



WRITERSTALK

Volume 30

Number 1

January 2022

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

JANUARY SPEAKER: GERI SPIELER

From Reluctant Author to Movie Deal

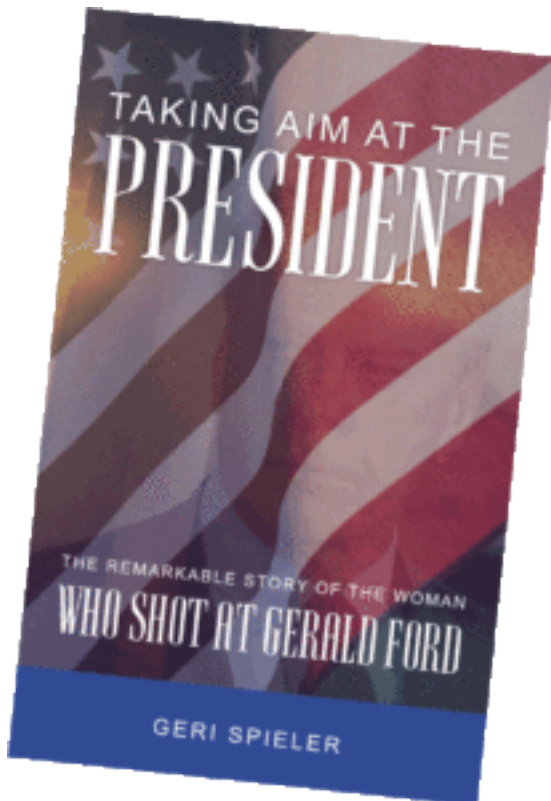
Jamal Khan

"How did I get here?" Geri Spieler asked herself as she reminisced about her writer's journey. "I never wanted to write books, and especially a book about Sara Jane Moore, the middle-aged mother and doctor's wife who shot at President Ford and missed his head by six inches." Yet, that was only the beginning of what the author of *Taking Aim at the President* accomplished. Her gripping narrative drew considerable attention beyond the book publishing world.

During our January 11th meeting, Geri will share how she not only landed an agent, but also positioned herself to be discovered by two Hollywood screenwriters who aim to adapt her book into a feature film or limited series.

Geri Spieler is an author, a journalist and an investigative reporter. She has written for the *Los Angeles Times*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Forbes*, *Huffington Post*, and *TruthDig*, an award-winning investigative reporting website.

Her creative nonfiction book *Taking Aim at the President: The Remarkable Story of the Woman Who Shot at Gerald Ford* (Macmillan/St. Martin's Press) has been optioned for a feature film. Her new book of historical fiction, *Regina of Warsaw*, is based on the life of her grandmother, who escaped Russian pogroms at the turn of the century.



Geri Spieler



Geri Spieler is the president of the California Writers Club San Francisco Peninsula branch, winner of the Louise Boggess award, and member of the Society of Professional Journalists, the Authors Guild, the Women's National Book Association, the Internet Society, and the Book Critics Circle.

Who: Geri Spieler

What:

Taking Aim at the President

When:

Tuesday, 11 January 7 PM

Notice change to Tuesday

Where:

Zoom Online Platform

Link forthcoming in your email

Breaking News:

Our January speaker could not attend on January 10th. We have **changed our January meeting to Tuesday**, January 11, 2022.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Between the Lines

Edie Matthews

President, South Bay Writers



It's a Party!

After 21 months, what a delight to finally meet up with fellow SBW members.

Truthfully, we wavered about having the Holiday Bash, but finally decided since only vaccinated members (with proof) were allowed, we'd go forward and have the party.

Zoom surprisingly, has turned out to be better than I anticipated, but it doesn't take the place of meeting in person with friends and fellow writers

However, we had no idea how many would attend—though in the questionnaire sent out earlier, 17 people responded "YES" they'd come, and a number of others responded "MAYBE."

My experience hosting our summer BBQ is that not everyone RSVPs. Plus, some of those who do, don't always attend. At the same time, a number never RSVP and arrive apologizing at the front door for not letting me know in advance.

No worries. I've noticed most people fall into one of two groups. Early birds who RSVP weeks in advance, and last-minute folks who send an email the evening before the event. I try to read my emails the morning of the party too, since someone always has questions—usually needing directions to my house.

Yet, this year, I thought we'd have at least a dozen—and I was confident we'd have a good time even if there were only a few of us. I also worried about the rain. That can affect turnout at our regular meetings.

I had another complication. My stone walkway in front of the house is uneven. I was hoping we could improve it by renting a planer and smoothing it out. Nope, all it did was tear it up more. My handyman extraordinaire said he could put in a new brick path in time for the party. Well, he came close. Everything was done but the grouting. He'd have stayed late to try and finish it, but he'd already been working long hours for several days, jack-hammering out the old stone and laying a new brick path—a window-framed-basket-weave design.

Again, no worries. Since my house is on the corner, I put up a sign to enter on the side entrance.

Of course, to add to the mix, it did rain. I'd cleaned and decorated the house and finally got my oriental carpets laid out, so I was leery of people walking in with wet shoes. Another email was sent out asking people to bring a second pair of dry shoes or slippers. I had new socks for anyone who needed them.

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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 30 June 2022. Dual membership, \$25; student membership, \$20. New or lapsed member, \$65. Contact ingasbwmembership@gmail.com, sign up online at southbaywriters.com, or send a check to CWC-South Bay Writers, P O Box 3254, Santa Clara, CA 95055

WritersTalk

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

email: newsletter@southbaywriters.com

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Carolyn Donnell

DeWayne Mason

Ken Roberge

Marty Sorensen

Deadline

Submissions are due by the 15th 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 (1000 words)

Poetry (200 words)

Essay/Nonfiction (1000 words)

Reprints

Authors retain all rights to their works. *WritersTalk* gratefully acknowledges the authors' permission to publish their works here. Contact individual authors for permission to reprint.

Announcements

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

Advertisements

Advertising of workshops, conferences, and events is accepted from other branches of California Writers Club. *WritersTalk* does not accept unpaid advertising of events or services that benefit an individual. Advertise in *CWC Bulletin* or in the *Literary Review*. (see page 14). No political advertising.

