowing. We had lots of fun in second period, especially when you did that thing with the waste basket on your head. Stay cool and don’t ever change.

Your friend,

<insert name>

In my case, there are a few key words that date me. Some people might wonder if I was thick-skinned or had a hard life after reading some of my friends’ comments.

“To a tough chick, We did some tough stuff in creative writing.”

In the olden days, tough was good and bad was bad. Back then, I was a quasi-achiever, voted the person most likely to have her name misspelled.

“To my dear friend Luann/LuAnn/Luanna/Louann/Lunneann, etc.”

Come to think of it, it was a time when nearly everything was better misspelled. This era probably signaled the actual start of educational decline in America. After we learned how to read and write, we figured out how to do it wrong.

“Hi Lu Ann, To a tuff chick that I really luv’ed having in English.”

As much as entries in annuals have in common, social factors influence what is written. Ninety percent of the signoffs in mine included the words, “Love” and “Peace.” Most likely, this could be directly attributed to the “conflict” in Vietnam.



Luanne Oleas’ Yearbook Photo

All this loving peacefulness may have blinded us somewhat. Back then, most people considered others beautiful. For example:

“To LouAnn, You are a beautiful person.”

You should remember this was back in the days when, for males and females, styling your hair meant you parted it straight. We didn’t have bad hair days. We just had times when it looked as though the ax didn’t fall dead center on our scalps.

Speaking of seeing, apparently a few of my friends couldn’t do that too well. They considered me “out of sight,” except for a few who considered me “outtasite.” This was probably a result of the explosion.

“We had a real blast in Math class, didn’t we?”

Having a blast wasn’t any more painful than having someone ‘sock it to you,’ or when someone mentioned you should ‘hang loose.’ What really hurt was being ‘cut down.’ However, most of us managed to survive our injuries and kept signing yearbooks. In case I missed yours, here goes:

“Dear Reader,

To a really nice person I’d like to get to know better. You’re super far out, so don’t ever change.

Peace & L♥ve,

Louanne” — WT

The Naked Man in the Cadillac de Ville

by Marjorie Johnson

Mary and I drive up 101 on our way to a meeting of CWC SF-Peninsula. It’s a rare perfect January day, clear, sunny, and 70 degrees. In front of us a bald-headed man is driving a light blue Cadillac convertible with its top down. The car’s a classic and perfectly detailed, white wall tires, gleaming chrome.

“Look at that,” I say. “He’s going to sunburn his head.”

“What a gorgeous car,” Mary says. “1968 Cadillac de Ville. I can tell the year by the Nixon-Agnew bumper sticker.”

Getting closer, his shoulders are bare. OMG—shoulders and arms also bare.

“Look at those muscles,” I say. “He’s a body builder. Look at those pecs.”

“And abs,” Mary says.

We pass pants and a shirt on the side of the road but they can’t belong to our man—they’ve been there before he drove by.

Mary pulls up alongside to get a better view. I can’t see much because I’m too short. He has a big nose and blue eyes. Her car is higher than his. No shirt, bare hairy knees—he’s naked!

“He’s gonna burn real good,” I say.

* * *

Perhaps that naked guy we saw driving on 101 didn’t have a shirt on because it caught fire when he torched a synagogue that he was expelled from. He had to drive while taking it off because it was burning.

Perhaps he was a time traveler. The clothes we saw along the road were left there last week.

Perhaps you can finish or adapt this story! Send in a submission to the editor, and the best Naked Guy story will appear in *WritersTalk*. — WT

Poetry Page

My Life as a Sandwich

by Kelsey Wu

Balance bao bun with fried chicken.
Once a Shanghai girl, I opt for hot beef rice with onion,
prefer soy sauce to cheese over my omelet,
and smile as I devour Panda Express's "genuine" Kung Pao Chicken.
I need not abandon my roots in order to assimilate.
The bao bun and fried chicken coalesce.

