



WRITERSTALK

Volume 29
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Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

MARCH SPEAKER: LEEANNE KRUSEMARK

Manuscript formatting do's & don'ts with LeeAnne Krusemark

Jamal Khan



Your manuscript may be nearing completion, but there are additional steps you'll need to take before firing it off to an agent or publisher. Submission guidelines can be stringent, meticulously detailing everything from formatting to file type.

Countless manuscripts have been tossed out before being read in their entirety, or even before being opened, a fate you will obviously want to avoid. As Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "Learn from the mistakes of others. You can't live long enough to make them all yourself." In our meeting on 08 March, LeeAnne Krusemark will draw upon her considerable experience to alert us to common mistakes that cause rejection, and how to avoid them.

Ms Krusemark is the founding partner of Krusemark, Grinnell & Associates, a consulting firm that assists authors and entrepreneurs achieve their goals. She has been an adjunct online professor of publishing for more than 1000 facilities worldwide, and is a nationwide speaker on the topics of entrepreneurship and publishing. Her in-person lectures have been offered at more than 200 facilities nationwide, including Purdue, and she has been asked to speak at a Senate-sponsored business conference as well as for the Department of the Army. In addition, LeeAnne has owned a successful award-winning

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FEBRUARY SPEAKER RECAP

Bill Belew: How to engage your readers

Bill Baldwin

South Bay Writers alumnus Bill Belew visited us in February, along with his thirteen-year-old daughter, Mia, to discuss how to find and engage with readers for your books.

He and Mia are now wrapping up their fourth book in their series, *Growing Up Aimi* (a play on Mia's first name). They've written over 2000 pages so far, and have racked up more than 7000 downloads—all without the benefit of expensive marketing tools.

Belew pointed out that writers often underestimate the reading ability of children. Although Dad claims the bulk of the writing credit, Daughter contributes significantly: Mia began reading the *Harry Potter* series when she was eight. (Author's note: I myself read *The Wizard of Oz* around that age, and by eleven had thrilled to several H. G. Wells classics.) When the books Mia was reading began to feel predictable, Bill thought, "Why not write our own books?!"

Now, as a writer, presuming you want to be read, what exactly should you aim for? Here are

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Monday
08 March • 7 PM

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Between the lines

Edie Matthews

President, South Bay Writers



Boorish boss

We've all encountered annoying people. The advantage of being a fiction writer is that these schmucks become ideal models for our characters. Such was the case when I became the first female assistant news editor at KWAC's All News All Talk Radio.

Venturing into this men's domain, I wanted to excel. Consequently, I made it a point not to notice the ubiquitous cursing used for the most innocuous situations. "Where's my son of bitchin' pencil" or "I need some f**king coffee."

Since newsrooms are filled with tension and deadlines, I assumed the profanity acted as a release valve. Occasionally, the men remembered I was a woman and apologized, though a moment later they'd be swearing again. But I took it as a compliment—like I'd become "one of the boys."

Unfortunately, the bulk of KWAC's stress was a direct result of our editor, AKA Genghis Khan. Genghis was a short, stocky tyrant with wire-rimmed glasses who thrived under pressure. In fact, he created chaos. He argued and insulted everyone. Worse, he let his work pile up and then raced like a lunatic to catch up.

I escaped his snide remarks by ignoring him, a tactic I learned growing up with three brothers. At most, I'd give him condescending looks implying, "Grow up." Since this wasn't the response he sought, he targeted male coworkers. They were eager combatants and vigorously exchanged verbal jabs.

Genghis was merciless with the college interns. He'd yell, "Can't you read!" or "Are you stupid?" One time, he crumpled up an intern's story and hurled it against the wall, shouting, "Idiot, the facts are wrong!" He immediately retrieved it, smoothed out the page, and took it to the anchor to read.

"What the hell is this?" asked the anchor.

After the story aired, Genghis reconsidered. "I guess that was all right." This was no comfort for the teary-eyed intern.

Genghis justified his abusive behavior, declaring, "The newsroom is no place for wimps."

I managed to escape the wrath of Khan until I decided to leave KWAC.

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South Bay Branch

www.southbaywriters.com

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SBW mission

To educate 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 30 Jun 2021. New member \$65, dual membership \$25, student membership \$20. Contact membership@southbaywriters.com, sign up online at southbaywriters.com, or mail your check and application to CWC-South Bay Writers, PO Box 3254, Santa Clara CA 95055

WritersTalk

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Submissions

SBW encourages writers at all levels to submit their creative work, essays, and reportage for publication in *WritersTalk*. Send submissions and proposals to newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Submissions and proposals must be either included in the body of the email or attached as a Word file. Please double-space. No paper submissions or scanned PDFs. Graphics should be high-quality JPGs or PNGs. Submissions will be copyedited, and may be sent back for revision. Managing editor reserves all rights to selection

Word limits

Member announcements (200 words, see below)
News/Essay/Reportage (please submit proposal by 1st of month; draft due 15th of month)
Opinion/Letters (300 words)
Fiction/Memoir (1000 words)
Poetry (200 words)

Deadline

Submissions open year-round
Issues close 15th of month prior to publication

Member announcements

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

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Change of address

ingasbwmembership@gmail.com

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March 2021

Tales from the slush pile

Renée J Anderson, Managing Editor



My editorial career began with a dose of karma, in the spring of 1989 in Philadelphia. "Beaches" was in the theaters, "Batman" was on the posters. The *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie was handed down on Valentine's Day. My boyfriend at the time was from India and already a fan of Rushdie's work, so we went together to the bookstore where the neon-orange covers of *The Satanic Verses* were on vivid display. I devoured my copy on the subway in the days that followed, and thereby learned to love the writing of one of my life's greatest teachers. Twenty-five years later, I was fortunate enough to meet Mr Rushdie in

Copenhagen, and was able to hand over my seven-times-read edition to receive his scrawl. And it was spring of 1989 that I landed an internship at Running Press Book Publishers and was introduced to another of my life's greatest teachers, the Slush Pile.

Running Press is a trade book publisher that always creates its own publishing line. They produce beautiful coffee-table books, how-to books for kids, blank journals, their famous Miniatures. One thing they don't do: new poetry or fiction. Ever. But that didn't stop at least a hundred would-be authors from trying while I was there.

In 1989, there were no electronic submissions of any kind. Everyone who sent a manuscript our way used their own money and time on paper and postage. We only returned manuscripts that came with a self-addressed stamped envelope; all the rest, regrettably, went in the trash. Each and every one of those hopeful writers that spring received a hand-typed rejection on mushroom-parchment Running Press letterhead, signed by Nancy the Editorial Director, but written by 19-year-old me. A simple-enough task, but quite a bracing first dip into the karma pool, I must say.

Writing rejections at Running Press was pretty standard. Though each letter was customized, my electric typewriter had a few scripts in its memory: "Running Press does not publish new [fiction/poetry]," and "This work does not fit our current publishing program." And always, "Thanks so much for considering Running Press."

Under no circumstance was I allowed to offer any kind of opinion on the work. Once I tried: I felt a more than a little chagrined having to say no to a sweet lady from my home state who had composed little fairy tales about her grandchildren, complete with photos. "Although this is charming . . ." I inserted. Nancy drew a line with a hooked tail through those words with her blue editor's pencil.

"We never offer any assessment, no matter how well-intentioned," she said. "This person could go to another publisher, wave this letter, and say, 'Well, Running Press thought it was good.' We can't have that."

Once in a while, I found myself shaking my head that *so many* would-be authors submitted to us to begin with. One look at our catalog or submission guidelines might have saved them a lot time and trouble, not to mention the disappointment of that slim, flat "No" arriving in their mailboxes days or weeks later.

Today, for a few hundred dollars a month, writers can hire document managers to flood the market with their writing, as many as ninety submissions per month. That doesn't sound like the best use of resources to me. I can't imagine what slush piles are like nowadays. And I'm on the other side of the market now, painstakingly researching and choosing journals to submit to with care and patience. I like to leave a little note in my cover letter for the editor: "I really appreciate your time. I used to manage the slush pile too." Because karma.

WT



Double dactyls
creative classified ads
poems, drawings
fairy tales about your grandchildren
complete with photos
newsletter@southbaywriters.com

View from the Board

Marjorie Johnson



The SBW Board members met the evening of Wednesday, 03 February, convening officially at 7:15 PM.