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Marjorie Bicknell Johnson

Interim Editor



Io Saturnalia

WritersTalk is transforming, making it time to wish everyone a happy new year from a former editor whose post is only one month. I thought I would write Happy New Year in a dozen European languages, but in this age of political correctness, I'm sticking to happy holidays and a little history.

When was the first January First? The date 1 January first occurred in 153 BC, when the Romans adjusted the calendar to better communicate with legions in distant lands. We would call it 01 January. The Romans had no zero and used Roman numerals; their prior calendar had begun in March, the month of the spring equinox.

The Romans of that time didn't know about this BC thing; they would have told you that the year was 600. They counted years from the founding of Rome (753 BC) by Romulus and Remus, twin sons of Mars, the god of war. (Archaeologists avoid BC and use BCE instead – Before Common Era.)

Our present calendar came to us through Roman imperialism and Pope Gregory XIII – not politically correct: conquerors and a Catholic pope. Did you notice that the calendar skips from 1 BC to 1 AD in the blink of an eye? There is no year zero. The Romans didn't use zero in calculation until 1202, when Leonardo Fibonacci Pisano wrote the *Liber Abaci*, the book of calculation. (Note: In Latin, the plural of abacus is abaci.)

Worldwide, calendars vary greatly. The Chinese, for example, celebrate the beginning of a new year on a traditional lunisolar calendar that begins at the new moon between 21 January and 20 February in our current Gregorian calendar. Our year 2021 is the Chinese year 4719, the Hebrew year 5782, and the Islamic year 1443, while the Maya count the days from 11 August 3114 BC, their creation date adjusted to our calendar.

January is the month of the Roman god Janus, whose faces look backwards and forward, characteristic of a new year, while February, the month of cleansing, is derived from *februa*, a Roman purification festival.

March is named from the god of war and a planet: Mars. March was the earliest time of year when the weather was mild enough to start a war.

April is from the Latin *Aprillis*, derived from *apero*-, meaning second, because April was the second month in the ancient calendar, or, possibly a tweaking of Apollo, a classic Olympian deity.

May springs from the Greek goddess Maia, a nurturer and earth goddess, while June is derived from Juno, wife of Jupiter and goddess of marriage and childbirth. No wonder we have so many June weddings.

July honors Julius Caesar, being the month of his birth, and August comes from the Roman emperor Augustus Caesar.

Notice that August is the eighth month, inserted before September, the seventh month in the earlier Roman calendar. September, October, November, and December were perfectly good month names, even though the Latin roots of their names are septem- (seven), octo- (eight), novem- (nine) and decem- (ten).

On that first January First, no one would have said "Happy New Year." Instead, a likely candidate would have been "Io Saturnalia," toasting a winter celebration and holiday. Let's hear it: Yo Sah-tur-nahl-yah!! – WT

Letter to Editor, *WritersTalk*

from Linda King, Member, South Bay Writers

In response to the questions you posed in your December 2021 column:

Why is it difficult to coax submissions from SBW members? Because they are busy writing, deeply into their own works. Members' time is diminished by coping with COVID, earning money, babysitting, elder care. Finishing up a book, a long article, or a blog is extremely time-consuming. I've finished two books recently. Endless hours are needed for editing, promoting.

If you have been frustrated with lack of success lately, think about this: as far as I am concerned, *WT* is tremendously successful, even without the creative submissions you might be imagining should be in it. I eagerly read each issue, and take satisfaction in being able to finish, because it is not too long.

You talk about "meat." You list five things. But I would expand "meat" to include perhaps everything in the newsletter. I would add the President's and Editor's messages, even the List of Officers (I like to review it, use it), jokes (Les Prose, etc.), obituaries, ads, book reviews, everything.

A *WritersTalk* with just the usual categories is a success, both creative and utilitarian. Great voluntary submissions are icing on the cake.

You ask, what are my needs in my writing journey? Because my mobility is limited, and I am fragile, I don't drive at night.

I have loved Zooming. I read every word of *WT*. It is my link to the world of writers. I could choose a larger forum for a link, like a national newsletter or blog, but they take too much time. *WT* is laser-focused on what is geographically close. Over time we hit all the high points a writer needs. Thank heavens the Bay Area has a whole universe of writers.

I value my hard copy of *WritersTalk*. Electronic messages and news get quickly buried and forgotten, perhaps filed but still buried. My hard copy *WT* kicks around the house to read until the next one comes along. I find myself going through my stack of past issues to refresh my memory on important matters. This would not happen with the website archives as much, though they are also valuable.

Do I feel funding for *WritersTalk* should be curtailed?

NO. I vote NOT to defund *WT*. It is my lifeline to the writers' community. Its length is about right.

Am I interested in what other CWC branches are up to, and State? I like the local focus, because it puts me in contact with people I might see face to face, a genuine community. Including news from the whole state or Bay area would be Editor's choice, focused on the useful and interesting.

Do I want a say in how club funds are allocated? Not really. That's what officers are for. I'll peek at the budget once a year on line, and make suggestions when I am moved or urged to do so.

Why did I join CWC? Because the desire to write was a twinkle in my eye. After years of being a member, I have worked up to being an actual writer, with SBW my central source of inspiration and skills acquisition. SBW continues to meet my needs.

How do I feel about going back to in person meetings? I feel resigned to the inevitable. I will not be attending regularly due to transportation needs. I would attend meetings close to my home. I have even thought about starting an SBW group, "Hollywood Writers," that would meet near me.

Virtual Meetings: Of course I would attend meetings virtually. I currently attend my chorus by Zoom, and two book clubs, with great success. The members of these groups are experienced Zoomers, and their goals have been well served. Hybrid meetings are best of all, but there is a learning curve, and a need for volunteers with tech equipment. The Board will have to feel its way achieving hybrid meetings. If money alone is a barrier to Zoom meetings, we could have a special appeal for funds.

In conclusion, I do not expect the SBW to make more than the usual accommodations for me. The Board will have to figure out how to hold our in person meetings (without me), and how to produce *WritersTalk* with the resources we have. I'm sure I will be happy with the result.

