



# WRITERSTALK

Volume 27  
Number 03  
March 2019

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

MARCH SPEAKER: MICHAEL C. GRUMLEY

## Self-Publishing and the Future of Writing

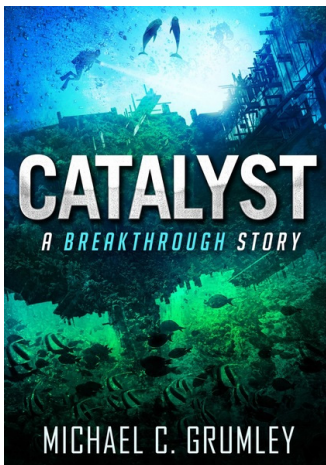
by Jamal Khan

The future of writing is changing rapidly for both new and established authors. No longer bound by the rules or control of giant publishing houses, writers today have new and exciting options thanks to the introduction of Amazon's revolutionary Kindle and the birth of an entirely new world for aspiring writers. The transformed self-publishing landscape is promising, but it can also be intimidating. In our dinner meeting on Tuesday, March 19, Michael Grumley will help you navigate the new system and get your work directly to readers.

For years, Michael Grumley dreamed of writing thrillers the way he thought they should be

written: complex, multi-genre stories with unique plots that 'move.' After years of trial and error, he produced *Breakthrough*, *Amid the Shadows*, and *Through the Fog*, all deeply human stories with endings you will never see coming.

Michael C. Grumley lives with his wife and two young daughters in Northern California, where he works in the Information Technology field. He's an avid reader, runner, and, most of all, father. He dotes on his girls every chance he gets. His website is [www.michaelgrumley.com](http://www.michaelgrumley.com) and his email address is [michael@michaelgrumley.com](mailto:michael@michaelgrumley.com).



FEBRUARY RECAP: MARLA COOPER

## Kill 'Em With ...

### A Book?

by J.K. McDole

Our February dinner meeting featured special guest Marla Cooper, author of the Kelsey McKenna *Destination Wedding* Mysteries. Her talk covered the various methods and means for brainstorming creative ideas for your next great story.

While Marla had several brainstorming exercises for the audience, her most provocative came in the form of a challenge: "List 10 ways you can kill someone with a book." The audience responses ranged from tame ("hit them with it") to complex ("bury them in a pile of books" and "fashion the books into weapons with which to maim them") to downright medieval ("lace the page corners with arsenic or some similar poison and convince the victim to lick their fingers as they turn each page"). Many laughs were had (and more than a few wincing).

How did Marla's creativity-building talk boost your storytelling vibes? Did you strike inspirational gold? Tell us about it! We love to hear your responses and thoughts about the impact of our guest speakers.

Send us your essays, your prose, even your prompt responses to the editor at [newsletter@southbaywriters.com](mailto:newsletter@southbaywriters.com).

Should you volunteer to write our meeting recaps, you'll be featured on our newsletter's front page! It's a great way to get your name in front of our club membership and eager readers!

— WT

Where: Holder's Country Inn, 998 S. DeAnza Blvd,  
San Jose, CA 95129

When: Tuesday, March 19 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



## On the Move

We're off to a new location! Beginning on March 19th, the THIRD TUESDAY of the month, (yes, a new day too), South Bay Writers will convene at The Country Inn. Technically it is located in San Jose, but adjacent to Cupertino, at 998 S. De Anza Boulevard, across the street from Home Depot. As long-time members know, this is not the first time SBW has relocated.

Since going to my first meeting in 1998, the club has met in eleven different venues—including returning to two prior sites, Harry's Hofbrau and Hometown Buffet.

The first two meetings I attended were held at Mariani's Inn & Restaurant in Santa Clara. It was pricey—twenty-plus dollars. However, I had a pleasant dinner served on a white tablecloth.

When I returned six months later, the club had moved to Hometown Buffet at the Moonlight Shopping Center. Although this location wasn't as elegant, financially it worked better for the club. Mariani's had insisted on reservations in advance, and the club was stuck paying for no-shows. Consequently, SBW was nearly a thousand dollars in debt.

Moving to HB solved that problem, but there were other issues. The publicity chair was negligent, the speakers were mediocre, and attendance was dropping.

In 1999, when I was elected VP (in charge of speakers), I asked to also take over Publicity. With a background in journalism, I knew how to get the word out.

At that time, the San Jose Mercury News was a thriving newspaper and printed a Sunday Book section. I started to get us listed in Events, and occasionally, they added the speaker's picture. When I learned they had a non-profit rate for ads, we took advantage of that too.

Twice a year, instead of our regular meeting, we held weekend workshops at the Wyndham Hotel in Sunnyvale. Our membership and attendance steadily increased. By 2001, we had outgrown Hometown Buffet.

The board started searching for a venue to accommodate our growing membership and still be reasonably priced. In August, SBW moved to Fresh Choice in Valley Fair. The meeting room was larger, and members loved the healthy food. For seven months, we met at FC until they lost their lease. (That location is now The Cheesesteak Factory.)

Another scramble for a new site. We moved to House of Yu Rong in Cupertino. At the first meeting, the food was plentiful and impressive. Sadly, at the second meeting, they forgot we were coming—and dinner was less than dazzling. Actually, there was another drawback—a lot of noise from the adjoining dining room filtered into our meeting.

I called Harry's Hofbrau. (I had spoken to them previously, but they wanted \$200 for the room.) In my second conversation, I reminded them that we were non-

*Continued on Page 4*

California Writers Club  
South Bay Branch  
[www.southbaywriters.com](http://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, 2019. Dual membership, \$25; student membership, \$20. New member, \$65. Contact Membership Chair at a meeting or sign up online at [southbaywriters.com](http://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 20th 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



## Confer With Me

I gotta keep it short this month: our March issue is jam-packed! I nearly ran out of room!

This past Saturday, I had the privilege of volunteering at the California Writer's Club booth at the San Francisco Writer's Conference. I'd never been to a conference specifically held for writers. When I worked in tech, I paid dues to a bunch of professional organizations and societies that offered networking summits and educational seminars that I never got around to attending. "Conference" just sounds like a stuffy word, and "convention" — well, that makes me think of Marvel and Star Trek. As I drove up to San Francisco that morning, I wondered to myself: what is a writer's conference like? A boring work summit, or ComicCon for scribblers?

Had I been a paid attendee, I think I would have seen a little of both, but my experience was still fairly fun and cozy. During my volunteer shift, I manned the CWC booth with the delightful Colleen Gonzalez from our Mt. Diablo branch. She was pleasant and witty and quick to engage everyone who came by the booth. Between us, we must have spoken to over thirty or so interested writers wanting more information about the club. We handed out brochures, took down e-mail addresses, and passed out Valentine's candy to any passing sweet tooths. Our stellar volunteer coordinator Kymberlie Ingalls kept us stocked with schedules, updates, and even a few much-needed snacks (I still think that might have been the best banana muffin I've ever had).

While I missed my chance to attend any conference events, I enjoyed speaking with everyone that came by the booth. We met members from CWC branches all across the state. I had a long conversation with a kindly gentleman who had recently become a literary agent. I've met many a fresh face who's just devoted themselves to writing full-time, but how often can you say you've met a fledgling agent in the wild?

My shift ran from nine in the morning to noon, so I didn't have too much time to run around the conference floor. But the experience of volunteering and meeting so many fellow CWC members was well worth the drive.

