



# WRITERSTALK

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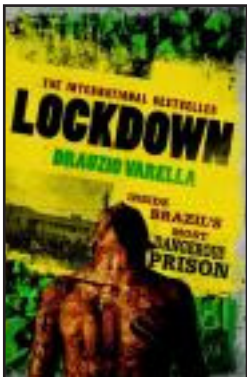
Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

APRIL SPEAKER: JONAH STRAUS

## An Evening with a Literary Agent by Jamal Khan

Writing is where it all begins. Throughout history, many of the greatest human achievements had their genesis when a writer first sat down to articulate an idea, whether large or small, real or invented. As we hurtle into the future, the importance of writing will only increase, even as the forms and methods of disseminating it shift and change, because there is no substitute for a great idea. But a working draft is the end of the beginning, not the beginning of the end. An author with a completed manuscript in hand must subsequently shift gears for a very different creative struggle.

Publishing houses almost never consider an unsolicited manuscript from an author. Many will return manuscripts unopened as a legal precaution. They will only consider manuscripts pitched by a literary agent like Jonah Straus. In our April 16 dinner meeting, Jonah will talk about his experiences sifting through reams of material to identify the diamonds in the rough. He will discuss current trends in the publishing industry, and share his wisdom on what makes a manuscript stand out from the slush pile.



Jonah Straus works closely with authors throughout the writing and publishing process, from concept and editing to marketing and publicity, and also utilizes an extensive network of international subagents and contacts in film and television. Straus Literary is a full-service boutique agency with offices in San Francisco and New York, and is dedicated to cultivating quality writing and unique ideas in a range of genres.



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

When: Tuesday, April 16 at 6pm; talk begins at 7:30pm

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

MARCH RECAP: MICHAEL C. GRUMLEY

## Recap of March 19th Dinner by Bill Baldwin

At SBW's March 19th dinner meeting, Michael Grumley spoke on the extraordinary opportunities that self-publishing, particularly electronic, offers. He pointed out that since Kindle was founded in February of 2007, over 22 million Kindle e-readers have been sold.

Grumley himself writes action-thrillers, and sells 300-500 books per day (you read that right!).

He reminded us that if you publish through a traditional publisher, you are giving up your rights to your work forever. You may receive 15-20% of the gross sales, but consider this: If you publish via Amazon, you retain your rights, and you also receive 70% of the gross sales. You can do even better by utilizing the Amazon "exclusive" option, which applies three-month marketing cycles to your PR. After covering these basics, Grumley offered several further bits of advice:

- Don't be afraid to give away books. E-books involve no cost; therefore giving them away involves no cost (it is different for printed books; they do involve costs to you). Grumley estimates that he has given away a half million free books, in addition to the million books he has sold.
- Do not design your own book covers! Are you a graphic artist? Probably not! On the other hand, do take a look at how your cover looks as a thumb-nail sized

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# Between the Lines

Edie Matthews  
President, South Bay Writers



## Hit and Run

"Five broken ribs, a fractured jaw, five teeth knocked out, fluid in one lung, bangs, bruises, and a cut chin," said a male voice. After a bicycle collision, my husband had been ambulated to Kaiser Hospital Emergency.

At 10 am on Sunday, four hours after his arrival, I received the call.  
"I'll be right down," I said.  
"You will?"  
"Of course, I will." (Nitwit).

Anyone who attends SBW's monthly meetings has seen Jim. For over 15 years, he has faithfully set up the sound system. He arrives at 4:30, gets everything prepared, and returns at 9 pm to pick it up.

His good friend Frank Johnson, (Marge's husband) helped until his passing. The two buddies ate dinner together and discussed and debated every topic.

I arrived at Kaiser 20 minutes later. My sweet husband lay in bed looking homeless—unshaven, hair sticking up, chin bloody from seven stitches, black grease on his hands, and unmatched socks.

Fortunately, no concussion. Quite the opposite. He was alert, perceptive, and articulate. (Thank you, God!)

He spoke to the doctor and was ignored.  
Angry, I said, "My husband is NOT senile—he's only a bit hard of hearing."  
The doctor apologized.

I straightened his hair, washed the off the blood and grease, and stepped outside to cry. One by one I phoned my four children. No one answered. (One is local, one was flying home, and two are out of state.) I called my sister-in-law. We've been friends since high school.

"I'm on my way," she said.

Jim rides his bike four times a week and walks the other three days. But first he does 45 minutes of stretches and exercises. Rain or shine, he's out the door by 5 am. In the winter, he bundles up and bikes with a light on. He loves the new bike lanes in Santa Clara along San Tomas Expressway. He travels between 15 to 20 miles, returns at 7:30, eats breakfast, and takes a nap in the recliner until about 11 am.

It was still dark when the accident occurred. A lone biker (without a light) in the middle of the lane, rounded the corner at the bottom of the underpass. Jim flew over the handlebars, crashing on the cement. He wasn't certain if the culprit was a vagrant riding or pushing his bike. However, the man mumbled something and

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[WABaldwin@aol.com](mailto:WABaldwin@aol.com)

### 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](mailto: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](mailto:membership@southbaywriters.com)

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J. K. McDole



## Reading is Elementary

"Readers are writers, and writers are readers." This is what my third grade language arts teacher, Mrs. Steubing, told our class of twenty-odd eight-year-olds as we embarked on a journey of classic children's literature. To write, one must first take in written content – really digest it and internalize its strengths and weaknesses – and, to better enjoy written content, one must understand the process of how it is created, refined, and published. I've kept her lesson close to my heart for many years.