Thank you, *WritersTalk* editors. —Linda King

View from SBW Board

by Marjorie Johnson

We came. We saw. We conferred. All the usual suspects (except Jamal Khan and Trenton Myers) met on Zoom for the 08 December Board meeting. Our names and email addresses are listed in *WritersTalk* on page 2. Again, no motions were made. Amidst much discussion, we heard officer and committee chair reports and approved the previous meeting's minutes. The most important item was the future of *WritersTalk*, not resolved

Edie Matthews: Our January speaker will be Geri Spieler, "Reluctant Author to Movie Deal."

Bill Baldwin: Open Mics continue on first and third Fridays. Attend this popular venue by contacting Bill Baldwin at WABaldwin@aol.com **Central Board:** The Central Board has not met since our last Board meeting. **NorCal:** NorCal will sponsor a Leadership Conference on or before July 31, 2022. This will include leadership training for branch officers such as presidents, treasurers, and membership chairs.

Inga Silva: Membership: 105 members; two new November.

Tatyana Grinenko: Survey on meeting in person (52 Responses out of 104 members): It's a split: very uncomfortable or somewhat uncomfortable, 33.4%; neither comfortable nor uncomfortable, 25.5%; somewhat or very comfortable, 46.9%.

Survey on WritersTalk Preferences (52 responses out of 104 members) 19 prefer paper, 33 preferred digital or didn't care. Thus, 38.8% prefer paper and 61.2 prefer digital or have no preference.

You can get a zoom meeting invite by contacting Tatyana Grinenko (pr@southbaywriters.com) who will add your email to her publicity and Constant Contact lists.

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Member News

by Marjorie Johnson

Bill Baldwin was honored to participate in San Jose Public Library's *LocalLit 2021*. He spoke about himself and his books, and read "Where and What I'm From," the opening poem of his collection *Autumn Leaves, Spring Rain...Lightning!* The *wunderbar* cover was designed by **Linda Judd**. Bill follows in the footsteps of previous participants from South Bay Writers, including **Carolyn Donnell** and **Luanne Oleas**.

Kelly Miller: My latest book, *A Consuming Love*, has won First place, Romance in the 2021 Royal Dragonfly Book Awards, so I thought I would let you know for the newsletter. I have included a couple of photos in case you want to use them.

Bravo, Bill. Brava, Kelly.

Please continue to send your writing news to me at membernews@southbaywriters.com. We live vicariously when we read about your successes. —WT

Kelly Miller's Writing News



Bill Baldwin's Writing News



Where and What I'm From

I'm from people and places I don't know anymore.
I'm from a first-kiss place I can never return to.
I'm from a first-crush person I can never find again;
High schools and colleges I can nearly never visit
Or never visit.

I'm from a fiancée who will never speak to me again.
I'm from one religion which mostly might reject me,
And another that totally affirms me.

I'm from people, though, that I value:
People who write and love and care about one another;
People who speak for justice and the down-trodden.

I'm from cold Bavarian landscapes,
Harsh Pennsylvania winters,
Japanese blizzards,
Appalachian miners, and Methodist ministers;
Muggy Virginia summers and racial c****

I'm from different "guy-stuff."

I am made from pasta and Dim Sun,
From rebellious contrarian Californian Bay folks;
People who aren't afraid to love many of whatever sort,
And who write their life-blood onto paper.

—William Albert Baldwin

The editors of *WritersTalk* would like to read more of SBW member's creative work.

Continued from Page 4

View from the Board

Marjorie Johnson: SBW Secretary and Deputy Editor, *WritersTalk*

SBW has no income until we again have in-person meetings. *WritersTalk* is the only CWC branch newsletter that prints hard copies. Discontinuing the print version until SBW has money makes sense and also cents—since we have been dipping into savings. But *WT* has kept some sanity amongst members of SBW during this time of COVID. We discussed having the January 2022 issue be the last print copy until SBW again has income; President Edie Matthews said we should continue as is for a few more months. Gerri Forté, the incoming Editor of *WritersTalk*, will begin with the February 2022 issue.

PLEASE, MEMBERS OF SBW, WEIGH IN!

Next Board meeting: Wednesday, 05 January 2022 on Zoom. Everyone is welcome at Board meetings. Contact Edie at pres@southbaywriters.com for a Zoom link. We need your ideas about where and when to meet when in-person meetings resume. Next speaker: Tuesday 11 January 2022 on Zoom. **Note change to Tuesday.** — WT

Last minute email message from Edie:

Hi Friends,

With the rise of Omicron, I think we need to continue meeting on Zoom in January. Sadly, the American Legion location has not worked out. But I have another location to check out when my life settles down. Right now I'm in the middle of a kitchen remodel and expecting a houseful of company Dec. 22. Not the way I planned it since kitchen cabinets were ordered over three months ago—just a sign of the times.

Happy Holidays,

Edie Matthews

Who can help Edie find a place for us to meet in person, whenever that may be? Do you still want dinner meetings?

It's a party!

Continued from Page 2

That day, it looked like an Indian family lived here—an assortment of shoes filled the back porch.

Twenty-one members showed up, including a few from other branches.

The food was delish! So many went out of their way to bring tempting dishes, some purchased, some homemade. This is typical of our writers, many who are also creative cooks.

We played the gift-stealing game. Quite an assortment of items included a Ninja blender, a book on writing, bottles of booze, etc. Consequently, lots of stealing occurred.

The time stretched on and some left by the time we got around to singing "Twelve Days of Christmas." But it's a tradition, and those who were here wanted the full holiday experience. We were down to eleven of us, so one good sport handled two verses. We learned there are some impressive voices in our group.

It was a joy!

Looking forward to seeing more of you in 2022!

Auld Lang Syne



Costumes 2017



Betty Auchard, Edie Matthews, Valerie Whong, and Marjorie Johnson at Gisela's Christmas party

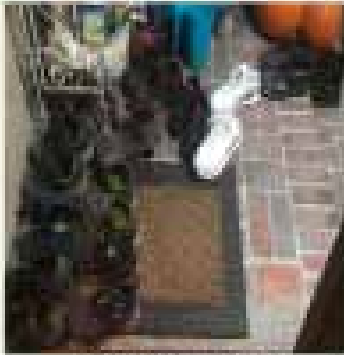


East of Eden Conference 2008
L to R: Speaker Karen Joy Fowler, Co-Chairs Edie Matthews, Kelly Harrison, Speakers Jane Smiley and Hallie Ephron



East of Eden 2008 Registration
Marjorie Johnson and Kelly Harrison in foreground; Jim Matthews and Frank Johnson in background

South Bay Writers Christmas 2021



Shoes off!