Ever been to the San Francisco Writer's Conference? Share your stories with us! Remember that the South Bay Writers are changing not only their dinner locations but the schedule for our meetings: every third Tuesday of the month, with submission deadlines for *WritersTalk* now on the 20th! — WT

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## View from the Board

by Marjorie Johnson



Marjorie Johnson  
SBW Secretary

On February 5, nine of us met at President Edie Matthews' home: Edie, Jamal Khan, Tatyana Grinenko, Alfred Jan, Bill Baldwin, Trenton Myers, Kymberlie Ingalls, and Marjorie Johnson.

- The meeting was called to order at 7:15 pm. Minutes for November 2018 were discussed. Meeting highlights follow.

- President Edie Matthews gave details about SBW's change of venue. Our February meeting will be held at Hometown Buffet, 1670 El Camino Real, Santa Clara, On Monday, February 11, 6 to 9 pm. In March and thereafter, SBW will meet at Holder's Country Inn, 998 S. DeAnza Blvd, San Jose 95129 from 6 pm to 9 pm on Tuesday, March 19, and on third Tuesdays after that. Board meetings will continue to be held at the home of Edie Matthews but on second Tuesdays, 7 pm.

- Vice President Jamal Khan announced the speaker for March: Michael C. Grumley on self-publishing and promoting your book.
- Preliminary plans for a contest to be open to all CWC members were discussed in November, to be headed by Carole Taub and announced in February. This will not happen. President Edie Matthews urged us to concentrate on the *WritersTalk* Challenge Contest: every submission printed in *WritersTalk* is automatically entered. Awards for the 2018 contest were given in November. Keep sending your stories, memoirs, essays, and poems to *WritersTalk* for the 2019 contest.
- Meeting adjourned 8:15 pm.

Next Board meeting: Tuesday, March 12, 7 pm, at the home of Edie Matthews. Board meetings are open to all interested members of SBW. — WT



Holder's Country Inn - Our New Dinner Meeting Location!

## DINNER MEETING CHANGES

The SBW March dinner meeting will occur on  
**TUESDAY, MARCH 19,**  
at **HOLDER'S COUNTRY INN:**

998 S. DeAnza Blvd  
San Jose, CA 95129

Future dinner meetings for the SBW will be on the **THIRD TUESDAY** of each month.

Newsletter deadlines now fall on the **20th of each month.**

Please expect your copy of *WritersTalk* to arrive a little after the first of the month (anywhere from the 7th through the 10th).

For further updates, please check your SBW-registered email or check the club website:

**southbaywriters.com**

### On the Move

*Continued from Page 2*

profit. The manager explained that too many groups have attendees who don't buy dinner. I said we would create a system to encourage people to eat — thus the \$10 credit ticket was established.

Of course, you can't please everyone. After complaints about the food, the lighting, and the Feng Shui, we relocated to the Lookout Bar & Grill at the Sunnyvale Golf Course. No doubt, this was a cheerier location, and most people liked it—except those who lived on the south side of town.

All went well the next several years. Then a crisis between the city of Sunnyvale and the management of the restaurant led to their closure.

With less than a week to spare, one of our board members booked us into the Pizza Hut in a shopping strip in Sunnyvale. They served an Italian buffet which was a nice change of pace. However, like the Chinese restaurant, this location was noisy and challenging for our speaker.

Back to Harry's!

For six years, all went well at Harry's until January of this year. Suddenly, the manager notified us that they were closing. (We had been told it might happen but not for at least a year.) The issue: the building needed extensive repairs (including the roof), and the owner preferred selling to a developer.

In a pinch, we were able to return to Hometown Buffet, so the January workshop and March meeting did not have

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to be canceled. However, though the room can legally hold 50+ people, the room is a tight fit. That brings us to our newest site.

Join us for the next chapter of SBW beginning at "The Country Inn." We hope to see you there! — WT

## The Literary Stage

### San Mateo County Fair

by Marjorie Johnson

A literary stage, and writing contests to boot, at a county fair? Yes, the Fine Arts Galleria, Literary Arts Division, has been happening for ten years.

The San Francisco Peninsula Writers is the only California Writers Club in the state (and possibly the country) utilizing a weeklong, 18,000 sq. ft. Fine Arts gallery with a stage and seating for 125. Over the past ten years, they have conducted over 150 free "events within the event" on our literary stage: workshops, panels, author presentations, one-act plays, poetry readings, and song and dance performances. SF Peninsula Writers sponsor two contests. For information on all of the free events and so much more, visit [sanmateocountyfair.com/literary-arts](http://sanmateocountyfair.com/literary-arts)

The San Mateo County Fair takes place in June, but the contests' deadline is April 1 at 11:59 pm. To be on the safe side, just mark March 31 on your calendar. There are too many contests to list here, each with prizes of \$100, \$50, \$25, and an entry fee of \$10. There is a contest for poetry. Contests for creative nonfiction essays and memoir, best blogs and audio books, and song writing. Fiction contests: novel chapters, first person narratives, heroic deeds, short stories. Also some special writing contests. Most divisions also divide into classes by age of writer. This is your chance to shine!

Be a winner. Go to the website above and READ the directions. Any entries that don't FOLLOW ALL THE RULES will be disqualified. **Good luck!**— WT

## The Club Today

by Dave LaRoche

Many who have recently joined and others who've been warming a seat for a while have seen only a smidgen of what they've signed into and harbor some curiosity. Well, I've been around for a while, held most every office, and been the prime-mover for any number of changes at any number of levels, so I can tell you a little because I know a bit about this club. In this and the coming issue of *WritersTalk*, you will find me blathering on. And, if you want to know more about what you paid for, please stay tuned.

South Bay Writers is a branch (legal partition—think division, as in the Tractor Division of Ford Motor Company) of the California Writers Club (CWC). The CWC is a nonprofit (501c3) corporation chartered by the state of California in 1913 with all the obligations and advantages of any nonprofit corporation in the State. Its main thrust, and the reason for that nonprofit status, is our mission of educating folks in the profession of writing. We are one of 22 branches variously located from Mendocino and Chico to the north, and to the south: Orange County and Long Beach. Total membership for the CWC today is north of 2000.

Branches operate on a "semiautonomous basis, deriving their own bylaws, electing their own officers, and conducting their own programs and business." However, branch operations shall conform to the corporate Constitution, Bylaws, and Policies. Otherwise, a branch is free to conduct itself as it sees fit. Branch bylaws and changes thereto must be approved by the Central Board.

The Central Board, the corporation's board of directors, consists of one representative from each of the 22 branches. They meet in January and again in July, and conduct interim business on an internet based platform known as the Forum. Their primary and ongoing concerns are membership, insurance, branding, the annual Literary Review, and financial reporting to the state and the IRS. Bill Baldwin is our current representative.

Our branch management is vested in our bylaws—a page and a half of elementary basics, which allows us a latitude the envy of any wide-eyed cosmologist. I can say that because their province rests with me as the chair. Their essence has not changed significantly since birth—the chartering of our branch on Jan 15, 1987. There has been one significant change,

the election of two members-at-large to our local Board of Directors. At the time of chartering, our branch boasted 28 members with Madge Saksena as founding president. Tom Mach, who we still hear from, succeeded Madge in 1988. Today we number about 130.

In addition to bylaws, we have branch policies—recorded means and methods derived from our experience so they needn't be rediscovered through trial and error by each newly elected Board. When new officers are seated they may garner guidance from the experience of those gone before and those before them.

Branches, with recognition and financial support from the Central Board, have formed two regional groups: the NorCal Group a coalition of 14 northern California branches, and CWC SoCal, a similar collection of the eight in the south. These groups are informal adjuncts to the corporate organization—organically sprouted coalitions of branches that draw out best practices from various sources to further their operations and interests.

