



# WRITERSTALK

Volume 30  
Number 12  
December 2022

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™



## California Writers Club South Bay Branch

### Holiday Bash

Sunday, December 11, 2022, 5 – 8 PM

#### POTLUCK

Please bring a dish to share.

Match the type of dish with the first  
letter of your last name.

A – G: Dessert or Appetizer

H – R: Salad or Side Dish

S – Z: Main Dish

(The club will provide beverages.)

#### GIFT EXCHANGE

To participate: Bring a wrapped gift valued at \$12 – \$20  
(member only and significant other/guest)

#### LOCATION

email Edie for location

Please RSVP to [pres@southbaywriters.com](mailto:pres@southbaywriters.com)

**Speaker Recap on November 11  
Presentation, Hallie Ephron,  
“Crash Course on Writing a  
Mystery,” to appear here in  
January, 2022.**

## Writing Reflections of Susan Straight

*Compiled by Patricia Collins*

Susan Straight has published eight novels and received awards for her writing and teaching. As is common among writers, even others with international name recognition as writers, Straight teaches to have a steady income. The following are just a few of Straight's writing recommendations.

- Write what you know. But you must interweave imagination with first-hand knowledge.
- Write what you love. But be sure to research relevant details. Put in the time.
- Research can require travel so that the place you describe has authenticity and the people you describe are taken from what you observed, what conversations you had with people who become morphed into characters. No excuses: Do the work.
- Improve your writing by applying what you observe about others' writing. Being a voracious reader is part of the job of a writer.
- Keep a pen and notebook handy, no matter where you are. You might find a few minutes to capture an in-the-moment experience or a random thought. Recognize opportunities to write while waiting in parking lots to pick up your children after a school sports event, a club meeting, or a school dance.

*Continued on Page 10*

# Between the Lines

Edie Matthews

President, South Bay Writers



## Upcoming Events

The social drought of the past two years has been a challenge. I'm grateful that we were able to fill the void with Zoom meetings. At least this made it possible to book speakers from various part of the country and Canada. But it didn't take the place of seeing people in person and being able to interact with people and make new friends. Consequently, I'm looking forward to hosting our Annual Holiday Christmas Potluck and seeing members in person!

In the beginning, the shutdown wasn't too bad for me. After moving into this historical house in 2019, I was swamped with tasks trying to get it into shape. Oh, it was a grand house to begin with, but a structure built 87 years ago, in 1935 to be precise, even out of redwood, needed some serious attention. The contractor, Pete Pasetta, a respected fellow, built this house for his family and lived here a dozen years. That is until he bought four acres in Saratoga and built a larger version. All the same, as busy as I've been, it has not taken the place of socializing with friends.

Funny, when people heard I was moving, they asked if I was downsizing. My response, "I'm not a downsizing kind of gal." I enjoy having people in; not to mention, I have a large family (four children, eight grandchildren) and often have one or several visiting me—which I enjoy. In addition, I regularly have friends over. Prior to COVID, I hosted our monthly board meeting, a critique group, and other events including the Pen Women Tea (another club I belong to). We did have the Holiday Potluck last year and 20 members attended. We had a grand time and the food was spectacular. Then we gathered here a few months ago for the Summer BBQ and 30 members attended. So, God willing, we'll have a good turnout at our December gathering.

It so happens, that this year my house will also be on Santa Clara's Historical Home Tour. This residence has never been on the tour, and they've been eager to include it. I was flattered and knew it would be motivating to really get the house spiffed up and decorated—a challenge since the tour days are December 2 & 3. I'm unpacking Christmas ornaments that haven't been viewed in several years. Yep, this is the year to decorate every nook and cranny. Actually, I probably have enough festive frills to decorate three houses. So I hope to see you!

Looking ahead, I'm happy to announce that after three years, SBW will have a Saturday Workshop, "Powerful Plots" with Jordan Rosenfeld., on January 28, 9 am to 2:30 pm.. (See Page 11.) The holidays will be over, and we'll be eager to return to our writing goals. There will be NO regular meeting in January—come to the workshop! As at previous workshops, the cost will include a continental breakfast and lunch. Register now and take advantage of the Early Bird Special. Details in the newsletter and on our website: southbaywriters.com

Also, SBW has now become a member the Headen-Inman Historical House Museum in Santa Clara. (Located behind the City Hall and Triton Museum.) As members, we will hold our January Workshop there—and if we like the location, we can hold our in-person meetings there too. The cozy quarters can accommodate 50 people.