Edie in the kitchen



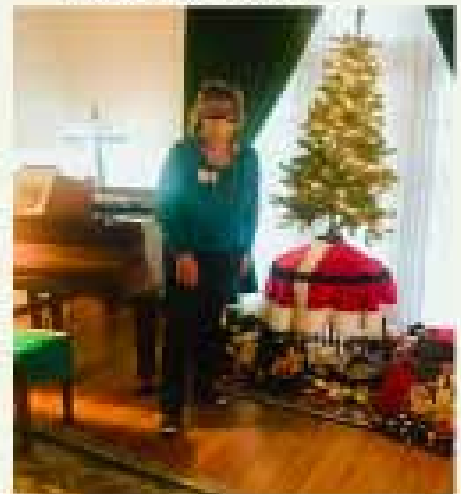
Holiday table



Writers eating



Holiday deserts



Christmas tree is lit



Around the tree



Opening gifts



Conversations

Thank you, Edie. It was so GOOD to be with friends again.

Collage and Photos by Carolyn Donnell

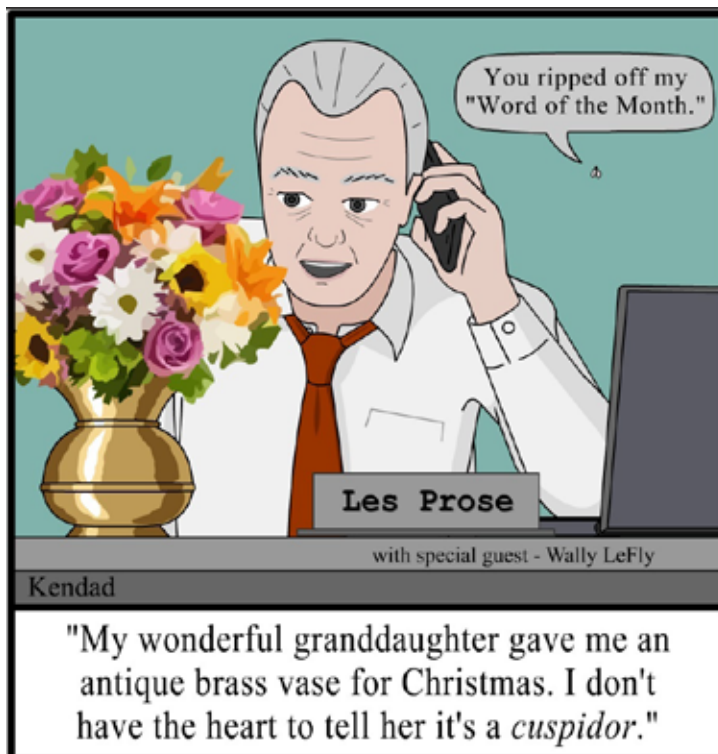
Writing Tips from Ernest Hemingway

by Marty Sorensen

1. **To get started, write one true sentence.** All you have to do is write one true sentence. Write the truest sentence that you know.
2. **The best way is always to stop when you are going good and when you know what will happen next.** If you do that every day when you are writing a novel you will never be stuck. That is the most valuable thing I can tell you so try to remember it.
3. **Never think about the story when you're not working.** I had learned already never to empty the well of my writing, but always to stop when there was still something there in the deep part of the well, and let it refill at night from the springs that fed it.
4. **When it's time to work again, always start by reading what you've written so far.** The best way is to read it all every day from the start, correcting as you go along, then go on from where you stopped the day before. When it gets so long that you can't do this every day read back two or three chapters each day.
5. **Don't describe an emotion—make it.** Put down what really happened in action; what the actual things were which produced the emotion that you experienced. The real thing, the sequence of motion and fact which made the emotion and which would be as valid in a year or in ten years.
6. **Use a pencil.** If you write with a pencil you get three different sights at it to see if the reader is getting what you want him to. First when you read it over; then when it is typed you get another chance to improve it, and again in the proof. Writing it first in pencil gives you one-third more chance to improve it. That is .333 which is a damned good average for a hitter. It also keeps it fluid longer so you can better it easier.
7. **Be Brief.** It wasn't by accident that the Gettysburg address was so short. The laws of prose writing are as immutable as those of flight, of mathematics, of physics. (From *openculture.com*)

Les Prose Comics

Kendad



Get your New York Public Library Card

by Marty Sorensen

Everyone can get a New York Public Library card just for the asking. Why would you want to do it? A good question. With a good answer. Now obviously I'm not going to go to The Big Apple anytime soon to check out books.

But there are ebooks. Where I live in the northwest corner of San Jose, we have both the San Jose and Cupertino libraries available to us. Cupertino is part of the Santa Clara County Library. So I compared the three libraries. I put in the keyword Keto in all three libraries. For San Jose library I found 28 ebooks on the subject. For the Santa Clara County library the result was 27 ebooks. And NYPL? 116 books.

How about *The everything keto diet meal prep cookbook : includes: sage breakfast sausage, chicken tandoori, philly cheesesteak stuffed peppers, lemon butter salmon, cannoli cheesecake...and hundreds more!* Yeah, not at our local libraries. I feel lighter already.

Want a NYPL card? Easy. Just go to NYPL.ORG and ask for a library card. They will want an address, of course. Just be a tiny bit brave and put in the address of an actual NYPL branch library. When you do this they will understand what's going on and will ask you to enter an alternate address. For that I used my home address. That's it, just fill in the rest of the stuff and soon you get an email with a temporary card. If you need to, you can get more complicated and obtain a permanent card. And then, when you are there on New Year's Eve to see the ball drop and find it's too cold outside, just use your library card to keep warm. In the meantime, you can read all 116 books on keto eating! — WT



Where Does The Comma Go?

Contributed by Carolyn Donnell

Where is the comma in “God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen” supposed to go?

God, rest ye merry gentlemen

God rest, ye merry gentlemen

God rest ye, merry gentlemen

God rest ye merry, gentlemen

Notice how the message changes.