The NorCal Group hopes to improve communications among branches with an exchange of ideas and needs, networking opportunities, and problem solving. For example: A biennial Leadership Conference is hosted by our NorCal Group, whereas officers and potential leaders meet and exchange across branches. Professionals present current and visionary ideas, and best practices are discussed as presidents brainstorm with other presidents, treasurers with treasurers, and on down the line.

So today, the California Writers Club consists of the Central Board that directs the corporation and is the club's organizational and legal locus; branches, which are semi-autonomous entities integral to the corporation and whose representatives are the corporation's board of directors; and regional groups, organically founded, that hope to circulate best means and methods related to achieving the CWC mission among member branches.

As mentioned at the top, it will be my pleasure to further elaborate on the CWC—its beginnings, troubles, successes and growth though the next several issues of *WritersTalk*. Thank you for reading. My hope is for your related understanding and, of course, questions and comments to the editor.

— WT



# March Member News

by Marjorie Johnson

Madeline McEwen reported that her short story, "Stepping on Snakes," has been accepted for publication in the MeToo Anthology in September 2019. She always signs her email with quotes: "I have spent most of the day putting in a comma, and the rest of the day taking it out." —Oscar Wilde

*Locals Rule*, Michael Shipp's surfing novel about love, respect, and waves in Moss Landing and Santa Cruz is now available at Amazon Books and soon coming to Kindle. The novel tries to define surfing through "Talking Story," the story of three surfers and a beautiful woman: Sean Waters who charges big waves, and Elan, his wife, who loves to run on the beach, Gnarly Charley, not so secretly in love with Elan, and Sand Dollar Bill who risks his life to save his "Homebreak" wave, the North Jetty wave, from destruction by P.G.&E., who proposes to widen the harbor entrance at Moss Landing to accommodate Super Tankers.

On January 24, at the Cafe Frascati (San Jose) Literary Open Mic, Dave M Strom was the headliner. He performed his audio story, *The Intellecta Rhapsody*, where Super Holly Hansson gets into a big argument with her boyfriend's artificially intelligent BatMobile-esque super car, and then she has to team up with it to stop Rocky the gangster and his gang from squashing some soldiers with a stolen super tank. Dave also helped someone on February 9 at the Fremont CWC book sale at the Newpark Mall. Previously, Dave was asked to email some advice to the daughter of a lady who knew Fremont CWC's Jan Small. He did, and at the mall, he met with the girl, looked over some of her drawings and writing, and gave her some advice and encouragement. Jan told Dave the girl and the mom were smiling a lot afterwards, and that made Dave feel good. (Dave's main comic book art advice: It's all in the face!)

Penny Cole and Marjorie Johnson also sold books at the Newpark Mall event.

New member Renee Nelson is interested in fiction and memoir. She is seeking publication. Welcome, Renee; perhaps we will hear good news from you soon. I hope you find your membership in SBW rewarding.

To report your writing good news, send an email to

[membernews@southbaywriters.com](mailto:membernews@southbaywriters.com).

If you are a new member and wish to tell us about yourself, send an email telling your areas of writing interest, your hobbies, or any other information to introduce yourself. For example, a new member told me she's an astrologer—I'd love to hear more about that—but she did not send anything. — WT

ESSAY

## The Challenge

by Marcela Dickerson

Pull, push, drag, press, right, left, slide, twist and bend. Nothing happened, absolutely nothing. The blasted thing would not budge. I couldn't believe it! My years of experience and my professional degrees were not helping. Did I become stupid or did I suddenly suffer an Alzheimer's attack?

I was not ready to give up without finishing my task. Annoyed as I might be I did not want to call for help. I was already here; I would hold on longer and get through the challenge.

I felt like the explorer in the reality shows, my hair would grow and my hands would get stiff but the beast would not win.

I went through the steps again, slowly and carefully, as a lion hounding its prey, ready to jump on it.

The low part did not give a clue, no button to lift, no lever to twist, and apparently no connection with the top either. Weird, weird, very weird.

I got closer and with some difficulty, because of the height. I re-examined the top. I pulled the knob; something

happened, although not what I wanted. I turned it to the right; the temperature was different, but nothing else changed. I looked and touched the top, the sides and then the bottom.

There it was! Hidden from view under the oversized knob I saw a small sliding bar. I slid it upwards and GREAT, oh GREAT; the water came gushing out of the shower, a marvelous warm waterfall.

Why in this our advanced country don't they agree on a universal design for shower taps?

I think to keep the engineer's goblins busy having us shiver in our underwear, thus delaying the pleasure of our bath, while we try to figure out how the darn thing works. These goblins hide in the soap dish and report to their bosses our futile efforts, while they laugh together figuring out how they can make the next tap even harder.

Well, they can laugh all they want; I have already mastered about 15 different types and after this one, I am ready for the next... — WT

## NEW YEAR, NEW CHALLENGE!

Submit your work to *WritersTalk* and you will be automatically entered into the yearly

**WritersTalk Challenge!**

Prizes to be awarded for

categories of

- Poetry
- Fiction
- Nonfiction/Essay
- Memoir

Send in your submissions by the **20th of every month** to:

[newsletter@southbaywriters.com](mailto:newsletter@southbaywriters.com)

## A Brand New e-SUV

by Allan Cobb

Imagine I'd given thee a pollution-free drives-itself SUV, run by electricity.

Imagine I'd paid for it with my evergreen eco-bribery corrupt e-kitty.

You'd love this pillaged robo-auto madly, till it drove you badly batty.





# ***South Bay Writers Feb. 2019***





ESSAY

# A Real Bucket List

by Chris Weilert

The term “bucket list” wasn’t a thing that I’d ever heard muttered from my parents. Their idea of a bucket item would be for us to get through high school without becoming a juvenile delinquent on the path to ruin. This moniker is a term now thrown about when somebody feels they need to have a master list of everything they want to do before they keel over. I sat down and tried to compose such a list.

Most people put travel high on their list followed by a sabbatical from nine to five. Then you have to write down some hobby that you discarded years ago because it looked like a foolish endeavor. Maybe chainsaw art and metal forging are foolish but dammit, they make me happy so that should be on the list. I say rebuild that muscle car, the one you never owned in high school to impress the teenage girls. It will be different this time around, you will impress other old dudes who did the same thing while you stand in a parking lot admiring each other’s dreams. Your 1966 Barracuda will get you plenty of admiration from Stuey Hamlin who rebuilt a 1971 convertible Dodge Charger and you can compare who spent more on their baby.

Next up, you are going to look up your family tree and compile your lineages history. Somebody in the family has to do it but don’t be discouraged when you find Great Uncle Chuck was actually adopted and that you have an aunt that is doing time in the pen for embezzling.

The list should probably include your desire to speak another language. I personally thought about this too, maybe I will pick one no one else knows, that way I can’t be judged how well I speak it. If I could rattle off some Pennsylvanian Dutch or Swahili, who wouldn’t be impressed?

You say you always wanted to be a photographer, well you caught a break on this one. Your cell phone has replaced the camera so now you can click away endlessly until you get a selfie where your eyes aren’t pink and your gold-covered tooth isn’t admitting a weird laser beam of light out of your mouth.