I have several writing goals this year, namely to workshop and shop around a handful of short stories I've been picking at since 2016. But I also set myself some reading goals. Not just published content, but manuscripts and unfinished work – final drafts written by fellow writers. I kicked off the year by offering to beta read for two good writer pals. After my read-through, I wrote up several discussions and reviews of varying lengths to give them the full breadth of my reading experience and thoughts. I kept my feedback both constructive and neutral, tailoring it to a "concept" review rather than the detail one might offer when giving line editing or copyediting (not to mention: I have a personal rule not to do in-depth edits for friends; you run the risk of serious strain on your relationship if they're not happy with your feedback). By the end of January, I was finished with the first manuscript, and not long into February I had completed the second. It was a lot to read!

I gotta say, after finishing each read, I felt like not only was I doing something supportive for a friend, but also something supportive for myself. Not only was I reinforcing Mrs. Steubing's elementary wisdom, but I was forging a better relationship with my friends and with myself as a writer. It takes a lot of trust to give someone your rough, unpolished work; you not only open up the piece for lots and lots of changes, but the general threat that it won't be as engaging as you'd hoped. So many ideas begin in our minds as fledgling genius, but the moment we put them on the page they're liable to lose that sparkle of mental magic. I've had concept drafts that totally fell apart during the first read. "No plan survives first contact with the enemy" was another tidbit of wisdom I first heard in third grade. A testament to the long lives of these sayings!

I'd love to hear your thoughts on beta-reading and any experiences you've had in the process. Submit your essays on the topic to us at [newsletter@southbaywriters.com](mailto:newsletter@southbaywriters.com)! You might find someone interested in letting you beta read, or beta reading for you! – WT

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## View from the Board

by Marjorie Johnson



Marjorie Johnson  
SBW Secretary

President Edie Matthews reported that a smaller but mighty group met on March 2. Thank you to everyone for sending your reports in advance. Thanks to Jamal's hustle, an agent will be speaking at the April meeting. Cross your fingers that our new location works out. Mark your calendar: the next board meeting is Tuesday, April 9th.

Vice President Jamal Khan announced upcoming programs:

- March 19, "Self-Publishing and the Future of Writing" with Michael C. Grumley
- April 16, "An Evening With Literary Agent Jonah Straus"
- May 21, "How to Create a Strong Cover Design" with Andrew Benzie.

Next Board meeting: Tuesday, April 9, 7 pm, at the home of Edie Matthews. Board meetings are open to all interested members of SBW. — WT

## Hit and Run

*Continued from Page 2*

quickly left. Spitting teeth and unable to get the chain on, Jim pushed his bike a half mile before encountering a teen with a cell phone. "Can you call my wife?"

He called 911.

A second team of EMTs arrived at Kaiser to transport Jim to Valley Medical, the trauma center for the South Bay. At first, they thought his birthdate was a mistake. Nope, he's 89 and out on the bike trail when the accident occurred.

Then I hear them trading war stories.

"Yeah, I was in the army, heavy metals," said Jim. "Fought in Korea in 1952."

The EMTs gazed in amazement.

"Not a scratch, a bee sting taking a crap," said Jim. "And it was hell in the winter."

He became the darling of the ICU.

One woman burst in his room. "Are you the 89-year old biker?"

"Yeah."

"Show me your legs." She proceeded to test his strength. A few minutes later she left, shaking her head and saying, "Wow."

"You're not taking your pain medication," said his nurse.

He shrugged, "I don't need it."

## DINNER MEETING CHANGES

The SBW April dinner meeting will occur on

**TUESDAY, APRIL 16**

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](http://southbaywriters.com)

On the second day, I asked him, "Have they let you walk yet? No?"

Twenty minutes later, they had him ready.

"Now take it easy," said the nurse.

He took off like a race walker.

"Hang on," she said.

We left the ICU and traveled down the corridor.

"You feeling okay," asked the nurse.

"Fine," he said.

"He's the healthiest person in the ICU," said the doctor.

Still dental work to contend with, but Jim is grateful to be home now and sorry he missed going to the opening game, A's vs Giants. — WT



# CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB Your CWC Beginnings

by Dave LaRoche

It's been said that Jack London was one of our founders back in 1909 when a small group of writers sat an Oakland hill and talked about things. We know not of those talks, but if London was involved, politics was likely the primary topic. We believe the hill belonged to Joaquin Miller and is now a part of a verdant public park. This group's origin we're told was a San Francisco bistro. The Coppa's Restaurant catered to a bohemian crowd of writers and artists. "The Coppa Four" — an adventurer, a real estate broker, a lawyer, and a socialist — met regularly there to talk up the news of the day and stir their interests in writing.

After the big shake in 1906, and with thousands of others escaping the resulting blaze, the four moved their meetings to Alameda. Those four were: Herman Whitaker, an English adventuresome bloke who arrived in America in 1895 with six kids, a wife, and a five dollar bill. George Sterling who worked for a real estate syndicate and between transactions wrote poetry. Austin Lewis, another Englishman — this one educated, practiced law, authored books and pieces for the Examiner, and Jack London, with *Call of the Wild* under his belt and two years of salt water coursing his veins from a recent voyage on The Snark.

The history here is not clear — stories told and likely changed to fit the teller's ways — but we know these folks wrote and we presume they talked about writing. One story has the four joining with others in the Press Club of Alameda to later become disenchanted with the seemingly unfocused approach, breaking off and forming what later became known as the CWC. Another has three (Lewis turning to the Press Club and actually elected president) directly to the Oakland hills for socializing, opinionating, and picnicking. Below find a brief carry-on of the four who reputedly formed our club or at least were instrumental in its start.

Whitaker's books include *The Probationer* (1905), *The Settler* (1906), *The Planter* (1909), and *The Mystery of the Barranca*

(1913), among many others. His novel *Over the Border* (1916) was adapted for the John Ford western *3 Bad Men* (1926) and two other novels were also made into films. He is credited with some 200 short stories and published articles most dealing with social justice. Herman Whitaker, English born, father of seven died in a New York hospital of stomach cancer in January of 1919 after returning from Europe where he served the San Francisco Tribune as a war correspondent.

