



WRITERSTALK

Volume 27
Number 06
June 2019

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

JUNE SPEAKER: VICTORIA ZACKHEIM

From Print to Performance: Adapting Books to Film and Theater

by Jamal Khan



In the era of peak TV, with new entrants spending big to dethrone Netflix, studios are hungry for material. Agents scour bestseller lists, looking to snap up valuable intellectual property before the competition gets to it first. But that's not the only route for authors: with buzzy titles like *Ready Player One* and *The Hate U Give*, the film rights were sold before the books were even published. This year, no less than 29 books are being adapted into films. Theater is another possibility. Many noted theater successes started out as books: *Alexander Hamilton*, *Wicked*, *Tuck Everlasting*, and the perennial favorite—*A Christmas Carol*. Is your book a potential film or play? How do you write the adaptation? In our June 18 dinner meeting, Victoria Zackheim will answer these questions and more.

Victoria Zackheim is the author of the novel *The Bone Weaver*, and the editor of six anthologies, with the seventh, *Mystery Writers on the Mysteries of Life*, scheduled to be published in Spring 2020. She adapted five essays from her first anthology, *The Other Woman*, and created a play that had a nationwide simultaneous reading in more than twenty venues in November 2016. Proceeds for most of these readings went to local women's shelters. Her new play, *Entangled*, is in the reading stage and was recently read in Los Angeles and the Berkshires in Massachusetts.

Victoria wrote the screenplays *MAIDSTONE* (with a feature film now in development with Sara Jane Murray of Story Rhetoric) and *ROZZY*, based on the novel by Caroline Leavitt. She wrote the documentary *Where Birds Never Sang: The Story of Ravensbrück and Sachsenhausen Concentration Camps*, which aired nationwide on PBS. Victoria created Women's Voices and is a frequent speaker and instructor at writing conferences and for women's organizations in the United States, Mexico, Canada, and Europe. She is a freelance book editor of fiction and nonfiction and has contributed personal essays to many anthologies, the latest being Paul Fahey's *EQUALITY*.

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

When: Tuesday, June 18 at 6pm; talk begins at 7:30pm

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

Cost of admission includes a \$10 rebate on the purchase of a dinner

MAY RECAP: ANDREW BENZIE

Creating a Strong Cover Design

by Bill Baldwin

Andrew Benzie spoke to our South Bay Writers May meeting on the topic of "Creating a Strong Cover Design." Andrew is a member of the Mount Diablo branch of the CWC, and the very first book cover he designed was for a book written by his father. Since then he has helped with more than a hundred books over the past seven years.

Book covers are important. "Never judge a book by its cover?" People do judge books by their covers! It's the first thing people see—and first impressions count! Human brains process images much faster than they process text.

What make a great cover? It looks professional. It is easy to read. It uses distinctive typography.

The cover image convey the essence of the book. It should be clear, crisp, and clean. Andrew showed us multiple covers and asked us to consider what those covers conveyed.

While Andrew cautioned against simply photoshopping images, he also recommended the site istock.com as a good source for images, which you can then reuse, with permission, as part of your cover. And remember that the cover will sometimes be displayed in miniature, so make sure a thumbnail version still conveys the spirit of the book.

He pointed out that you can change your book cover as often as you like without needing to get a new ISBN for the book.

Andrew urged us to think beyond the cover itself, in long-range terms. Your cover design can be used as part of your general branding: For your website, business cards, flyers, bookmarks, and

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Between the Lines

Edie Matthews



Proms, Balls, and Graduations!

It's the season for gowns and graduations. Department stores showcase their frou-frou finest, florists feature bouquets and boutonnieres, and even grocery stores offer cards and corsages. On weekends, many of us will spot teens dolled up for an evening on the town. I noticed a group of young ladies in tulle and taffeta waiting to be seated for dinner. All their heads were buried in cell phones. I wanted to say, "Ladies, speak to each other!"

One of my twin granddaughters invited a boy to go with her to the Senior Ball. "He's just a friend," she explained. The other twin had a bit more drama. First, an emissary inquired, "Would you go with Robert IF he asked you?" When she replied yes, the next day Robert approached her with a full-size poster invitation.

I was impressed but had to laugh. I think my husband proposed the same way. Not with a poster, but suggesting, "IF we got married ..." I understand why—we all hate to be turned down.

Although today's traditions have evolved, they remind me of my children's proms and my prom.

My oldest son attended the Winter Ball when he was a Freshman. With a limited budget, he managed to fit into his 8th grade powder-blue graduation suit. His baby sister looked at him and asked, "Is Jimmy getting married?" His Senior Ball will always be remembered because he got two traffic tickets. One for rushing home after picking up his tuxedo, and a second for parking on private property.

My younger son, Mr. Debonair, was invited to six proms by girls from various high schools. The word must have gone around, if you need a date, "Better call Mike."

I should have invested in a tuxedo, but somehow a men's white-cropped dinner jacket came our way. Michael wore it and looked quite dashing. Afterwards, that he received a lot of compliments.

A few years later I found a black tuxedo at a parking lot sale of a synagogue in LA and bought it for myself. Turned out it fit my husband perfectly, and he's worn it many times.

My youngest daughter insisted I make her prom dresses—two years in a row. "I don't want to look like the other girls," she exclaimed. At the fabric store we selected two patterns, and I combined the best features of both. One year, she wore pine-green taffeta with triple-frilly flounces, fitted bodice, and three-quarter length sleeves. Her senior year, she wore black satin with a double-bubble skirt and lace bodice. This was quite a switch for a girl who usually wore sports clothes. At 5'8" she looked fabulous. (Well, didn't we all at 16 and 17?)

But her 8th grade graduation dress was the funniest. I kept reminding her to go to the mall and find a dress. I was busy and she was busy. The day before graduation, she told her teammates at rehearsal that she still didn't have a dress. When she came home that night, I opened my closet and we tried to find something suitable. Nothing worked.

"What about that pink lace dress?" she asked. Pink lace? I had no idea what she was referring to. But excavating in the spare bedroom closet, we found the pink concoction: a ballerina-length bridesmaid's dress. "This?" I asked, delighted the pricy garment that I had worn once eight years prior in my BFF wedding might be recycled.