Visit YouTube for the answers. — WT

Oscar Wilde’s battle with the comma:

“I have spent most of the day putting in a comma and the rest of the day taking it out.”



Are you sure you want to eat here?

Reprinted Essay

Carry On, Comma

Marjorie Johnson

Sometimes I think editing is bad for my health; commas awaken me in the night. I no longer read novels for pleasure; small errors, such as misplaced commas, not to mention dangling participles, leap off the page.

My critique group gets bogged down on commas while missing the big how-is-the-content picture. Unfortunately, grammar rules are not as simple as those of mathematics, where 2 plus 2 always equals 4. Comma usage is a slippery slope, its rules not always clear-cut. Strunk & White’s *Elements of Style* has only a few rules for commas but takes up five pages to explain them.

“In a series of three or more terms with a single conjunction, use a comma after each term except the last.” Simple enough, but the comma before the conjunction, the serial comma, is optional unless omitting it changes the meaning of the sentence.

This needs a comma: World leaders at Mandela tribute, Obama-Castro handshake and same-sex marriage date set ...

“Enclose parenthetical expressions between commas.” Write, *My sister, you will be pleased to hear, is now in perfect health*, not *My sister you will be pleased to hear, is now in perfect health*. Write *Eleanor’s husband, Colonel Nelson, paid us a visit yesterday*, using a pair of commas.

However, “No comma should separate a noun from a restrictive term of identification.” That means to write *Billy the Kid* or *the novelist Stephen King* without commas. I write *My husband Frank came home* without commas because I have one and only one husband, but strict grammarians say I need a pair of commas.

“Place a comma before a conjunction introducing an independent clause.” That is, write *Mary brought her frog, and John showed off his monkey*. However, because the independent clauses are short, it is also correct to write *Mary brought her frog and John showed off his monkey*.

“A participial phrase at the beginning of a sentence is followed by a comma and must refer to the grammatical subject.”

Dodging the traffic, his cell phone got dropped in the street is incorrect (as well as inconvenient); the cell phone is not dodging the traffic. Instead, write *Dodging the traffic, he dropped his cell phone in the street*.

That’s it. You now know all that I know about commas, except that you must understand the grammatical terms given in the rules and recognize them in use.

Stylistically, some people throw in commas for emphasis or to indicate a pause. I tried that some years ago, but I’m chronically short-winded, unless I’m writing an editorial. One of my manuscripts caused an editor to write, “I have never seen so many commas!”

Now, if you are not comatose, remember that you have to write something before you can edit it. I tried to be clever, using commatose rather than comatose, until I discovered that the word spelled with a double-m means overuse of the comma in a sentence.

I hope that you’re starting the New Year with renewed resolve to write something every day.

And submit it here, to *WritersTalk* — but not every day! — WT

Why Gladys Stuben Turned to a Life of Crime

by Luanne Oleas

Gladys was short with brown hair and eyes. In fact, her ex-husband used to say she was “five foot two with eyes of poo,” which was one of the many reasons he was her ex. Still, she had kept the best of what he had to offer, his four kids, not that he had fought her for custody. He was fairly religious about his one-weekend-a-month visits with them. Less so about his child support. Gladys figured his latest girlfriend probably soaked up those missing alimony payments.

Still, it wasn’t the missing payments or the lack of alimony that drove Gladys beyond the brink. It wasn’t even the fact that her three-year-old son, Billy, with his bed-head wisps of blond hair and enormous blue eyes, had gotten up early, plugged the electric frying pan into the wall, and cooked a scrambled egg on the floor. (It was better than when he parted the dog’s tail and stuck it in the wall socket.)

Gladys’ insanity wasn’t caused by the fact that her 16-year-old daughter, Samantha (“Call me ‘Sam,’ Mo-o-o-m”) had a bus ticket to Salt Lake City and hotel reservations for two at the Marriott there. Gladys wouldn’t even have known if she hadn’t been pulling seven-year-old Franklin’s hands out of her daughter’s makeup drawer and discovered the folder from the travel agent. Really, at that point, Gladys wasn’t sure which was more upsetting, the fact that her daughter was planning a rendezvous in a city 1000 miles away with a stranger she had met on the Internet or the fact that Franklin liked lipstick and eye shadow.

Still, all that was just kids being kids. It wasn’t even the fact that she was rear-ended by an uninsured motorist on the way to work, or that when she arrived, the air conditioning was on the fritz.

Her road to ruin didn’t even really start when she picked up her paycheck and discovered that it was \$100 short. It took four calls and an email to the payroll person to get an explanation. They had deducted the money because Gladys took time off to take five-year-old Norman to the ear, nose and throat guy to remove the wing nut lodged in his ear.

“But I’m a salaried employee,” Gladys protested, standing beside the payroll gal’s desk. “You can’t deduct an hourly amount from my check.”

“Your manager insisted,” the payroll gal started. In that instant, Gladys had a vision of holding a pistol to the side of her manager’s fat head, telling him to get down on his knobby knees – if he could find them beneath his swollen belly – and beg her for mercy in his weak, lispy voice. “It was the second time you took time off for a medical visit last month.” They were counting the pregnancy test for Samantha against Gladys too. At least that had come back negative.

But then, a lot of things seemed to be coming back negative for Gladys. She had completely given up on any social life. Most of the guys who were paired with her by Match.com proved to be worse than her ex, especially the one that Franklin was

so attracted to.

“With all the overtime I put in?” Gladys started. She had worked every weekend that her ex had the kids for the last year.

“That is expected from salaried employees,” the payroll gal said. The lady’s phone began to ring and a stack of papers fell from her desk. “Discuss it with your manager.”

“Or my manager’s manager,” Gladys threatened before walking out.

Of course, those discussions would have to wait. Her wimpy manager and his manager were in Paris with the sales team. The bums.

No, it was none of that which drove her to the brink. It was an egg. She had stopped at the store on her way home to grab something quick for dinner. It was Friday, and her ex would be picking up the boys from the after-school program. Samantha – Sam – was going to spend the night with her BFF and then meet her dad on Saturday morning. All Gladys needed were the essentials. Eggs, milk, spaghetti, no beef. She was loading her groceries into the trunk of her car when she noticed liquid leaking from the egg carton. Inside, a lone egg sat in the middle of the dozen, its shell broken and dripping. That did it.