Finally, I'm happy to announce that Brigitte Doss-Johnson will take over as our new *WritersTalk* editor. I want to thank Gerri Forte, who stepped up earlier this year when Reneé Anderson became ill and moved back to Denmark. Gerri's efforts are greatly appreciated. —WT

## California Writers Club

### South Bay Branch

www.southbaywriters.com

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#### SBW Mission

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

#### Join Us

We have a membership category that fits you. Dues are \$45 per year plus a one-time \$20 initiation fee. Note: California Writers Club uses a fiscal year that runs from July 1 through June 30 each year. Dual membership: \$25. Contact Membership Chair, Inga Silva, or sign up online at southbaywriters.com Or, send a check to CWC-South Bay Writers, P O Box 3254, Santa Clara, CA 95055

## WritersTalk

is the monthly newsletter of the South Bay Branch of the California Writers Club.

**Managing Editor (Interim)** Marjorie Johnson  
newsletter@southbaywriters.com

### Contributing Editors

Bill Baldwin  
Patricia Collins  
Carolyn Donnell  
Marjorie Johnson  
Ken Roberge  
Marty Sorensen

### Submissions

Members of the South Bay Writers Club are encouraged to submit their creative works for publication in *WritersTalk*. Please prepare your work as carefully as you would for an agent. All submissions will be copyedited. The Managing Editor decides which submissions to publish.

Submission deadline is the 15th of the month.

Electronic submissions should be attached MS Word files sent to newsletter@southbaywriters.com. Use Times New Roman 12-font, no tabs, no colors, no page breaks. Send graphics separately as jpg files.

### Creative Works

Short Fiction (1000 words)  
Memoir (1000 words)  
Poetry (300 words)  
Essay (1000 words)

### Creative Works

newsletter@southbaywriters.com

### Member Achievement and News:

membernews@southbaywriters.com

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.

Advertising of workshops, conferences, and events is accepted from other Branches of California Writers Club. Because California Writers Club is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation, *WritersTalk* does not accept advertising of events or services that benefit an individual. Also, we cannot accept political advertising of any kind.

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

### Our Mission

Encouraging writers at all levels of expertise to hone their skills in the craft of writing

**Change of Address:** Send changes of address to membership@southbaywriters.com or use MRMS.

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# Words from the Editor

by Marjorie Bicknell Johnson  
Managing Editor (Interim)



## The "Singular They"

What is the "singular they"? The "singular they" appears in the *San Jose Mercury News* every day, and "they" was the 2019 Merriam-Webster word of the year. Our language usage constantly changes, and new words appear.

"They, singular"? What do you do when you run into your friend on their birthday? You wish them a happy birthday, of course! Or wait—you wish ... him or her a happy birthday? That's how you're supposed to say it if you want to avoid using they to refer to one person.

Anyone who writes for a living runs into this situation all the time and must go through all kinds of contortions to avoid the easiest solution—the "singular they." In everyday speech, the use of they or them to refer to one person feels completely natural. But in more formal contexts, that usage has been frowned upon since the production of grammar books in the 19th century: "A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in number, person, and gender." You will find knowing the rules helps if you study French, for example, in which all nouns have gender.

However, the "singular they" has been used in English for centuries. It's in the King James Bible, and Chaucer and Shakespeare used it. About the "singular they," several SBW members said, "Hurray!" while former *WT* editor Dick Amyx once said, "This is nuts."

So, how does the *Chicago Manual of Style*, *WritersTalk's* preferred style guide, weigh in? *CMOS* 17 no longer prohibits the use of "singular they" as a substitute for the generic "he" in formal writing, but recommends avoiding it, offering various other ways to achieve bias-free language.