George Sterling, born in Sag Harbor, New York in 1869, followed his uncle to San Francisco where he assisted as a broker in his uncle's real estate business. Educated as a poet, he began to write and published, *The Testimony of the Sun and Other Poems*, which enamored him to the Oakland literati including Jack London. Sterling then wrote exclusively, publishing myriad poems, plays, and prose pieces while living a bohemian life in the developing Carmel-by-the-Sea where he became quite notorious for the parties he threw and attended. Sterling committed suicide in a room at the Bohemian Club in San Francisco, November 1926 - age 57.

There is little known of Austin Lewis: 1865-1944 Also an English born American and a known socialist was associated with Industrial Workers of the World. Lewis, a writer, author, and lawyer ran for governor against James Gillett in 1906. "Militant Proletarian" and "The American Proletarian" are titles of pamphlets with which he is credited. Lewis was the first president of the New Press Club of Alameda (re-established in November of 1909).

Jack London, or to be critically legal, John Griffith Chaney, was born January 12, 1876, in San Francisco; died November 22, 1916, in Glen Ellen, California at age 40. A prolific writer, his published work includes a couple dozen novels, memoirs, essays, plays, poetry, and many short stories. His most famous are: a shorter piece, "To Build a Fire," and novels *White Fang*, *Sea Wolf*, *Call of the Wild*, *The Iron Heel*, and *Marin Eden*.

London, an atheist and passionate socialist of his time, strongly favored workers' rights and unionization. Many of his stories and essays speak to that interest. Not widely known are his nightly speeches in an Oakland Park extolling the working class, or that in 1901 he ran for mayor of Oakland and again in 1906 — both events as a member of the Socialist Party of America.

London lived his life. In addition to his writing, he sailed, he farmed, he mined gold in the Klondike, worked as a war correspondent for Randolph Hearst, was a member of the Bohemian Club and took part in the offerings. He husbanded animals, married twice, defended against charges of plagiarism, and built a large stone house in Glen Ellen that burned down before it was occupied. And, the list goes on. "I would rather be a superb meteor, every atom of me in magnificent glow, than a sleepy and permanent planet. The function of man is to live, not to exist."

While these four may have been the core of the CWC's beginnings, other notables were soon involved. Ina Coolbrith, a known poet, and librarian, joined the group and in 1915 became the state's first Poet Laureate, and her good friend, Joaquin Miller seems somehow associated. Dr. William Morgan led the incorporation march in 1913. More on these and others in your next issue of *WritersTalk*. — WT





# April Member News

by Marjorie Johnson

**Audry Lynch** will receive the Delta Kappa Gamma California State Distinguished Career/Profession Award at the DKG Convention, May 3 – 5, San Francisco Airport Marriott Waterfront Burlingame. If anyone would like to attend to see Audry receive this award on May 4, register as a guest and select the Saturday, May 4 evening banquet using this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/y4n6bws9>

Marjorie Johnson and her daughter, Jan Fey, went on a two-week archaeological tour in Mexico, first stop, Mexico City's National Museum of Anthropology. Jan purchased T-shirts sporting Pakal's death mask in the museum store. We wore them to dinner where everyone recognized Pakal. Jan said, "Just like Mom's book," and everyone on the tour wanted a copy of *Lost Jade of the Maya*.

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. — WT



*Pictured: Marjorie Johnson and daughter Jan Fey, wearing t-shirts with Pakal's death mask (featured on the cover of Marjorie's book *Lost Jade of the Maya*).*

## SBW Recap

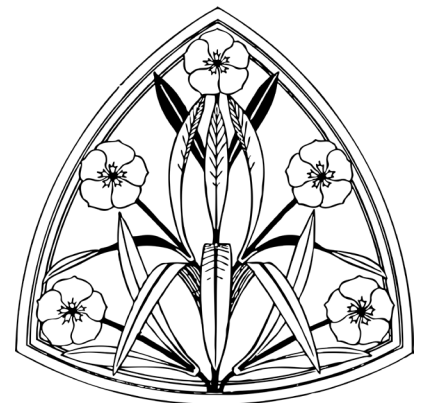
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graphic. This is how many of your potential buyers will first see your book!

- Do not edit your own book! You will always miss something! Get a professional pair of eyes instead!
- Do not proofread your own book — for the same reason!
- Ask for book reviews! Do this on the final page of your book. Provide your email address and webpage and ask for a review!
- Have an author's webpage. Don't design it yourself; get a professional to do it!
- Get beta readers (real fans) by engaging them. Connect! Develop fans into super fans into evangelist!
- Keep an email list of interested contacts and readers (ie. build that fan base). But email them sparingly.

- Be careful who you get your advice from (!?!). For example, many authors advise conducting blog tours; but such efforts may not prove worthwhile.
- Research genres and categories. Consider strategies for advertising and promotions. KDSpy can be a useful online tool for tracking how many books you (or other authors) are selling.
- Consider your pricing. \$3.99, for example, is a good standard price for an e-book.
- Amazon provides the best opportunities for advertising.

This is just a summary of the wealth of advice provided by Michael Grumley. You can contact Michael at [michael@michaelgrumley.com](mailto:michael@michaelgrumley.com). — WT





# *South Bay Writers Club*

## *March 2019*



# The Bogeyman Drove a Peterbilt

by Lucinda Woerner

In the Twentieth Century, thousands of families migrated to Michigan between the first and second world wars in search of jobs in the factories General Motors built in Detroit and Flint. GM employees populated most of the neighborhoods throughout the city of Flint and its outlying suburbs including Rolling Wood Estates where my family lived. The modest homes on Western Road and the connecting streets were the antithesis to “estates.” The small, single story homes were all the same floor plan, had no garages, no character, and housed an army of “shop rats,” (the local term for factory workers typically used by those who didn’t want to become one).