Isherwood's Sally Bowles

by Bill Baldwin

There once was a girl from Berlin,
Who prided herself on her sin.
She was called Sally Bowles,
She just wanted a Rolls,
But 'twas only a book she got in.



Poetry Series

by Stephen C. Wetlesen

Haiku Moment

Around 11:15 AM PDT

June 15, 2018

Saratoga, California

One Line, Seven Syllables

Cool soft breeze blows rose bushes.

Father's Day Haiku

Sunday, June 17, 2018

One Line, Five Syllables

Overcast meets pine.

Summer Solstice Haiku

June 21, 2018

Longest day of year.

Morning overcast cools us.

California.

Rene Magritte

Art Critic Quote Haiku

June 21, 2018

One Line, Seven Syllables

"Eternally perplexing."

Saturday, June 23, 2018 Haiku

Saratoga, California

One Line, Seven Syllables

Heat wave - slightest morning breeze.

Fusion - Endless Multiverses

One day,
"virtual reality"
may become
so sophisticated
that
it cannot be distinguished
from actual
reality.

Downtown Pescadero

Harleys Haiku

June 28, 2018

Levi jeans sofa.

Fine Americano blend.

Swirling Down the Pipe

Continued from Page 3

no text. You need cognitive rest, not just physical rest."

I looked at the doctor like he'd just diagnosed me with something rare and utterly incurable, like hantavirus. "No writing?" I repeated. "For how long?"

"Three to four weeks."

My jaw dropped. "Are you serious?"

"That's the trick." He held the lobby door open. "Cognitive rest. It'll all come back, if you take care of yourself."

I didn't want to accept it. I follow the writerly lifestyle advice of Stephen King: 'make sure you write something every day, no matter what, even on Christmas and Fourth of July.' For days after the concussion, I thought about writing. I was having trouble remembering all manner of things, from birthdays to locations to events. But when it came to writing, I thought, what the hell. It can't really be that bad, can it? What's to *really* stop me from squeezing out two, three hundred words a day if I just give it the old college try?

THE WRITERSTALK CHALLENGE

MEMBERS of SOUTH BAY WRITERS:

Don't forget! Once a year in January, awards will be given to contributors to WritersTalk. You need take no special steps to enter this competition; if your piece in one of the designated genres is published in WritersTalk, you are a contestant!

Genres:

Fiction: 500 – 1800 words

Memoir: 500 – 1800 words

Essay/Nonfiction: 500 – 1000

Poetry: 20 – 200 words

Judging Periods: Work published in WritersTalk in the preceding year. 2018 only: Work published in October, 2017 through December, 2018.

Prizes: Two winners will be selected from each genre; first prize, \$100; second, \$50. Judging by WritersTalk contributing editors and other members of CWC.

The first requirement to enter this contest is that you have something published in WritersTalk.

Let's see your creative work!

Once I psyched myself up, I turned rationale into productivity. "I could do a recovery journal," I told my spouse a few days after the bump. "Kind of like a dream diary, except I write about how I feel post-concussion."

"If you want," he replied, wary. "But I don't know if that's a good idea."

"Why's that?"

"Doctor's orders, you know? I think you should slow down."

Pardon the pun, but I'm hard-headed. I don't like slowing down, so I didn't listen. Two days after the injury, I sat at my computer (violating Doctor's Order #3, *no screen time*), opened Google Docs, and clumsily scribbled out a journal entry. The going was rough. It took longer than usual to form sentences I felt good about, with certain words and phrasings failing to jump to mind as quickly as they used to. But I didn't stress. I jotted down a note to reread the entry later and do some light editing. I was convinced: Fifteen minutes of writing flow was an achievable daily goal, and would do wonders for my anxiety.

Three hours later, I sat back down, opened the doc, reread the entry, and broke into tears. Not sniffles, either; we're talking big-boohoo sobs.