It wasn’t a grand, noisy freak-out with screaming and hand-waving. It wasn’t even the sort with door-slamming. It started with a slow, steady muttering of curse words as she got into the driver’s seat.

“Son of a bitch. Damn it all to hell putrid pond scum duckshit-faced futher mucker.”

She was so enthralled with her diatribe that she remembered too late that she needed to stop at the ATM. Her maneuver through traffic nearly killed a pedestrian. She slammed the brakes just in time. Her parallel park job by the curb was less than perfect. No matter. She wouldn’t be long. She reached under the seat looking for her purse, but found Norman’s favorite toy. The life-like handgun his father (the duckshit-faced futher mucker) had given to him. A crazy gift for a five-year-old boy. She stuffed it in her purse, planning to toss it in the garbage can by the ATM.

There was a line, of course. She finally got up to the machine and entered her PIN.

“Funds not available.” Those words on the display hit her like a brick. She knew she had funds. Her paycheck, though short, was direct-deposited into her account every other Friday. This was the Friday.

She grabbed her card and headed into the bank, 30 seconds before closing. She got up to the teller and started to explain, opening her purse to retrieve her bank card, but saw the gun instead. She pulled it out and pointed it at the teller’s nose.

“Give me all the money you got,” Gladys said. WT

SNIPPET

Did you know that glamour and grammar are derived from the same root word?

Our National Anthem as a Call to Generations

by Marty Sorensen

Oh, say,
Can you see,

What so proudly
We hailed

By the dawn's early light,

At the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars,
Thru the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched
Were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets red glare,
The bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night
That our flag was still there.

O, say,
Does that
Banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free
And the home of the brave?

Star-Spangled



P
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Homeless (WT 2017)

Mister Nobody came my way
This is what he had to say

Give me some soap
I'll have me a shower
Buy me some dope
I'll dream I'm a flower

Hand me a beer
I'll drink it all down
Shed me a tear
Cause soon I will drown

A shadow most cannot see
Now, is visible to me

— Judith Shernock

FROM WT 2017

Grammar Schlammer Plurals

Grammar is hard, plurals make no sense
English money, one penny, five pence
Five boys named Denny, not five Dence.
If the plural of mouse is mice
And the plural of louse is lice
Why aren't two houses, two hice?
If the farmer may have a team of oxen
Why can't I have a pile of boxen?
I hold out my foot, I have two feet
Why aren't my two boots, two beet?
Or, a pair of old coots, a parakeet?
One is a tooth, a mouthful are teeth
Should two booths be called two beeth?
If a goose is one of a gaggle of geese
Is a moose one of a herd of meese?
Is a caboose one of many cabese?
Remember, the plural of this is these,
But the plural of kiss is never keese.

— Marjorie Johnson

WritersTalk needs more poetry and
a poetry acquisition editor.

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 member-news@southbaywriters.com

You can check other branches for their current contests, submission, anthology, and/or requests. See a list of other CWC branches at www.calwriters.org/cwcbranches/ and on page 14 of this newsletter. Members of our Facebook group—**South Bay Writers Club**—see contest postings and other notifications on the Facebook group.

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.

LOCAL (PUBLISHERS AND EDITORS) AND OTHER CWC BRANCH RESOURCES:

Norcal – The Literary Review: Read and follow the submission guidelines and be sure to carefully edit. Contest deadline is January 31, 2022. See details at <https://calwriters.org/publications/>

North State Writers: They are planning a fourth anthology. The last one accepted all CWC members. Keep an eye on the status at <http://www.northstatewriters.com/nsw-anthologies.html>

West Trade Review: Our Kelly Harrison is an associate at <https://westtradereview.submittable.com/submit>

The Literary Nest—A local online publication. See details for future submissions at www.theliterarynest.com/ Also visual art in high res jpeg, gif, or png format to the literarynest@gmail.com

Fremont Area Writers lists many resources on their page under Writers Resources tab. www.cwc-fremontareawriters.org/

Redwood Writers: Some contests welcome other CWC branch members. <https://redwoodwriters.org/contests/>

North State Writers lists many resources at their site. <http://www.northstatewriters.com/writer-s-resources.html>

Catamaran Literary Reader—West Coast quarterly literary/visual arts journal. Fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, and fine art. Submissions year-round with quarterly production cycle. www.catamaranliteraryreader.com/

AWP Association of Writers and Writing Programs: See at <https://www.awpwriter.org/contests/overview>

Other Contests and Submissions:

Writer's Digest Annual Writing Competition now open. Deadline May 6, 2022. <https://www.writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions/annual-writing-competition>

WOW! Women on Writing now hosts two quarterly contests: one for fiction writers and one for nonfiction writers. See information at www.wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php

Trish Hopkinson: A blog with many resources. www.trish-hopkinson.com/where-to-submit-reprints/

Writer's Relief: Ongoing contests at writersrelief.com/featured-listings-contests-journals-calls-for-submissions/

Winning Writers: Tom Howard/John H. Reid Fiction & Essay Contest: All styles and themes, fiction and nonfiction. Submission period: Oct 15-Apr 30 Total prizes: \$8,000. **Accepts published and unpublished work** <https://winning-writers.com/our-contests/tom-howard-john-h-reid-fiction-essay-contest>

Chicken Soup For The Soul has ongoing submission requests. More information at <https://www.chickensoup.com/story-submissions/story-guidelines>

The Write Life: 31 Free Writing Contests. <https://www.thewritelife.com/writing-contests>

Fanstory: Fanstory requires a subscription (paid) but has many activities <https://www.fanstory.com/contestsall.jsp>

Poets & Writers contests/deadlines: www.pw.org/content/upcoming_contest_deadlines

Association of Writers and Writing Programs www.awp-writer.org/contests/overview

Publishedtodeath: A blog that lists literary magazines accepting reprints <https://publishedtodeath.blogspot.com/2016/01/163-literary-magazines-accepting.html>

NewPages.com is news, information, and guides to literary magazines, independent publishers, creative writing programs, writing contests, and more. www.newpages.com/classifieds/writing-contests

The Writer Magazine: Lists contests, articles, resources and newsletter. www.writermag.com/contests/