The sameness of the blocks of homes was mirrored by the sameness of the lives of their occupants. Dozens of day-shift dads left their homes every morning at the same time with lunch box in hand, and drove their Buick Rivas or Chevy Impalas to one of the factories that were the lifeblood of Flint. They performed the same shift work at the same places, alongside the same faces every day of the week, then clocked out and returned home for dinner with their school-age children. Predictable, stable, and mind numbingly boring jobs that paid well and offered such attractive benefits the autoworker union members stayed until retirement.

Like other men in the neighborhood, my father drove a Chevy. His ’65 silver blue Impala was the vehicle in which I earned my driver’s license and secretly chauffeured friends to outings at Lake Metamora, but I digress. My father was also a union member, but he was not in the UAW like our neighbors. Wally was a member of Jimmy Hoffa’s infamous Teamster’s Union. My father was not a shop rat—he was a trucker, a long haul trucker. He owned his own rig, a Peterbilt that he leased to Long Transportation in Detroit. A dispatcher’s call would put Dad on the road again as an interstate eighteen-wheeler. Among our factory worker neighbors, my diesel-driving Dad enjoyed a measure of celebrity and envy, especially with the kids.

Completion of each trip required Dad to deliver a return trailer to the freight yard in Detroit, disconnect it, and bobtail his cab seventy miles to Flint typically arriving home after dark. Occasionally he arrived during daylight when kids were still playing kickball on the street. The giant green Peterbilt with dual exhaust pipes rumbled down Western Road and kids ran alongside the colossal truck to pump their fist in the universal sign to blow the horn. Obliging their request, the air horn would blast an alert to our family, and to the entire block, Wally was home.

Sometimes Dad let kids climb into his cab and pull the horn cable, or let them pretend to drive the massive vehicle. The Peterbilt was always a hit with the neighborhood children when it rolled onto our street. It was a hit with me only when it was rolling in the outbound direction. The presence or absence of the Peterbilt in our driveway represented the on/off switch to my life. When the diesel engine fired up for departure and I heard the gears shift, it signaled my father had pulled away and I was free to shift gears. I could laugh, play, talk on the phone, and generally exist free of fear—normal activities that were curtailed while my abusive father was in the house.

The Peterbilt was a vehicular superhero to me—the income from it paid the bills, but more importantly it took my father away from our home five days a week. During the week my siblings and I felt safe, but come Friday night we anxiously listened for the sound of his truck coming down the street. Our dog Baron was able to hear the diesel before we could. His jumping at the front door was an effective early warning system that signaled we had ten minutes to blitz the house and disappear into our rooms.

As a professional trucker my father valued his Class A commercial driver’s license and was careful to obey traffic laws to maintain it. To preserve his job he honored the company rule against passengers riding in his cab while hauling a trailer. When he bobtailed his cab

(driving without a trailer) he could legally carry a passenger with him, but he rarely did as he thought it unsafe. I was allowed to ride in the Peterbilt on only two occasions and was exhilarated to sit high above the cars on the road and feel the power of the diesel engine. More fun than as riding inside my father’s Peterbilt was when we followed behind it on family vacations.

Every summer, my parents would pack the kids into my mother’s station wagon and follow my father as he hauled a trailer to its delivery location. Both my parents enjoyed traveling and they devised a way to show their children some of the most famous sights on the East coast by combining a road trip with my father’s work. Dad would park his truck, get into the car with us, and drive to whatever sight they had predetermined we should see. The final destination was kept secret and no matter how many times we asked where we were going, my father would say, “I don’t know, you tell me.” Or he might say, “Keep your eyes open. Tell me when you see it.” The destination might be hours away, but he didn’t allow us to sleep and miss the scenery.

Most of the places we visited had historic significance like Washington D.C., Gettysburg, and Boston. When I was ten we visited the Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument, and the Smithsonian. We toured the White House, saw slave quarters at Mount Vernon, and got admonished to keep quiet while the guards changed in Arlington Cemetery. The next year we traveled to Boston, walked the Freedom Trail, and boarded the USS Constitution. The summer I turned twelve, we drove through a string of Southern states where my father pointed out the “whites only” signs on water fountains, ate hush puppies in New Orleans, and danced down Bourbon Street searching for a lady on a swing.

Vacations were a luxury my parents could ill afford. Nevertheless, they took their three children, often whiny and squabbling, on annual road trips in an

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## The Bogeyman Drove a Peterbilt

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effort to expose them to U.S. history and geography. As kids we were less impressed by Niagara Falls than we were by staying in a motel with a swimming pool. Less impressed by the Empire State building and Statue of Liberty than the cheap souvenirs we were allowed to buy.

Our trips meant more to us than any joy in seeing the Liberty Bell, or Old Ironsides in Boston harbor. The week we spent following Dad's Peterbilt was an island of pleasure in a sea of fear and anxiety. The tension we lived with at home was suspended while we made a few good memories together. Recalling those memories, my favorite is simply following the Peterbilt on Pennsylvania turnpikes and watching my father navigate his eighteen-wheeler into parking spaces. Of the places we visited my favorites are the truck stop diners where we ate fried chicken and shared apple pie a la mode.