Present were President Edie Matthews, Vice President Jamal Khan, Treasurer Trenton Myers, Membership Chair Inga Silva, Member-at-Large/PR/Web

Editor Tatyana Grinenko, Member-at-Large Alfred Jan, CWC-Central Board Rep/NorCal/Open Mic Meetup Bill Baldwin, *WritersTalk* Managing Editor Renée J Anderson, and new Board officer Carolyn Donnell.

Absent were Secretary Marjorie Johnson and Hospitality Chair Janet Patey.

Jamal Khan reported on upcoming speakers for SBW:

08 Mar LeeAnne Krusemark, New York literary agent and publisher, "Manuscript Formatting & Submission Do's & Don'ts" (Avoiding Simple Mistakes that Cause Rejection)

12 Apr Cara Black, *New York Times* best-selling mystery writer, "Writing a Series"

Trenton Myers reported good feedback on the last quarterly report and noted a 1.2% increase over December funding.

Bill Baldwin reported:

- Good showing for the first Open Mic of 2021.
- The Central Board met on 24 Jan, and is exploring replacements for MRMS. Many CWC branches report open positions in leadership roles. Important to promote *Literary Review* as much as possible. Jack London awards to be postponed to 2022. A "craft" tab is under consideration for the CWC website. The next Central Board meeting will be in April.
- NorCal met on 30 Jan. All branches to receive NorCal letterhead for official and promotional use. Vision: Board emphasized the need to publicize NorCal at branch level and help local branches succeed. Leadership conference proposed for Autumn.

Tatyana Grinenko reported that *WritersTalk* staff profiles have now been implemented on the website. Six reminders sent in the lead-up to the SBW meeting on 08 Feb, via emails and Tweets. We currently have ~400 addresses on our mailing list.

Inga Silva reported eight new members since 01 Jan, for a current membership as follows:

Total members = 106
Students = 2
Life = 1
Supporting = 5
Active = 55
Associate = 43

She would like to hear from Associate Members who have published work recently who may qualify for a membership status upgrade: ingasbwmembership@gmail.com.

South Bay Writers is seeking volunteers to help and administer various IT roles within the organization, including MRMS and website development.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM. Next Board meeting: Wednesday, 03 Mar. Next regular meeting on Zoom: Monday, 08 Mar. **WT**

If you don't tell us your good writing news, how can we cheer? Send an email to Marjorie: membernews@southbaywriters.com

Does SBW know about your latest publication? If you recently published writing that we are not aware of (or published in the past ten years that you have not shared with us), please tell us! It could upgrade your membership from Associate to Active, and we may also describe your work in *WritersTalk*, giving your writing more visibility. Email a description of the writing and the publication to us so we can update your info.

Inga Silva, Membership
ingasbwmembership@gmail.com

Have you been receiving our emails? If not, we may not have your current email address in our directory. Send email updates and subscription preferences to

newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Off the shelf

Edie Matthews



California Writers Club *Literary Review*

Open for submissions thru 15 March
calwriters.org/publications/#submit



WANTED

Volunteer IT professionals for website administration, and MRMS administration

pres@southbaywriters.com

EDITORS WANTED

All skill levels welcome!

newsletter@southbaywriters.com

La borraccia

Phyllis R Dulaney

Always on the lookout for interesting stories, Dr Cesare Marino, an anthropologist with the Smithsonian in Washington, DC, found one about an Italian gentleman who possessed a war relic, an army canteen, which he had found in 1945. According to the article, fifteen-year old Corrado Colledan found his prize near a mechanic's shop in Treviso and had preserved it for nearly sixty years. In 2004 Mr. Colledan became determined to return the canteen to its owner and began his search "in the spirit of friendship and the anniversary of 9/11."

My dad flew US Army Air Force missions around Italy until the end of the war in 1945, when he returned home and promptly married Jane Walker, my mom. His lost canteen, engraved with dates, city names including Bozerta, Casablanca, Algiers, Cosarte, and other information, also included the identity of the soldier to whom it had belonged, "Earl W Dulaney."

Dr Marino saw an article in *il Gazzettino*, the oldest newspaper in northern Italy, requesting help in finding the owner, and he easily found an online reference to Earl W Dulaney. With the help of the local college history department, he made the final connection to my father.

My husband and I felt it worth a trip to Italy to retrieve this piece of history from Mr Colledan, who was then 75 and living in Portogruaro. Once there, we met Mr Colledan at the *il Gazzettino* offices in Treviso. We were very warmly welcomed by Mr Colledan and his sister, as well as the editor of the paper, several reporters who had written earlier articles about the search, a photographer, and a translator. Prosecco and delightful pastries were served, photos were taken, and an air of celebration and friendship prevailed as Mr Colledan ceremoniously presented me with the precious artifact. Sad to part with his treasure, he was clearly

emotional. My husband and I were thrilled to be a part of this historic exchange, to help spread goodwill throughout the world, and to honor my father and his service during the war. Not to mention getting to spend five days in Venice!

The following morning, an article about our meeting and the transfer of the canteen appeared in *il Gazzettino* with photographs of Mr Colledan and me together, holding the canteen. The final chapter in Mr Colledan's quest was fulfilled when I presented the canteen to my grateful and patriotic father on our return to the States.

Corrado Colledan and Earl W Dulaney have both passed on, but we remain in contact with Corrado's family, exchanging holiday greetings, news, and photos of our families. The canteen is now in the possession of Earl's grandson, who has a great interest in WWII.

Dr Marino had this to say about the transaction: "How unlikely, for a small old metal canteen to become the center of so much attention, of so many emails, phone calls, and, most importantly, emotions and newly acquired friendships. How symbolic, a war relic, but not a weapon; instead, a container to carry that precious liquid that sustains life, and that one of the wisest and humblest men to ever walk this Earth, Saint Francis of Assisi, affectionately called 'Sister Water.'" **WT**

Phyllis R Dulaney, with Corrado Colledan, holding her father's canteen in 2005, at the *il Gazzettino* offices in Treviso, Italy. Photo: V Zeuzem



Winners

Flash humor

2nd Prize
\$30

Mask required

The store employee said, "Could you please wear a mask in here?"

"I will not." The customer grabbed a basket. "COVID-19 is fake news."

The employee smirked. "I don't care about the virus. You're ugly."

—Kendad



1st Prize
\$50

No good answer

Walking past Arlington Cemetery during a full-honors funeral, my three-year-old wanted to know what was going on. I did the best I could to explain about funerals and 21-gun salutes.

Clearly, I was misunderstanding her.

Hands on her hips, she demanded an answer.

"Why did they shoot him if he's already dead?"

—Kate Russell



3rd Prize
\$20

Pleased to meet you

A cemetery in Pittsburgh was expanding. My mother was to be buried there. The rest of our family was buried elsewhere.

At the grave my sister Marian said tearfully, "I just hate to think of Mama being over here by herself."

I unwittingly responded, "She'll be alright. She makes friends easily."

—Terrele Schumake



Congratulations to the winners! More entries on the following pages...

Ladies' club

A group of elderly ladies were playing cards at a park.

A man holding a knife approached and demanded, "Give me your purses!"

They warned, "You don't want to mess with our club!"

The thug laughed and grabbed a purse.

"Meet our club," Mabel said, swinging a baseball bat.

Lesson learned.

—Russ Towne

Nothing halfway

"Barkeep!"

"Hi John, I have a new game."

"Okay."

The bartender adds one shot into a double-shot glass. "Half-empty or half-full?"

John taps the counter. "Fill'er up."

The drink is peaked and John downs it. "I do nothing halfway."

"Me neither—our Macallan 25-Year just upped your tab by 300 bucks."

—Kendad

Silly me

I phoned my wife, "Please drop everything, grab the kids, and bring your spare key to my car."

"Lose your keys?"

"No," I responded with my best "Who would do something silly like that?" tone of voice, then sheepishly added, "I locked my keys in the car with the engine running."

—Russ Towne

Dr Goodall calls

Jane Goodall was giving a slide lecture about gorillas. Ignoring rain and thunder, I attended. Suddenly the power failed. Everyone waited patiently in the pitch-black auditorium. Frustrated, Jane apologized.

Suddenly she broke the silence. "I'll imitate different primates!"

For 45 minutes Jane grunted, shrieked, and hooted in the dark.

What a calling!

—Linda King

Ivan whips off his shirt at the pool exposing his hairy back. It only takes seconds before the eyes of judgment reign upon him. He is despised for his boldness. Ivan knows the onlookers wish they could be like him, a natural person unashamed of his body temple. Therefore, he wears low-cut Speedos with pride.