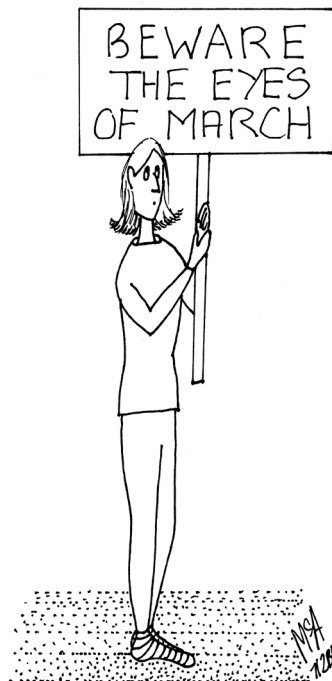
These bucket lists are starting to appear as though the real bucket you need is a pail of money. Maybe robbing a bank should be on the list or swindling funds

in some cockamamie land scheme. I say start a low budget version on the side just in case things don’t work out on the high roller list. For instance, I know volunteering is still a free thing and organizing your garage is relatively cheap, which probably just involves a garbage can and trips to Goodwill.

In all seriousness, forget the bucket list and instead just put a few ideas in your mind and think about them constantly. Those thoughts will happen because you have become obsessed and drove everybody around you nuts by constantly talking about them. Then you will be in no position to deny yourself of those things you always wanted to do. So, go out and run for city council and put yourself out there on a limb... or on a yard sign and pontificate how you can help others with their dreams. —WT

## Cartoons

by Madeline McEwen



Sylvia experienced a moment of doubt.

ESSAY

# I Unplugged, and I Survived

by Sheena Arora

Two weeks ago, my husband and I went on a weeklong vacation. We flew from San Jose to Cancun. As we were staying in a resort and not planning to do anything else but soak the sun, we didn’t take the international data plan for our mobiles. We could avail the Wi-Fi option on our phones. But for some reason, once I locked my house doors and kept my smartphone in my purse, I didn’t even take out my phone until I returned home.

It was not preplanned, it just happened, that for eight days I didn’t access my smartphone and internet. I didn’t check my emails, calendar, news, messages, websites, and any social media. It was extremely freeing.

For a week in Cancun, I ate, lounged on the beach, read books, watched live performances, visited Tulum, drank in the afternoon, drank in the evening, walked on the sand, and shopped at Mercado 28. I didn’t work-out, and, I didn’t peek at the internet in any form, not even once. My husband did, but that’s his bliss. Not me.

It was as if with my mobile I had zipped my worries and plans and agendas and to-do lists in my purse. I forced myself not to think about anything. I lived as though I didn’t have a worry in the world. As if, life had come to a standstill.

In Cancun, I didn’t have any complaint about anything. The weather was perfect—not too hot and not cold. The humidity didn’t totally drive my hair crazy. The food was really really good. And the best part, adding to the perfect staff, amenities, and services, Secrets The Vine Cancun was adults only. A week without encountering a single screaming child. And my husband upgraded as so we had a personal butler. We didn’t need it, but sometimes in life, you got to go beyond and see the other side, no? It was bliss.

Looking back, I realize, I was escaping from the past and the impending future. 2018 had been a long year. Citizenship exam and interview, sewing classes, personal training, two travels, Stanford application, root canal, and first of seven writing classes. And 2019 seems

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## I Unplugged, and I Survived

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daunting. I need to make headway with my novel and complete three writing classes. Actually, before the start of my next writing class in the mid-January, I'm expected to complete reading four textbooks and write the opening of my novel. All this along with the business of living. Just thinking about it worries me.

This unplugging for eight days had interesting results. Once I switched on my phone, in my one of my personal email accounts, I had some 600 emails; I don't even know that many people. This un-connectivity cemented the fact that I don't like being connected all the time. It cured me of obsessively reading news and recaps and gossip websites and watching political shows. It reminded me of the days before GPS and google translate. And this lack of connectivity took us on adventures in Cancun.

Even though this was our second trip to Mexico, we had never ventured out of the resorts on our own. It was always a private taxi. So one afternoon, I insisted we take a local bus to visit a local attraction. Of course, we went looking for a bus stop, we walked and walked, okay probably, I'm exaggerating a bit, we just walked. But we didn't find any bus stop. Mind you, collectively my husband's and my Spanish speaking skills are zero. With a limited vocabulary of hola, si, and gracias, I stopped to ask directions from a taxi driver. And somehow that resulted in a two-hour-drive unplanned trip to an archaeological site at Tulum. We have never gone anywhere unplanned. My husband spends hours finding perfect restaurants for our date-nights. It was a memorable trip with an exceptional driver. One day, when I have time to breathe, I shall write about it.

Of course, I needed to fulfill my dream of traveling on a local bus in a foreign country. Armed with information from our butler, we tried again. We found the bus stop, waved down the bus, paid in pesos, but the driver couldn't understand where we wanted to get down. Imagine, my Spanish pronunciation with an Indian accent. The bus driver probably thought I was speaking some Indian language. My husband had that husband-expression: I am indulging you, let's get down a take a damn cab. But I knew, if I gave up, I'll never be able to do it again. I stood and announced in Spanish to other passengers

that I don't know how to speak Spanish. See, this is my secret weapon. Whenever I encounter an unknown language, the first thing I memorize is how to say that I don't speak that language. I waved my resort brochure, pointed at the destination on the map, and a man with gazillion tattoos on his forearms stepped forward and explained our destination to the driver. First, we visited a local archaeological site then took another bus to the shopping district and back to the resort. Instead of spending hundred-and-fifty dollars in cabs, we spend ten dollars on our bus fare. And rest on souvenirs. In the end, we felt accomplished and less touristy.

Since I am back, and I'm getting my life in order—laundry, emails, cleaning, gym, calendars, writing schedules and textbooks, dishes, and writing. It is rainy and dark. I use a light therapy box just to get out of the bed. My tan and rest of Cancun are rapidly vanishing. Yet, I have this inner calm. I'm less depended on my smartphone. I feel I can survive again in a world without the internet. I will be difficult, it will be wired, it will be tedious, but it is doable. For some reason, that makes me feel stronger. Now, I just cross my fingers that I can keep my Zen until the summer when I meet the sun again. —WT

## MEMOIR

### A Valentine's Day Special

*by Penelope Cole*

It's coming up on Valentine's Day; a Hallmark Holiday to celebrate our loved ones. There are ads for diamonds and other fine jewelry, for romantic weekend get-a-ways, for one-of-a-kind gifts. And in stores we'll see the chocolate and flower gifts. Even with two failed marriages behind me, I can't remember any memorable Valentine's Day gifts from my husbands or boyfriends. What I do remember is a special valentine from my younger brother. He's gone now, but I cherish that special gift. And one other one he gave me, a homemade Christmas candle. Gifts from the heart you don't forget.

I never talked about how special this gift was to my brother Don when he

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## ESSAY

### Teaching: The (Ig)noble Profession

*by Evelyn Preston*

Many women "of a certain age" began their career paths teaching school. A close second to motherhood, teaching's the ultimate challenge combined with infinite multitasking.

Work your passion was the new mantra in my era! So I began my adult life as a school teacher because my four year college passion was the French professor at Northwestern whom I daily stalked (fortunately before the term equaled a felony.) Since teaching Spanish as well as French was the only way to get hired, I convinced a junior high principal that "Ay caramba, si, si, señor;" of course, I "hablo muy bueno." And as few real world jobs at that time required even "un poquito Espanol," or any Gallic terms beyond "Resume," I implored squirrely seventh graders to "faites attention" to my "ooh la la's," and "c'est si bons." Mixed with "adios amigos," and "hasta la vista," I often dismissed them early when I ran out of foreign vocabulary.

"Le Chef du Département n'était pas amusée" however, and gave me a new "language arts" assignment of flunked parolees from Juvenile Hall. Their passion was to bulls-eye my eyeballs aiming paper clips from rubber-band slingshots. We compromised—class parties, my treat vs. classwork, my mistake, but a winning life lesson in self-preservation. They graduated to Street Gangs, and I was "promoted" to 8th grade art class.