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California Writers Club
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www.southbaywriters.com

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SBW Mission

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

Join Us

We have a membership category that fits you. Renewal dues are \$45 for membership through June 30, 2019. Dual membership, \$25; student membership, \$20. New member, \$65. Contact Membership Chair at a meeting or sign up online at southbaywriters.com or send a check to CWC-South Bay Writers, P O Box 3254, Santa Clara, CA 95055.

WritersTalk

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

email: newsletter@southbaywriters.com

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Deadline

Submissions are due by the 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



June 18: Meetings and Elections

Let me extend my apologies that this issue is probably getting to you a little later than usual. I had computer troubles in the last week of May, as well as a visit from family that lives out-of-state. Summer is the busiest season of my year—and usually always the most productive—so I find myself having to strategize a little more cautiously when it comes to deadlines. This month, I want to carry on with a few more thoughts about our upcoming elections and what leadership means to our chapter of the California Writers Club.

In February, I traveled up to San Francisco to volunteer for the yearly Writers Conference. It was my first time volunteering, first time attending, first time stepping into a large event geared towards writers and authors. Though I only manned the CWC booth for a single morning, I met more writers and exchanged more meaningful conversations with said writers than I felt like I had all winter! It felt like such an incredible opportunity: to meet other writers, network with other members in our club, and just hang out with people who shared a love for writing. I wouldn't have had that opportunity if I hadn't spoken up and reached out to Kymberly about volunteering.

Granted: you don't have to be an officer in our chapter to volunteer for things like the Writers Conference. The real onus is on speaking up in the first place. You can open doors of opportunity for yourself just by showing up and following through. Our board meetings are a great start. They occur every second Tuesday of the month—maybe Wednesday; you'll have to keep track via the website and our regular emails—and they are a good way to get a peek into how we run the chapter. All members are welcome to attend, so long as you're in good standing and you've paid your dues for the year!

Now, I always feel like an invitation to action should come with some of my own thoughts on what kind of efforts might benefit the club. Within the upcoming year, I would love to see a few more writing groups and critique circles pop up within our chapter. It takes a lot of work to create and sustain a good writing group. Modern technology (especially social media) has helped many writers with communication and networking, but, at the end of the day, you still have to get a certain number of folks together to read, review, and discuss each other's work. Maybe in the upcoming year we can see that happen; if not, it's a topic I at least want to keep bouncing around.

See you at our June election! Write on! —WT

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View from the Board

by Marjorie Johnson



Marjorie Johnson
SBW Secretary

On May 15, ten of us met at Secretary Marjorie Johnson's home: Edie Matthews, Jamal Khan, Bill Baldwin, Trenton Myers, Dave LaRoche, Inga Silva, Janet Patey, Alfred Jan, Tatyana Grinenko, and Marjorie Johnson.

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 pm. **Minutes for March and April 2019 were approved.** Meeting highlights follow.

Because of our new meeting schedule, Treasurer T. Myers began collecting renewal dues at the April meeting. If you did not re-up, you have another opportunity on May 21: \$45 renewal dues for SBW for the fiscal year July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. Please bring your checkbook to the May and June meetings or use Paypal to pay online at southbaywriters.com.

Announcements from President Edie Matthews: the **SBW summer BBQ** will be on **Sunday, August 11, 3 p.m.**, at Edie's new home, TBA. On Tuesday, July 16, SBW will have a our July dinner meeting with a speaker program.

Upcoming programs:

- May 21, "How to Create a Strong Cover Design" with Andrew Benzie
- June 18, "From Print to Performance: Adapting Books to Film and Theater" with Victoria Zackheim

Other items of interest:

- Janet Patey was appointed and ratified as Hospitality Chair.
- Dave LaRoche was appointed and ratified as Nomination and Election Chair. While current Board members have agreed to serve another term, we really need new blood. Please consider becoming more active in SBW by taking an office or helping a committee chair. SBW elections will occur on June 18.
- Our Jack London nominee will be announced on May 21.
- The awards for the *WritersTalk* Challenge 2019 contest will be made at the holiday party in December.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:38 p.m. Next meeting: Wednesday June 12th, 7 p.m., at Marjorie's house. Please note change of venue.

SBW Board meetings are open to all interested members of South Bay Writers. RSVP to Marjorie at

secretary@southbaywriters.com

Come and learn what's happening and how to be a part of the action. — WT

Proms, Balls, and Graduations

Continued from Page 2

Actually, the feminine style was more suitable for a 13-year old. What a dichotomy for the daughter who had a closet full of hi-top basketball sneakers.

At the graduation ceremony, one snippy mother said to me. "Michele told everyone she didn't have a dress." I just laughed. No way was I going to reveal the truth.

Memories of my prom flood back while gazing at the pictures of my twin granddaughters. It wasn't held in a posh hotel, but in the school gymnasium decorated with crepe paper and streamers. No one arrived in a limousine — those were only for weddings, funerals, and celebrities.

In those pre-pantyhose days, we wore nylons and garter belts. Many girls (even skinny ones) suffered in Merry Widow corsets.

Always on a budget, I managed to find a lovely gold brocade dress on sale. It had a scoop neckline, capped sleeves, and a bell skirt, only it was a size too big. Fortunately, I could do the alterations. I scraped together enough money to get my hair fashioned in a bouffant, a popular style of the 60s. I felt elegant.

My date and boyfriend, a college student at Santa Clara University, borrowed his friend's car. No time for dinner before the prom, so afterwards, half famished, we ate fried chicken at R&J's Drive-in on the El Camino Real. (Now it's a strip mall with a T-Mobile Store). Feeling nostalgic, I smile recalling a simpler time. — WT

SBW Recap

Continued from the front page

so on. Think strategically! Decide what your goals are. Get a professional editor. Have a website. Utilize social media. Apply new technology.

On the other hand, don't wait to market your book. Don't skimp on your cover design. Don't treat your business like a hobby. Don't worry about formatting while writing (your professional editor can take care of all that later!) Don't assume your book will sell without a well-thought-out marketing strategy.

The average number of copies that a book sells is around 126. Wouldn't you like to do better than that? So develop a business plan, including a marketing strategy. Build your fanbase.

