



WRITERSTALK

Volume 27
Number 11
November 2019

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

NOVEMBER SPEAKER: DAVE DENNY

Mechanics of Imagery and Metaphor

by Jamal Khan



When we come across the language of imagery in a text, something happens. As our eyes move over ink on paper, we experience sensory stimuli. The world of words has become alive within our minds, transporting us to another reality. How seamlessly this happens depends on the merit of the work. It takes skill, and that skill can be learned and strengthened over time. As Stephen King has written, "Description begins in the writer's imagination, but should finish in the reader's." Metaphor goes one step further, drawing comparisons that require logic but feel wholly intuitive. In our November 19th dinner meeting, Dave Denny will help us unpack the mechanics of imagery and metaphor.

Dave Denny teaches writing and literature at De Anza College. California

Poet Laureate Dana Gioia has described him as "a poet who finds the miraculous in everyday experience." Dave's most recent books include the poetry collection *Some Divine Commotion* and the short story collection *The Gill Man in Purgatory*, both from Shanti Arts. He is also the author of three previous poetry collections: *Man Overboard*, *Fool in the Attic*, and *Plebeian on the Front Porch*. His poems and stories have appeared in numerous publications, including *The Sun*, *Narrative Magazine*, *Rattle*, *California Quarterly*, and *New Ohio Review*. He holds an MFA from the University of Oregon. Awards and honors include The Thomas Merton Poetry of the Sacred Contest, The Steve Kowit Poetry Prize, The Center for Book Arts Broadside Award, an Artist Laureate Award from the Arts Council of Silicon Valley, and several Pushcart Prize nominations.

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

When: Tuesday, November 19 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

OCTOBER RECAP: KIRK GLASER

Mastering the Short Story

by Bill Baldwin

At our October dinner meeting, Kirk Glaser began by describing how short stories are like poems. We're often told that writing poems is good for the novelist. Poems focus your writing. Poems force you to think in terms of images and emotions; emotional response. They help the novelist to not get lost in long descriptions and exposition; keep close to the emotional core of what you are trying to say!

The same thing with short stories. Because we are restricting the length of our effort, we become more aware of what we are saying. In a short story, every sentence becomes important. A single sentence can capture our attention, can captivate and entrance. A single turn of phrase can rivet us and illuminate our character or plot.

Glaser then addressed the manipulation of time in fiction. With careful craft, a writer can speed up the action to skip over inconsequential events. Conversely, the writer can slow the pace of the writing to dwell on or emphasize significant details of character or action.

Glaser used as his main example the short story "Bullet in the Brain," by Tobias Wolff, a well-known author at Stanford. The story describes the last few minutes in the life of a man named Anders.

Anders is a famous book critic who is respected but feared for the way he belittles almost every piece of writing he reviews. Through years of his profession, he has become hardnosed and cynical not only towards writing but towards people and life in general.

One day, waiting in line at a bank, his hardened cynicism dooms him when

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Between the Lines

Edie Matthews



Family Lore

My mother wrote a novel to make a million dollars and rescue the family from economic hardship. Perhaps it would have, but it was never published — and never quite finished.

I recall her valiant efforts. She'd change from her house dress into her Sunday best, and walk a mile to attend night school where she took typing and studied creative writing.

She would never leave us (four children) unattended, so on Wednesday night, she paid Mrs. Curtis across the street to watch us. Fat Mrs. Curtis had a large screen TV and ours wasn't always working. My mom bought treats so we could make ice cream sodas (also enjoyed by Mrs. Curtis).

My mother's book was based on her scandalous family. Her mother came to New York and lived in Hell's Kitchen with her Aunt and Uncle who started a bakery. She returned to Scotland a few years later a "widow" with a baby daughter. The pregnancy was blamed on a fellow who lived in their apartment building and died in an accident. (Actually, she'd had twins, but one died at birth.)

In Glasgow, my grandmother worked with her sister in a factory making pinafores (aprons). She soon married an Englishman and had five more children. Three died for archaic reasons like blood poisoning. But three sisters survived, including my mother, the youngest.

My grandfather purchased one of the first bioscopes (movie projector) from an older man who was ill. "Flickers" were still a novelty. My grandfather's family provided sausages to the summer fairs and festivals, so with his connections, he and my grandmother traveled the circuit and began showing flickers in Northern England and Scotland and became quite successful. Eventually, they purchased a large tent, stage, caravan (trailer), steam engine, and an ornate calliope. Both Charlie Chaplin and Stan Laurel performed on the stage while touring the provinces as part of Fred Karno's Company. My grandfather recalled Chaplin saying the equivalent of "I could be a star if I ever got a chance." World War I and divorce disrupted my grandparent's business, and ultimately, the family immigrated to California.

My mother's two sisters, in today's vernacular, like to "party." Her oldest sister became a renowned astrologist in Hollywood, and was often chauffeured to her clients' homes.

My mother's way of rebelling was to join a convent. Not just any order, the Carmelites who take a vow of silence. After 18 months, and before taking final vows, she had doubts and left. (She loved to talk — and I think ever since she was making up for the deprivation of conversation.)

Fortunately for me, she met my father seven years later and I was her second child and only daughter.

I never read my mother's book until after she died. It was captivating. As it turned out, her mother was also chatty and revealed all her secrets and her family's skeletons which became fodder for my mother's book — that made no effort to protect the guilty.

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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, 2020. 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

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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

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Announcements

An announcement is information of interest and value to writers that does not provide direct economic benefit to its originator and is published free of charge.

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How Very Special Are We...

What a sad November for the South Bay Writers. In this issue we memorialize two recent losses from our writing community: Alex Leon and Stephen Wetlesen. I'm saddened to hear of their passing, and though I've written and rewritten this piece about three times now I still can't muster much cheer.