The Blue Nib: Essays/Journalism, Reviews, Poetry, and Fiction. They pay for items accepted for print but not for digital at this time. www.thebluenib.com/submit-to-the-blue-nib-2/

The Vincent Brothers Review: Fiction, non-fiction, poetry. Pays a minimum of \$25 per accepted item. www.vincent-brothersreview.org/submissions/

The Lumiere Review accepts poems and prose from all writers, emerging writers, as well as those who identify as BIPOC, LGBTQIA, or disabled. One \$100 prize each for prose and poetry. No fees. www.lumierereview.com/

Imagine 2200 Grist's solutions lab. short story contest. Climate change theme. 1st prize \$3,000, 2nd and 3rd \$2,000 and \$1,000, respectively. www.grist.org/fix/climate-fiction-writing-contest-imagine-2200-prizes/

Jerry Jenkins blog: guides to writing contests and other resources <https://jerryjenkins.com/writing-contests/>

Electric Lit: For Emerging Writers www.electricletrature.com/free-or-cheap-resources-for-emerging-writers/

OTHER RESOURCES

* On both the Internet and Facebook

***Poets & Writers:** www.pw.org/grants, www.pw.org/content/upcoming_contest_deadlines

***MWA NorCal Chapter:** Mystery Writers of America: www.mwanorcal.org/

***Women's National Book Association:** San Francisco Chapter www.wnba-sfchapter.org

***The Write Life:** Includes L. Ron Hubbard Writers of the Future contest, more. www.thewritelife.com/writing-contests/

Funds For Writers: Contests, submissions, grants, etc. See www.fundsforwriters.com/contests/

***Freedom With Writing:** Submissions, contests, jobs, and more. www.freedomwithwriting.com/ See also <https://www.freedomwithwriting.com/freedom-uncategorized/50-1000-for-short-stories-10-calls-for-submissions/>

***Authors Publish:** <http://www.authorspublish.com/>

The Best Writing Contests curated by Reedsy www.blog.reedsy.com/writing-contests/

Hidden River Arts: Book award deadlines listed at www.hiddenriverarts.wordpress.com/

New Pages: Lists many contests www.newpages.com/

Writers Post No Fee Call for Submissions * Facebook only

POETRY CONTESTS AND SUBMISSIONS AND OTHER RESOURCES

SEE regular contest list as well.

Academy of American Poets: <https://poets.org/academy-american-poets/american-poets-prizes>

Writing Matters: 30 Publishers of Poetry Books & Chapbooks www.randallsanctuary.wordpress.com/2020/08/11/publishers-of-poetry-books-chapbooks/

Up the Staircase Quarterly: Submit 3 to 6 poems in a single document. Submit up to 10 jpgs for art. No previously published poetry, but previously published artwork is okay. www.upthestaircase.org/

Poets & Writers: Lists poetry and other contests. https://www.pw.org/content/upcoming_contest_deadlines_43

Poets & Writers: Also lists over 1200 literary magazines. www.pw.org/literary_magazines

Poetry Society of America contest: <https://poetrysocietyofamerica.submittable.com/submit>

The Thimble Magazine: A quarterly online journal, primarily poetry www.thimblelitmag.com/submissions/

Authors Publish: Poetry Manuscript Publishers, no reading fees. www.authorspublish.com

Poetry Foundation: www.poetryfoundation.org

Poetry Pacific: Literary e.zine. Two issues per year. **Published** and unpublished. www.poetrypacific.blogspot.com/

Everywriter: The Best Poetry Prizes. www.everywritersresource.com/best-poetry-prizes/

Prospectus: A Literary Offering. Submission Periods: June 1st-Aug 31st & Dec 1st-Feb 28th. They welcome unpublished or little-published poets as well as short prose pieces and fine-art images. See information at <https://www.prospectusliterary.com/submissions2020.php>

Rattle Chapbook Prize: Three winners: \$5000, 500 copies, and distribution to Rattle's 8,000 subscribers. Deadline: 15 January 2022. <https://www.rattle.com/chapbooks/prize/>

Some FACEBOOK Poetry Groups

- Poetry Center San Jose PCSJ
- Willow Glen Poetry Project
- Cupertino Poet Laureate
- Santa Clara County Poet Laureate
- Los Gatos Poet Laureate
- National Poetry Month: write a poem a day challenge
- Coffee House Perculator Writing Group
- California Poets
- How Writers Write Poetry Community Group
- No Fee Calls for Poems
- SF Creative Writing Institute-drop-in poetry workshops

2022 San Francisco Writers Conference

2022 San Francisco Writers Conference, 18th Annual Event: February 17-20, 2022 Hyatt Regency San Francisco

The San Francisco Writers Conference / San Francisco Writers Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit. Event details are updated regularly and are available at www.SFWriters.org

CONTACT:

Laurie McLean, SFWC Executive Director (650) 747-0796, Elisabeth Kauffman, Director of Marketing (310) 367-6215, Barbara Santos, Director of Partnerships (925) 420-6223

The San Francisco Writers Conference is pleased to announce that, after taking a gap year due to the pandemic in 2021, it will produce its 18th annual event LIVE AND IN PERSON at the Hyatt Regency San Francisco on February 17-20, 2022. Joining the San Francisco Writers Conference speaker lineup for 2022 are Bay Area authors, agents, editors, and publishing professionals from the West Coast, New York City, and beyond who embody the conference tenets: Learn. Connect. Publish.

We're thrilled to announce our 2022 keynote speakers: Charlie Jane Anders, Annalee Newitz, and Lysley Tenorio.

Charlie Jane Anders is the author of *Victories Greater Than Death*, the first book in a new young-adult trilogy, which came out in April 2021. Up next: *Never Say You Can't Survive*, a book about how to use creative writing to get through hard times; and a short story collection called *Even Greater Mistakes*. Her other books include *The City in the Middle of the Night* and *All the Birds in the Sky*. Her fiction and journalism have appeared in the New York Times, the Washington Post, Slate, McSweeney's, Mother Jones, the Boston Review, Tin House, Teen Vogue, Conjunctions, Wired Magazine, and other places. Her TED Talk, "Go Ahead, Dream About the Future" got 700,000 views in its first week. With Annalee Newitz, she co-hosts the podcast *Our Opinions Are Correct*.