Andrew Benzie Books can provide design services (covers, websites, business cards, bookmarks, posters), publishing services, ebook services (conversion to Kindle and iPad), and marketing services (Amazon, Facebook, etc). Check out the website at www.andrewbenziebooks.com. Contact Andrew by email at andrew@andrewbenzie.com

Andrew is offering free consultations to CWC members. Email him and take advantage of this excellent resource! for story submission. — WT

CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB

Enduring the Century

by Dave LaRoche

An early noteworthy in CWC history is Ina Donna Coolbrith, known as a librarian—the first in Oakland—and a close friend of Jack London's. Coolbrith, also the State's first Poet Laureate, brought lasting esteem to the club—a citation for exemplary Club service that carries her name is sparingly awarded by the Central Board.

Joaquin Miller, also dearly associated, an often mentioned poet and the benefactor of Oakland Park provided the club with its motto, "Sail on," which was taken from one of his many poems, "Columbus."

*... The good mate said, "Now we must pray.
For lo! The very stars are gone.*

Brave Admiral, speak, what shall I say?"

"Why say, 'Sail on! Sail on! Sail on!'"

Upon Miller's death in 1913, and with the leadership of Gertrude Mott (League of Women Writers and wife of Oakland mayor emeritus) a campaign to convert Miller's estate into a park gained sufficient momentum and in 1919, Joaquin Miller Park became a new and 500 acre charge of the Oakland Parks and Recreation Department. A memorial grove was associated with the CWC and a tradition of tree planting inaugurated by the club—the first planted in 1930 to commemorate the poet donor — Joaquin Miller himself.

The CWC's interest in its founding picnic hillside continued, and the Woodminster Amphitheater was envisioned and completed with significant assistance from FDR's WPA (for those under forty: Franklin Delano Roosevelt's depression related Work Projects Administration). Waterfalls, fountains, and pools marked this "cathedral in the woods" and remains today as it was when dedicated to the CWC in March of 1941. The club as a whole has picnicked there in July of several years running 2011-16.

Meetings soon became celebrations of literary events and authors of the day. Writing contests, *The Bulletin*, and eloquent speakers on topics of craft and publication

brought a level of sophistication to the ambiance. A keenly focused view on literary prowess evolved, and many achieved while others held high aspirations—this club character earlier promoted by Dr. Morgan if mixed with a measure of fun. Many were published in various local and nationally distributed releases. From its inception, the club has dedicated itself to the enrichment and development of its members through such programs as peer review and critique groups and over its life, the sponsorship of over thirty writers' conferences.

As the country evolved through the war of the teens and the dance of the twenties, the literary scene expanded as well, with the work from Virginia Wolf, D.H. Lawrence, and Herman Melville's Moby Dick; Thomas Mann, Hemingway, and Scott Fitzgerald also principal on the scene. This exemplary writing and its recognition had a beneficial effect on the club and membership grew. In March of 1925, a Sacramento branch was inaugurated with thirty-two members. In December of 1926, club membership stood at 146; in 1931, 253 members were listed in "Who's Who in America." During the war run-up and through the combat, membership dropped into the low one-hundreds but by 1975 had again increased to four-hundred plus in a reorganized club. The new CWC now comprised a Central Board and four branches — Berkeley, Sacramento, SF Peninsula, and Redwood.

Leadership is the key to club vitality, and while social environs play a significant role, it's the leaders that bring the vision, innovation, and energy to "sail on." Throughout the life of CWC, from 1909 until today, one can see the truth of this maxim.

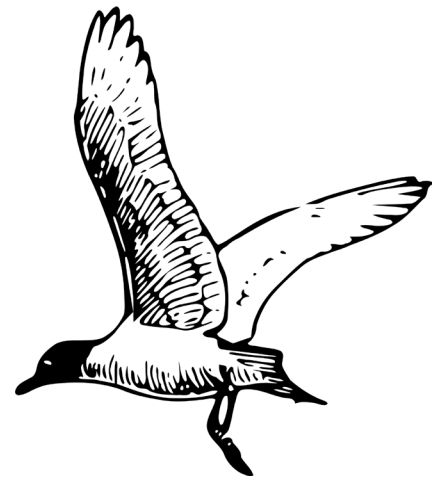
The first CWC writers' conference was held in Oakland on April of 1955—shepherded in by John Wesley Noble then president with sponsorship from the Oakland Chamber of Commerce and the *Oakland Tribune*. The following year

another was held in Oakland, and annually through 1967 after which a biennial schedule ensued. In 1977, the Central Board managed their first conference—the twentieth to date—held at Stanford University with 323 registrants. Follow it another at Stanford, two at Mills College, and the final four by the Central Board through 1995 at Asilomar on the coast. Conferences, a favorite of writers, are now held at many of the branches.

In 1973, the Jack London Award was established by the Central Board, its intent to honor a branch member for salient service to that branch. Each branch sends their nominee to a luncheon where the citation is presented. The celebration, once annual, is currently scheduled for every other year.

Today the club boasts 22 branches throughout the State and some 2000 members. The Central Board, comprised of one representative (director) from each branch, meets twice a year in January and July. Regional associations have developed—the NorCal Group and CWC South. Their role is communications and operational help.

Our branch, The South Bay Writers, finds 137 members in its roll today, is financially stable and socially strong. More about SBW and our branch activities in my next CWC episode. —WT



May Member News

by Marjorie Johnson

This month the flash fiction story, "The Great White Chihuahua" by **Judy Field**, was published in the Spring 2019 issue of *Birdland Journal*. Judy is a member of both South Bay Writers and SF/Peninsula CWC.

On May 4, 2019, **Audry Lynch** received the Delta Kappa Gamma Distinguished Service Award for Professional Service for her tireless work in the area of scholarly research on California author, John Steinbeck. A banquet was held in her honor along with two other recipients at the San Francisco Airport Marriott Waterfront in Burlingame.

May 19 was Authors' Day at Barnes & Noble, Hillsdale, attended in the afternoon by **Penny Cole, Marjorie Johnson and Russ Towne** from SBW and Bill Barnes, Jeanine Gerkman and Laurel Anne Hill from SF Peninsula Branch CWC. (Elise Miller, Carole Bumpus, Audrey Kalman and Thomas Crockett had the morning shift.)

Michele Weiss writes: "My historical mystery novella, *The Letters*, is now on Amazon in both paperback and ebook versions."