What I had written was *bad*. Utterly illegible. Nothing made sense – and not in the Hubert Selby Jr. *Requiem for a Dream* stream-of-consciousness sense, but in the outright ludicrous. It was like I wrote while drunk. Whole sentences read like I had written them backwards. Certain words were misspelled or replaced with homophones. No paragraph retained the same tense as the previous. I felt like a toddler had played Mad Libs in my parietal lobe.

That pipe, I kept thinking. A complete brown-out of my cognitive writing ability, all from a bonk to a dirty drainage pipe.

I gave in and followed the doctor's orders to a tee. Three to four weeks, no writing. Minimal reading. As little screen time as possible, which provided a sabbatical from social media. Facebook, it turns out, is not a difficult platform from which to wean.

(Even less so is Twitter. God, I do not miss Twitter, not one bit.)

Now, over a month later, things are getting better. Recovery has been surreal. At times, it feels like something out of a foggy nightmare. Like I said, I'm over the moon to have recovered enough to share with you what happened. But now, more than anything, I'm interested in similar stories that may have happened to you.

Do you have a recollection of recovery you'd like to write about? Has an injury or setback ever put you through a rough time with writing? How did you handle the frustration? What kept you going? Share your stories with us at WritersTalk! Who knows: your story might be just what someone needs to hear. — WT

The Synopsis Opens the Door

by Marjorie Johnson

Editors agree that writing the synopsis is the toughest kind of writing. But it's the synopsis, not the manuscript as a whole, which opens the door to agents and publishers. The synopsis is the author's best and sometimes only sales tool.

Google shows us as many ways to write a synopsis as there are books. But all good synopses have certain things in common.

The three C's for a sellable synopsis:

- **Clear.** The information is straightforward and presented in a logical manner.
- **Concise.** It doesn't fill space with unnecessary details or back story.
- **Complete.** It includes all the information necessary to understand the characters and the conflict. It shows how the conflict is resolved and how the ending comes about.

The necessary pieces of the synopsis:

- **Hook.** What will appear on the back cover of the book? What will grab the reader and make him say, "I have to read this book"?
- **Protagonist.** What makes the main character interesting? What kind of person is he? How did he get that way?
- **Antagonist.** Why does the other main character oppose the protagonist? What does he want? Why does he not want the protagonist to succeed?
- **Conflict.** What is the protagonist's difficulty at or near the start of the story? Conflict is not storyline. Conflict is a problem that keeps the characters apart, forces them to

work together, or creates tension between them.

- **Story.** Sketch the beginning, middle, and end of the story in skeletal form. What twists and turns in the plot will keep the reader fascinated?
- **Resolution.** How is the conflict resolved? What makes the ending satisfying for the reader?

Five things to keep in mind:

- Write the synopsis in present tense.
- Think book review, not book report.
- Tell the story in a logical way, not necessarily in the order the story will be presented in the book.
- Remember that less is better than more. Make it short.
- Strive to capture the tone of your book.

Five things to avoid:

- Wasted words: "The story

starts...", etc.

- Adverbs, internal monologue, scenic descriptions.
- Clichés.
- Telling how humorous or suspenseful the story is. Let the editor be the judge.
- Leaving the ending mysterious.

Finally, study your intended audience and give the agent or editor what he asks for. Go over your synopsis with your critique group. —WT

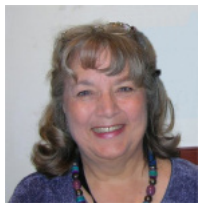


"We're looking for books that are not too complicated, not too simplistic, but just right."



Contests and Markets

by Carolyn Donnell



2019 California Writers Club Literary Review: Submissions run from September 1 through Nov 30. I just got the 2018 Literary Review. Only 2 South Bay members got published! (one dual member). Let's get more members accepted this year. Get

your stories and poems together this summer and submit. \$10 fee for up to 2 pieces.