Annalee Newitz writes science fiction and nonfiction. They are the author of the book *Four Lost Cities: A Secret History of the Urban Age*, and the novels *The Future of Another Timeline*, and *Autonomous*, which won the Lambda Literary Award.

Continued on Page 15

News from 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 NorCal

Central Coast: 3rd Tuesdays, 6 pm, Juice n' Java, 599 Lighthouse Ave, Pacific Grove. centralcoastwriters.org

Fremont: 4th Saturdays, 2 pm, Zoom. cwc-fremontareawriters.org

Marin: 3rd Wednesdays, 6 pm, Zoom. cwcmarin.com

Mendocino: 3rd Sundays, 3 pm, Zoom. writersmendocinocoast.org

Mt Diablo: 2nd Saturdays (except July & August), 8:30 am, Zoom + in-person, Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. cwcmtdiablo.org

Napa: 2nd Wednesdays, 7 pm, Zoom. napavalleywriters.org

North State: 3rd Mondays, 6 pm, Veterans Hall, 554 Rio Lindo Ave, Chico. northstatewriters.com

Peninsula: 3rd Saturdays, 10 am, Zoom. cwc-peninsula.org

Redwood: 3rd Saturdays, 1 pm, Finley Center, 2060 W College Ave, Santa Rosa. redwoodwriters.org

Sacramento: 3rd Saturdays (except July, August, & December), 1 pm, Zoom. cwcsacramentowriters.org

San Joaquin: 2nd Saturdays, 12 pm, Zoom. sjvalleywriters.org

Tri-Valley: 3rd Saturdays (except July & August), 2 pm, Four Points by Sheraton, 5115 Hopyard Rd, Pleasanton. trivalleywriters.org

CWC South

Coastal Dunes: 1st Saturdays, 10:15 am, Community Room, Nipomo Library, 918 West Tefft Street, Nipomo. coastaldunescwc.com

High Desert: 2nd Saturdays, 10 am, Community Church at Jess Ranch, 11537 Apple Valley Rd, Apple Valley. hdcwc.com

Inland Empire: 4th Saturdays, except December, 10:30 am, Zoom and in-person, Ovitt Family Community Library, 215 E. C Street, Ontario. iecwc.com

Long Beach: 2nd Saturdays, 3 pm, Zoom. calwriterslongbeach.org

Orange County: 1st Saturdays, 10:45 am, Zoom. calwritersorangecounty.org

Ridge Writers: 1st Thursdays, 6:30 pm, Ridgecrest Presbyterian Church, 633 W Las Flores Ave, Ridgecrest

San Fernando Valley: 1st Saturdays, 1 pm, Zoom. cwc-sfv.org

Writers of Kern: 3rd Saturdays, 9:15 am, Hodel's Country Dining, 5917 Knudsen Drive, Bakersfield. writersofkern.com

CWC-South Bay Writers

SBW regular meetings: 2nd Mondays, 7 pm. southbaywriters.com Watch your email for Zoom login details. SBW Board meetings: Wednesday before regular SBW meeting, 7 pm. Write to Edie, pres@southbaywriters.com, to request Zoom invite.



Auld Lang Syne

SBW Board greets speaker Kate Farrell 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>January 2022</h1>						1
2	3 2P Valley Writers	4	5 7P January Board	6	7	8
9	10 2P Valley Writers	11 SBW general meeting 7P ZOOM	12	13	14	15 D e a d l i n e W r i t e r s T a l k
16	17 2P Valley Writers	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	<h2>Nothing happens 'til February</h2>		

Future Events:

SBW Board, 7 PM Wednesday, February 9, Zoom
SBW speaker, 6 - 9 PM, Monday, February 14, Zoom

SBW Recommends ...

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

Ongoing Events

Critique Groups

Valley Writers: Meets on Zoom Mondays 2 PM. Contact Marjorie Johnson, at membernews@southbaywriters.com

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

SBW Board Meetings

Board meets on Wednesday, 7 PM, in the week preceding the dinner meeting. Contact Edie Matthews at pres@southbaywriters.com.

Open Mic

South Bay Writers Open Mic: Read from your own work, from your favorite authors, or just come to listen. First and third Friday evenings, Zoom. Contact Bill Baldwin (408) 730-9622 or email WABaldwin@aol.com

Ongoing discussion groups

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

San Francisco Writers Conference

Continued from Page 14

As science journalists, the team writes for the New York Times and elsewhere, and have a monthly column in New Scientist. They have published in The Washington Post, Slate, Popular Science, Ars Technica, The New Yorker, and The Atlantic, among others. They are also the co-host of the Hugo Award-winning podcast Our Opinions Are Correct. Previously, they were the founder of io9, and served as the editor-in-chief of Gizmodo.

Lysley Tenorio is the author of the novel *The Son of Good Fortune* and the story collection *Monstress*, which was named a book of the year by the San Francisco Chronicle. He is the recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship, a Whiting Award, a Stegner fellowship, the Edmund White Award, and the Rome Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, as well as residencies from the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, and the Bogliasco Foundation. His stories have appeared in The Atlantic, Zoetrope: All-Story, and Ploughshares, and have been adapted for the stage by The American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco and the Ma-Yi Theater in New York City. Born in the Philippines, he lives in San Francisco, and is a professor at Saint Mary's College of California. He is a 2021-22 Radcliffe Fellow at Harvard University, where he is working on a novel.

MORE ABOUT THE SAN FRANCISCO WRITERS CONFERENCE

The San Francisco Writers Conference is an annual gathering that draws 600+ participants to the Bay Area including bestselling authors, literary agents, publishers, editors (both from traditional publishing houses and indie editors), and both traditional and self-publishing industry professionals. The presenters from the West Coast, New York City, and beyond, come to the event looking for new talent, and to share their expertise with the attendees. For more information, go to www.SFWriters.org



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

7 – 9 p.m.

Tuesday, January 11, 2022

Speaker Geri Spieler

From Reluctant Author to Movie Deal

Zoom

(Yes, that's a Tuesday.)

WritersTalk deadline is always
the 15th of the month.

Regular dinner meetings are
usually second Mondays.

Please note: This month's is
on a TUESDAY.