—Chris Weilert

I entered the store without a mask, nobody noticed. I walked past a mirror and saw my blunder. I was mortified of being discovered. I panicked and scurried to the restroom and entered a stall. I sat and pondered. I emerged with a toilet paper mask, hopefully not to make a rear end of myself.

—Chris Weilert

Artist vs. critic

A man drives down the highway and sees a man hitchhiking.

He stops, picks him up, and drives on.

The hitchhiker says, "Thanks for picking me up, but how do you know I'm not a serial killer?"

The driver replies, "The chances of two serial killers being in one car are pretty low."

—Alfred Jan

A well-known art critic approaches an emerging artist at his gallery reception and says, "Do you want my opinion of your work?"

The artist replies, "Yes."

The critic says "It's worthless."

The artist says, "I know it is, but I want to hear it anyway."

—Alfred Jan

Excuse me?!

Regions of the country call the same item different names. In Pennsylvania "soda" is "pop." In Cleveland cutting the line is "sponging."

When my friend Sarah relocated from Mississippi, two burners didn't work on her new stove.

"My eyes are out!" she told the maintenance man.

He retorted, "Lady, you need a doctor!"

—Terrele Schumake

Smart kid

I told my grandson I'd give him another graham cracker if he promised not to ask for more.

He agreed.

I handed him another square.

He didn't take it, and said, "A rectangle, please."

He'd outsmarted his Grandpa. Again. (Sigh . . .)

He got the twice-as-large rectangle. I got yet another dose of humility.

—Russ Towne

Airport

Last-minute restroom need. Available stall. I use it and flush. Water spits up. No tissue in place—on window sill—I use it and run.

Almost in line, a woman whispers, "Look behind." A tail follows me from the pants waistband.

My answer: "I'll take it and write my novel on board."

—Marcela Dickerson

San Francisco

My daughter is visiting and we go shopping in Chinatown. We enter a souvenir store. She discovers a glass counter displaying what she wants. She points and says, "This."

The sales girl is a smiling Chinese about her age. Magdalena adds: "Me no speak good English."

The girl answers, laughing: "Me too."

—Marcela Dickerson

Watermelons on sale

Nick, the vegetable peddler, visited their small mountain community once a week in his shiny black 1918 Ford Model T pickup.

When his horn called, "Ooogah! Oogah," housewives came running.

"Do you have peas today?" Grandma Minnie asked. "I haven't had a good pea all summer."

"Lady," he said. "Buy a watermelon!"

—Marjorie Johnson

Abbreviations

Doing therapy at a hospital, I read my patient's chart.

His therapist wrote: "Do not seat him EOB; he becomes SOB."

I knew the first; the second was self-explanatory.

After, I reported to the nurse, "I did not sit the patient on the edge of bed."

"Yes," she finished, "he becomes short of breath."

—Marcela Dickerson

Mind Reading 101

My husband, Tom, and I were on separate El trains in Chicago. Going home, I passed a sidewalk sale of cheap, gaudy lamps for \$10 each. I imagined a big sign saying, *Attention Tom Schumake, don't buy any of these lamps!*

Later Tom came home, proudly cradling a big, ugly lamp.

—Terrele Schumake

Them's the brakes

"Do you understand why I'm giving you a citation today, Sir?"

"*Heh!*—suppose I been putting the old pedal to the metal again."

"Yeah, would you mind pulling over to the side there? You're holding up traffic."

—Janell Johansen

Early on in the pandemic, Moses has been an advocate for wearing masks. He has learned to appreciate the beauty of a person's eyes. He feels the impulse to judge a person by facial beauty has immensely diminished. Therefore, when the mask restriction is lifted, Moses has decided to forego a long-awaited eyebrow waxing.

—Chris Weilert

Entries were evaluated without author names by an external panel of impartial judges (Eddie's friends), with prizes awarded to the three entries best meeting the contest criteria and serving up the most satisfying LOLs.

Congratulations all!

A good pencil

Michael Shipp



I write with a pencil because I like the way it feels in the hand and how the words look on paper. I tried writing with a pen once, on the theory that it was faster and I would be more productive, but it was a disaster. I was all over the place like a clumsy first-timer struggling to ice skate. My handwriting was so sloppy, it looked like a love letter from a rooster to his favorite hen.

And then there's the other thing—I make a lot of mistakes.

A pencil is a forgiving tool that comes specially equipped with its own eraser. Your mistake is a Mulligan. You erase, forget, and move on. Ink is absolute. A *then* that should have been a *than* can be like hitting your thumb with a hammer. You scratch out the wrong word, then scrunch the right one between the lines. You scribble an explanatory note in the margin. Then you cross that out, draw arrows—pretty soon it's black & blue and ugly.

Writing with a pencil is like a casual hike through new countryside. Wildflowers, birdsong; you find your voice. You think your thoughts, write them down, and see how they look and sound. Pencils add artistic dignity. Pens make a presidential signature look like a toddler's doodle.

I can write anywhere. At home, in my truck at the beach, in a crowded café. Outside noise isn't heard when you are searching inside for the perfect word. But only when my faith is in a good pencil. Without faith, there is nowhere for the imagination to go.

I have bought pencils by the dozens at drug stores, grocery stores, stationery stores, even toy stores. Craft centers. Artist supply stores. Often I would sharpen all of them yet find only three or four that were worth writing with. It's like panning hidden creeks for gold dust and hop-

ing to find a nugget. I look under every rock.

There have been great finds at flea markets and garage sales. At one estate sale, I scored a cigar box of old pencils for five dollars, only to find, sleeping on the bottom, a rare fountain pen worth 700 bucks.

I've had pencils with everything imaginable printed on them: birds, cats, dogs, horses, flowers, hearts, skulls, zebras. Solid colors. Paisley and psychedelic patterns. Baseballs, basketballs, footballs. Enough smiley faces to drive you nuts. You and I know it's not what's on the outside that counts. It's about core strength. Appearances can be deceiving. Still, I am very superstitious. I like a pencil with a good vibe.

The best unexpected luck came with Looney Tunes pencils. Daffy Duck and Elmer Fudd were fun to work with. Foghorn Leghorn and Yosemite Sam were a blast. But Bugs Bunny was the star. Bugs was good to me, and I always felt confident when I started a story with him. Together we had a hot streak one summer, cranking out seven fishing stories as true as I can tell them without revealing regrettable secrets.

A good pencil is worth its weight in gold. So imagine my exhilaration when I found the coolest pencil on the planet—*The Black Warrior*.

It was inspiring. "Bad" in all the right ways. It had attitude written all over it. Jet-black with "Black Warrior" embossed in gold, and two gold hearts above that. It spoke of golden love and bold strength. What kind of high-octane mojo lurked inside, daring to call itself *Black Warrior*?

Or was it fool's gold? It glittered, but was it real?

I grabbed two packs and took them home, sharpened all 24, and tested each one, writing out the whole alphabet to see how every

letter felt and looked. Every single pencil performed perfectly. A natural feel in the hand with a soft, dark consistent printing that came easy.

I had hit the mother lode, and it was 24-carat. I was rich. Set for life. With an army of Black Warriors, I would be invincible.

I wrote with confidence and enjoyment, with hope that others would enjoy my stories and style. Two handwritten drafts of two novels, and a dozen odd short stories. I wrote about what I knew and loved best, then set sail for new lands and adventure.

Then suddenly I fell off the edge of the world. Production of the Black Warrior was discontinued without warning. I never even had time to hoard a survivalist's supply.

It made no sense. You produce the best pencil in the universe, then out of the blue, end production? I freaked out and called every art supply and stationery store in the phone book without luck. I was f&#ed.

Frantically I searched the house and garage, even my truck, for AWOL Warriors, finding two handfuls of half-pencils or better.

There were two in my toolbox I had sharpened but forgotten. Then, an unopened pack in the junk drawer: a dozen Black Warriors in mint condition—magic!

I was a young wizard granted his first wand. Black Warriors were now more scarce than gold-plated blue diamonds. Respectfully, I used my last Warriors down to stubs, then bolstered them with a makeshift extension to still fit in the hand, then wrote the stubs down to nubs.

It still didn't make any good sense, and it sucked big-time, but I would have to keep the faith.

Now back to prospecting and soul-searching. **WT**

See the USA (from your home today): Virtual writing conferences

Renée J Anderson

The pandemic changed so much. From tragic loss of life to myriad pedestrian things that we are just now discovering will never be the same.