The most I knew about teaching art was how to spell it which left innovation and imagination wide open. "Basic shapes," I exhorted my budding Picasso's as I hastily assembled a still life: a half-eaten apple from the previous class, a few frayed schoolbooks and an old gym shoe. "Space, lots of white space, for contrast" I instructed, and a lot less mess I silently hoped. Sprinkling terms like, "mass" and "perspective," I thoughtfully peered at each smeary attempt. Leaving no time for questions, everyone earned an A for effort—especially me.

Hmmm, maybe I'd found my true teaching niche; no papers to mark, no tests to score, so no parents pushing for grades. I vowed

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# Toast

by Anna Koster

Georgia O'Keeffe got her first toaster oven in 1976 when I was her newly hired weekend companion, working from Fridays at 5 p.m. until Mondays at 8 a.m. The situation was as foreign to me as the toaster, apparently, was to her.

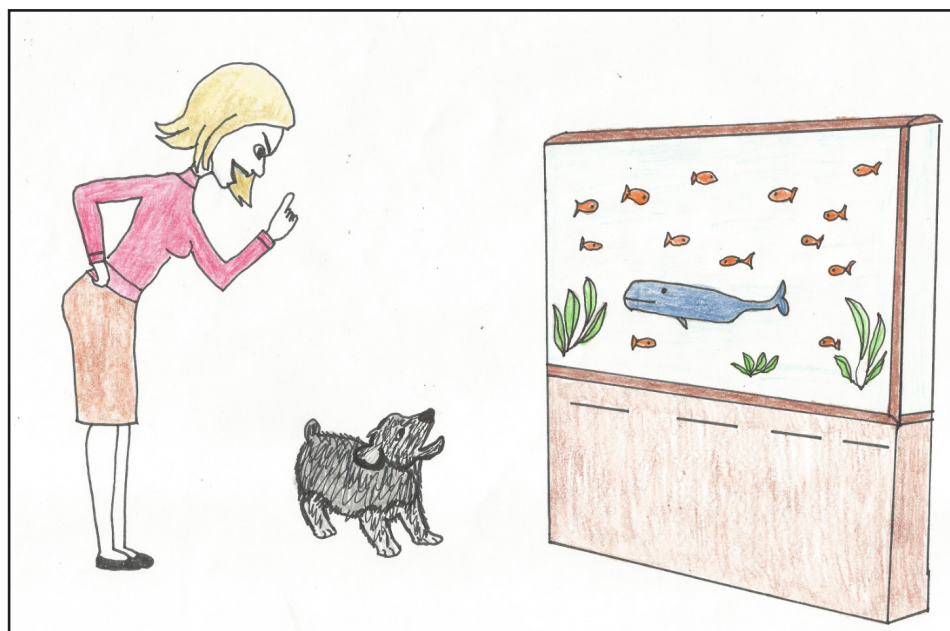
It was sitting on the kitchen counter, ready to use, with its instruction booklet by its side, both delivered by some other staff member earlier in the day. She wanted to learn all about this new-fangled device — not that she would ever operate the toaster, since she had staff to help with everything.

Despite decades of fame as an artist, and separation from daily tasks by a bevy of helpers — who cooked, cleaned, baked, typed, gardened, shopped, and more — she took interest in what was happening in the household. That interest was doubled, since she had two houses, just 16 miles apart. She preferred the simpler and more isolated “Casa de Burros” at Ghost Ranch to the walled compound in the village of Abiquiu, New Mexico.

“Ms. O’Keeffe,” as I’d been coached to address her, wanted to know all about the toaster oven. So we sat side by side that summer afternoon in the kitchen of the Ghost Ranch house, facing the counter as I read the instructions that came with this new purchase. She was 88 years old, and macular degeneration impaired her vision, severe enough that she needed help. I was 29 and served as her eyes and provided a strong back and extra pair of hands for household tasks.

But I learned that it was her fall a couple years before that had prompted round-the-clock help. She dislocated her shoulder in that accident and was alone in the house. If Juan Hamilton (her confidant, secretary, and assistant), had not had trouble with the plumbing at his home and come over to shower, she would have been lying in agony on the floor until the next morning — or even until staff arrived on Monday.

As we sat there studying the toaster oven, someone peeking in the kitchen window might have thought we were acolytes worshipping at the shrine of technology, O’Keeffe with her regal, upright posture and me, trying not to slouch. I read and pointed out various features indicated in the brochure as she asked questions.



*“Ahab, stop barking at the fish!”*

Her interest in the hows and whys of the toaster was followed by a lecture about how she disliked cold toast and a stern warning that she wanted it served warm. She expressed this with considerable irritation, apparently thinking about her disappointment in the past.

It was no mystery why her toast was cold when she received it. Her bedroom was on one side of the U-shaped Ranchos de Burros adobe, and the kitchen on the other. To get from kitchen to bedroom required going outside, along the portico, then into the other section of the house. Even in summer, when mid-days are hot, mornings are cool. At the Abiquiu compound, her bedroom and studio were in a building separate from the kitchen, and the distance between them meant an even longer walk outside.

That evening, I prepared a simple, light supper of soup, salad, and whole wheat bread. (Breakfast and the “noon meal,” as O’Keeffe called it, were heartier.) After eating, washing the dishes, helping her into bed, and reading to her, I got myself ready for sleep.

The next morning I made her tea, then breakfast: soft boiled eggs, toast with butter and jam, and fruit. (Later in the summer, chiles would be in season and a regular part of breakfast, roasted and garnished with crushed garlic and a drizzle of olive oil.) As I got the breakfast tray ready, I put a small plate in the

toaster oven before placing the toast on it.

Balancing everything on the tray, I took it to her room and set it on her bedside table, which turned, so it was over her lap. As I set the tray down, she immediately reached for the toast, I presume to test the temperature. She felt the plate, started, and exclaimed, “Oh, you heated the plate!”

I explained the use of the toaster oven. She never lectured me again about the toast. However, she had many opportunities to admonish me in the weekends ahead. — WT

## FICTION

### The Measure of Love

by Lucinda Smith

Strange you should think of Squeaky at a time like this. My God, that must have been twenty years ago. Certainly, you were no more than seven when your pet white mouse met her fate in a flash of Tabby teeth and claws. You cried bitterly while Dad made a tiny coffin from a kitchen match box and buried her in the back yard under the weeping willow. How appropriate. All you could think was that you should have cleaned her cage more often — the way Mom badgered you to do — and how you used to watch with secret delight as Squeaky industriously shredded the newest tissue you put in her soup-can house, to make a warm, fluffy nest that looked

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## The (Ig)noble Profession

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to learn which two colors made purple.

I bought a smock, a nifty color palette with a thumb hole and a fresh apple.

"Time to clean up," I directed at the end of a class. "Let's all scrub our tables, close up the paints and rinse our brushes."

"Ya gonna make me?" came a sneering shout from the back corner. "I ain't cleaning up all this crap."

Stunned, the students and I both froze. Bad manners! Worse grammar! Unheard of Middle school mutiny? Authority still reigned supreme in the suburban '60s!

"Now, now...We must remember...good citizenship...prepare for...the next class..." I succumbed to shock and teacher-speak.

Before I fully recovered, a hippie clad, Amazonian female, fists braced, feet planted and face inches from my nose, spit out, "Try 'n make me scrub anything, Teach, and I'll push your face in!"

Mute and mesmerized, twenty four pairs of 8th grade eyes stared and waited for their teacher's doom or deliverance. Ed Psych 101 had never covered this!