Use of the "singular they" is endorsed as part of the Associated Press stylebook because it is inclusive of all people and helps writers avoid making assumptions about gender. Always use a person's self-identified pronoun, including when a person uses the singular "they" as their pronoun. Also use "they" as a generic third-person singular pronoun to refer to a person whose gender is unknown. Do not use "he" or "she" alone as generic third-person singular pronouns.

However, there are times when gender identification should match the person's preference for "he" or "she." For example, Martin prefers a masculine gender reference: When Martin entered the room full of people, he immediately cringed. For a second example, Marie prefers a gender-neutral reference: Marie entered the room full of people, but they immediately escaped the crowd. Do you see how this use of "they" creates confusion?

We see people listing their pronouns frequently; *WritersTalk* will never ask you for your pronouns. As a great-grandmother, mine are she, her, and *moi*. —WT

**An Apology:** Due to computer glitches and Hurricane Ian—our printer is in Florida—the November newsletter was not mailed out. It did go to all members by email and is on our website with all past issues.

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# SBW Zooming Along on 14 November 2022

Collage by Carolyn Donnell



## Member News

By Marjorie Johnson

**Kelly Miller** writes, "My sixth Regency romance, *A Dutiful Son*, a variation of *Pride and Prejudice*, released on October 18, 2022. I am excited to announce it is an Amazon best seller: it reached #1 in British Historical Literature! More excitement: On October 27, my book hit #1 in another category: Adaptations & Pastiche Fiction! (Wow, Kelly! #1 twice.)"

**Marjorie Bicknell-Johnson** reports that her article (Co-authored with C.P. Spears), "Classes of identities for the generalized Fibonacci Numbers  $G_n = G_{n-1} + G_{n-c}$  from matrices with constant valued determinants," had reached 1000 reads as reported by ResearchGate in October. ResearchGate is great fun; where else would a mathematical article have 1000 persons reading it?

This issue of *WritersTalk* contains book announcements for *The Shanahans* by Dr. Jac Fitzenz and *Miss Sarah Brown: Daughter of Abolitionist John Brown* by Mary Miller Chiao.

Congratulations **Bonnie Vaughan**, on your new fantasy space book: *Acacia*. Available on Amazon.

**Chris Weilert** writes, "My book, *High School Playbook*, received a second-place award at Bookfest Fall 2022 in the category Young Adult—Male." (Way to go, Chris!)

**Tatyana Grinenko**: My novel, *Player 0.4*, now has had more than 100,000 views across the two sites I publish on and it is currently ranked in the top 2% of all novels on Royal Road! I also currently have 6 Patrons on Patreon that donate monthly to access 2 chapters ahead of what's available on RoyalRoad.

I plan to add another tier and start doing some more marketing now. (Fantastic, Tatyana!)

The 2022 *California Writers Club Literary Review* contains an essay, "A Walk along the Levees," by **Patricia Collins**, the only member of SBW whose work appears in that volume.

Please keep sending your writing news to [membernews@southbaywriters.com](mailto:membernews@southbaywriters.com). It's wonderful to share your joy. —WT

## Off the Shelf

— Edie Matthews

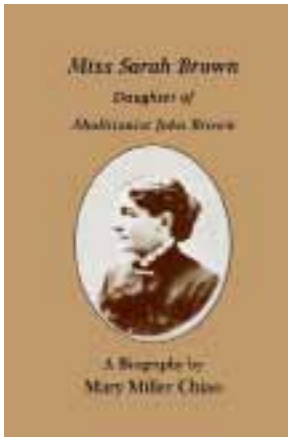


*What do you mean, 'Owners look like their dogs?'*

## Book Announcements

### *Miss Sarah Brown*

By Mary Miller Chiao



Mary Miller Chiao announces the publication of her book, *Miss Sarah Brown, Daughter of Abolitionist John Brown*, a biography.

Sarah was born in Akron, Ohio, in 1846. In 1859 her father was hanged for his attempt to seize the Federal Arsenal at Harpers Ferry. Sarah was thirteen years old at the time, living with her family in New York. With the assistance of her father's abolitionist supporters, she was sent to be educated at Concord, Massachusetts, the seat of the Transcendental Movement in America. She lived first at the home of Ralph Waldo Emerson and later with the family of Louisa May Alcott. She often met Nathaniel Hawthorne and Henry Thoreau in her walks through the area.