Literary and writing conferences took a big hit in 2020, as fears of contagion sharply reduced attendance, then social distancing guidelines, infection rates, and finally lockdown mandates made in-person gatherings impossible. For many organizations, the annual conference is the primary sustaining revenue. Those hit hardest were ones whose meetings fell early on in the pandemic, and had to be cancelled outright at the last minute, with registration fees either refunded or held for "next time," whenever "next time" might be.

Would-be conference-goers have been sorry as well, missing out on their once-a-year visit to exciting locations, catching up with old friends, and trying out their pitch or showing their manuscript to live agents and editors. But where there's a will, there's a way. As organizations and the public have gotten used to Zoom, many conferences have retooled their concepts.

The bad news: attending a conference in your jammies from your home office, though comfortable and all, does lack the energy of actually being there—with your conference tote filled with shiny new autographed books, schedule, and map of room locations. There are no book signings or booth-browsing, no chatting with idols between sessions. No fun hotel restaurant fare or cocktail hours with new and old friends. But hey, no awkward social events either.

The good news—Zoom makes it possible to flit anywhere in the world. You don't have to secure plane tickets or book hotel rooms—you're already there. Suddenly, everywhere is local. The only limits are your interests, wallet, and time. And many conference organizers are taking pains to respect these last two, offering discounts on their usual registration fees, or pay-as-you-go schemes. Many are spreading out their conference schedules over time, using subscription-based registration—instead of three days of wall-to-wall speakers, you can tune in once a week, or once a month. The Kauai Writers Conference offers a month-to-month subscription of \$49 for the foreseeable future, with invitations to all live speaker events as well as unlimited access to the recorded sessions while you subscribe.

The flexibility afforded by virtual writing conferences means you don't have to pick and choose on the basis of your travel budget. Places as far away as Alaska and Hawaii, even Melbourne, are no longer out of the question. The opportunity for new cultural exposure and international networking has opened up wide.

Many organizations have discovered they can grow their audience dramatically with virtual offerings. Perhaps many will offer both in-person and virtual attendance going forward. We might just be looking at a hybrid future. Because what do we really mean by "after the pandemic?" No one can predict what the world will be like once this vaccination phase has been implemented and things open up again. Much has already changed forever. But one thing will never change: writers will always find each other. **WT**

Kauai Writers Conference and Book Club

\$49/mo, live sessions Sundays
kauaiwritersconference.com

Virginia Festival of the Book

13–26 March, mostly free!
vabook.org

SleuthFest 2021

19–21 March, \$20
Mystery writing, sleuthfest.com

Tennessee Williams New Orleans Literary Festival

24–28 March, \$10–\$600
Now in its 35th year
tennesseewilliams.net

The Write Stuff Writers Conference

25–28 March, \$40–\$95
greaterlehighvalleywritersgroup.
wildapricot.org

Las Vegas Writers Conference

8–10 April, \$149
lasvegaswritersconference.com

Blue Ridge Writers' Conference

9–10 April, \$75
blueridgewritersconference.com

The Muse & the Marketplace

21–25 April, \$269
museandthemarketplace.com

Pikes Peak Writers Conference

23–25 April, \$195
pikespeakwritersconference.com

Indie Author Project

CONNECTING INDIE AUTHORS, LIBRARIES, AND READERS

Marty Sorensen

The Indie Author Project (IAP) is a way to submit your indie-published eBook and share it with library patrons throughout California. When you submit to the IAP, your title automatically goes into your local collection, Indie CA, a process that typically takes a couple of weeks.

There's more. Your title is reviewed by IAP curators to be picked as an IAP Select title and placed in a national collection, which takes about four to six weeks.

Once your title is published on BiblioBoard, you will receive an email informing you it is accessible to readers.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

No matter how you choose to indie-publish, the service is free for all authors. The process takes about five minutes, and you are welcome to submit as many of your books as you would like. Before you submit, please make sure that your book is:

- **A PDF or an ePUB file**
- **In the English language**
- **An original work to which you own the rights**

Content guidelines specify no offensive language.

WEBSITE

indieauthorproject.com has helped hundreds of libraries engage their local creative community, placing more than 12,000 indie authors into libraries where they are vetted by industry editorial partners and regional library editorial boards.

The "For Authors" tab has info about the IAP and regional contests. At the bottom of the page, "Share Your Book" leads to the submission page. You can subscribe to the IAP newsletter.

The "Expert Sessions" tab provides a monthly webinar series for all writers, with links to videos for authors, similar to the virtual monthly events at California writers clubs. Examples include how to create websites, how to write and publish a children's book, marketing, and more.

"Indie Author Day:" 13 November 2021 will be the sixth annual day of education, networking, mingling, writing, open mics, panels, and more. Registration is free, along with access to resources, sponsor workshop videos, promotional graphics, and support. You can even be a host for the event. With the current state of the world, you can learn more about planning, promoting, and executing a virtual or in-person Indie Author Day in your own community.

"News," announcements and events, with links to the top-circulation IAP 2020 books, 2020 contest winners, a Black Stories Matter page, 2020 Indie author of the year, Let the Contest Judging Begin, and Texas and Minnesota IAP winners.

Follow IAP on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (@indieauthorproj). **WT**



START HERE

[submit.librariesshare.com/
indieauthor/](http://submit.librariesshare.com/indieauthor/)

SUBMISSION STEPS

1 Terms: 3000 words of legal agreement between you and Bibliolabs of South Carolina, who make this happen. You agree to this by clicking Accept.

2 Upload your file and, if you like, some cover art.

3 Enter book details: intended audience (adult, children, YA), a link to where the book can be purchased, whether you have a publisher or a print-on-demand vendor, title, genre, ISBN, and your role as contributor (the author, presumably).

4 Enter your name, email, and library. Then review and submit. You will then receive a confirmation email telling you someone will get back to you.

5 There are guidelines for content: Be sensitive to and respectful of contemporary groups. **WT**

BIBLIOBOARD

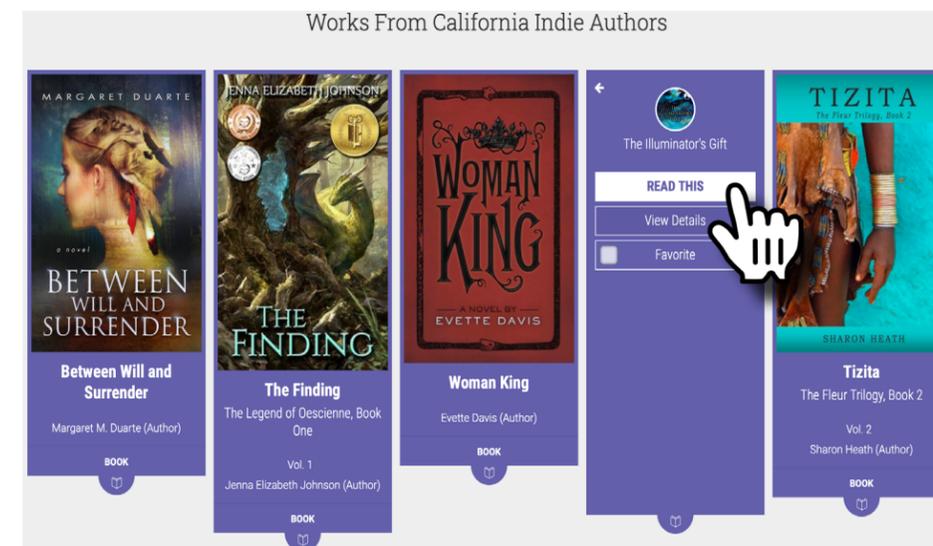
A community for your book

Marty Sorensen

BiblioBoard (library.BiblioBoard.com) is where all the books are hosted. At BiblioBoard.com, community-engagement tools are provided for authors and libraries, with links to the Indie Author Project (IAP), IAP Select Commercial Collection, and Community Collections. The service includes "Beyond the Bookshelf," which highlights how libraries around the country are making use of BiblioBoard's resources, with links to projects at other public libraries, including San José's own graphic novel contest from 2020 (now closed). BiblioBoard's author page provides links to IAP and presumably future regional contests. Fifteen states ran contests in 2020.

It's free and well worth it to start an account at library.BiblioBoard.com and start browsing the books available there. You do not need a library card to set up an account. Once in, the user interface is excellent, and you can begin reading at the click of your mouse. Searching and filtering are straightforward, and there are many curated collections to tempt your inner bookworm. One such collection, "Works from California Indie Authors," is depicted in part below.

BiblioBoard can be followed on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (@BiblioBoard). **WT**



From library.BiblioBoard.com, a sampling of works from the "California Indie Authors" curated collection.