My heart skipped, but only one beat. "Push my face in? I swiftly retorted. "Oh, would you? How wonderful!" And I launched into a lilting monologue accompanied by sweeping gestures. "I'd like a little off here, see, where it's beginning to sag..." I fluttered the back of my hand under my chin. "Now how about these crow's feet? Maybe a little lift...there..." I said, stretching the corners of my eyes into a reptilian squint. "Oh dear, these lines, anything you can do?" I frowned. "My forehead's positively pleated."

The entire class earned extra credit as they cheered my snappy comeback proving they'd tuned into the recent face-lift craze. Then they laughed my deflated bully back to her seat. "Oh, you're nuts," she grumbled, "like some kinda crazy lady." And she grabbed a rag on her way.

Disaster diverted, curriculum vitae expanded, as I acquired the only advanced degree that counted — Masters in Middle School Survival — along with the proud and lasting title of Crazy Lady. —WT

## The Measure of Love

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like a cotton ball and felt as soft as down.

You were a child with a child's loyalties, more resilient back then. Still, you never forgot Squeaky. But you moved on, leaving behind the games of your childhood one by one. You were already outgrowing the "Eagle's Claw" game when Grandpa died, but that was what filled your mind at the funeral. You and Grandpa, sitting in the garden in the shade of the huge maple tree he'd planted when he was only a boy, his hand sneaking up from behind as he said, "Heee's gonna getcha." You, on pins and needles, wondering when he would strike, until his gnarled hand lunged for your back, scratching and tickling with aged, yellowed fingernails. You, squealing and jumping away, while he chuckled with satisfaction. Only ten years old at his funeral and already you knew you'd been cheated — that you'd lost the opportunity to gather bits of wisdom from him, knowledge that only he could impart. No more secrets confided. No more smiles shared in the garden. No more Eagle's Claw.

Seven years later, there was Bobby Walbot. Deep blue eyes that danced with mischief above double dimples. When you were a junior in high school, no one else on earth mattered. You still remember the way you tingled the first time he kissed you. An older, mature man, Bobby was a senior. All the girls adored him but he chose you. He was your future, your dream man, the one you would marry in the fairy tale version of life that only a teenage girl can imagine. But Bobby had other dreams, and when he graduated and moved to New York to find his place in the theater, you were devastated. Another loss, another blow at the tender age of seventeen. How could you go on? But of course, you did.

Why? Why are we destined to go through the complete grief cycle time and time again in our lives? Is it human nature to grieve over even the most insignificant of losses: the missed phone call, the stubbed toe? Damn! — anger. There's no reason for that box to be there — denial. If I hadn't been in such a hurry — bargaining. I suppose I'm going to limp for days — depression. At least the toe's not broken — acceptance. Some cycles are brief.

I wish I'd learned tatting from Aunt Tusey, you think for the fortieth time since that Fiber Arts Festival when you talked to the lady who was making lace. Big-hearted Aunt Tusey, the family character, sitting straddle-legged to accommodate her generous belly, her skirt draped almost modestly between her knees. You wonder if the ladies bridge club ever knew she had honed her card-playing skills in dingy bars years earlier. Very unladylike, even if it was the only place to get a good card game in those days. It's only now that you realize you don't really care about learning to tat, but that you grieve the missed opportunity of bonding with fascinating, eccentric old Aunt Tusey. She would have loved teaching you. She's been gone for years but you still think of her, hear the clack of her shuttle, see her white head bowed over her work.

You're not a stranger to loss. No, loss has been a part of your life, intermixed with joy as it is in every human life. But you're not prepared for this. How could you be prepared for this overwhelming sense of longing, this utter and complete emptiness? At first you liken it to being in a bottomless pit, the darkness impenetrable yet all-consuming. Then comes the terrifying knowledge that the pit is inside you, that you're being swallowed from the inside out. You touch your tender, swollen breasts, engorged with milk that will never be needed. A useless reminder of loss by your unaccepting body. "Why?" your heart cries out in silent anguish, and you echo it in a whisper, "Why?" Never to hold her, never to feel her downy skin next to yours. Never to breathe in the sweet mixture of softness and life as you cradle her tiny head and smile at her unsure, jerky movements as she snuffles and gropes for your breast. Where are the days of innocence and love, smiles and pride? The days of frustration with her petulance, fear for her well-being, dismay at her choice of friends? The days of deliciously shared confidences followed by days of patent distrust? Ribbons, parties, soccer, school, makeup, boys, dances. The pain of letting her go. The joy of knowing you'll always have her in spite of it.

You think of all these things as you stare out the hospital window to the grounds

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## A Valentine's Day Special

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was still with us, except to say "thank you for your thoughtfulness." It really touched me. On Valentine's Day, I received a small box of chocolates from my younger brother. I found out later it was a special deal offered by J.C. Penney's.

It was the only box of chocolates I received that year, so I was determined to make it last. I limited myself to just one piece each day until they were gone. I congratulated myself on my restraint and discipline in eating only one candy a day. And I was pleased my brother remembered me that way. I was divorced, didn't have a boyfriend, and my baby brother thought of me on Valentine's Day. How sweet it was.

Then less than a week later, I got another box in the mail. Though smaller than the first box, it was another box of chocolates. That was the Penney's special deal. Just when you thought you were finished with the chocolates, you got another three-day treat. Thank you, my little brother; you knew my weakness was chocolate. You are greatly missed, especially each Valentine's Day. — WT

## The Measure of Love

*Continued from Page 11*

below where fellow patients enjoy the sunshine, recuperating from their various ailments, oblivious to your sorrow. And knowing that it is somehow important beyond your comprehension during this time of grief, you make a mental note to remember this moment of revelation. For it is only now, after all these years of loss, after all these cycles of grief, large and small, that you finally realize that you do not grieve only for the loss of love you might have received, but for the loss of love you might have given. — WT



## Blossoms and Mustard

*By Karen Hartley*

Driving that day I  
almost passed by  
the yellow and white  
and the  
ominous grey sky

The clouds objected  
to Spring  
and still had a  
winter punch inside

The white blossoms  
on the trees  
the yellow mustard  
carpeting the ground

I stopped, got out of my car,  
grabbed my camera  
walked in a ways  
I stepped softly not wanting  
to make a sound

I put the lens to my eye  
shot one, shot two  
shot more than I knew  
I moved back to view the scene

Took one last photo  
then had to go  
It would be a week or so  
before I'd know  
what I had captured

Blossoms and mustard  
in the field  
and the clouds grey  
and ominous  
ready to pour out  
the contained water  
for the thirsty petals

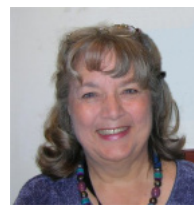
Back in the car those clouds  
let loose,  
Again, I delayed, watching  
the blossoms lift up - I thought -  
they know they can drink now  
and the mustard below  
also perked up  
all those flowers  
as if they too knew  
they could now sup

Happily I drove away  
the best of those photos  
hangs in my home today

Blossoms and Mustard

## Contests and Markets

*by Carolyn Donnell*



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!

If you are in the Facebook Group for the South Bay Writers Club, you can find some listings in the Files section. The Files section can be found on the left-hand column of the page. If you aren't already a member, check us out on Facebook and ask to join!

### ONGOING LOCAL PUBLICATIONS

**The Literary Nest:** A local online publication. [theliterarynest.com/](http://theliterarynest.com/)

**Sand Hill Review:** Stories, non-fiction articles, and poems. [sandhillreview.org/](http://sandhillreview.org/)

### NEW CONTESTS

**MASTERS REVIEW.** From Winning Writers. \$5000 awarded. A collection of ten stories and essays written by the best emerging authors.