In 1863, Sarah, her mother, and other family members joined a wagon train to the West. They eventually settled in the small mountain town of Saratoga, California.

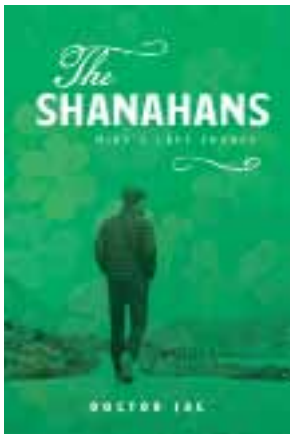
Sarah Brown was a gifted artist, valued member of the Saratoga community, and a supporter of Asian issues at a time when prejudice was rampant.

This biography will be a good resource for historians, the many descendants of the Brown family, and those interested in the Saratoga community and its surrounding areas.

*Miss Sarah Brown, Daughter of Abolitionist John Brown* is available from Lulu.com, Amazon, and Barnes & Noble. [www.marymillerchiao.com](http://www.marymillerchiao.com)

### *The Shanahans, Mike's Last Chance*

By Doctor Jac



Dr. Jac Fitzenz, author of 400 magazine articles and 15 books, is launching his latest fiction series, The Shanahans. Dr. Jac's books have won two national book awards and been translated into ten languages.

*The Shanahans* is the story of Michael Fitzpatrick, a 32 year old Boston sports writer caught in the Subprime Mortgage Crisis of the 1950s. In only three months Mike loses his job, house, wife and baby boy.

In despair, he receives a call from his friend, the GOAT of Gaelic football, Padraig Shanahan. Now retired, this national hero and entrepreneur asks Mike to come to Waterford to rescue his failing magazine, Irish Sports.

On arrival Mike faces opposition from the alcoholic editor of the magazine, One-Pint Sullivan, as well as Padraig's 28-year-old twins Maureen and Kathleen, who do not see him as the solution to the problem.

As he delves into the family business, he encounters incompetence, betrayal, embezzlement and later an attempted murder. Gradually, as he wins over the family members, his job grows and he sees hope for a new life. At the heart of this entertaining drama is an extraordinary cast of intriguing characters and unexpected challenges. It has a happily-ever-after ending.

*The Shanahans* is available on Amazon and Barnes & Noble in paperback and E-book. This book will be followed in November by *Shanahan's Growing Pains* and in Q1-23 by *Shanahan's Full House*. Contact: [jac@drjac.com](mailto:jac@drjac.com)



# View from the Board

By Chris Weilert

The South Bay Writers Board met as it always does, zooming at 7 p.m. on November 9. SBW Board members are listed on page 2 of *WritersTalk* with their emails.

Meeting began at 7:10 PM. Approved prior month minutes.

## Edie Matthews, President:

There is no regular December meeting. Our annual holiday party will be held on December 11 at Edie's home in Santa Clara, TBA in *WritersTalk*.

South Bay Writers has secured a membership with the Headen-Inman House Historical Museum in Santa Clara. This membership will allow us to have future meetings there if we choose to. We are still looking for a location to have dinner meetings. Zoom meetings are still a viable option for our group.

There will be no regular group meeting in January but will offer a workshop on January 28 at the Headen-Inman. The workshop will feature Jordan Rosenfield; the topic is called "Power Plotting." You will be sent details about the workshop in the near future.

## Marjorie Johnson, MRMS:

All membership addresses are updated. Please send any member news to Marjorie for publishing in *WritersTalk*.

## Trenton Myers, Treasurer:

Account Growth: +3.6% increase in funds since September

## Bill Baldwin:

**Open Mics** continue on the first and third Fridays. (Zoom) Contact Bill at WABaldwin@aol.com

The **Central Board** is meeting Sunday 13 November via zoom. Topics include the Literary Review (budget and timeline), the Jack London Awards, and the San Francisco Writers Conference.