My own experience

Marty Sorensen: Through San José Public Library, I submitted my unpublished novel, *Do Not Betray Me*, an historical novel about the murder of my father's first wife, which made big front-page headlines in the *Seattle Times* on Labor Day 1937. I received confirmation from support at librariesshare.com:

"Thank you for submitting your eBook as part of the Indie Author Project program! In the coming weeks, if you have submitted an adult fiction or YA fiction title, your book will enter our review process. If it's determined that your book is one of the best self-published works submitted, it will be included in curated Indie Author Project Select collections on BiblioBoard, available to library patrons across the U.S. and Canada. You will be notified via email if your book is selected by our curators. This process takes 4–6 weeks."

I submitted another book (a modern Cinderella story) to the IAP submission page directly and was asked first whether it's my creation, and then the rest of the process was like that via San José Library; I got an identical email back from them with a different submission identifier.

We'd like to hear from anyone who has tried this or is interested. Send an email to newsletter@southbaywriters.com **WT**

IN MEMORIAM

Remembering Dick Amyx 1942–2021



Richard Alan Amyx passed away on 15 January 2021, leaving behind his loving wife, Meredy, and their two sons, Damon and Ethan. He was 78 years old.

Dick was born in Salinas, California, a proud third-generation California native. He received his education from the University of California, Berkeley, and San José State University, with a degree in creative writing. He pursued graduate studies in literature and creative writing, San José State University and San Francisco State University.

His professional career spanned more than four decades as a technical writer, consultant, and manager. At heart he was a fiction writer, and he maintained an active role in an SBW-based critique group. He and Meredy were participating members of American Mensa and held both local and national posts in the organization.

Dick joined SBW in 2007, after attending meetings for years with Meredy, and served as editor of *WritersTalk* for three years.

WT

Photo: Meredy Amyx

“Page one, first line.”

Dick said that so many times to various members in our critique group that we came to expect it. His edits were always insightful, right on, and done kindly. His suggestions could turn a good piece into a great one.

He was a member of that same group for fifteen years at the Valley Village Retirement Community and, of course, on Zoom since last March. He rarely missed a Monday despite his illness. We watched our friend get weaker and thinner, week-by-week, until he passed on 15 January 2021.

Dick was Managing Editor of *WritersTalk* 2007–2010. In July 2011, the SBW President asked me to take that over—they needed someone right away. I was willing to try, but Adobe’s InDesign is like Photoshop on steroids, and I had never used it.

“Of course you can do it,” Dick said. “I’ll show you how.”

His three hours of instruction got me through seven years as editor. I used his InDesign document with his styles as a template and cloned the previous issue every month. The consistent format made it easy to plan.

Dick made the sortable cumulative index for *WritersTalk* that appears on southbaywriters.com to this day. That index covers every issue since 2005, and downloadable PDFs of every issue are available on the same page.

In recent years, Dick has been the administrator for MRMS, the statewide California Writers Club member recording system, and webmaster for SBW. He did so much for South Bay Writers that he received the Matthews-Baldwin Award in 2009 and the Jack London Award in 2011.

Dick was a supportive member of South Bay Writers for more than a decade, always ready to coach any writer who wanted to learn. He was our friend and we miss him.

I heard Dick’s voice, “That’s a weak ending.” He would like this couplet better:

*Though lovers be lost love shall not;
And death shall have no dominion.*
– Dylan Thomas

Marjorie Johnson



I always enjoyed Dick’s dry wit and mental agility, and above all his exclusive and positive focus on the subject at hand. He was a talented proponent of the South Bay Branch, with a cautious concern for our success and fulfillment. We will miss him.

– David LaRoche



"Editor's Perspective" '09



Feb '09 Matthews-Baldwin Award



M&ED East of Eden '08



South Bay Writers BBQ July '15



Meredy & Dick

May '15



Summer '08

Photos: Carolyn Donnell

Editor's perspective

Published in *WritersTalk*, January 2009

Six File Drawers Labeled Miscellaneous

Dick Amyx, Managing Editor

I wish I'd keep a writer's notebook. I wish I'd kept a writer's notebook. I wish I'd been keeping a writer's notebook for years. People have been telling me, virtually since the day in 1965 that I announced my intention to become a writer, that I should keep a writer's notebook. I've read any number of things that writers have said about their notebooks, from the one who scratched notes on cocktail napkins and the backs of envelopes and stuffed them in a shoebox, to the one who always carried a small notepad in his back pocket like a wallet and would stop dead in the middle of a sidewalk to jot something down, to the one who walked away from a fight with his wife so he could write it down while it was hot (because fights are so hard to write right). But I've never kept one myself.

When I was a student at San Jose State, I attended a talk by a writer who'd just had his first novel published, and one of the things he said was that you have to "dump the garbage." You just sit at the typewriter and write whatever comes into your mind until you're rid of all the junk, and then you can begin to write your novel.

Fifteen or more years ago, when a few demons were plaguing me distractingly, a friend suggested that I could ease the pressure by writing about it. In that particular instance, I accepted the advice and wrote. And wrote and wrote and wrote. For the better part of a year, I spent several hours a day hammering on my keyboard, and when all the jots and tittles finally settled down, I found a stack of six hundred single-spaced pages, about 360,000 words—enough for two or three novels. Those words, unfortunately, were destined only for the incinerator. I've gone back and taken a couple of peeks, but what I found, no matter how compelling it may have seemed in the creation, was terribly boring in the rereading. I think this may have been the garbage that writer talked about dumping. I did feel better after I'd dumped it, but there doesn't seem to have been a novel yet.

Still, some images remain from observations made years ago, and I still think there should be a story there. The grey-bearded man standing barefoot at the corner of Second and San Fernando with a pair of boots whose laces were tied together hanging around his neck. The cast of downtown denizens I came to recognize while living in a seriously funky apartment at the corner of Fourth and San Carlos during my undergraduate days. I didn't exactly keep a writer's notebook, but I did capture three of them in a testosterone-fueled poem of sorts, written with all the fervor of youthful now (and no capital letters or punctuation). What may be even more amazing than those words themselves is that they've persisted for forty or so years now, and that I knew exactly where to look for them.

DA

a testosterone-fueled poem of sorts, written with all the fervor of youthful now

Dick Amyx

one day in the 88-cent
store the little
mute woman who binds her breasts came up
to me
and said mmm mmm pointing at her palm
i'm sorry i said i
haven't any money
like a snake striking
little pincer fingers
grabbed the change
outlined in my tight
pocket and a dime of flesh too mmm mmm
she smiled
and wouldn't let go until i said ok
i sometimes wonder if she's friends with
the woman who wears
a green corduroy mackinaw
and black leather
gloves even at noon
in summer and who
talks to herself as she walks
and who must exist
on a diet of
jackinthebox hamburgers
lately i've been thinking
they should get together
and visit the man
who argues with parking meters

February 2021



Fifty were in attendance for the South Bay Writers monthly meeting on 08 February 2021, with Bill Belew presenting together with daughter Mia.

Photo captures by Carolyn Donnell

Baldwin, *Continued from page 1*
some goals to consider:

- ✓ Getting eyeballs on your books
- ✓ Building a subscriber base
- ✓ Engaging with readers about you, your books, your brand

Surprisingly, you can achieve this all for *free*. Belew breaks your campaign down into steps:

Step 1 Develop an online presence—a place where readers can reach you. Set up your own website. You can do that, for example, with WordPress. You can get your own page on Amazon.

Step 2 Set up a way to capture email addresses. You can do this, for example, using Mailchimp. Or you can use MailerLite, as Belew recommends. MailerLite is free and flexible, and will store the email addresses. People can subscribe to you. You can gather as many as 1000 emails in one go. You can create email campaigns and groups. Belew has 2000+ subscribers for his fiction, and 1700+ for his nonfiction.

Step 3 “Reader Magnets” are things you can give away in exchange for an email address. One free way to do this is with StoryOriginApp.com. In exchange for readers’ emails, you can offer these Reader Magnets. This enables you to engage with readers. People may even ask to review your book!

Step 4 Find like-minded friends. Network. You can use StoryOrigin to gather authors who write in genres similar to yours. You can offer to promote their books in exchange for their email address. You can promote big swaps. Belew found thousands of comparable authors on Story-

Origin, which also has Facebook page (StoryOrigin Authors).