Carolyn Donnell's piece, "The Black One," won an Honorable Mention in the Division 333-03, Short Story, General Fiction, Senior Exhibitor, in the San Mateo County Fair literary contest. **Dave LaRoche's** piece, "Roan and Rachel," was awarded a second place in the same contest. Congratulations, Carolyn and Dave!

The San Mateo County Fair opens Saturday, June, and runs a week. The Literary Division, the Literary Stage, and many free events for writers are sponsored by CWC SF Peninsula. They are looking for volunteers to help out at the fair. For every 3 hours you work, you are entered into a raffle for a year's free membership in the SF Peninsula Branch of California Writers Club. Check out

<https://www.sanmateocountyfair.com/literary-arts>

Share your writing news in this column by sending an email to Marjorie Johnson at membernews@southbaywriters.com.

— WT



President Edie Matthews and 2019 Jack London Award Nominee Carolyn Donnell

Carolyn Donnell SBW Nominee for 2019 Jack London Award

by Marjorie Johnson

Carolyn Donnell is South Bay Writers' nominee for the 2019 Jack London Award, given every other year to outstanding members of the branches of the California Writers Club, the oldest and largest professional writing club on the West Coast. The club recognizes the value of dedicated, outstanding, and in many cases sustained, service as a mission to support members pursuing their writing, publishing, and marketing goals.

Carolyn is behind her camera at all South Bay Writers functions. She makes a photo collage for every issue of *WritersTalk*, and she also finds an extensive list of current contests for writers every month. Behind the scenes, she assists Dick Amyx in updating the *WritersTalk* cumulative index for all back issues since 2005. Yes, all back issues of *WritersTalk* from 2005 are on our website, southbaywriters.com. Besides that, when the club needs something done, Carolyn can be depended to work on it.

The award will be bestowed on Sunday, July 21, at the Holiday Inn in Oakland.

Some past winners of the Jack London Award from SBW are Sally Milnor, Colin Seymour, Marjorie Johnson, Dick Amyx, Dave LaRoche, Vicki Burlew, Bill Baldwin, Tina Glasner, Edie Matthews, and our life member, Tom Mach. — WT



Pictured left: SBW member **Audry Lynch**, recipient of the Delta Kappa Gamma Distinguished Service Award for Professional Service

South Bay Writers

May 2019



Be in Charge

by Dave LaRoche

Be in charge of your life, your writing life. Move your vision toward reality. Network with peers at a challenging level—offer and learn. Move into the center; get more involved; reap more reward—take an office in your writing club and help steer us into a page-littered, publishing future.

I'm Dave LaRoche (dalaroche@comcast.net) your nominating chair for our branch elections to be held in June; and I'm asking that you run for an office, win, and provide your influence as with the rest of the board - about nine - you decide what it is we'll do next month and the months and months after that. We have six electable seats available

- President - provides vision related to mission and cracks the implementation whip.
- Vice President - determines members' needs and sees to mostly-fulfilling programs.
- Treasurer - weaves straw into gold and spends it.

- Secretary - Takes minutes of action, inaction, and grumblings at board meetings
- Member-at-large (2 of these) - brings profundity and profanity from members, and promotes related consideration.

Our board works as a team, each providing their experience and when needed, backfilling empty pockets belonging to larger mouths. (When X doesn't know, or pauses to breath, Y will butt in.) Our Board meets once a month, a couple of hours and most of it cordial. You'll like being there—the table offers a selection of cookies, coffee, occasionally M&Ms, but BYOB.

Here's how it works: you tell me—email is dandy— which office you choose. I'll put your name on the slate and ask for a brief bio - couple hundred meaningful syllables max. When full and bios collected, I'll send the slate to Jessica McDole for inclusion into the June newsletter, which, with a special prayer, will arrive in mailboxes

before the election.

It also can work that if only seconds before a particular vote during the election part of the June meeting, you refute your earlier muddled thinking and now actually want to run. It's not too late. I'll ask for additional "noms," and you may raise your hand (or someone can raise it for you, or raise theirs in your behalf, or anyone's hand will do—just get it up there). While this is fair, and in our bylaws, it isn't the preferred approach as it limits selection time for the voter, and further reduces our evening social quibbling.

Send me your interest in running for office; send me your questions; send me your affirmative nod. I'll happily engage with them all, will especially enjoy the "nod." We have a large and growing branch and deserve your personal involvement. We all have something to offer—yours undoubtedly better than mine and I've been offering for years. Step up, now. Give it a go.

Once more: dalaroche@comcast.net. — WT

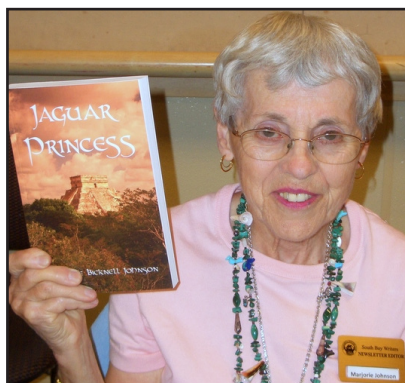
SBW ELECTIONS

Candidate Statements

for our 2019 SBW Elections

Edie Matthews - President Candidate

If I'm re-elected, this would be my third term as president. I've been fortunate to have nearly all of the talented board members continue in key positions. They have helped our branch get reorganized and move forward. We inherited a number of challenges when we began two years ago: squabbles, unfinished business, website issues, and more recently, a venue change to the Country Inn after Harry's Hofbrau suddenly closed. However, we have faced each problem and resolved it. At the same time, instead of our membership decreasing (as had been the case), we have steadily increased to 137 paid members and regularly draw new guests. Now, several new dedicated people have joined the board too. If I'm chosen, it is my goal to see that our branch continues to operate smoothly. I would like meetings and occasional workshops to be informative and exhilarating. I'd like members and guests to look forward to attending our events. Finally, I like the idea of our meetings being like a Paris salon or Algonquin Round Table where creative people can meet, socialize, and inspire each other.



Marjorie Johnson - Secretary Candidate

I have been a member of SBW since 2002. I served as membership chair for 6 years followed by 6 ½ years as Editor of WritersTalk. Over the years, I have attended most SBW Board meetings, and I served as secretary 2018-2019.