**Nor Cal** is meeting on 16 November via zoom. Carole Bumpus has announced that she is stepping down as NorCal president (after seven years).

## Carolyn Donnell, Facebook/Contests and Markets:

Issues with Facebook remain unresolved. Looking to condense some of the contest and markets listed in *WT*.

**Inga Silva, Membership:** We have 79 active members, 2 lifetime members, and 1 student. Total 82 members.

The meeting ended at 8:00 PM. Next Board meeting: Wednesday, December 7, 2022 on Zoom. SBW members are always welcome at Board meetings. To attend a board meeting, email Edie Matthews, pres@southbaywriters.com — WT

# Please Pass the Gravy Boat

by Chris Weilert

Roll out the folding table, set up the silverware and real cloth napkins. We have a party we need to get ready for. That turkey is cooking, and the relish tray needs more pickles and olives. We perform this ritual every year, which seems ridiculous with all the eating and preparation. Funny how I started thinking about it in October, even before Halloween. Thanksgiving is valid because it prepares you for the onslaught of advertising and endless mall walking of December. Thanksgiving at least makes sense. Eat, drink, be with family and friends, fall asleep from tryptophan overdosing and watch the Detroit Lions pull out a miracle victory.

Thanksgiving memories and standards were instilled in me at an early age. My parents had five children, and every other uncle and aunt had a posse of children. We would converge at my grandmother's cracker box house to celebrate the day. Thirty people would have a place to sit, even if it meant eating in a bedroom on a TV tray right next to hanging pantyhose. The meal would be prepared in a phone booth kitchen with the aunts somehow maneuvering through the chaos. The buffet was laid on the table while you waited in line with your paper plate hoping no one took the turkey leg.

Years passed, and the size of the gatherings changed, sometimes more prominent, and other times it was down to a few. One year I spent in Hawaii and another in Disneyland. Eating turkey at Disneyland with mashed potatoes shaped like Mickey Mouse's head is not something I could recommend. In Hawaii, I couldn't find a turkey dinner and settled for Mai Tai's and Kalua pig.

In the end, the day represents a gathering of your friends and family when we all can be the best versions of ourselves. The feast is, of course, a big part of it, and it is the only day of the year I will eat green bean casserole. Ambrosia salad is a mix of ingredients that get thrown together to appear on your table, and I still haven't indulged in. Maybe there will be an argument over politics, perhaps the turkey is dry, and there will be a backup in the kitchen sink. You get over it and move forward because, in the end, it means very little. Thanksgiving is being thankful for your blessings. Soon thereafter, the other holidays come around, and the real pandemonium and strife take hold. — WT

## Off the Shelf

— Edie Matthews



"Mom, do these need batteries?"

# The Black Cat Who Almost Stole Christmas!

by Shipra Shukla

Woof woof woof woof woof woof woof woof woof woof. Woof woof woof woof woof woof woof woof woof woof woof woof woof woof woof woof . . .

As narrated by Bella, the dog diva, who speaks the Woof language, which had to be translated by Professor Ollie, the most erudite of the jungle folk.

Hi Kids,

I have a little story for you. It's about cats. And it's true and it happened to me.

Once upon a time there was a black cat who lived in the garden of a big house. She and her kittens lived in the bushes.

One day a dog called Bella – that's me – came to live in the house. Bella, like all dogs, did not like cats. So, she would bark at the cats and chase them. The cats started thinking about how they would get rid of Bella – ME!



Every night the cats would peer into the house and run back into the bushes. Bella, again MOI, started barking in the night and woke everyone up. The people of the house, (my assistants), looked around and did not see anything. So they just gave a tummy rub to Bella and she went to sleep.