Step 5 Engage with the people whose emails you have collected. Ask yourself: What information can I provide by email? You can remind readers when your books are coming out. You can keep them informed of your writing progress, even if you are not releasing books at present. You can

*Ask yourself:
“What information can
I provide by email?”*

provide updates on your writing weekly, biweekly, or monthly. You can provide sales notifications. You can even provide relevant information about yourself (nothing private, of course): readers like to feel they know the authors they are reading.

Other observations:

- ✓ Having your own domain name enhances your credibility in the marketplace.
- ✓ It is advantageous to offer multiple books for sale, as opposed to just one title.
- ✓ Ads on markets like Amazon and Facebook pay off more when you advertise several titles at once.
- ✓ Don’t be afraid of giving things away for free—a first chapter, a whole book perhaps. In any case, it is always better to do *something*, rather than *nothing*.

One audience member asked about when these techniques might start to pay off: when one could begin to see actual revenue.

Belew’s reply: “Even though all these steps are *free*, and they *work*, they are *all work*. Treat this as work and devote yourself to it.” He reports it took him about a year to begin seeing results from the use of these techniques.

Belew had these words of advice: “Don’t give anything away for free unless it’s worth getting an email address in return. And if you get an email address, if they take your freebie—make sure it’s so good, they will be back for more!”

WT

Email is the best way to connect with readers!

44% of readers would prefer monthly emails
28% would prefer biweekly emails

12% would like weekly contact

18% would like release notifications (advanced notice of book releases)

17% would like writing updates

17% would like sales notifications

14% would enjoy personal-interest stories

13% would like giveaways

12% would like excerpts

83% of readers buy new releases from email

84% want to hear from you monthly or more often

88% buy discount books from emails

Les Prose Comics

Kendad



The power³ of

...poetry

Song of the Okogis, or Frog in Spring

See how the white spirit presses us,—
Presses us—presses us, heavy and long;
Presses us down to the frost-bitten
earth.

Alas! you are heavy, ye spirits so white,
Alas! you are cold—you are cold—you
are cold.

Ah! cease, shining spirits that fell from
the skies,

Ah! cease so to crush us, and keep us
in dread;

Ah! when will ye vanish, and Seegwun
return?

—Bamewawagezhikaquay,
aka Jane Johnson Schoolcraft,
Ojibway poet and writer, 1853

The power³ of

...one sentence

Miss Brooke had that kind of beauty
which seems to be thrown into relief
by poor dress.

—George Eliot

Opening sentence of *Middlemarch*
(1872)

The power³ of

...one word

gel
egg
goo
ego
ergo
yes

GOT POETRY?

newsletter@southbaywriters.com

POEMS

They're not just for
breakfast anymore

newsletter@southbaywriters.com

WANTED

Poems.

newsletter@southbaywriters.com



Silver Sebright Bantam
Emma Prusch Farm Park, San José, CA
Photo, J Johansen

Contests & markets

Carolyn Donnell



⚠️NB: NO VETTING
has been done by South
Bay Writers Club. Listings
are for information only.
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 your experi-
ences, good or bad.

CONTESTS

The Missouri Review

- **Perkoff Prize, deadline 15 Mar**, \$1000 and publication each for best story, best set of poems, and best essay that engage in evocative ways with health and medicine missourireview.com/contests/perkoff-prize/
- **Miller Audio Prize** Genres: audio recordings of prose, poetry, documentary, and humor. One \$1000 prize for the winner in each category. Open for entries year-round missourireview.com/contests/audio-contest/

2021 Effie Lee Morris Literary Contest Women's National Book Assn–San Francisco literary contest. Fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. 1st prize \$200, 2nd \$100, 3rd \$50 and publication on the WNBA–SF website for 90 days. **Deadline 31 Mar** wnba-sfchapter.org/2021-effie-lee-morris-contest-get-ready

National Indie Excellence Awards (NIEA) Celebrating Self & Independent Publishing Excellence. Submissions for the 15th Annual National Indie Excellence® Awards are currently open **Entries must be postmarked by 31 Mar** indieexcellence.com

Winning Writers

- **Wergle Flomp Humor Poetry Contest** (no fee) Seeks humor poems. Total prizes \$3500. **Deadline 01 Apr**. 1st prize \$2000 plus a two-year gift certificate from Duotrope (a \$100 value), 2nd prize \$500, 10 honorable mentions \$100 each
- **Tom Howard/John H Reid Fiction & Essay Contest** All styles and themes, fiction and nonfiction. Accepts published and unpublished work. **Deadline 30 Apr** winningwriters.com/our-contests

CWC–Redwood Writers 2021 Poetry Contest First prize \$100, 2nd \$50, 3rd \$25. **Deadline 15 Apr, 9 PM**. Open to all CWC members, \$10 entry fee. Winners announced 15 May at the Redwood Writers general meeting on Zoom. redwoodwriters.org/2021-poetry-contest/

CONTESTS, CONTINUED

Regal House Publishing regalhousepublishing.com

- **The 2021 Kraken Book Prize** for middle-grade fiction, **deadline 06 Apr**, winner receives \$750 and publication
- **The 2021 Petrichor Prize**, recognizing finely crafted fiction, winner receives \$1000 and publication. **Entries accepted 15 Apr–15 Jul**

WOW! Women on Writing

wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php

- **Creative Nonfiction Essay Contest**. Your story must be true, but the way you tell it is your chance to get creative. 200–1000 words, entry fee \$12, **deadline 30 Apr**.
- **Quarterly Flash Fiction Contest**. Open prompt, 250–750 words, entry fee \$10, **deadline 31 May**

Grist “Imagine 2200: Climate fiction for future ancestors,” deadline 12 Apr. Stories that envision the next 180 years of climate progress. *Grist’s* solutions lab, *Fix*, is excited to announce the launch of our first-ever, free-entry, climate-fiction short story contest. 3000–5000 words. 1st prize \$3000, 2nd \$2000, 3rd \$1000. Nine \$300 honoraria. Winners and finalists will be published in a stunning immersive digital collection on *Fix’s* website. grist.org/fix/climate-fiction-writing-contest-imagine-2200-prizes/

Writer’s Digest

- **Self-Published Book Awards, deadline 01Apr**
Whether you’re a professional writer, a part-time freelancer or a self-starting student, here’s your chance to enter the premier self-published competition exclusively for self-published books. 1st prize \$1000
- **Annual writing competition**, *WD’s* oldest and most popular competition now in its 90th year. \$5000. Winners announced in the Nov/Dec 2021 issue. **Deadline 07 May** See writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions for more prizes and details.

Rattle Poetry Prize One \$15,000 winner and ten \$500 finalists selected in a blind review; one \$5000 readers’ choice award chosen from among the finalists. **Deadline 15 Jul** rattle.com/prize/guidelines/

The Vincent Brothers Review Annual short story contest: “Housekeeping,” **deadline 31 Oct** vincentbrothersreview.org/annual-short-story-contest

San Francisco Writers Conference—2021 Writing Contest 1500 words or less in fiction, nonfiction, children/YA, or poetry. Entry fee \$30. \$100 prizes for each category; grand prize a full registration to the 2022 SFWC. **Deadline 18 Sept** sfwriters.org/2021-writing-contest-overview/

LOCAL & CWC

California Writers Club *Literary Review* reading cycle open for submissions through **15 Mar**. We have our team. Our webmaster has posted the submission rules and forms. All CWC members are encouraged to send their best work for consideration in *Literary Review*
calwriters.org/publications/#submit

Catamaran Literary Reader Santa Cruz print quarterly. “West Coast themes. Writers and artists from everywhere.” Fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, fine art. Submissions year-round with quarterly production cycle.
catamaranliteraryreader.com

CWC–Fremont Area Writers lists many resources on their page, such as contest announcements, publications seeking submissions, freelance jobs, resources for screenwriters, genre organizations, and more
cwc-fremontareawriters.org/resources-writers

MWA NorCal Chapter Mystery Writers of America, the country’s oldest organization of professional mystery writers. Events, podcasts, blog
mwanorcal.org

West Trade Review Reading periods 01 Apr–01 Aug & 15 Aug–15 Dec. Original and unpublished fiction, poetry, and photography by new and established writers & artists. SBW’s Kelly Harrison is an associate editor.
westtradereview.com/submissionguidelines.html

Women’s Natl Book Assn–San Francisco Events, lecture series, Pitch-o-Rama, Effie Lee Morris writing contest & more
wnba-sfchapter.org

OPEN SUBMISSIONS

Delmarva Review Now in its 14th year. No reading or submission fees. **Deadline 31 Mar** for November publication
delmarvareview.org/submissions