Today's US highways are crowded with big rigs, many of them gigantic Peterbilts. Occasionally when I'm driving along side of one, I look up into the cab and ponder the driver's life. I wonder, "Is the man looking down on me a bogeyman, or is he a father with children who are eager for him to return home?" I hope the latter is true. — 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

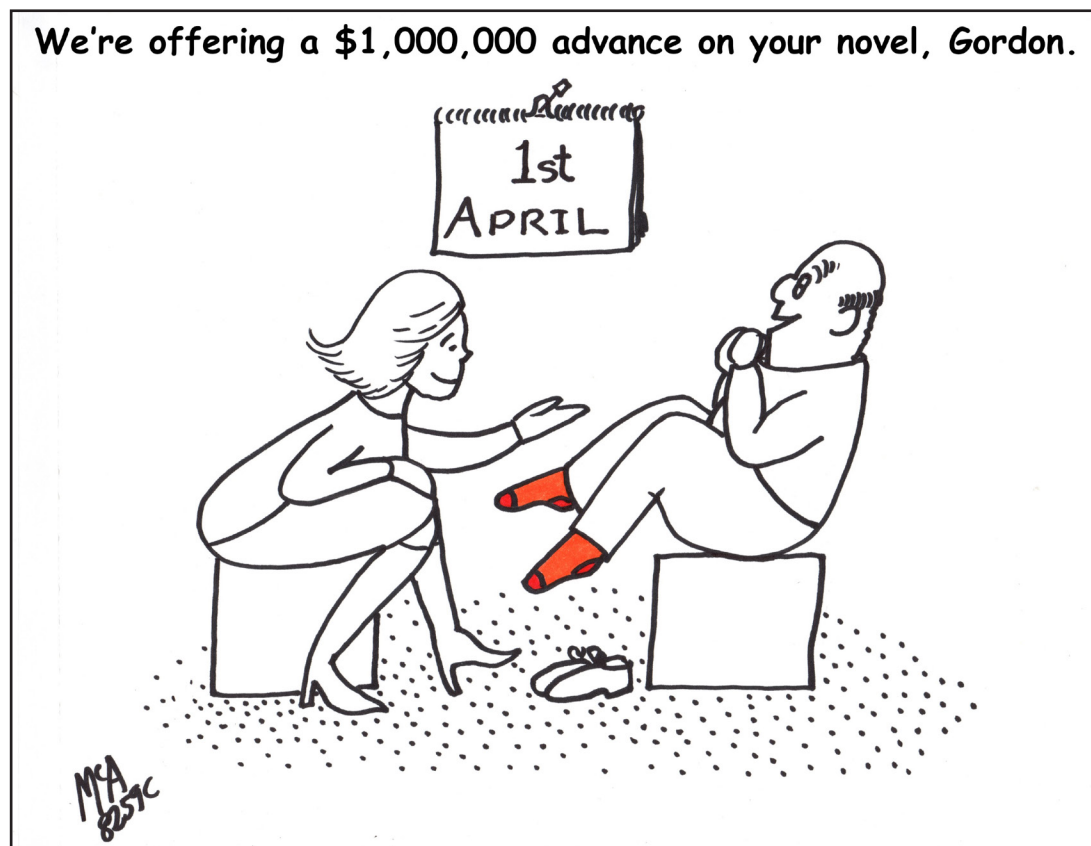
- Poetry
- Fiction
- Nonfiction/Essay
- Memoir

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

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

## Cartoons

*by Madeline McEwen*



# Shame

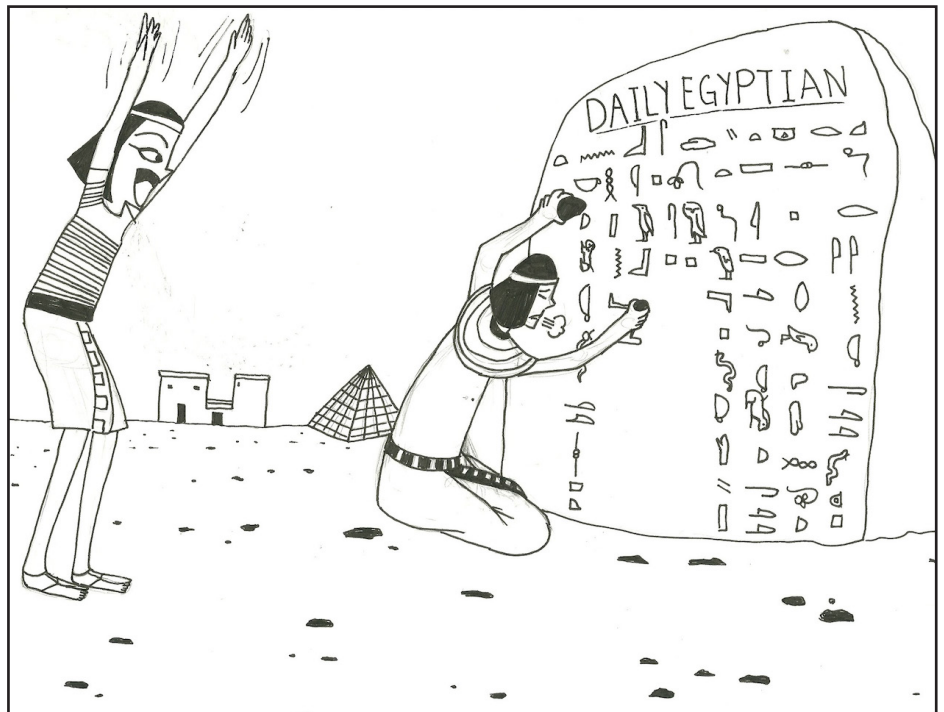
by Chris Weilert

Ever since the news of the day has been reported, large heaping doses salacious vitriol has been spoon fed to the masses. It has always been presented with a generous dose of embellishment of ghastliness to cater to worse in all of us. Gossip and innuendo will always sell more than happy puppy stories or fact-based science discussions.

I have always scratched my head about this constant barrage of negative word barf that filters its way through all forms of media. All we can do to avoid it is to walk around in a bubble with blinders on and earplugs inserted. It's gotten so bad lately that I think it has become a daily addition for a lot of folks. I heard the term "Outrage porn" which sounds like a fairly accurate description. Why does this happen and why do people want this? The only thing I can come up with that gives us all a chance to feel fortunate we are not the poor saps that are being written about. We hope that misfortune never happens to us and like it did to people who lost their home in a fire or the family who died on the interstate. The best we hope for is that we learn from it and we will never again play with matches, text and drive or eat the old romaine lettuce in our refrigerator.