Next day Bella started barking again in the night and this went

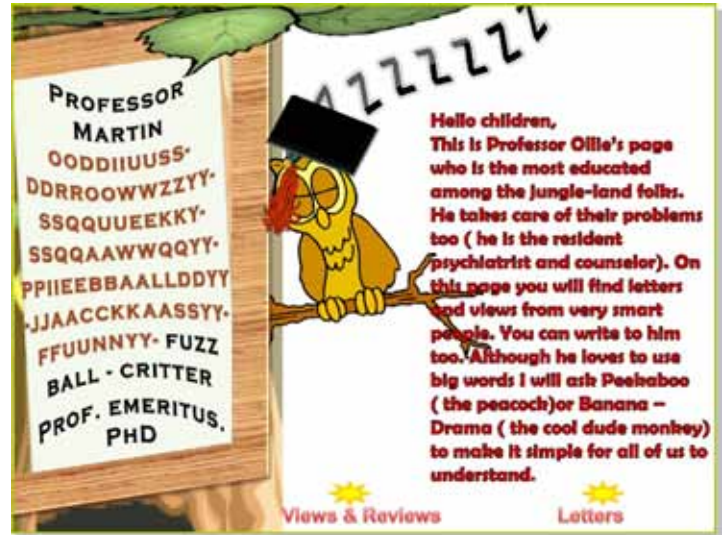
on for a month. Nobody could understand. Why was Bella barking? They were fed up! Little did the people of the house know that it was the black cat.

Every night the black cat would come and frown at Bella through the window. Bella would start barking.

When the people came the cat would run away and hide in the bushes. That was the cats' big plan to get Bella into trouble!

The people of the house started talking about sending Bella away because no one could get up in time for office or school. They were so tired. The cats were happy that their plan was working, until the very next day!

The kids of the house loved Bella and did not want her to go. It was Christmas and they prayed that Bella should be saved. They decided to keep awake and see what made Bella bark. But by ten they were dozing off.



Many thanks to Professor Ollie Martin from Jungle Land or the entire story would be all woofs. Woof woof woof woof woof woof woof ... The professor's jungle address is <http://www.junglestories.com/letters.html>

In the night a big man with a sack over his shoulder was quietly walking towards the house.

"OW, OW, OW!" MEOW, MEOW, MEOW!

He had tripped over a cat. It was the same black cat!

Bella started to bark and everyone woke up. They rushed out and saw the black cat. Now they knew it was the black cat!

They also saw SANTA! They shooed the black cat away, helped up Santa and brought him in the house.

After he had his dinner the children asked to go on a sled ride and Bella – again moi – loved it because she could stick her head out of the window the whole time because there were no windows!



Bella loves to stick her head out the car window.

See Shipra's blog <https://junglestories.blog/>

# True Opponent

by Kendad

Some people love to fight. They'll join brawls to rack up exciting anecdotes for their future grandchildren. Me? I sneak out the door—instead to champion a worthy cause.

Still, at age thirteen in 1964, I encountered a fight I couldn't avoid.

I grew up in a small New Hampshire city of 9,000 with two Catholic schools and churches. I attended Catholic school through the seventh grade but transferred to public middle school in the eighth grade. Consequently, my parents insisted I attend catechism (catholic bible study) every Monday evening, with other school teens—no parents or young kids.

Catechism took place in an old brick school building, classes on the first floor and lavatories in the basement. We typically gathered in the schoolyard before class to hang out with our friends. I don't know why, but the adult teachers didn't supervise us outside. One night, a ruckus ensued. A group of four, aggressively chaperoned one of my classmates, Dennis, to the basement. Dennis had apparently blurted a smart-ass remark to a sophomore and was about to receive "the bowl." Later, I heard that Snippy and his bullies performed the honors. Snippy stood no taller than five-foot-one, but still led the group.

To the uninformed, "the bowl" is when a group holds a victim upside down with his head unceremoniously dunked into the toilet while it is flushed. At minimum, it makes for a bad hair day.

Tuesday morning in homeroom, before the teacher arrived, I spoke with Vicky who sat in front of me. She looked beautiful and acted mature. I liked her, but I knew she operated way out of my league.

When Dennis came in, he didn't look happy. I asked him about the night before. Snippy had knocked over his bicycle, so Dennis complained. The argument heated up and Dennis used a few choice insults, so Snippy and friends retaliated.

Vicky overheard and told me she had been dating Snippy for about three months.

Without thinking, I blurted, "You're dating that four-foot punk?"

Vicky stared at me, wide eyed.

I immediately visualized a foot-in-mouth cartoon image.