<http://calwriters.org/publications/#about>

Twenty-second Annual Zoetrope: All-Story Short Fiction Competition First prize: \$1,000 Second prize: \$500 Third prize: \$250 The three prizewinners and seven honorable mentions will be considered for representation by various agencies. Deadline Oct. 1, 2018, at 11:59 p.m. PDT.

Guidelines at <http://www.all-story.com/contests.cgi>

Writer's Digest: Four contests left this year.

- Self-Published eBook Deadline Aug 1!!!
- Popular Fiction Awards Deadline: 9/14/18
- Poetry Awards 10/01/18
- Short Short Story Competition 11/15/18

<http://www.writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions>

Local Publications:

- The Red Wheelbarrow (De Anza/Poetry Center San Jose) Deadline Aug. 15!!

<https://redwheelbarrow.submittable.com/submit>

- Literary Nest - Local publication. Deadline for Fall issue - September 30.

<https://theliterarynest.com>

- Sand Hill Review: Stories, non-fiction articles, and poems.

<https://sandhillreview.org/>

- North State Writers Recommends Glimmer Train and Chicken Soup For the Soul on their website.

<http://www.northstatewriters.com/contests.html>

- Redwood Writers Young Adult & Middle Grade Fiction Contest Launching Soon: Opens: Sept. 9, 2018 Deadline: Oct. 21, 2018

<http://www.redwoodwriters.org>

- Fremont Area Writers list

<https://cwc-fremontareawriters.org/resources-writers/>

The following listings are for information only. No vetting has been done by South Bay Writers Club. Some contests have been around for a long time and the reputation is known but some are newer. Please read all guidelines carefully before submitting. And please share any experience you have with them. Good or bad.

Poetry

Winning Writers - Tom Howard/Margaret Reid Poetry Contest Submit until Sept. 30

<https://winningwriters.com/our-contests>

Naugatuck River - Deadline September 1st, First prize \$1000, second prize is \$250, and third is \$100.

<https://naugatuckriverreview.com/2018/07/01/>

[/naugatuck-river-review-contest-submissions-now-open/](#)

Tinder Box Poetry Journal - 2018 Brett Elizabeth Jenkins Poetry Prize contest. Ends on Aug. 22, 2018 \$12.00 USD. One winner will receive \$750 and one runner-up will receive \$500.

<https://tinderboxpoetryjournal.submittable.com/submit>

The Philip Levine Prize for Poetry - previously unpublished poetry book manuscripts, 48-80 pages. \$2,000 award, publication by Anhinga Press, 25 author copies, and a public reading at California State University, Fresno. Deadline Oct. 1.

<https://www.fresnostate.edu/levineprize>

Fiction

DAW (Imprint of Penguin - Science Fiction and Fantasy) Open to manuscript submissions from authors without an agent.

<http://www.penguin.com/publishers/daw/>

Non-Fiction

Workman Publishing - Multiple imprints

<https://www.workman.com/work-with-us/author-submissions-algonquin>

Some Websites That List Contests

- Writer's Digest -

<http://www.writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions>

- The Writer Magazine -

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

- The Write Life -

<https://thewritelife.com/writing-contests/>

- Winning Writers -

<https://winningwriters.com/the-best-free-literary-contests>

Continued on page 13

Contests and Markets

Continued from Page 12

- Poets & Writers - <https://www.pw.org/grants>
- National Association of Memoir Writers - <http://namw.org/>
- Freedom With Writing - <https://www.freedomwith-writing.com/freedom/>
- Authors Publish - <https://www.authorspublish.com/>
- WOW! Women On Writing - <http://www.wow-womenonwriting.com/>
- Women's Fiction Writers Association - <http://womensfictionwriters.org/Contests>
- Funds For Writers - <http://fundsforwriters.com/contests/>
- Reedsy Writing Competitions in 2018 - <https://blog.reedsy.com/writing-contests/>
- Funds for Writers - <http://fundsforwriters.com/contests/>
- Writer's Write - <https://www.writerswrite.com/contests/>
- Writer Unboxed
- <http://writerunboxed.com/2017/04/09/fiction-writing-contests-worth-your-time-april-may-june-edition/>