Since the old days of privacy and confidentiality are now officially gone with the invention of camera phones, doing stupid acts in public are being documented for further research and public viewing. Unfortunately, even the silly things that are not perverted or hideous but are more innocent like singing dreadful karaoke or dancing with your shirt off at a Rolling Stones concert are recorded. Public shaming is right around the corner when you are exposed on social media.

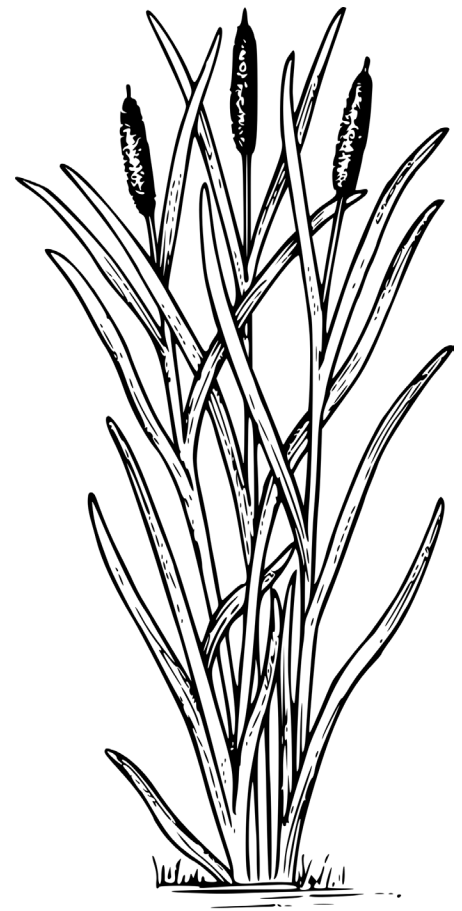
We as people better grow some thick skin and learn to except a new level of humiliation in our lives. You either get immune to seeing your public embarrassment or don't indulge in anything that resembles too much fun. My wife still likes to show our family and friends the time we were on vacation in Puerto Vallarta while I performed a tequila



"Party on the Nile!"  
"Can't go, I'm on deadline."

enhanced cha-cha on stage at a resort. I have to sit there and laugh at my lack of rhythm while others chuckle at my expense. If that is all I have to worry about in my closet of secrets being exposed, then I feel fortunate. The problem is that this won't be the last time I drop my guard and let loose with a series of off-beat dance moves.

We as people of the modern world have to carry on like no one is watching or we will be doomed to act like controllable little robots. Don't lose your sense of humor just because somebody wants to document your behavior. I say give them something to really look at. This doesn't mean that you should go Sean Penn on them and break their camera then push them to the ground. We are now in the age of overt exhibitionism and endless selfies so no need to ever worry that you have something so shocking that it shouldn't be seen. If you have skeletons in your closet just hope they were done before 1998, just to be safe. —WT





# Poetry Page

## Twins

By Judith Shernock

Ignorance and Intolerance:  
Twins, always together,  
Like quotation marks,  
or a pair of books.

Black belted pants.  
Dark shirts.  
Faces turned from the sun.  
Cut glass shark eyes.

Intolerance is sallow  
With pointy teeth,  
A lolling tongue.  
Hands made for strangling.

Ignorance, red faced  
Sweaty, overblown cheeks.  
Hands short fingered,  
Coated in blood.

Twins march with a banner  
That attracts minions.  
So many souls searching  
For that white light.

They shout their slogan:  
Not knowing is Holy!  
Ignorance is bliss!  
Hate those 'Not Us!'"

The "Not Us" are baffled.  
They despise violence.  
Yet, must learn quickly,  
Before Armageddon reigns.

## DID YOU KNOW? April is NATIONAL POETRY MONTH

What poems are  
YOU writing this month?  
Send them in to  
WRITERSTALK to be fea-  
tured in May! We love to  
hear your verse!

## BOOK REVIEW

### Bittersweet: A Coming of Age Historical Romance

by Lloyd Free

by The Prairies Book Review

An engaging coming-of-age story written with subtle humour and great panache...

Read the FULL review at...

[theprairiesbookreview.com/2019/03/09/bittersweet-a-coming-of-age-historical-romance-by-lloyd-free/](http://theprairiesbookreview.com/2019/03/09/bittersweet-a-coming-of-age-historical-romance-by-lloyd-free/)

## POETRY EVENTS

Poetry Readings at:  
Willow Glen Library  
FREE and open to the public  
Third Thursday of Every Month  
7:00 pm  
1157 Minnesota Avenue  
San José, CA 95125

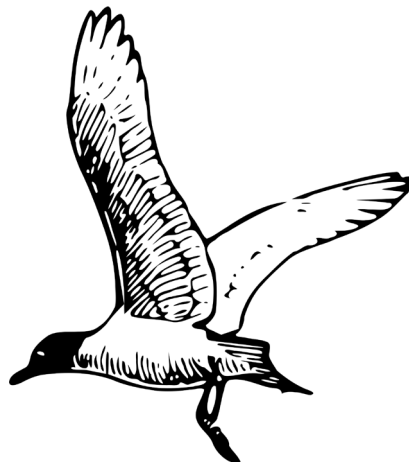
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Poets @ Play  
Second Sunday of Most Months  
1:00 to 4:00 pm  
Edwin Markham House in  
History Park  
1650 Senter Road,  
San José, CA 95112



## Pegasi

by Marjorie Johnson

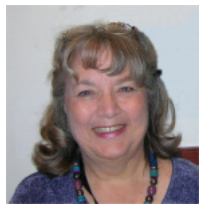


Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
How I wonder where you are.  
Star Walk app shows Pegasi  
Up above the world 47° 50' 35"  
Super-giant, orange.