Candidate Statements

for our 2019 SBW Elections

Jamal Khan - Vice President Candidate

I grew up in San Jose and completed my K-12 education in its public schools, including Independence High School. Having participated in the Creative Writing Group at Harvard Law School, I know firsthand the crucial difference that the support of like-minded individuals can make in one's writing journey. Having served as Vice President, I am familiar with the requirements of the position. I know the importance of booking accomplished speakers for our club meetings so members can benefit from their guidance and wisdom. I will submit their bios to the newsletter in a timely manner. I will continuously elicit feedback from members to ensure that speakers are meeting their expectations. I will attend board meetings on a regular basis and will help with additional responsibilities as needed.



Tatyana Grinenko - Member-at-Large Candidate

Time sure has flown by since my first meeting back towards the start of 2017! In this time, I have learned so much from the various guest speakers and writers within this wonderful club. It has been an honor to be the one that updates members about upcoming events, speakers and Writer's Talk deadlines, and I look forward to continue helping our club's members stay updated on what interests them most as your Member at Large.

Alfred Jan - Member-at-Large Candidate

Alfred Jan published freelance art criticism during the 1980s through the mid-1990s. He now compiles anthologies of mystery stories originally found in the pulp magazines of the 1920s, 30s, and 40s. He is a Kaiser Permanente optometrist and has a MA degree in Philosophy, specializing in Aesthetics.



Vote for your candidates at our June 18th 2019 SBW Dinner Meeting!

RENEW YOUR SBW MEMBERSHIP!

ALL current members need to renew for 2019-2020, even if you purchased a half-year membership in January or February or March.

RENEW TODAY by:

Credit card: Renew online at southbaywriters.com

Pay in Person: cash or check at the next meeting

Mail: send your basic information with a check for \$45 to

CWC South Bay Writers Club

P. O. Box 3254

Santa Clara, CA 95055

What is Marital Bliss?

by Chris Weilert

When a couple decides to change up the usual wedding reception events, I am not one to judge. I can say I wouldn't miss any more drunken speeches, garter flinging, bouquet throwing, grandma dancing and cake smashing into faces. We attended a Polish-Mexican wedding and will declare it was everything but traditional with accordion's, hat dances, polkas and an obscene amount of food offerings.

When the pace of the reception relented for a short time and a slow jam finally played, my tipsy wife grabbed my arm and off we went to the dance floor. We shuffled around like two prizefighters locked in a clinch. My mind drifted off to a previous version of the same event. I transported to my eighth-grade graduation celebration when Charlene Bowers asked me to slow dance. She so towered over me that it took four years for me to catch up to her in height. When the dance ended, she tried to plant a kiss on my lips which caught me off guard. The kiss didn't land on target and we bumped heads. She reloaded and went in for some more action but this time I squared up and we made a perfect connection. That moment flew out of my mind in a matter of seconds but has never left my memory in forty years.

I looked over at the newlyweds while they held on to each other like they would collapse any second. They both made it through the wash cycle of planning a big wedding though I am sure this groom had a lot less to do with this shindig. His buddies probably got him liquored up well before he even said, "I Do" and now he was paying the price for not pacing himself.

I thought this wedding reception checked off all of the boxes on the events scorecard, so I sensed it was time to leave. We said our goodbyes and congratulations then made our way to the exit but not before we ran into my ex-wife. All of the years of wondering what it would be like if we ever met each other again but to have my two wives in the same place at the same time was never part of that thought process. Time stopped followed by double takes to make sure we were seeing things right. She was still dying her hair dark brown and kept herself in shape by lift-

ing weights. Both wives seemed to be non-embarrassed by this situation unlike me who wanted the meeting to come to a swift resolution. After the introduction of the wives, I could see it. The wheels in both their heads turning while I felt the sweat roll down my back.

After a little small talk, I grabbed my current wives' arm and said we should go. I saw her stiffen up like she didn't want to leave. Then both of them laughed at my expense. They knew they had me in a tight spot, and both wanted the torture to continue. Wife number one asked us if we wanted to have a cocktail at the bar. I held my composure but declined the invitation before wife number two could respond. She said it would be okay we stayed a little longer and guided us to the bar. The walk of death. I could see it now, a future where they are now friends. The chance, the odds and how in the hell did this happen clouded my mind.

The next twenty minutes lasted longer than my first marriage. Fortunately, I wasn't the subject of the conversation, but more about the two of them and their new found friendship. Every man can't help contemplating how one rates with women of their past and present. You just hope they all remember the great moments and have amnesia of the not so. But that

by Edie Matthews



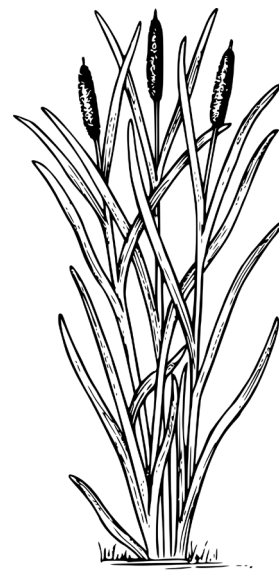
"I'm certain the treasure is in this area."

"But I can't figure out the code."

"I think it's written in an ancient script called 'cursive.'"

would be wishful thinking but the brutal reality is they seem to remember every shortfall you had.

On the way home, I brought this theory up to my wife and she told me that it's true but not what she thought as all three of us sat together. She wanted to understand why the marriage didn't last without outright asking my ex. I asked her if she got it all resolved in her mind in the brief amount of time. She pondered for a couple of seconds then said, "It's hard to really say but obviously she was way too short for you." — WT



Nirvana:

What Really Happens When You Die

by Jac Fitzenz

A short, studious looking, elderly gentleman in a tweed jacket approaches me at the podium with a smile. "Good day sir. My name is Roy. Would you come with me please? I have something to show you that you will find very interesting."

We walk deliberately, but slowly out of the building, across a grassy yard and up a nearby hill. As we near the top he says, "I think you will enjoy the view."

In the distance I can see a cloud formation that seems to glow. "What is that," I ask.

"That's your new home. A man of your talent and creativity will find it most fulfilling."

"What do you mean my new home? I live back there, just a couple miles from the meeting hall."