Dennis latched on to that statement with more fervor than a pit-bull on a steak. "Four-foot-punk? I'm telling Snippy on Monday night. He'll get you."

There was no talking Dennis out of it. We were acquaintances, not friends, and as I said before... he was a smart-ass.

I had all week to think about the doom that awaited me—reminded every day by Dennis.

Should I skip catechism? With parental pressure and weeks of more classes, I'd eventually have to go. Moreover, it's hard to hide where everybody knows everybody. Do I fight Snippy? I took judo classes as a kid, but I was no blackbelt.

I did remember one important lesson, though. Use your opponent's strength and weakness against him. Still, there were four of them.

Should I lie about what I had said? Too many people in my class had heard my comment, and I was too proud to lie. What the hell was I going to do? My stomach churned and head pounded all week from the stress.

By Sunday night, I decided on my only available option. Tomorrow, I would use my opponent's strength and weakness against him.

Monday evening arrived, and I stood with a group of friends when I saw Snippy coming my way.

He didn't hesitate. "Did you call me a four-foot-punk?"

"Who told you that?" I asked.

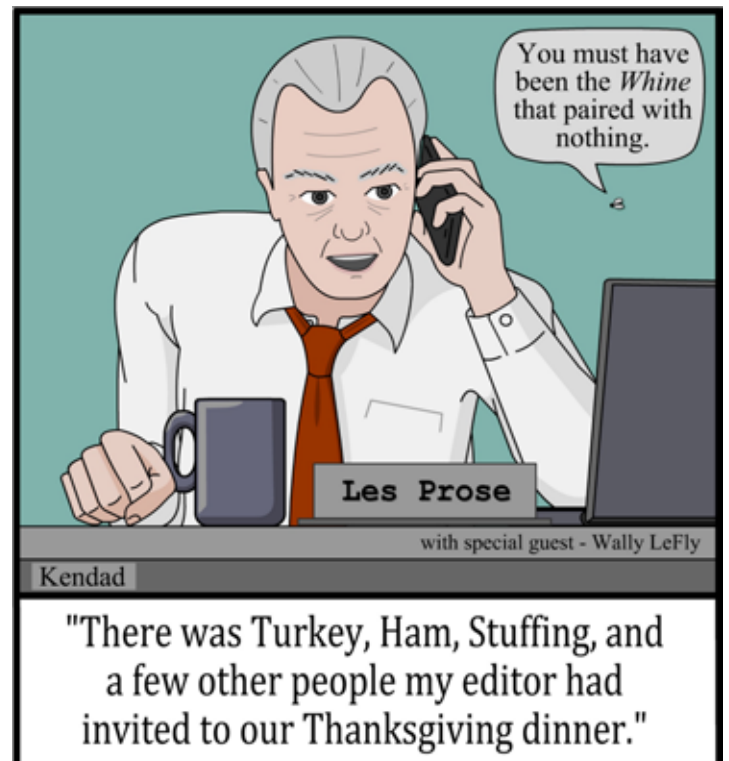
"Dennis."

"Are you kidding me? Dennis? That smart ass. He's just trying to cause trouble again."

Moment of truth. Snippy gave me a curious look. "Yeah, I think you're right." He turned to his friends. "Get Dennis."

Off they stormed, to replay last week's scene on my true opponent. —WT

## Les Prose by Kendad





# Contests, Markets and Resources

by Carolyn Donnell



Carolyn Donnell  
Contributing Editor

Let us know if you have any success with any of the contests listed in *WritersTalk*. (Or any other contest for that matter.) Send your writing victories to member-news@southbaywriters.com and any new stories, poems, articles, etc. to newsletter@southbaywriters.com

You can also check other branches for their current contests, submission, anthology, etc. requests. See a list of other CWC branches at [www.calwriters.org/cwcbranches/](http://www.calwriters.org/cwcbranches/)

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.

**WRITERS BEWARE** site. Check out this website for warnings about contests, submissions, etc. <https://www.sfwaw.org/other-resources/for-authors/writer-beware/>

## LOCAL PUBLISHERS AND EDITORS AND OTHER CWC BRANCH RESOURCES:

Check [calwriters.org](http://calwriters.org) for NorCal and branch information.