A more personal loss is pulling me down right now. Earlier this month, after ten wonderful years together, I lost a dear old friend. My fourteen-year-old tuxedo cat passed away after a long battle with lymphoma and kidney failure. With the aide of an in-home veterinary service, we opted to have him put to sleep at home, where he'd be comfortable, and he peacefully slipped away in my arms after a tearful goodbye. Before his final appointment, I put together a memorial video comprised of clips I'd taken of his antics over the years. Setting the clips to Debbie Reynold's *Mother Earth and Father Time*, I chided myself that this was an act of pure masochism: an overly-emotional tribute that was going to do nothing but deepen my grief. But, in the end, it helped tremendously with processing his loss. He was my first pet—a hallmark of young adult responsibility, adopted from a pet shelter not long after I landed my first grown-up job and home—and he witnessed an entire decade of major life events. He was there for me through good times and bad; through roommates, failed relationships, cross-country travel, a transition into a house with other pets (read: my husband's own three cats, all now passed on from old age), and the birth of my daughter, a family member upon whom he doted even when she was a toddler. You could see in the clips how he aged and wizened from a spry, lively fellow into a weary, slow-moving lounge who preferred sleeping and cuddling over playing with ribbons and catnip. What an ache I felt, realizing how much he'd changed since he'd gotten ill! Seeing his better years go by in that video gave me a much-needed dose of perspective. He had lived a full, happy life with a family who loved him very much. It was time to ease his pain.

Still, it's been hard. For two years now, I've written these editorials and assembled this newsletter with him snug in my lap, curled up warm and cozy against the keyboard. Nothing feels the same without him. There's an empty space there now, one that feels just as hollowed-out as the one in my heart.

I think of a quote someone once told me: "memorials are for the living." We go on laden with sorrows and grief, but those who have passed on are free. We were blessed to share a sliver of time and space with them; the onus falls to us to ensure that the departed and their memories live on. That's what we do, us writers. We can't help but spin the ones we love into words that often outlast them.

Even Debbie seemed to agree, as she sang the opening line of that haunting, sweet ballad: "*how very special are we for just a moment to be part of life's eternal rhyme?*" — WT

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View from the Board

by Marjorie Johnson



Marjorie Johnson
SBW Secretary

On October 7, a skeleton crew of your hard-working board members, President Edie Matthews, Marjorie Johnson, Janet Patey, Inga Silva, and Alfred Jan, met at Edie's house.

The minutes from the September Board meeting were approved. Vice President Jamal Khan sent the slate of upcoming speakers:

- November 19, Dave Denny, "Mechanics of Imagery and Metaphor"
- December: Holiday Party
- February 18, 2020: Lisa Mendelman, "Sex in Popular Cultures"

WritersTalk Challenge Contest: The awards for calendar year 2019 will be given at the December meeting, which is also SBW's holiday party. We will need more judges; please let me know if you're interested.

Also, with a new writing season upon us, now is the time to pursue any new SBW activities. Member-At-Large Alfred Jan had some excellent suggestions for our newsletter, which Edie has relayed to Jessica McDole. Please come to a board meeting with your ideas and suggestions.

Next board meeting: 7 pm, Wednesday, November 19, at the home of President Edie Matthews. SBW Board meetings are open to all members. Come and learn what's happening and how to be a part of the action. All you have to do is RSVP to Edie and show up for a pleasant evening discussing our writing club. — WT

Family Lore

Continued from page 2

My mother's writing was quite good though she made one mistake: author interference. Every so often, she'd jump into a dramatic scene and say, "See, he was a stinker."

I wanted to reply, "Mom, stay out of the story—I can draw that conclusion myself." My mother did the same thing when we watched TV. So, it's not surprising she'd do it in her book. In fact, after seeing *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane*, my mother described it to me so thoroughly, I never bothered to see the film.

When I read my mother's book, (actually my grandmother's biography), I wanted to rewrite it. Then I decided, first I'd learn how to write a book by penning my own.

This led me to the MFA program at San Jose State University. Now many stories, a cartoon book, and two novels later, I still haven't gotten back to my mother's book.

First, I need to do some rewriting on my own book. — WT

In honor of Stephen Wetlesen's natural haikus, the editor has selected morphs of common European and North American butterflies to brighten the issue. Can you identify them all?

Mastering the Short Story

Continued from the front page

robbers descend on the building and everyone in it.

But only a third or so of the story deals with the incident that leads up to the "bullet in the brain." The remainder deals with what passes through Anders' mind during his last micromoments—the long-ago events that led him, as a boy, to fall in love with language and writing to begin with, before he started critiquing it.

Because of the way Wolff speeds or slows time, the effect is intensified and his points underscored.

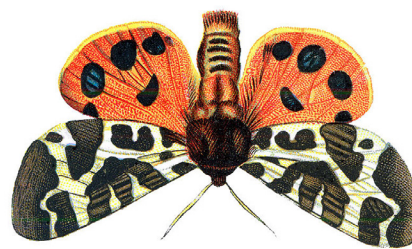
A second example was "The Great Open Mouth Anti-Sadness," a one-page flash fiction piece by Ron Carlson. One page. A single paragraph. Very much like a poem. The piece establishes a mood and then intensifies it

Glaser presented a third example, an excerpt from "Every Tongue Shall Confess" by ZZ Packer. Here, Packer uses small details to build a cumulative effect.

I think we all came to appreciate the craft that goes into creating a riveting short story and how a short story is like a poem in the way that it focuses both the person who writes it and the person who reads it. A short story can be as intense as a poem, as well-crafted and as memorable.