Websites With Writing Advice

- Avoid bad contests. <https://winningwriters.com/the-best-free-literary-contests/contests-to-avoid>
- Finding reviews - <http://www.selfpublishingreview.com/2018/04/how-to-get-book-reviews-in-2018-without-going-crazy/>
- Finding reviews - <http://www.clkmg.com/ddrum/brthome>
- Amazon ads - <https://writeforkids.org/blog/2018/01/amazon-marketing-services-offers-cheap-ads-self-publishers/>
- Kindle keywords - <https://kindlepreneur.com/how-to-choose-kindle-keywords/>
- Sell internationally - <https://kindlepreneur.com/selling-kindle-books-internationally/>
- Writing groups - <http://www.authorspublish.com/the-surprising-ways-writing-groups-open-doors/>
- The Writer Magazine
 - Book readings - <https://www.writermag.com/2018/04/25/tips-for-boosting-attendance-book-reading/>
 - Articles - <https://www.writermag.com/category/fiction/>
- Self-publishing courses - <http://www.ingramspark.com/self-publishing-courses>
- Google marketing - <https://offers.hubspot.com/digital-marketing-with-google>

Some Facebook pages and groups for writers

- Writers Post Call for Submissions
- A Path To Publishing
- SCBWI CA North/Central
- Historical Novel Society - Northern California
- Children's Book Writers and Illustrators
- #IndieBooksBeSeen
- Indie-Visible Community Lounge
- National Association of Memoir Writers
- Children's Writer's & Illustrator's Market
- The Writer Magazine

Conferences and Events, August 2018

by Margie Yee Webb

Mendocino Coast Writers' Conference 2018

August 2-4, 2018, Mendocino CA

<http://mcwc.org/>

Publishing Bootcamp with Jane Friedman

August 5, 2018, Mendocino CA

<http://mcwc.org/oneday-bootcamp/>

"Publishing Bootcamp with Jane Friedman, ex-publisher of Writer's Digest and the established authority on new paths for authors in the digital age"

How to Become a Competitive Creative: Building a Full-Time Career as a Writer in the Digital Age with Jane Friedman

August 10, 2018, San Francisco CA

<https://www.milibrary.org/events/how-become-competitive-creative-building-full-time-career-writer-digital-age-jane-friedman>

<https://sfwriters.org/mil-classes>

Class co-sponsored by Mechanics Institute and San Francisco Writers Conference/San Francisco Writers Foundation.

Worldcon 76

August 16-20, 2018, San Jose CA

<http://www.worldcon76.org/>

"Worldcon (the World Science Fiction Convention) is the annual gathering of science fiction and fantasy fans, writers, artists, musicians and other creators, first held in New York City in 1939."

The 2018 Writing Workshop of San Francisco

August 25, 2018, San Francisco CA

<https://writingworkshopsanfrancisco.com/>

"A full-day 'How to Get Published' writing 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

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 DeVry University 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

The Author Website: Building a Site That Works with Linda Lee

August 25, 2018, San Francisco CA

<https://www.milibrary.org/events/author-website-building-site-works-aug-25-2018>

<https://sfwriters.org/mil-classes>

Class co-sponsored by Mechanics Institute and San Francisco Writers Conference/San Francisco Writers Foundation.

WordPress Bootcamp: Creating a WordPress Website and How to Use It with Linda Lee

August 25, 2018, San Francisco CA

<https://www.milibrary.org/events/wordpress-bootcamp-creating-wordpress-website-and-how-use-it-aug-25-2018>

<https://sfwriters.org/mil-classes>

Class co-sponsored by Mechanics Institute and San Francisco Writers Conference/San Francisco Writers Foundation.