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
How I wonder where you are.  
Star Walk app shows Pegasi  
689.6 light years away —  
What rhymes with orange?

# 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!

## APRIL IS...

### NATIONAL POETRY MONTH

Below is a list of sites with daily prompts, contests, activities or suggestions for poets and poetry lovers. San Jose Public had events last year, so did Santa Clara County. Keep you eye out for more this year.

- Poets.org: 30 ways to celebrate. Page specific to California at [www.poets.org/poetsorg/state/ca](http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/state/ca)
- Writer's Digest 2019 April PAD Challenge: write a poem each day of April. Prompts posted at [www.writersdigest.com/whats-new/2019-april-pad-challenge-guide-lines](http://www.writersdigest.com/whats-new/2019-april-pad-challenge-guide-lines)
- The Writer Magazine [www.writermag.com/?s=national+poetry+month](http://www.writermag.com/?s=national+poetry+month)
- NaPoWriMo - National Poetry Writing Month (and Na/GloWriMo National/Global Poetry Writing Month) [www.napowrimo.net/](http://www.napowrimo.net/)
- Poets & Writers Poetry month celebrations. [www.pw.org/poetrymonth](http://www.pw.org/poetrymonth) [www.poets.org/national-poetry-month/home](http://www.poets.org/national-poetry-month/home)
- Poetry Society of America (PS) [www.poetrysociety.org](http://www.poetrysociety.org)
- Poetry Foundation: [www.poetryfoundation.org/poetry-magazine/npm](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetry-magazine/npm)

A few Facebook poetry groups:

- Poetry Center San José
- Poetry Pacific
- How Writers Write Poetry Community Group (a community of Poetry Writers and fans)
- National Poetry Month

### OTHER SITES FOR POETS:

- Poetry Center San Jose: Cæsura 2019 Call for entries. Call closes: June 2, 2019 for General Public. June 16, 2019 for PCSJ Members. [www.pcsj.org/caesuracall.html](http://www.pcsj.org/caesuracall.html)
- Streetlight Magazine Poetry Contest deadline has been extended to April 10, 2019. 1st Prize \$125, 2nd Prize \$75, 3rd Prize \$50. [streetlightmag.submittable.com/submit/132762/streetlight-magazine-2019-poetry-contest](http://streetlightmag.submittable.com/submit/132762/streetlight-magazine-2019-poetry-contest)
- Up The Staircase Quarterly: Submit 3-6 poems in a single document. Submit up to 10 .jpgs for art. No previously published poetry, but previously published artwork is okay. [tinyurl.com/yc6e26ru](http://tinyurl.com/yc6e26ru)
- The Thimble Magazine: A quarterly online journal. [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, 2 issues per year-Spring and Fall. Published and unpublished welcome as long as you still have the rights. [poetrypacific.blogspot.com/](http://poetrypacific.blogspot.com/)
- 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/)
- Freedom With Writing - 78 Poetry Manuscript Publishers Who Do Not Charge Reading Fees [tinyurl.com/yccuwzj6](http://tinyurl.com/yccuwzj6)

### ONGOING LOCAL PUBLICATIONS:

- The Literary Nest: A local online publication. On their Facebook page they just said "So few women poets in this issue. Women, won't you help me by submitting your poetry to us?" [theliterarynest.com/](http://theliterarynest.com/)
- Sand Hill Review: Stories, non-fiction articles, and poems. [sandhillreview.org/](http://sandhillreview.org/)

### OTHER CONTESTS & SUBMISSIONS:

- 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: 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. They publish 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!

*Continued on Page 13*



## Contests and Markets

*Continued from Page 12*

- Get this week's prompts at [blog.reedsy.com/writing-contests/](http://blog.reedsy.com/writing-contests/)
- The Write 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
- 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)  
[winningwriters.com/the-best-free-literary-contests/contests-to-avoid](http://winningwriters.com/the-best-free-literary-contests/contests-to-avoid)
- MASTERS REVIEW. From Winning Writers. \$5000 awarded - Ten writers recognized and published in an anthology - a collection of ten stories and essays written by the best emerging authors. [mastersreview.com/anthology/?utm\\_source=WinningWriters&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_content=Guidelines](http://mastersreview.com/anthology/?utm_source=WinningWriters&utm_medium=Email&utm_content=Guidelines)
- Poets & Writers: Contest Blog [www.pw.org/blogs/prize\\_reporter](http://www.pw.org/blogs/prize_reporter)

Other resources include:

- Poets & Writers [pw.org/grants](http://pw.org/grants)
- The Write Life [thewritelife.com/writing-contests](http://thewritelife.com/writing-contests)
- Freedom With Writing [www.freedomwithwriting.com](http://www.freedomwithwriting.com)
- Authors Publish [www.authorspublish.com](http://www.authorspublish.com)

Freedom With Writing and Authors Publish: 25 Journals That Accept Reprints at

[tinyurl.com/25-Literary-Journals](http://tinyurl.com/25-Literary-Journals)

and 10 PAYING/NO FEE Literary Magazine at

[tinyurl.com/paying-no-fees](http://tinyurl.com/paying-no-fees)

Writers Post Call for Submissions posted this:

- The Blue Nib prints an online edition. Not a paying group yet but the online magazine is free to all. [thebluenib.com/](http://thebluenib.com/)

## Conferences and Events April 2019

*by Margie Yee Webb*

Pitch a Publisher! Insider Secrets to Getting a Book Deal with Brenda Knight

April 5, 2019, San Francisco CA

<https://www.milibrary.org/events/pitch-publisher-insider-secrets-getting-book-deal-apr-05-2019>

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

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

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

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

Independent Bookstore Day

April 27, 2019

<http://www.indiebookstoreday.com>

"Independent Bookstore Day is a one-day national party that takes place at indie bookstores across the country on the last Saturday in April. Every store is unique and independent, and every party is different."