It is certainly worth pursuing as an aide to better writing and an end in itself.

Thank you, Kirk Glaser!! — WT



A Tribute to Alex

by Dave LaRoche

A South Bay member has died - Alex Leon passed on October 16 of deep-set pulmonary fibrosis. We knew Alex. He was the guy with the smile, an accommodating man reaching out, pulling in—an easy guy wearing a baseball cap. We are sorry to see him leave. We will miss him. We will remember what he brought us—each of us, individually.

Alex was a friend of mine. He joined my critique group years ago and later left to follow his music. He was imaginative and creative. His writing was engaging and cleverly composed. His music—he played the guitar—was exciting, invasive, and grabbed your foot in its rhythm. The man could cook. The parties he hosted were culinary events making Mex taste better than French. He was a scientist—secured several patents related to battery development, and he played golf. A newbie with the sticks, his full, easy swing, when occasionally connecting, sent his unwilling ball to its target. We both suffered here, but lunch was tasty, and the talk was often challenging.

Alex is among us yet. I'm betting his essence will remain as we honor our writing companions with friendship, and together aspire to our goals. We won't see Alex in his baseball cap. He won't be coming to our meetings, and his smile will not be visible there. But his cordiality, interest, and personal availability will be fixed in our minds, and we thank him and wish him bon voyage. — WT



Pictured Above: Alex Leon

Thanks to Dave LaRoche for the photo!

Member News

by Marjorie Johnson

Ken Roberge writes:

"Just to let everyone know, I've published my first novel, *Preserving the Sanity*, on Kindle. My pseudonym is Kendad, a name my stepdaughter gave me. The story is science fiction, and a book announcement appears in this issue of *Writer'sTalk*."

David Reiss writes:

"For the second year in a row, one of my novels has become a semi-finalist in the Publishers Weekly BookLife Prize. Finalists will be announced on November 1st. Wish me luck!"

Your member news can go here! Send in your latest writing news, accomplishments, and other developments to Marjorie Johnson at membernews@southbay-writers.com! — WT

IN MEMORIAM

The Haikus of Stephen C. Wetlesen

by J. K. McDole

Stephen C. Wetlesen, a poet and member of the South Bay Writers, passed away this past month. His haikus were a frequent and colorful addition to not only our monthly newsletter but all across our fellow writers' landscapes. Carolyn Donnell mentioned to me that Stephen wrote numerous haikus for her novel *Deeper Colors*. Other members mourned his loss on the South Bay Writers Facebook group, where the news of his passing was first announced.

From Jacqueline Mutz:

"Steve's poetry was metaphor and imagery and it was a pleasure to hear him read his work. Sorry to hear of his passing."

From Susan Paluzzi:

"Another shock! I did not know he was sick. He had a unique 'voice' and was a talented poet."

From Dave LaRoche:

"Courageous man carried on despite his several illnesses. Even his few complaints came through a smile. Good bye, Steve. Your memory lingers."

From D.S. RyshOhm:

"Our favorite 'Poet for hire'."

From the editor: Stephen, I cannot begin to say how sad it will be from now on to put together this newsletter each month without receiving one of your sets of lovely haikus. Because of your dedication to the style, I couldn't help but yield to curiosity, and this summer I briefly looked into the history of this unique and rhythmic form of poetry. Some day, in tribute to your work, I'll try my hand at a few verses; doubtless, they will pale in comparison to the bright and peaceful imagery captured in your own. Rest well. — WT



South Bay Writers October 2019



Halloween Trick or Treat Books

by Kathy Boyd

When my nieces, nephews, and step-grandchildren were young, I had mailed each family a box three times a year of things I had collected for them. I sent the boxes on Halloween, Christmas, and Easter. They usually contained things like holiday decorations, crafts, and various stuff from the Dollar Tree and Target; holidays books from Barnes and Noble; and a few discarded/donated books from library book sales. I did this for many years until the children became too old for my boxes and their interests were unknown to me and probably out of my price range.

I also had a collection of books that I had saved for doing storytimes or collected because they were too good to pass up. It has not been a large expense since I buy most of the books at the end of the library sales when the price is \$5 for a full grocery bag. And I am happy to give the books a second chance at life.

Years ago when I was still working in the library, I had walked to Lincoln Avenue in Willow Glen to watch the annual trick-or-treating from store to store sponsored by the Willow Glen Business Association. There was a table set up between stores that caught my interest. It had books sorted by age level and each child was allowed to take one to put in their treat bag.

In 2014, I missed buying cute things and books for little children. So I bought a few Halloween books at Target to give out to my neighbors. I usually get about 12-15 trick-or-treaters so it was not a large expense. I bought my usual box of 30 pieces of full-size candy bars from Costco, a mix of chocolate (like M&Ms and Snickers) and fruity candy (like Skittles and Starburst). I had on my orange t-shirt that said, "This IS My Halloween Costume" and sat on my porch and waited. When I saw someone come, I met them halfway down my stairs and gave them a choice of candy bars and a Halloween book.

A couple of years later, I remembered the Halloween book giveaway on Lincoln Avenue. It would be a great way to give away some of the books I had collected and to spread the joy of reading. I filled a couple of boxes with books for young

children and a few for early teens (just in case!). I had a fresh box of candy bars from Costco.