[mastersreview.com/anthology/](http://mastersreview.com/anthology/)

**RE:FICTION** New prompts every month for monthly contest. You have 15 days to write and submit your entry. No entry fees. Monthly cash prize is \$50 (via PayPal) or the equivalent in an Amazon gift certificate.

[tinyurl.com/REFICTION](http://tinyurl.com/REFICTION)

**MARY: A Journal of New Writing** is a student run online arts journal sponsored by Saint Mary's College of California's MFA in Creative Writing program. They accept previously unpublished fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and hybrid genres. Contributors receive a \$30 payment.

[www.stmarys-ca.edu/mfa-in-creative-writing/mary-journal](http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/mfa-in-creative-writing/mary-journal)

**BOOTH:** Established in 2009 by MFA students at Butler University's writing program. Open to submissions from Sept. 1 through Mar. 31. They are looking for poetry, fiction, nonfiction, comics, and lists — but they especially like the last three.

[booth.butler.edu/submit/](http://booth.butler.edu/submit/)

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## Contests and Markets

*Continued from Page 12*

### FOR POETS

**Up The Staircase Quarterly:** Submit 3-6 poems in a single document. Submit up to 10 .jpgs for art. Previously published poetry not accepted, but previously published artwork is okay. Questions should be sent to [upthestaircase@gmail.com](mailto:upthestaircase@gmail.com).

[tinyurl.com/yc6e26ru](http://tinyurl.com/yc6e26ru)

**The Thimble Magazine:** A quarterly online journal. Submissions for Issue 5 will open in February and March.

[www.thimblelitmag.com/2018/12/10/the-golden-age-of-whaling/](http://www.thimblelitmag.com/2018/12/10/the-golden-age-of-whaling/)

**Poetry Pacific:** Literary e.zine for true lovers of words & wisdom. Published and unpublished welcome as long as you still have the rights.

[poetrypacific.blogspot.com/](http://poetrypacific.blogspot.com/)

**Sequestrum:** Literature & Art. Two submission section: poetry and Fiction/Non-fiction. One prize of \$200 and publication in Sequestrum will be awarded in each category. A minimum of one runner-up (in each category) will receive \$25-\$50. Finalists will be listed on the site. Contest closes April 30th (or earlier dependent on submission volume, so submit as early as you can) Entry fee is \$15. Winners announced in August.

[www.sequestrum.org/contests](http://www.sequestrum.org/contests)

**Poetry East** is currently reading for the Fall 2019 issue. Typed manuscripts only. They do not accept email submissions.

[poetryeast.org/submissions/](http://poetryeast.org/submissions/)

**Wergle Flomp Humor Poetry Contest.** No fee. 1st Prize: \$1,000 plus a one-year gift certificate from co-sponsor, Duo-trope (a \$50 value), 2nd: \$250, Honorable Mentions: 10 awards of \$100 each. Submit through April 1, 2019

[winningwriters.com/our-contests/wergle-flomp-humor-poetry-contest-free](http://winningwriters.com/our-contests/wergle-flomp-humor-poetry-contest-free)

**Freedom With Writing:** 78 Poetry Manuscript Publishers Who Do Not Charge Reading Fees

[tinyurl.com/yccuwzj6](http://tinyurl.com/yccuwzj6)

### PAST LISTINGS

**Writer's Digest 88th Annual Writing Competition.** Deadline May 6, 2019. One Grand Prize winner will receive: \$5,000 in cash, an interview with the author in Writer's Digest, a paid trip to the Writer's Digest Annual Conference, including a coveted Pitch Slam slot, and a one year subscription to Writer's Digest Tutorials.

[www.writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions/annual-writing-competition](http://www.writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions/annual-writing-competition)

Also see their **Self-published Book Awards.** Deadline: April 1, 2019

[www.writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions/self-published-book-awards](http://www.writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions/self-published-book-awards)

**The Writer magazine:** The next short story contest will launch in late spring 2019.

[www.writermag.com/contests/](http://www.writermag.com/contests/)

**Citron Review:** Online literary journal. Reading for the Spring issue starts on Feb. 1. Poetry, creative nonfiction, and fiction.

[citronreview.com/submission/](http://citronreview.com/submission/)

**Zizzle:** An "international short story bookazine devoted to publishing quality, innovative fiction for young minds." Print and online. Submissions on a rolling basis. Flash fiction 500 - 100 words. \$3 fee per story. Flat rate of US \$100 for each accepted piece.

[zizzlelit.com/submit/](http://zizzlelit.com/submit/)

**Reedsy Blog:** Short story competition. Submit a short story based on one of 5 weekly prompts. Winners get \$50 and will be featured on their Medium page!

[blog.reedsy.com/writing-contests/](http://blog.reedsy.com/writing-contests/)

**TheWrite Life:** 31 Free Writing Contests: Legitimate Competitions With Cash Prizes

[thewritelife.com/writing-contests/](http://thewritelife.com/writing-contests/)

**Winning Writers:** Lists poetry and prose contests that are free to enter. Usually accepts previously published work. Current submissions open for Tom Howard/John H. Reid Fiction & Essay Contest (October 15-April 30, total prizes: \$5,000) and the North Street Book Prize for self-published books. Submit February 15-June 30. Total prizes: \$10,500. Top winners receive expert marketing services. [winningwriters.com/our-contests](http://winningwriters.com/our-contests)

**Poets & Writers: Contest Blog**

[www.pw.org/blogs/prize\\_reporter](http://www.pw.org/blogs/prize_reporter)

### NEW SUBMISSIONS

**AUTHORS PUBLISH** lists these 10 Imprints of Big 5 Publishers That Accept Unsolicited Submissions:

- Versify: a new imprint of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Books for Young Readers.
- SMP Swerve: St. Martin's Press is an imprint of Macmillan. SMP Swerve is the digital-first romance publishing imprint of St Martin's. SMP Swerve is open to all sub-genres of romance.
- Forever Yours: romance imprint of Grand Central Publishing. Grand Central Publishing is the imprint of the Hachette Book Group. Forever Yours is the digital sister of Forever, they focus on publishing unagented authors, and often publish authors without a publication history.

- WorthyKids/Ideals: fiction and non-fiction board books, novelty books, and picture books for children from birth through the age of 8. Purchased by Hachette in September 2018.
- Tor/Forge: publishes science fiction and fantasy books - an imprint of Macmillan.
- Avon Impulse: romance imprint of HarperCollins.
- Harlequin: romance-only publisher. HarperCollins purchased the company.
- Carina Press: Harlequin's digital-first adult fiction imprint, open to all subgenres of romance, and also mysteries of all flavors - from cozies to thrillers.
- DAW: imprint of Penguin that is open to manuscript submissions from authors without an agent.

— WT

## Conferences and Events March 2019

*by Margie Yee Webb*

### WNBA SF Pitch-O-Rama 2019

March 23, 2019, San Francisco CA

[wnba-sfchapter.org/pitch-o-rama-2019/](http://wnba-sfchapter.org/pitch-o-rama-2019/)

"Women's National Book Association - San Francisco Chapter presents Pitch-O-Rama: Meet the Agents and Editors"

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

March 23, 2019, San Francisco CA

[www.milibrary.org/events/author-website-building-site-works-mar-23-2019](http://www.milibrary.org/events/author-website-building-site-works-mar-23-2019)

[sfwriters.org/mil-classes](http://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

March 23, 2019, San Francisco CA

[www.milibrary.org/events/wordpress-bootcamp-creating-wordpress-website-and-how-use-it-mar-23-2019](http://www.milibrary.org/events/wordpress-bootcamp-creating-wordpress-website-and-how-use-it-mar-23-2019)

[sfwriters.org/mil-classes](http://sfwriters.org/mil-classes)

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

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

## Conferences and Events

*Continued from Page 13*

### Poetry Workshop

Application Deadline: March 28, 2019

June 22-29, 2019, Alpine Meadows CA

[communityofwriters.org/workshops/poetry-workshop/](http://communityofwriters.org/workshops/poetry-workshop/)

[communityofwriters.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/2019-Download-Brochure.pdf](http://communityofwriters.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/2019-Download-Brochure.pdf)

Presented by Community of Writers at Squaw Valley – “The Poetry Program at the Community of Writers is founded on the belief that when poets gather in a community to write new poems, each poet may well break through old habits and write something stronger and truer than before.”