"You did sir, but no longer. You see, you had a fatal heart attack just as you finished your presentation – which was quite exhilarating I might add. You are truly a brilliant man."

"What do you mean, I'm dead?"

"Yes sir, sadly you are. Now, I'm going to take you to an extraordinary place – beyond even your dreams."

"What about my wife and children? What will happen to them?"

"I'm afraid that is now behind you. I imagine you planned for them and although they will miss you a great deal, they will be secure."

"What is this place you're talking about? Is it heaven?"

"Something like heaven, perhaps even better for a person like you."

"What's it called?"

"There isn't a name for it, but we refer to it as Nirvana, a transcendent state, beyond suffering, pain or desire."

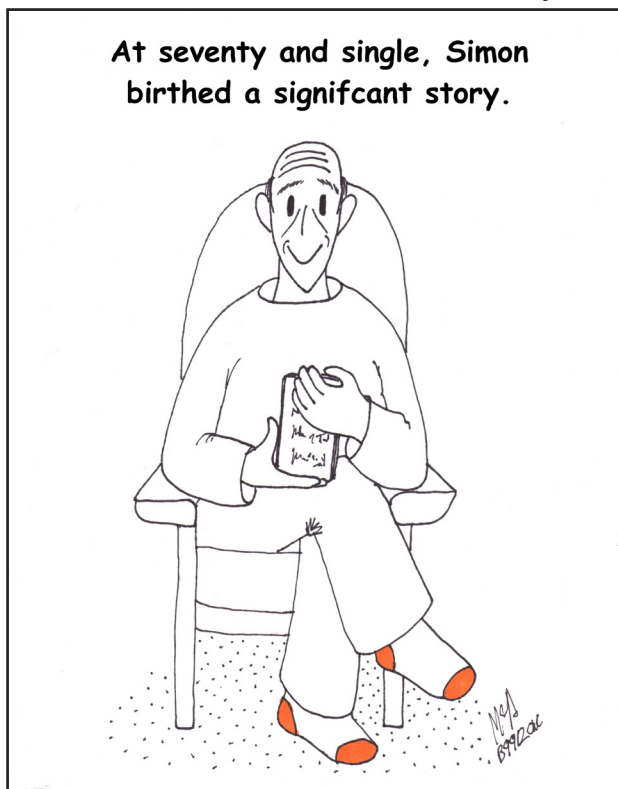
"I've read about nirvana."

"Yes, many seek to attain it as their final goal. Yet, there is something more, something to which you can apply your knowledge, skills and insight to make the world a better place for those you left behind."

I'm stunned, first by the news of my death and now this strange notion that I can still affect the physical world. I shake my head to try to clarify what's happening. We continue our walk toward the top of the hill as I try to make sense of it.

"I imagine you're a bit puzzled by this.

At seventy and single, Simon birthed a significant story.



Please be patient. When we reach the Center there will be others to greet you and explain further." The old man speaks softly and puts his hand on my arm.

At the top of the hill I can see a building with simple lines, and a soft glow about it. The old man opens the door and motions me to enter. Inside there is no decoration, no walls, just space, with soft light rays emanating from above. This is what I would have thought heaven might feel like. A small group of people, of several ages rise to greet me. They don't exactly stand up. It's more like they emerge from the surrounding space. Interesting – there are no shadows. I suppose spirits don't have shadows. The first person is a very small, very old lady with a beatific smile. She reaches out to me, not with a hand, but more like with her spirit. "I'm Ann. Welcome sir. Welcome to our Center. I believe you will find it to be more than you could have imagined."

One by one they approach me and introduce themselves. The last one is a boy of about six who says his name is Eddie. I'm surprised to see a child among this group of middle aged and old people.

Ann can see my consternation. She smiles that radiant smile and says, "I see you're puzzled to find such a young person among us. He is quite useful in that he offers the innocence and purity of youth.

His thought process is not contaminated by the evils of the world that we older people have experienced. He can see the obvious that is not covered or warped by painful experience. He's our treasure."

"I understand that, but for what purpose? Where will his pure vision be applied, to what? I don't know why you, now me, are here."

A tall, husky, middle aged man moves toward me, "You can't understand because we haven't shared our purpose. You don't know why we're here or what we're charged to study."

I nod and look around for an explanation. There were no clues because there is no furniture or equipment in this space – a space that seems to have no definition, no boundary.

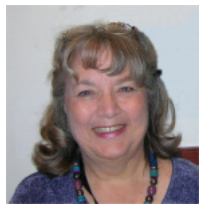
Roy moves forward and says, "Let me explain what we are about here and how it is different from anything you've ever been told."

He takes a deep breath, looks at the group for approval and feeling them nod, begins. "When people die, their soul is consigned to someplace that they earned through their actions on earth. A very small percentage of souls are assigned here. They are those who have something extraordinary to contribute. You ask contribute to what; to life back on earth.

Continued on Page 14

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!

UPCOMING DEADLINES:

- Writers Digest Popular Fiction Awards - Deadline: 09/16/19. Many genres. 4,000 words. Grand prize: \$2,500, featured interview in Writer's Digest magazine, a paid trip to Writer's Digest Annual Conference in New York City. 1st Prize in each category: \$500, announced in May/June issue of Writer's Digest, story published on writersdigest.com, copy of 2020 Novel & Short Story Writer's Market and \$100 gift certificate for writersdigestshop.com. Honorable Mentions: Announced on writersdigest.com and copy of 2020 Novel & Short Story Writer's Market <https://www.writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions/popular-fiction-awards>

OTHER CONTESTS & SUBMISSIONS:

- Citron Review: Online literary journal. Reading for the Spring issue starts on Feb. 1. They publish poetry, creative nonfiction, and fiction. <https://citronreview.com/submission/>
- The Write Life. 31 Free Writing Contests: Legitimate Competitions With Cash Prizes <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 <winningwriters.com/our-contests> <winningwriters.com/the-best-free-literary-contests/contests-to-avoid>

- North Street Book Prize: For self-published books. Deadline: June 30. Total prizes: \$10,500. Top winners receive expert marketing services.

- Tom Howard/Margaret Reid Poetry Contest. All styles and themes. Submit April 15 - Sept 30.