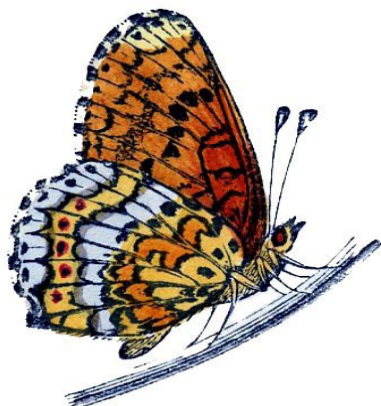
I still had on my witch costume with a pointed hat and purple and black stockings from that morning's storytime. I set the boxes of books on the sidewalk at the bottom of my stairs under the street light. I left the candy in the box so it would be easy to see the flavors. Each year most of the fruity candy is taken, possibly because the chocolate ones usually have peanuts in them and maybe children are allergic.

I hurriedly fed the cats so I could sit on the porch and wait for trick-or-treaters. When I heard the children coming, I went down the stairs and met them at the bottom to give them the candy and let them select up to three books.

The parents, and most of the children, were very happy to take some books. I realized I should have separated the hardpage books (for the very little children) so the parents would have an easier time selecting. The following years, I sorted the books by age level in several boxes.

It was so successful that I have given out books with the candy for three years. One mother happily commented that they now have three books from me, one for each year.

I think I will continue my tradition. At the end of this month, I will put on my witch costume, sort a few boxes of books by reading level, open a box of Costco candy bars, and wait on my sidewalk for children. I will try to treat the soul in addition to the taste buds and the tummy. — WT



Answering the Call of the Wild: Jack London

by Marjorie Johnson

The November 2019 issue of *Smithsonian Magazine* has a "must read" article for every member of California Writers Club. The cover reads, "Answering the Call of the Wild: The Incredible Dangerous Journey that Turned Young Jack London into a Blockbuster Novelist."

In the article, "Gold Fever! Deadly Cold! And the Amazing True Adventures of Jack London in the Wild," Richard Grant traces Jack London's 1897 journey to the Klondike, where he risked his life looking for gold. It's especially interesting to me because my paternal grandfather made that same journey. My grandfather was one of the lucky ones who returned with some gold; Jack London returned with the great American novel.

London's best-known Yukon book, *The Call of the Wild*, has been translated into nearly 100 languages and will be released in February 2020 as a movie starring Harrison Ford as a Klondike gold seeker. This is the ninth time the 1903 novel has been adapted for film or television.

The current film adaption, using computer-generated imagery, was produced without leaving California. Had they filmed on location, Harrison Ford would have been challenged by horrendous swarms of mosquitoes in the summer and extreme cold in the winter.

At temperatures of 60 or 70 degrees below zero Fahrenheit, 21-year-old Jack London discovered that even the strongest whiskey freezes solid and a man's spit turns to ice before it hits the snow. Though his time in the Yukon was brutal, London wrote, "It was in the Klondike that I found myself. There you get your perspective." — WT



A Five-Run Homer

by Russ Towne

In 2012 my wife and I experienced a most unusual baseball game between the Giants and the Yankees. During it we got to see a 5-run homer, a batter run the bases backwards, and players skipping in the outfield and doing somersaults in the in-field.

Perhaps I should explain...

My wife, a Special Education teacher for Kindergartners and 1st Graders, was invited by the parents of one of her students to a baseball game in a Special Education league. She invited me, and so off we went on that beautiful sunny day which featured a strong brisk breeze.

The home team was named the Giants and the away team was the Yankee's. By now you've probably figured out that this was no ordinary game. In fact, it was a special game indeed.

All the fans cheered equally for every player of both teams. Each player was matched with a "buddy" on the field, a

Little Leaguer who volunteered to help their little buddy to field or hit the ball and stay safe.

Every one of the young volunteer buddies was amazing! They stayed focused during the whole game while patiently guiding their little buddies in gentle, loving ways.

The grown-up volunteers, coaches, managers also kept everyone safe while helping children who were physically, mentally, and behaviorally challenged to experience the thrill of playing baseball.

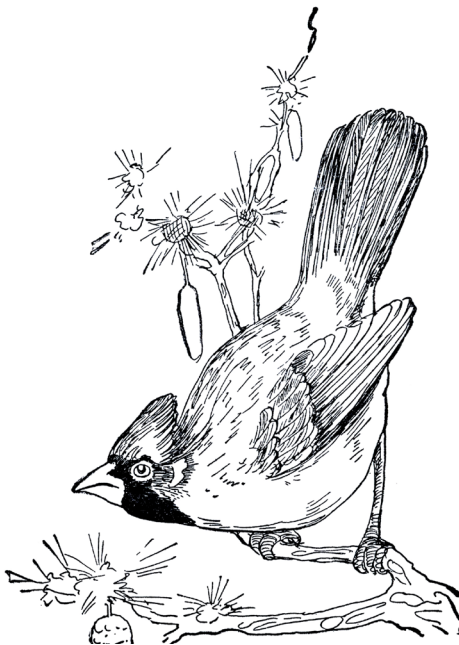
Every child got to bat every inning. There were eight players per team and the score was tied 8 to 8 at the end of the first inning, and ended in a 16 to 16 tie. It wasn't exactly a pitchers' duel, and the fielding needs some work, but their bats were on fire!

On the field was a player in a motorized wheel chair, and players who could barely run or hold a bat. Boys and girls played for each team. The players went through a range of emotions during the game, with smiles dominating, but there were frustration and tears too. Some were show-boats, some were painfully shy, and a few got overwhelmed by it all.

You couldn't ask for a better announcer or fans. It was a wonderful way to spend part of the day.

To say I was touched by it all would be an understatement. My vision blurred several times during the game as I saw people being beautiful toward each other. It must have been the brisk breeze blowing dust into my eyes.

Yeah, that must have been it... —WT



SBW October Dinner Meeting

Our Halloween Costume Contest Winners

Your costumes were FABULOUS! Thank you for attending!

Another Selfie...