Kosmos Journal for global transformation. Essays, poetry. Editorial preference given to members; membership is free
kosmosjournal.org/contribute-to-kosmos-quarterly/

The Lumiere Review Accepts poems and prose, encouraging emerging writers, BIPOC, LGBTQIA, and disabled. No fees. **Theme issue “Party Time” open until 15 Mar**.
lumierereview.com/

Second Chance Lit Submissions must have been previously rejected. No payment, but will promote. Max 1000 words.
secondchancelit.com/submit

Sequestrum: Literature & Art Paying market. High-quality short fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and visual arts. Previously unpublished only. **Theme issue open, ends on 15 Apr**: “Slipstream: Magical Realism. Fantasy. Science fiction. We’re after literary-quality writing with a healthy serving of imagination. You wrote it. We want it.” Nominal fee.
sequestrum.org/submissions

OPEN SUBMISSIONS, CONTINUED

Vestal Review Flash fiction. “A venue for exceptional flash fiction by both emerging and well-known authors.” Reading periods: **Print, Feb–May**, Aug–Nov. Online: Jun and Dec. Length: ≤500 words. Genres: fiction, including speculative, romance, contemporary, political, humor Nominal reading fee; contributors receive \$50.
vestalreview.net/guidelines/

The Vincent Brothers Review Submissions in fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Pays a minimum \$25 per accepted item. **Issue 25 submissions call, themed “Ghosts”**
vincentbrothersreview.org/submissions/

FOR POETS

Academy of American Poets List: “American Poets Prizes”
poets.org/academy-american-poets/american-poets-prizes

Everywriter Article, “The best poetry prizes”
everywritersresource.com/best-poetry-prizes

The Literary Nest Online publication for poetry and visual arts. Accepted poetry appears on blog; issues released quarterly
theliterarynest.org

Palette Poetry No fee, contributors receive \$50. Monthly contests, open submissions
palettepoetry.com/submit/

Poetry Magazine Please send only one submission at a time per category, and wait until you hear back from us before uploading another submission. Unpublished work only. **Paying market**
poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/submit

Poetry Pacific Literary eZine, 2 issues per year, Spring and Fall. Published and unpublished welcome as long as you still have the rights.
poetrypacific.blogspot.com

Poetry Society of America The nation’s oldest poetry organization, founded in 1910. Celebrating its 110th anniversary
poetrysociety.org

Poets & Writers Lists poetry contests:
pw.org/blogs/prize_reporter

Rattle “If a poem is accessible, interesting, moving, and memorable, if it makes you laugh or cry, then it’s the kind of poem that rattles around inside you for years, and it’s our kind of poem.” Subscribe and receive a new poem in you email every morning.
rattle.com/submissions/guidelines/

Thimble Literary Magazine Quarterly. Primarily a poetry journal but invites submissions on related topics such as artwork, stories, and interviews. “When selecting your poems or prose, please ask yourself, did writing this poem help me create shelter?”
thimblelitmag.com/submissions

FOR POETS, CONTINUED

Trish Hopkinson “A Selfish Poet.” Blog with lists of markets for poets
trishhopkinson.com/tips-and-resources/
Facebook group, “No fee calls for poems”
facebook.com/groups/860877037424122

Up the Staircase Quarterly Poetry & art. No previously published poetry, but previously published artwork OK
upthestaircase.org/submit

Writing Matters Article, “34 Publishers of Poetry Books & Chapbooks”
randalssanctuary.wordpress.com/2020/08/11/publishers-of-poetry-books-chap-books/

Facebook groups for poets

- California Poets
- Cupertino Poet Laureate
- How Writers Write Poetry Community Group
- Los Gatos Poet Laureate
- Natl Poetry Month poem-a-day challenge
- No Fee Calls for Poems
- Poetry Center–San Jose—PCSJ
- Rattle
- Santa Clara County Poet Laureate
- SF Creative Writing Inst drop-in poetry workshops
- Willow Glen Poetry Project

GENERAL RESOURCES (* = Internet and FB)

Ace World Pub Maintains updated lists of international opportunities for grants, publication, contests, prizes, jobs, and more
aceworldpub.com.ng

Association of Writers & Writing Programs AWP sponsors six contests, and also provides an extensive listing of literary grants, awards, and publication opportunities available from organizations and publishers throughout North America.
awpwriter.org/contests/overview

Authors Publish* Subscription magazine for writers, with lists of publishers accepting no-fee submissions for fiction, nonfiction, and poetry
authorspublish.com

Electric Lit Article, “Free or cheap resources for emerging writers”
electricliterature.com/free-or-cheap-resources-for-emerging-writers

Freedom with Writing* Subscribe to our newsletter and we’ll send you reviews of freelance writing companies, assignments, and the best articles we can produce. Everything is free and delivered via email.
freedomwithwriting.com

GENERAL RESOURCES, CONTINUED

Funds for Writers Up-to-date listing of contests, submissions, grants. Free weekly newsletter.
fundsforwriters.com/contests

Hidden River™ Arts Independent literary, visual, and performing arts organization based in Philadelphia dedicated to the service, support and celebration of all artists. Book awards deadlines and guidelines, news, celebrations, and publications
hiddenriverarts.wordpress.com

NewPages News, information, guides to literary magazines, independent publishers, creative writing programs, alternative periodicals, calls for submission, indie bookstores, writing contests, and more. Contests:
newpages.com/classifieds/writing-contests

Poets & Writers Contest blogs
pw.org/blogs/prize_reporter; pw.org/grants
List of 1200+ literary magazines (filterable):
pw.org/literary_magazines

ProWritingAid Writer’s Community FB group for writers to connect and help each other become better writers
facebook.com/groups/ProWritingAidCommunity

Publishing ... and Other Forms of Insanity Article, “185 Literary Magazines Accepting Reprints”
publishedtodeath.blogspot.com/2016/01/163-literary-magazines-accepting.html

Reedsy: The Best Writing Contests Blog spot with filterable and searchable listing of current competitions
blog.reedsy.com/writing-contests

The Write Life* “Tools, Courses & Resources for Writers”
thewritelife.com/tools-for-writers/

The Writer Upcoming contests, articles, resources, and you can subscribe to the newsletter.
writermag.com/contests

Writers Post No Fee Call for Submissions Facebook group: “Help yourself and other writers”
facebook.com/groups/58414389316

WT



Khan, *Continued from page 1*

public relations business for more than twenty years and was president of Cerrito, CA chamber of commerce. She is also a former journalist, editor, and managing editor of newspapers, as well as the author of countless magazine articles and several books, some of which can be found on Amazon. LeeAnne also assists authors with editing to make sure their writing is marketable, and then represents them as an agent. The inspiration she gives to others has even been compared in writing to that of Oprah!

WT



Above: LeeAnne Krusemark, photo credit, Tonya Harvy.

Right: *Self-publishing vs Traditional Publishing*, published 2018, available on Amazon.

SELF-PUBLISHING VS. TRADITIONAL PUBLISHING

INCLUDING EBOOK, PRINT-ON-DEMAND, SUBSIDY/VANITY, AND AMAZON OPTIONS

LEEANNE KRUSEMARK

Matthews, *Continued from page 2*

I was in my final year at the university, and after finishing my 4 AM radio shift, I struggled to stay awake in my 2 PM class.

Genghis was furious. The previous assistant editor, a man, had been incompetent. He couldn't handle the hectic pace; he'd mislabelled cartridges, and worse, he forgot to cue them up, resulting in radio's cardinal sin—Silence. Dead air.

Genghis tried to convince me an actual job in news was worth more than a journalism degree. Nevertheless, I valued a college diploma more than this frenzied position—and besides, I wanted to work in television.

My last week, Genghis, intent on making me miserable, went on a rampage. I endured his villainy like a mute nun—until the final day. He was up to his dirty tricks, inciting havoc by falling behind, scrambling to catch up, aggravating the anchors, persecuting the interns, and searching for an excuse to attack me.

He soon found one. Taking offense at one of the story introductions I'd written, he stood over my chair shrieking, flapping his arms like an evil bird trying to fly—calling me “stupid!”

I felt my blood simmering. “Don't talk to me like that.”

He hovered closer, bellowing, “I'll talk to you any way I want.”

“No you won't,” I said, rising from my chair, feeling my patience snap. “Because I'll stop you.” My mind blanked and my defense mechanism kicked in—bolstered by years of slugfests with three brothers.