San Francisco Writing for Change Conference

September 8, 2018, San Francisco CA

<http://sfwritingforchange.org/>

"Writing to Make a Difference" — "At the 10th San Francisco Writing for Change Conference you will discover how what you write can change the world...and how to get your writing published."

North Coast Redwoods Writers' Conference

September 21-22, 2018, Crescent City CA

<http://www.ncrwc.org/>

18th Annual North Coast Redwoods Writers' Conference

Book Passage Mystery Writers Conference

September 27-30, 2018, Corte Madera CA

<https://www.bookpassage.com/mystery>

Central Coast Writers Conference

September 27-29, 2018, San Luis Obispo CA

<https://www.centralcoastwritersconference.com>

34th Annual Cuesta College Central Coast Writers Conference
—WT

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
August 2018			1	2	3 7:30P Open mic Barnes&Noble Almaden, San Jose	4
5	6 2P Valley Writers	7 7P Well-RED at Works 7P Board Meeting	8	9	10	11
12 10A Our Voices	13 2P Valley Writers 6:00P SBW Dinner Harry's Hofbrau	14	15 DEADLINE: WritersTalk Submission	16 7P Third Thursday, Po- etry Center	17 7:30P Open mic Wil- low Glen Library, 1157 Minnesota Ave	18
19 1P Poets@Play, Markham House	20 2P Valley Writers	21	22	23	24	25
26 10A Our Voices	27 2P Valley Writers	28	29	30	31	

Future Events:

SBW Board Meeting: Tuesday, Aug. 7 at Edie Matthews' home

May Meeting: August 13 at Harry's Hofbrau

**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**

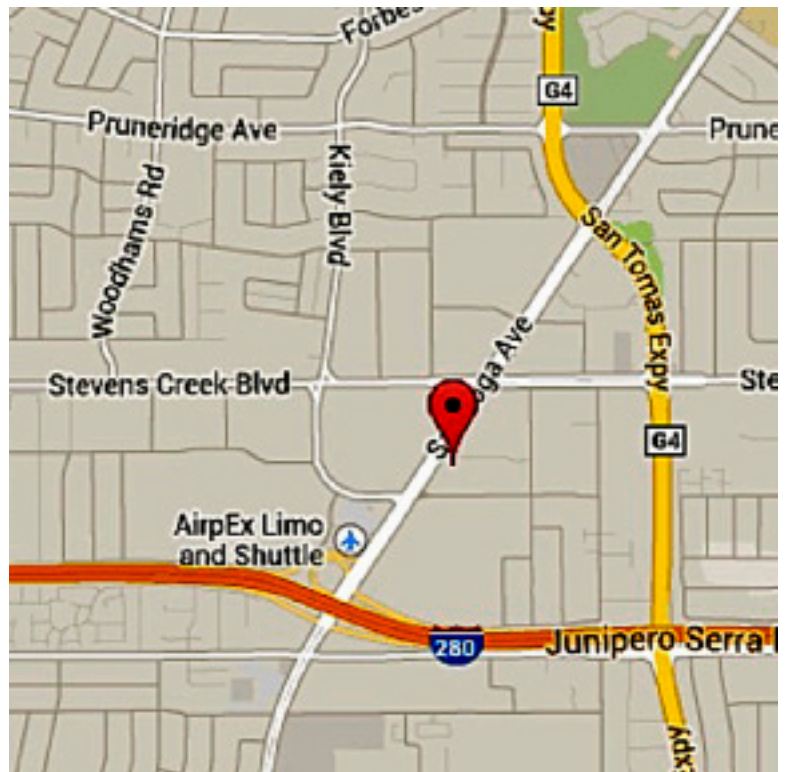
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**South Bay Writers
Regular Dinner Meeting
6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Monday August 13, 2018
Harry's Hofbrau
390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose**

**Travel Writing
with
Don George
August 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.