Thank God, I Almost Forgot What You Looked Like

by Chris Weilert

I thought I would never be sick of you and your face. Unfortunately, the statute of limitations of seeing you posing and mugging for the camera is expiring. Sure, the dimples that most of us don't possess are endearing but even those facial indentations are growing old. The way you tilt your head at a thirty-three-degree angle needs to be reevaluated by perhaps using a forty-five-degree turn, and maybe ninety. The black stretchy pants need to be put into the hamper and replaced by a one-piece jump suit with your name embroidered on the breast.

Most of us think the word "selfie" is a recent invention, which may be true. The world has taken their own self-portraits with cameras... for maybe 150 years. People posting their selfies on the internet, I think around twenty-five. This imagery has evolved to the point where a large chunk of the universe is snapping endless amounts of pictures of them-

selves, more popular than a vacation photo of a sunset and the fish tacos they consumed. I am no social psychologist but are these folks just being curious of their own perception or is this about creating your own personal fan club?

It appears selfie-takers who post on social media websites want immediate feedback and there is an imagined number of responses they want to receive. If the amount of replies meets a certain threshold their self-esteem is lifted. All is fine and dandy when the image being displayed gets adequate response... but if this doesn't? What happens next? Is it back to the drawing board for a better picture? Is your day ruined?

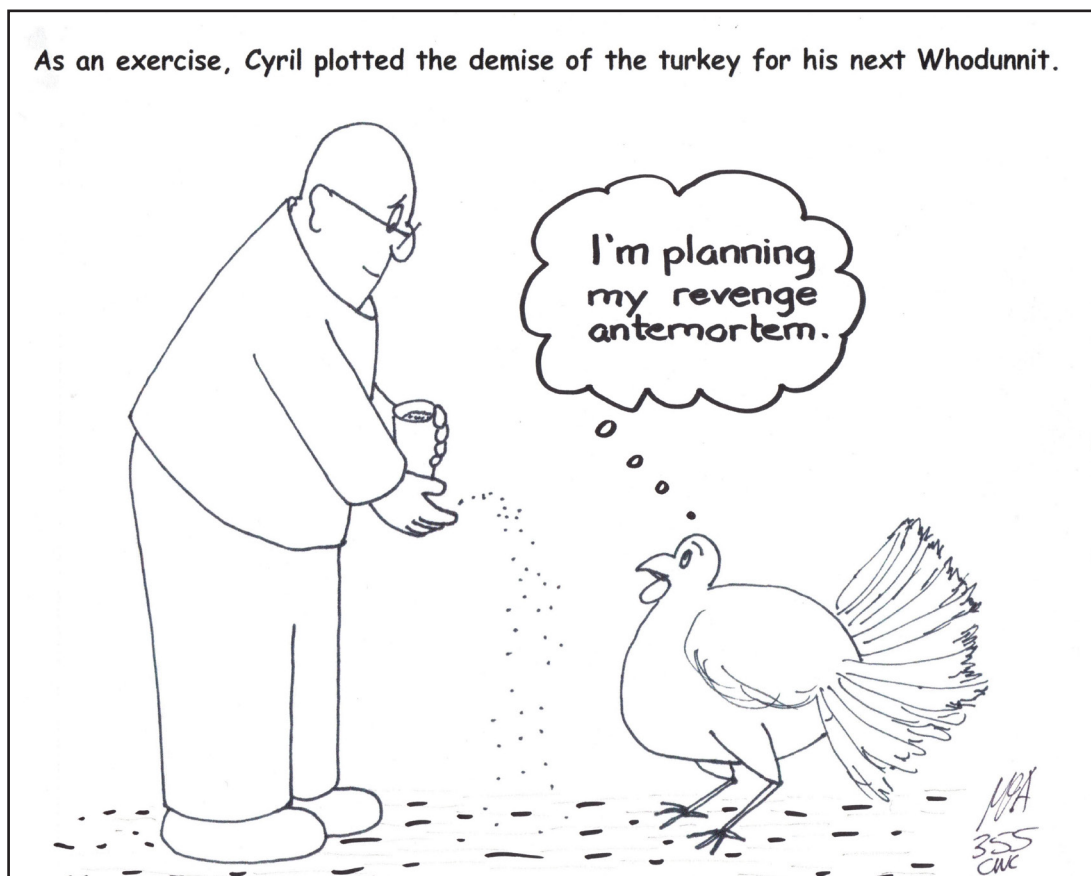
There are two choices to battle the feelings of inadequacy; first and foremost, avoid all attempts to post selfies to build your self-esteem. Second, and the only tried and true way to receive

a lot of responses is to give the people something interesting to look at. If that means putting on a suit or cocktail dress, then do it. But if you really want to get some action try installing a neck brace or an eye patch.

What I am trying to tell you is give the people something they want to see. The random pose of you sitting in a sushi bar with a cheesy grin is old and tiresome, I'm bored with this portrait and I understand what you look like by now. If you want to take one normal picture of yourself and post on January 1st, keep the trend, so I will be able to own a documented display of your aging. In the meantime, wear a Lady Gaga outfit or sport a mohawk and make me chuckle as I press the button saying, "Yeah, I like it." — WT

Cartoons

by Maddy McEwen



A Warm Heart on a Cold Day

by Russ Towne

When I was about 10 years old I accepted an invitation to go to the mountains to play in the snow with a large group of children, most of whom I didn't know. I was one of the smallest and youngest. The older kids taunted and shunned me. I was lonely and feeling bad about myself and angry at the others.

To make matters worse, I was so skinny I was often called gaunt, a city kid who lived in a temperate climate and wasn't used to snow or cold weather. I came from a family of seven. We couldn't afford fancy snow gear – or any snow gear for that matter. I didn't have water- and snow-repellent shoes or overshoes. I think I only had three pairs of shoes: "sneakers," dress shoes, and slippers. So I went with the sneakers.