I grabbed Genghis by his lapels, spun him around, and pinned him against the mailboxes. One intern sat frozen, the other one hid. Genghis's jaw dropped and his eyes bulged like a character on Looney Toons. The fear on his face brought me back to reality. I released Genghis, and he scuttled away like a cowardly dog with its tail between his legs.

“Did you see what she did to me?” he whined to the anchors in the glass sound booth.

“Get out of here,” said one. “We're on the air. You deserved it,” said the other.

I sat down and went back to work. Inside, my nerves trembled like Jell-O. I'll never work in broadcasting again, I worried. My career is over before it started—all because of this idiot! I imagined the conversation: “But your honor, it was unpremeditated.”

Genghis went back to his workstation. His chest puffed-up like a rooster, he swatted at me with his fingertips.

“Don't ever touch me again!” he said.

I nearly burst out laughing.

With an outstretched arm he pointed to the door. “GET OUT!”

I looked him in the eye and said, “You didn't hire me, and you can't fire me. I'll leave when my shift is over.”

I turned back to my work. I kept saying to myself: Don't give him the satisfaction of knowing you're upset. I breathed deeply and forced myself to concentrate.

Meanwhile, Genghis sat perspiring, and panting loudly. He mumbled, “You're really strong!”

Again, I wanted to laugh. Though I'd recently completed a weight-training class, my reaction was pure adrenaline. The weatherman called, and I answered in my sweetest voice, “Hellooo!”

Somehow, I managed to get through the rest of the morning.

Before I left, the news director called me into his office. *Oh no, here it comes—banishment.* However, he proceeded to tell me how much he'd miss me and what an excellent job I'd done.

I told him it had been a challenge working with Genghis. He agreed. I consoled myself—maybe there *was* a place for me in broadcasting.

Throughout the day, I replayed the incident in my mind. I wrote pages in my journal. I finally concluded that no one knows how they'll react when backed in a corner, but I'm glad I defended myself. AND, I'm glad I was raised with three brothers.

WT



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CWC around the Bay

Berkeley cwc-berkeley.org

Central coast centralcoastwriters.org

Fremont area

cwc-fremontareawriters.org

Marin cwcmarin.com

Mendocino writersmendocinocoast.org

Mt Diablo cwcmtdiablo.org

Napa Valley napavalleywriters.net

North state northstatewriters.com

Redwood City redwoodwriters.org

Sacramento cwcsacramentowriters.org

SF peninsula cwc-peninsula.org

San Joaquin Valley

trivalleywriters.org



CWC events in March

10 MAR: CWC-Redwood

Indigo Moor **WORKSHOP**, "Poets and Authors Transitioning to Screen," Wed 10 Mar, 6-7:30 PM, \$25 for CWC members. Whether in poetry or prose, the desire to see our work on screen is irresistible. Breaking onto this platform takes more than desire. Similar to your primary genre, scripts have their own tools and elements that must be observed to make your work palatable to directors, actors, and producers. With Indigo Moor, award-winning poet & author. redwoodwriters.org/indigo-moor-workshop/

10 MAR: CWC-Napa

Author and media pro Joey Garcia will take us behind the scenes to show us the reality of how the media works, and what you need to do to get publicity and increase sales. Wed 10 Mar, 7-9 PM, \$5 for CWC members. <http://napavalleywriters.net>

10 MAR: CWC-Mt Diablo

James Scott Bell, "Write Your Novel From The Middle: A New Approach for Plotters, Pantsers and Everyone in Betweens." ONLINE, Sat 13 Mar, 9:30 AM-12 PM, \$5 for CWC members. Sign up here: cwcmtdiablo.org/current-cwc-mt-diablo-meeting/

16 MAR: CWC-Central Coast

Betsy Graziani Fasbinder, "Public Speaking Skills for Today's Writers: Pitfalls to Avoid/Practices that Pay Off." **Free**, Tue 16 Mar, 6 PM. Write to info@centralcoastwriters.org to request Zoom link.

19 MAR: CWC-Sacramento

Andrew Benzie, publisher, designer and owner of Andrew Benzie Books will present "Self-Publishing Strategies," Fri 19 Mar, 1 PM cwcsacramentowriters.org

20 MAR: CWC-Tri-Valley



Dana Gioia, California Poet Laureate, "Becoming a Writer," Sat, 20 Mar, 2 pm, **free** (RSVP by 18 Mar). Gioia will read poems and discuss his own odd journey towards being a writer. He will also discuss his new memoir, *Studying with Miss Bishop: Memoirs from a Young Writer's Life*. Register here: trivalleywriters.org

20 MAR: CWC-Redwood

Sarah Rabkin, "Writing the Image: Drawing the Text." 1 PM, \$5 for CWC members. redwoodwriters.org/meetings/

21 MAR: CWC-Berkeley

Emily Cotler of WaxCreative Author Websites, ONLINE, Sun, 21 March,

1-3 PM, \$5 for CWC members. Emily Cotler is the Creative Director and principal of Waxcreative Design, Inc., and co-author of *Web Redesign 2.0: Workflow that Works*, an established standard for workflow methodologies and user-centered design principles worldwide. cwc-berkeley.org

21 MAR: CWC-Mendocino

Mendocino: Member Readings from 2021 Anthology, *EROSION*, Sun 21 Mar, 3-5:00 PM. Write Writers-MendocinoCoast@gmail.com.

28 MAR: CWC-Marin

Michael Andres Palmieri, "Maximizing the Potential of Your Content across Platforms," Sun 28 Mar, 2 PM, \$5 for CWC members. RSVP at cwcmarin.com

Facebook discussion group

Join our Facebook group South Bay Writers Club Group admin Carolyn Donnell

Have a look at NorCal Group, a regional collection of our northern-California CWC branches. The "Group" was formed a decade back to further communication and share best practices among the various northern-California branches—some seasoned and established, others new to the mission. We are recognized and partially funded by the Central Board and act, in part, as an intermediary. **Curious?** cwcnorcalwriters.org



SBW/CWC Events

MARCH 2021

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---------------------------------|--|---------|----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| 28 | 1 VALLEY WRITERS | 2 | 3 SBW BOARD MTG 7 PM | 4 | 5 OPEN MIC | 6 |
| 7 | 8 VALLEY WRITERS SBW MTG 7 PM INTL WOMENS DAY | 9 | 10 | 11 LAILAT AL MIRAJ | 12 | 13 |
| 14 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS BEGINS | 15 VALLEY WRITERS WT ISSUE CLOSES | 16 | 17 ST PATRICK'S DAY | 18 | 19 OPEN MIC | 20 OSTARA SPRING EQUINOX |
| 21 | 22 VALLEY WRITERS | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 PASSOVER BEGINS |
| 28 PALM SUNDAY STORM MOON | 29 VALLEY WRITERS HOLI | 30 | 31 CESAR CHAVEZ DAY | 1 | 2 | 3 |

Ongoing events

Critique groups

Valley Writers Mondays 2-4 PM via Zoom. Email Marjorie Johnson marjohnson@mac.com

Zoom writing group

Small supportive group of experienced writers has room for one more. We meet the **1st & 3rd Fridays, 3:30-5 PM**. If you're interested, please contact Karen Sundback at sundback@gmail.com

Morgan Hill writers group

We're a critique circle based in Morgan Hill, with members from all over. Long and short narra-

tive, any genre. **Mondays, 5 PM**. Contact Vanessa MacLaren-Wray for Zoom login details cometarytales@gmail.com

SBW regular meetings

2nd Mondays, 7 PM. Watch your email for Zoom login details

SBW Board meetings

1st Wednesdays, 7 PM. Contact pres@southbaywriters.com

Open mic

1st & 3rd Friday nights. Contact Bill Baldwin (408) 730-9622 WABaldwin@aol.com

Know of a regularly occurring event for writers? Email us! newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Ads in CWC's The Bulletin

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 CWC's *The Bulletin*, published three times a year, reaches 2,000 published and aspiring writers in 22 CWC branches throughout the state and is published on calwriters.org.

We accept 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.



California Writers Club
South Bay Branch
PO Box 3254
Santa Clara CA 95055
southbaywriters.com

MAIL TO

Address Correction Requested

South Bay Writers
April 2021 meeting
Monday | 12 April | 7 PM

Guest speaker Cara Black

Watch your email
for details!

California Writers Club
Literary Review

Open for submissions
through 15 March

**[calwriters.org/
publications/#submit](http://calwriters.org/publications/#submit)**

COVID-19 VACCINE IS HERE

STAY INFORMED. KEEP WEARING YOUR MASK.

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covid19.ca.gov/vaccines

Vaccinate ALL 58