- 24-hour Short Story Contest - They send a prompt 4 times a year, you have 24 hours to write a story. Summer 2019 start time is Saturday, July 13 12:00 p.m. (noon) central time (10 am Pacific.)

<https://24hourshortstorycontest.com/>

- Hidden River Arts.

<https://hiddenriverarts.wordpress.com/awards-deadlines-and-guidelines/>

- Poets & Writers: Contest Blog

www.pw.org/blogs/prize_reporter

SOME SITES FOR POETS:

- Poetry Center San Jose: Caesura 2019 Call for entries. Call closes: June 2, 2019 for General Public. June 16, 2019 for PCSJ Members.

www.pcsj.org/caesuracall.html

- Streetlight Magazine 2019 Poetry Contest:

<https://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

- The Thimble Magazine: A quarterly online journal.

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.

<https://poetrypacific.blogspot.com/>

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

tinyurl.com/yccuwzj6

- No Fee Calls for Poems - A Facebook Group that lists contests that don't charge fees.

ONGOING LOCAL PUBLICATIONS:

- The Literary Nest: A local online publication. Submissions period for summer issue is April 16 - June 30.

<https://theliterarynest.com/>

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

<https://sandhillreview.org/>

OTHER RESOURCES INCLUDE:

- Poets & Writers

<https://pw.org/grants>

- The Write Life

thewritelife.com/writing-contests

- Freedom With Writing

www.freedomwithwriting.com

- Authors Publish

www.authorspublish.com

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

tinyurl.com/25-Literary-Journals

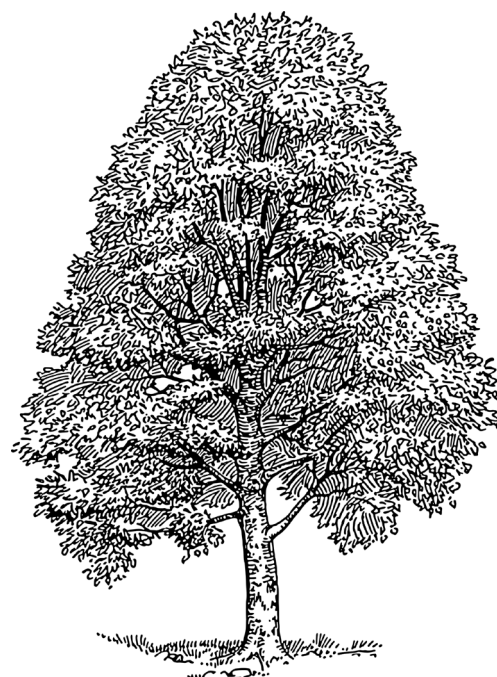
and 10 PAYING/NO FEE Literary Magazine at

tinyurl.com/paying-no-fees

- The Best Writing Contests of 2019 curated by - Reedsy

<https://blog.reedsy.com/writing-contests/>

— WT



Conferences and Events June 2019

by Margie Yee Webb

Santa Barbara Writers Conference

June 16-21, 2019, Santa Barbara CA

<https://www.sbwriters.com>

47th Anniversary Santa Barbara Writers Conference

ThrillerFest XIV

July 9-13, 2019, New York City

<http://thrillerfest.com>

Thrillerfest -- annual conference of the International Thriller Writers -- is the premier conference for thriller enthusiasts, bringing together famous authors and new ones along with industry professionals, agents, and fans.

2019 Berrett-Koehler Book Marketing Conference

July 11-12, 2019, San Diego CA

<https://bkauthors.org/category/events/marketing-conference/>

Author Stephanie Chandler said: "You can receive \$100 off the conference fee. Just register and use the code: SENTBYA-SPEAKER."

Sierra Storytelling Festival

July 19-21, 2019, Nevada City CA

<http://sierrastorytellingfestival.org>

"Celebrating 34 Years of Artfully Told Tales!"

Mendocino Coast Writers' Conference

August 1-3, 2019, Mendocino CA

<http://mcwc.org>

30th year of the Mendocino Coast Writers' Conference

Publishing Bootcamp

August 4, 2019, Mendocino CA

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

"Join Philip Marino, senior editor at Little, Brown and Company, for our fourth annual Publishing Bootcamp . . ."

Annual Greater Los Angeles Writers Conference

August 16-18, 2019, Los Angeles CA

<http://www.wcwriters.com/aglawc/index.html>

23rd Conference for Writers --

"AGLAWC uniquely presents individual tracks for Aspiring, Active, and Accomplished writers (what we call the 3-A's)."

Book Passage Mystery Writers Conference

August 22-25, 2019, Corte Madera CA

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

"The four-day Book Passage Mystery Writers Conference has a strong tradition of great authors and teachers. It covers everything mystery writers need -- from developing ideas and writing skills to finding a publisher." -- WT

SBW Poetry for June

Fourth of July Cats

by Kathy Boyd

July the Fourth has come to Catsville Town.
The cats invite their friends to come on down.
A picnic planned for all that afternoon
With food and fun and games will happen soon.
They find a place so high up on a hill
Where later fireworks will give a thrill.
The flags are out and ready on some poles.
The cooking pits are ready with hot coals.
The guests arrive, all dressed in red and white
And blue, the perfect colors for tonight.
The hamburgers and hot dogs on the grill
Will go with drinks set on the ice to chill.
There's salad, chips, and fresh corn picked today.
There's watermelon for the holiday.
The kittens show their decorated bikes
And older kittens wander on short hikes.
They blow balloons and decorate the place.
Some games are played like tag and relay race.
They gather when the meal is set to eat.
They find their food and drink and take a seat.
A cake with stars and stripes of red and blue
Was made with berries and white icing, too.
And as the sun is setting in the west,
They find a place to sit that they like best.
The perfect place to view is in this park.
The fireworks begin as soon as dark.
They see a tiny sparkle climb up high,
Then it explodes with lights to fill the sky.
They see amazing sights above their heads.
Some changing rainbows, whites to blues to reds.
The cats of any age say oohs and aahs
And kittens laugh out loud and clap their paws.
A final burst of colors makes them grin,
And then the sky is quiet once again.
They sing a birthday song for U.S.A.,
A fitting end for such a busy day.
They pack their things and then to home they head
And all the tired kitties go to bed.