Before I left for the trip, Mom tried to help me keep my feet warm and dry by having me wear two pairs of cotton socks – we didn't have wool or thick cold-weather socks – and she gave me some plastic bread wrappers to put over the socks before I put on my shoes to try to keep my feet and socks from getting soaked. She did her best with what she had. Unfortunately, between my complete lack of body fat, not being conditioned to cold weather, and the clothes I wore, I was very quickly wracked with uncontrollable full-body shivering. The older boys ridiculed me. I felt absolutely miserable and alone on a snowy hilltop crowded with people having fun.

At the bottom of the snow hill a parent volunteer had opened the tailgate of his station wagon and made a big pot of cocoa for us. He was a stranger to me. I shook like a leaf in a windstorm as I stumbled over to him for some hot chocolate. He handed a cup of the wonderfully-smelling steaming elixir to me. I thanked him and began to turn away.

"Excuse me son." I turned back toward him, concerned that maybe I'd done something wrong. He continued in a kind voice, "I've noticed that you are always so polite. Many boys aren't. I appreciate that you are. Thank you."

It was a simple acknowledgement, but at that moment, it meant the world to me. Where there had only been bitter coldness a moment before, this kind stranger brought warmth. Even now, as I remember his kindness 47 years later, it still warms my heart.

Thank you to that wonderful person and to everyone who brings kindness and a smile to those badly in need of both. My world is a brighter place with you in it. — WT

HOLIDAY PARTY 2019

It's almost time to celebrate with your fellow writers! Join us for our December holiday party!

WHEN: Sunday, December 15th, 3-6 pm

WHERE: Una & Ken Daly's home in Saratoga (Address TBA with RSVP)

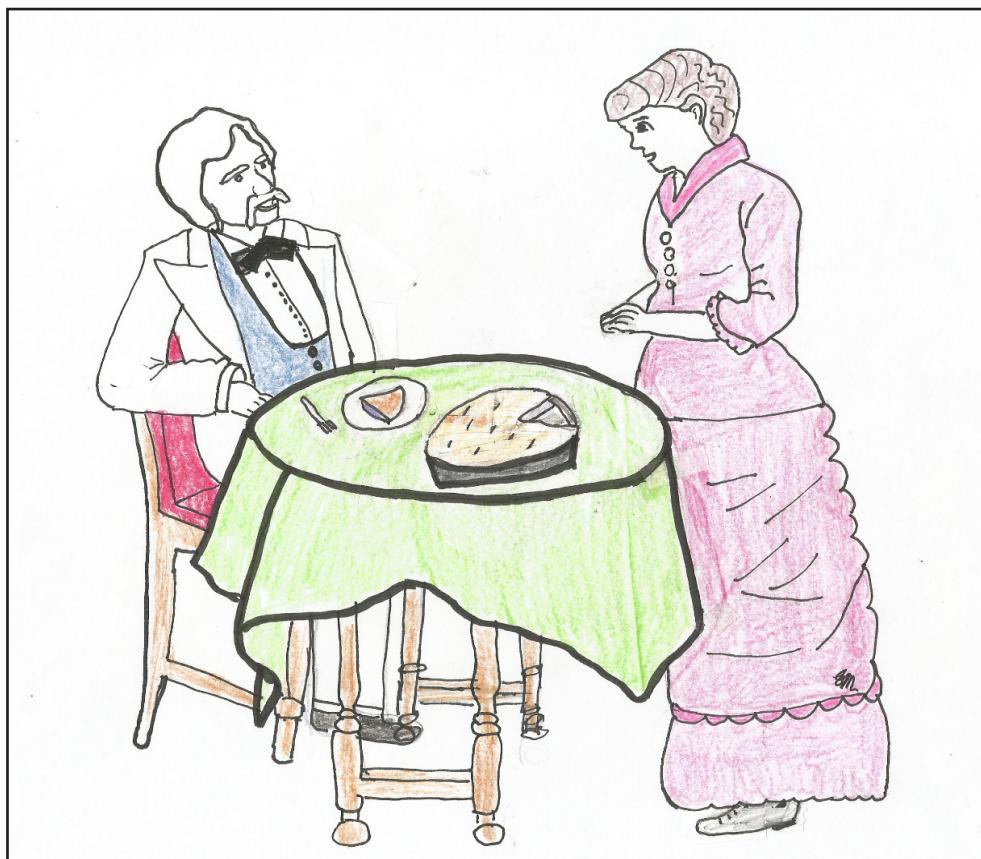
HOW: Potluck (dish assignments also TBA)

Remember there is no dinner meeting during the holiday party month!



Off the Shelf

by Edie Matthews



"I need a name for a young scalawag character."

"You'll think of something – have a piece of Huckleberry pie."

Poetry Page

Mars Haiku

by Carolyn Donnell

Red planet out in space
Can life ever settle there
Mars, our future home?

Mars Haiku

by Stephen Wetlesen

Painted desert orb
Vast canyons without cowboys
Rock garden neighbor

Mars Haiku

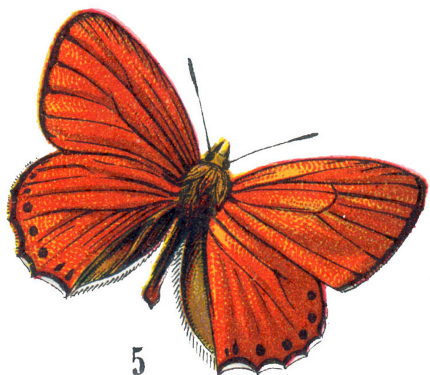
by Noah (guest poet; Carolyn's grandson)

Flaming red-tinged sword
Placed between man and Eden
Mars, our ancient home?