2019 Sierra Poetry Festival

April 27, 2019, Grass Valley CA

<https://www.sierrapoetryfestival.org>

Nevada County Arts Council presents its 3rd Annual Sierra Poetry Festival at Sierra College in Grass Valley.

Gold Rush Writers Conference

May 3-5, 2019, Mokelumne Hill CA

<http://www.goldrushwriters.com>

14th Annual Gold Rush Writers Conference

Spring Spirit 2019

May 4, 2019, Citrus Heights CA

[canorthcentral.scbwi.org/events/spring-spirit-2019/](http://canorthcentral.scbwi.org/events/spring-spirit-2019/)

Presented by Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators -- California: North/Central region

— WT

*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

## 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. [cwcmtdiablowriters.wordpress.com](http://cwcmtdiablowriters.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.

## Conferences and Events

*Continued from Page 13*

### Bay Area Book Festival

May 4-5, 2019, Berkeley CA

<https://www.baybookfest.org>

"Tens of thousands of book lovers meet hundreds of acclaimed authors over an exciting weekend in downtown Berkeley, California."

### Mokuleia Writers Retreat

May 5-10, 2019, Oahu HI

<https://www.campmokuleia.org/mokuleia-writers-retreat>

"The Mokulē'ia Writers Retreat is an annual gathering that brings three dozen writers of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, essays, and memoir to the North Shore of O'ahu for a week of intimate workshops and coaching."

### Nonfiction Writers Conference

May 8-10, 2019, Online

<http://nonfictionwritersconference.com>

The 9th Annual Nonfiction Writers Conference presented by the Nonfiction Authors Association.

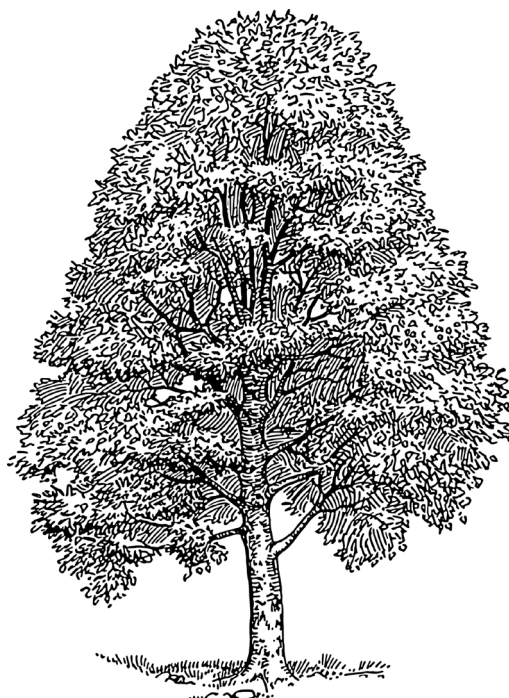
### Creative Writing Conference at UOP

May 17-19, 2019, Stockton CA

<https://www.writersconferenceatpacific.com>

Annual Conference on Creative Writing at Pacific.

—WT





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

### Upcoming Events

Board Meeting  
(Edie's home):

- Tues. April 8
- Tues. May 14

Dinner Meeting  
(Holder's Country Inn)

- Tues. April 16
- Tues. May 21

**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

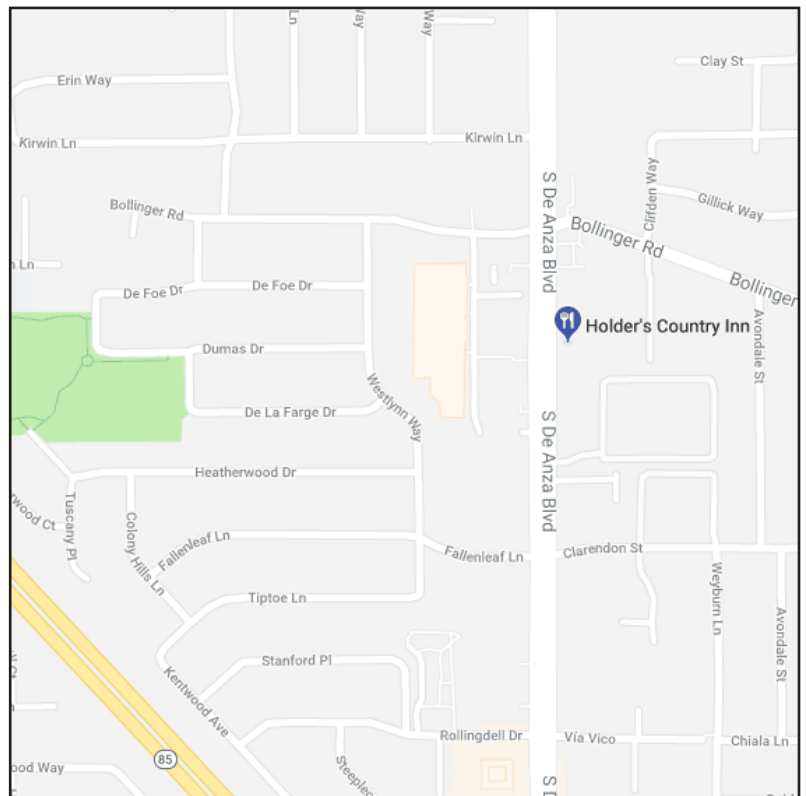
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**South Bay Writers  
Regular Dinner Meeting  
6:00 - 9:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, April 16, 2019  
Holder's Country Inn  
998 S. DeAnza Blvd, San Jose**

## **An Evening With a Literary Agent with Jonah Straus**

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)