News from the California Writers Club

Ads in CWC Bulletin

by Bob Isbill (760) 221-6367

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

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

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

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

Go to www.calwriters.org for details

CWC Around the Bay

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

Berkeley: 3:00 third Sundays, 1204 Preservation Park Way, Oakland. cwc-berkeley.org

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

Fremont Area: 2:00 fourth Saturdays, 42 Silicon Valley, Fremont. cwc-fremontareawriters.org

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

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

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

Napa Valley: 7:00 second Wednesdays, Napa Valley Unitarian Church, Napa. napavalley-writers.net

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

Redwood: 2:00 second Sundays, Flamingo Conference Resort & Spa, 2777 Fourth Street, Santa Rosa. redwoodwriters.org

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

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

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

Tri-Valley: 1:30 third Saturdays, Four Points by Sheraton, 5115 Hopyard, Pleasanton. trivalleywriters.org

Wanted: Information on Conferences

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

Nirvana

Continued from page 11

"The Creator wills that life on earth should progress, that its inhabitants strive to make it better, better in the sense of fulfilling the Creator's will, IT's design. You notice I didn't say he or she. The Creator is above physical description. It is just IT. Our job is to study the great conundrums and suggest solutions that will advance IT's will on earth."

"Suggest to whom?"

"To the Universal Subconscious. You've heard of that. Our universe is a field of vibrating energy. Thoughts and emotions operate at a high frequency. Everything is energy; this energy is like a mass "mind" or awareness. Each and every one of us is made up of a piece of that awareness. Before something is created, it always exists first as an image or thought in the Universal Consciousness. Our own individual piece of Universal Consciousness is our self, manifested as our ego. Every event that occurs or every "thing" that someone makes is the result of a thought. If people consciously direct their thoughts, they have a great deal of power to control or shape their lives and the reality surrounding them. Our job is to take on the major Conundrums of life on earth and think of ways to improve that life. Then, we feed our thought back into the Universal Consciousness in the hopes that someone on earth will pick it up and apply it."

"This is astonishing. It's going to take some thought to grasp it."

"The fact that you understand the principle is a sign that you

will be able to contribute. I'm very happy to see that," he says in a warm-hearted way and pats me on my back.

"Please give me an example or two of a Conundrum that we might work on."

The big man smiles broadly, "How about world peace?"

Everyone in the group, except for Eddie, joins in his little joke.

"Could I start with something a bit lighter?" —WT



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
June 2019						1
2	3 2P Valley Writers	4 7P Well-RED atWorks	5	6	7 7:30P Open mic: Almaden B&N	8
9 10A Our Voices	10 2P Valley Writers	11	12 7P Board Meeting (Marjorie's House)	13 7P Third Thursday, Poetry Center	14	15
16 1P Poets@Play, Markham House	17 2P Valley Writers	18 6:00P SBW Dinner Holder's Country Inn	19	20 DEADLINE: <i>WritersTalk</i> Submission	21 Open Mic Cancelled	22
23 10A Our Voices	24 2P Valley Writers	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Upcoming Events

Board Meeting (Marjorie's home):	Dinner Meeting (Holder's Country Inn)
• Wed. June 12	• Tues. June 18
• Wed. July 10	• Tues. July 16

SBW Summer BBQ:

Sunday August 11; Location TBA!

Ongoing Events

Critique Groups

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

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

Your Critique Group: Send info to news-letter@southbaywriters.com

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

SBW Board Meetings

Board meets on Wednesdays, 7 PM, in the week preceding the dinner meeting. Contact Edie Matthews for more information on how you can attend at pres@southbaywriters.com.

Open Mics

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

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

Ongoing discussion groups

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

Add your discussion group here!

SBW/CWC Events

appear on this calendar page.

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

Poetry Readings

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

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

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

SBW Recommends ...

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



California Writers Club

South Bay Branch

P.O. Box 3254

Santa Clara, CA 95055

www.southbaywriters.com

MAIL TO

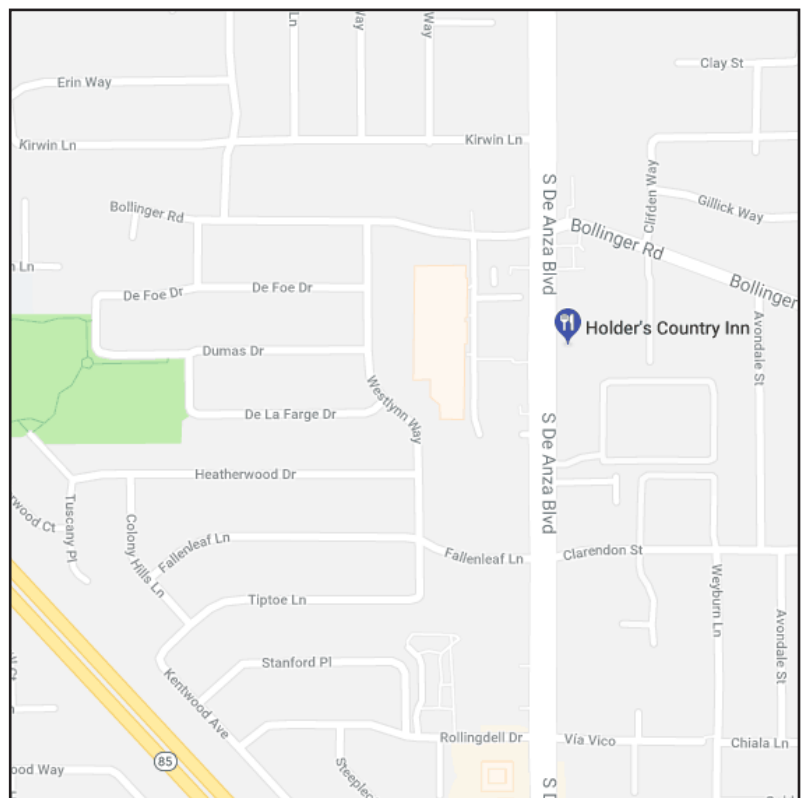
Address Correction Requested

**South Bay Writers
Regular Dinner Meeting
6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Tuesday, June 18, 2019
Holder's Country Inn
998 S. DeAnza Blvd, San Jose**

**From Print to Performance:
Adapting Books to Film and
Theater
with
Victoria Zackheim**

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)