Casual Talk With Ranger Haiku

Santa Cruz, California
by Stephen Wetlesen

Once – countless in trees.
Now - fifteen hundred Monarchs.



BACH HIGHER DIMENSIONS TRICKS AND TREATS 2018

Free Form Haiku Cycle
by Stephen Wetlesen

What reverberates
within black holes outside time?
Bach and Hawking know?

Backwards or oblique –
whose eyes see all concertos?
Numberless score sides?

Day of the Dead skulls –
sweet familia sculptures.
What color roses?

Vampire cantatas
defy divine sacred fire.
Dracula no match.

Two violins dance,
converse on love beyond love.
Jack O'Lantern strings.

Chamber elegance.
Musical lives disguise wealth.
Bach's greatest costumes.

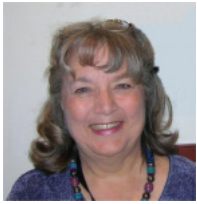
Gauzelike knocks on doors.
Spectral music, candy corn.
Angels or witches?

Who composes fugues,
wears mimic wigs to inspire?
Is Bach among us?

Bach enters interstellar space on board Voyager probes.

Contests and Markets

by Carolyn Donnell



Let us know if you have any success with any of the contests listed in Writers Talk. (Or any other contest for that matter.) Send your writing victories to membernews@southbaywriters.com

and any new stories, poems, articles, etc. to newsletter@southbaywriters.com.

You can also check other branches for their current contests, submission, anthology, etc. requests. See a list of other CWC branches at

<https://calwriters.org/cwcbranches/>

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.

CONTESTS WITH DEADLINES

Writers Digest Awards for 2019

<https://www.writersdigest.com/writing-competitions-pricing-and-deadlines/>

- Short Short Story Competition deadline: 11/15/19

LOCAL PUBLICATIONS AND CONTESTS

WNBA 2019 Bay Area Contest Fiction, Nonfiction, and Poetry. Deadline Oct. 31, 2019.

- <https://wnba-sfchapter.org/2019-bay-area-writers-contest/>

The Literary Nest: check website for submission period for Winter issue.

- <https://theliterarynest.com/>

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

- <https://sandhillreview.org/>

Catamaran Literary Reader: A West Coast quarterly literary and visual arts journal. Fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, and fine art. Submissions year round with a quarterly production cycle. Submission fee includes a coupon for a \$14 discount on their website store.

- <https://catamaranliteraryreader.com/>

OTHER CONTESTS AND SUBMISSIONS

The Writer Magazine: free downloadable guide (Winter 2019 Guide to Writing Contests) at:

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

The Write Life - 31 Free Writing Contests: Legitimate Competitions With Cash Prizes

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

Winning Writers - Lists poetry and prose contests that are free to enter. Usually accepts previously published work. Tom Howard/Margaret Reid Poetry Contest. Submit October 15-April 30. \$5000 prizes. Wergle Flomp Humor Poetry Contest - Seeks humor poems Submission period: August 15-April 1. \$2250 prizes. No fee! Usually accepts published and unpublished work.

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

Crab Creek Review - Reading period open from Sept. 15 through Nov. Original, unpublished poetry, fiction and creative nonfiction. No fee. Payment is in contributor copies.

- <http://crabcreekreview.org/submissions.html>

The Treehouse Climate Action Poem Prize - 1st place \$1,000; 2nd \$750; 3rd \$500. All three poems will be published in the Poem-a-Day series. Deadline Nov 1, 2019.

- <https://poets.org/academy-american-poets/prizes/treehouse-climate-action-poem-prize>

SOME SITES FOR POETS

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.

- <https://tinyurl.com/yc6e26ru>

Poets & Writers - lists poetry and other contests.

- <https://www.pw.org/grants>

The Thimble Magazine - A quarterly online journal.

- <https://www.thimblelitmag.com/submissions/>

Poetry Pacific

- <http://poetrypacific.blogspot.com/>

Poets.Org: ecommends several book and magazine contests.

- <https://poets.org/text/entering-winter-poetry-contests>

Freedom With Writing: 78 Poetry Manuscript Publishers No Reading Fees

- <https://tinyurl.com/yccuwzj6>

Trish Hopkinson - a blog - Where to Submit Reprints.

- <https://tinyurl.com/poetryreprints>

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

SF State Poetry Center Chapbook Exchange. Sept 15 - Dec 15. Guidelines: 10-40 pages original, new work (written within the last 5 years) and/or published work that's fallen out of print. No fee!

- chapbookexchange@gmail.com

- <https://www.facebook.com/poetry-centerchapbookexchange/photos/a.836392293052441/3476184125739898/?type=3&theater&ifg=1>

OTHER RESOURCES

Poets & Writers

- <https://www.pw.org/grants>*

The Writer

- <https://www.writermag.com/contests/> (*The Writer Magazine)

The Write Life

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

Funds For Writers - Contests, submissions, grants, resources, etc.

- <https://fundsforwriters.com/contests/>

Freedom With Writing

- <https://www.freedomwithwriting.com/> *

Authors Publish

- <http://www.authorspublish.com/> *

The Best Writing Contests of 2019 curated by Reedsy

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

Get Free Write - a list of the writing contests in 2019

- <https://getfreewrite.com/blogs/writing-success/2019-writing-contests-the-complete-guide>

NewPages Classifieds - Writing Contests & Book Contests. Announcements of new and current writing contests.

- <https://www.newpages.com/classifieds/calls-for-submissions>

Hidden River Arts - Many different book award deadlines.