### Writers Workshops in Fiction, Nonfiction and Memoir

Application Deadline: March 28, 2019

July 8-15, 2019, Squaw Valley CA

[communityofwriters.org/workshops/writers-workshops/](http://communityofwriters.org/workshops/writers-workshops/)

## 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:** 3:00 third Sundays, 1204 Preservation Park Way, Oakland. [cwc-berkeley.org](http://cwc-berkeley.org)

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

**Fremont Area:** 2:00 fourth Saturdays, 42 Silicon Valley, Fremont. [cwc-fremontareawriters.org](http://cwc-fremontareawriters.org)

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

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

**Mount Diablo:** 11:00 third Saturdays, Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. [cwcmtdiablowlriters.wordpress.com](http://cwcmtdiablowlriters.wordpress.com)

**Napa Valley:** 7:00 second Wednesdays, Napa Valley Unitarian Church, Napa. [napavalley-writers.net](http://napavalley-writers.net)

**North State:** 6:00 third Mondays, Butte County Library-Chico Branch. [northstatewriters.com](http://northstatewriters.com)

**Redwood:** 2:00 second Sundays, Flamingo Conference Resort & Spa, 2777 Fourth Street, Santa Rosa. [redwoodwriters.org](http://redwoodwriters.org)

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

**San Francisco/Peninsula:** 10:00 third Saturdays, 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:** 1:30 third Saturdays, Four Points by Sheraton, 5115 Hopyard, Pleasanton. [trivalleywriters.org](http://trivalleywriters.org)

## Wanted: Information on Conferences

Send information on conferences and other events of interest to writers to [newsletter@southbaywriters.com](mailto:newsletter@southbaywriters.com) for consideration for inclusion on this page.

### Left Coast Crime 2019: Whale of a Crime

March 28-31, 2019, Vancouver Canada

<http://www.leftcoastcrime.org/2019/>

Left Coast Crime is an annual mystery convention . . . “where readers, authors, critics, librarians, publishers, and other fans can gather.”

### Our Life Stories Writers' Conference

Note: Registration required by April 5, 2019

April 13, 2019, Sacramento CA

<https://ourlifestories.org/>

“Revealing the Tapestry of Our Life Stories” – a cross-generational memoir conference

### The Belize Writers' Conference, (Fiction, Creative Nonfiction and Memoir)

April 6-11, 2019, Jaguar Reef Resort, Belize

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

“Vacation with Literary Agents while

Learning to Succeed as an Authorpreneur at the Belize Writers' Conference!”

### Tri-Valley Writers Conference 2019

April 13, 2019, Pleasanton CA

<https://www.trivalleywriters.org/conferences/tri-valley-writers-conference-2019/>

3rd Annual Conference of Tri-Valley Writers –WT





Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<div>March 2019</div>					1	2
					7:30P Open mic Barnes&Noble Almaden, San Jose	
3	4 2P Valley Writers	5 7P Well-RED at Works	6	7	8	9
10 10A Our Voices	11 2P Valley Writers	12 7P Board Meeting	13	14	15 7:30P Open mic - Willow Glen Library	16
17 1P Poets@Play, Markham House	18 2P Valley Writers	19 6:00P SBW Dinner Holder's Country Inn	20 DEADLINE: WritersTalk Submission	21 7P Third Thursday, Poetry Center	22	23
24 10A Our Voices	25 2P Valley Writers	26	27	28	29	30
31						

#### Future Events:

SBW Board Meeting: Tues. March 12, E. Matthews' home  
Dinner Meeting: Tues. March 19, Holder's Country Inn

**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](mailto:dalaroche@comcast.net)

**Valley Writers:** Meets at Valley Village Retirement Community, Winchester at Dolores, Santa Clara, Mondays 2 PM. Marjorie Johnson, [marjoriej358@comcast.net](mailto:marjoriej358@comcast.net)

**Your Critique Group:** Send info to [newsletter@southbaywriters.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.poetrycentersanjose.org)

### SBW Recommends ...

If you know of a regularly occurring event for writers, send an email to [newsletter@southbaywriters.com](mailto:newsletter@southbaywriters.com).



## California Writers Club

South Bay Branch

P.O. Box 3254

Santa Clara, CA 95055

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

## MAIL TO

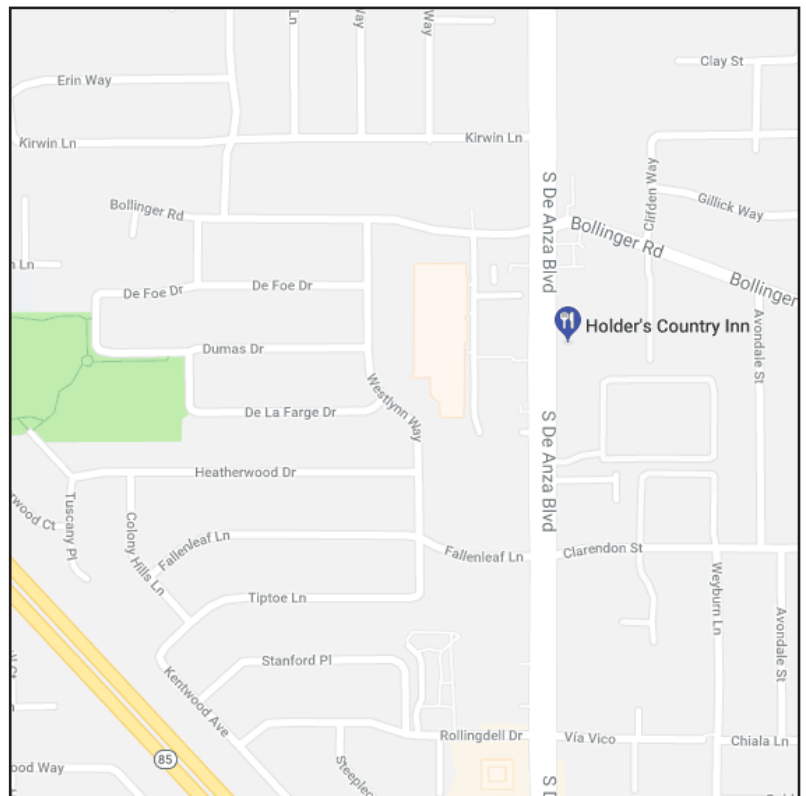
Address Correction Requested

**South Bay Writers  
Regular Dinner Meeting  
6:00 - 9:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, March 19, 2019  
Holder's Country Inn  
998 S. DeAnza Blvd, San Jose**

## Self-Publishing and the Future of Writing with Michael C. Grumley

Please send contributions and submissions for *WritersTalk* by or on the 20th of the month!

Regular dinner meetings are third Tuesdays 6 – 9 PM of every month except July, December, and workshop months



### Holder's Country Inn

Located on South De Anza Boulevard after Bollinger Rd.

Accessible from Stevens Creek Blvd. or 85 (Mineta Hwy)