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

New Pages: October

- <https://www.newpages.com/item-list/category/795-october>

* On both the Internet and Facebook. — WT

Poetic Art: The “Easy” and “Quick” Recipe

by Stephen Wetlesen

Editor's Note: Stephen sent the newsletter more than just haikus; often his emails were interspersed with commentary and writing wisdom. Here's one of my favorites.

Just write about something as you feel a visual artist would discuss it, then break it up and transform it into rhythmic language lines, maybe revise and sharpen it up a little, and voila! There you have a painting! Let it stand alone for itself or combine it with your own or someone else's art photo, sketch, canvas or sculpture, to interact.

On a deep level, however, as some haiku masters say, it might take the rest of your life to finish. Quite rapid on a cosmic time scale. —WT



Take a look at this! Books by our club members Marjorie Johnson and Carolyn Donnell are featured in the Local Author Collection at the Santa Clara Public Library!

Is your book featured on library shelves near or far? Send in your photos and publication news so we can feature it in the next newsletter issue!

Conferences and Events November 2019

by Margie Yee Webb

Conferences and Events

Kauai Writers Conference

November 4-10, 2019, Kauai HI

Master Classes: November 4-7

Conference: November 8-10

<https://kauaiwritersconference.com/>

“The Kauai Writers Conference attracts major authors of both literary and popular fiction, memoir, non-fiction and screenplay.”

Fall Nonfiction Writers Conference

November 7-8, 2019, Online

<https://nonfictionwritersconference.com/>

The Nonfiction Writers Conference is presented by the Non-fiction Authors Association.

San Francisco Writers Conference

February 13-16, 2020, San Francisco CA

<https://www.sfwriters.org/>

“17th Celebration of Craft, Commerce and Community”

PLUS Optional Pre/Post Event Master Classes

Note: SFWC 2020 Scholarships available! For details and deadlines: <https://www.sfwriters.org/scholarships/>.

2020 San Francisco Writers Contest

For details and deadline:

<https://www.sfwriters.org/2020-writing-contest-overview/>

National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo)

A fun seat-of-your-pants approach to creative writing.

National Novel Writing Month began in 1999 as a daunting but straightforward challenge: to write 50,000 words of a novel during the thirty days of November.

For details, visit <https://www.nanowrimo.org/>.

National Nonfiction Writing Month

During the Write Nonfiction in November (WNFIN) Challenge, also known as National Nonfiction Writing Month (NaNonFiWriMo), you are personally challenged to start and complete a work of nonfiction in 30 days. This can be an article, an essay, a book, a book proposal, a white paper, or a manifesto.

For details, visit: <https://writenonfictionnow.com/about-write-nonfiction-in-november/wnfinannonfiwrimo/> —WT

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.



SBW October Dinner Meeting: featuring our members and their excellent Halloween costumes!

Photo by Carolyn Donnell

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

Upcoming Events

Board Meeting (Eddie's home):	Dinner Meeting (Holder's Country Inn)
• November 13	• November 19
• December 11	• None in Dec. (Party)

Holiday Party: Sunday, December 15th, 3-6 pm

SBW/CWC Events
appear on this calendar page.

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

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

Critique group meeting in Mountain View: We meet 1st and 3rd Friday of every month and are open all genres. If interested, please contact Karen Sundback at sundback@gmail.com.

Your Critique Group: Send info to newsletter@southbaywriters.com

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

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.

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.

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

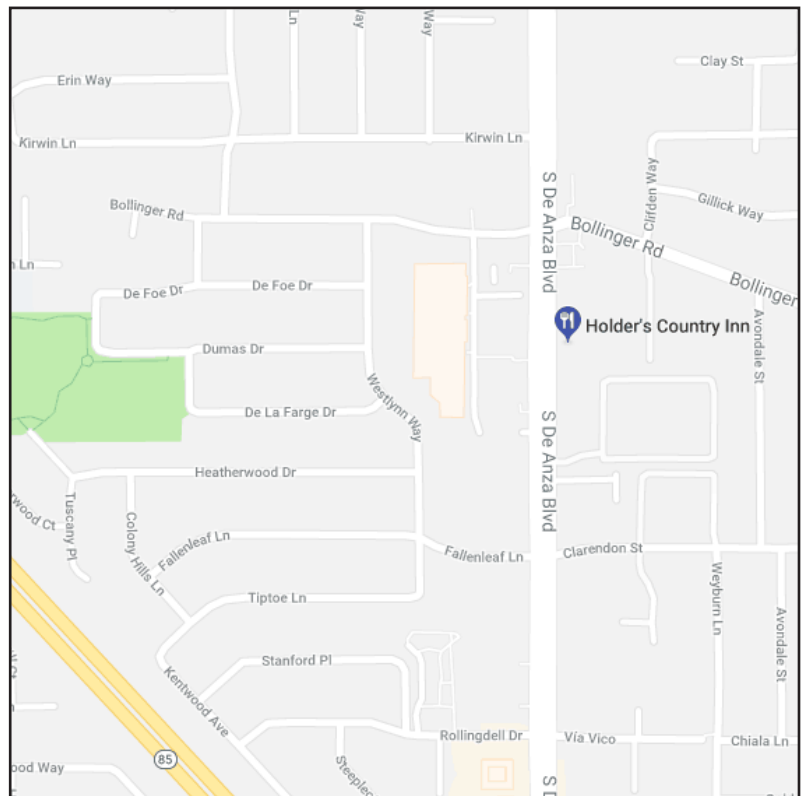
Address Correction Requested

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

**Mechanics of
Imagery and Metaphor**
with
Dave Denny

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 Summer BBQ, 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)