**SF/Peninsula Branch.** If you are a dual member, they are looking to the next Fault Zone The theme is: Detachment.

Submissions open Sep 1 – Dec 31, 2022. <https://www.cwc-sfpeninsula.org/next-issue>

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

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

**Fremont Area Writers.** Writer Resources at <https://cwc-fremontareawriters.org/resources-writers/>

**The Literary Nest.** A local online publication. See details for future submissions at [www.theliterarynest.com/](http://www.theliterarynest.com/) Also visual art in high res .jpeg, .gif, or .png format to the [literarynest@gmail.com](mailto:literarynest@gmail.com)

**MWA NorCal Chapter** \* Mystery Writers of America: See [www.mwanorcal.org/](http://www.mwanorcal.org/)

**Women's National Book Association:** San Francisco Chapter [www.wnba-sfchapter.org](http://www.wnba-sfchapter.org)

## OTHER CONTESTS:

**Writer's Digest Contests.** [www.writersdigest.com/wd-competitions/writing-competitions-pricing-and-deadlines](http://www.writersdigest.com/wd-competitions/writing-competitions-pricing-and-deadlines)

**WOW! Women on Writing** has two quarterly contests: [www.wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php](http://www.wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php)

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

**Winning Writers.** Check out their contests at <https://winningwriters.com/our-contests>

**Chicken Soup For The Soul:** <https://www.chickensoup.com/story-submissions/story-guidelines>

**The Writer Magazine:** Lists contests, articles, resources and newsletter. [www.writermag.com/contests/](http://www.writermag.com/contests/)

## SITES THAT LIST CONTESTS/SUBMISSIONS:

**Freedom With Writing** <https://www.freedomwithwriting.com/>

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

**Poets & Writers:** [www.pw.org/grants](http://www.pw.org/grants) and [www.pw.org/content/upcoming\\_contest\\_deadlines](http://www.pw.org/content/upcoming_contest_deadlines)

**Funds For Writers.** Contests, submissions, grants, etc. See [www.fundsforwriters.com/contests/](http://www.fundsforwriters.com/contests/)

**The Write Life:** 31 Free Writing Contests: [https://www.thewritelife.com/writing-contests](http://www.thewritelife.com/writing-contests)

**The Best Writing Contests** curated by Reedsy [www.blog.reedsy.com/writing-contests/](http://www.blog.reedsy.com/writing-contests/)

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

**Trish Hopkinson.** A blog with many resources. [www.trishhopkinson.com/where-to-submit-reprints/](http://www.trishhopkinson.com/where-to-submit-reprints/)

**Writer's Relief.** Ongoing contests at [writersrelief.com/featured-listings-contests-journals-calls-for-submissions/](http://writersrelief.com/featured-listings-contests-journals-calls-for-submissions/)

**Association of Writers and Writing Programs.** [www.awpwriter.org/contests/](http://www.awpwriter.org/contests/)

**NewPages.com** is news, information, and guides. [www.newpages.com/classifieds/writing-contests](http://www.newpages.com/classifieds/writing-contests)

Are you on **Facebook**? South Bay Writers has a Page and a Group. The Page name is California Writers Club – South Bay. The group is an internal group for members only at this time. Name: South Bay Writers.

Other branches have Pages on Facebook as well, where you can keep track of their activities. Use California Writers Club as a prefix; for example California Writers Club – Poetry Center San Jose.

## Some local Facebook groups:

- Poetry Center San Jose: PCSJ
- Poetry Exchange: Poetry Reading and Open Mic, third Sundays, 1:00pm, Los Gatos Library.
- Third Thursdays, Willow Glen Library, Open Mic
- Cupertino Poet Laureate
- Santa Clara County Poet Laureate
- Los Gatos Poet Laureate
- California Poets

If you hear about an intriguing contest, market, or event, please share at [newsletter@southbaywriters.com](mailto:newsletter@southbaywriters.com). – WT

## Susan Straight

Patricia Collins

- Writing can be facilitated when the process involves pen (or pencil) and paper. There is a time for typing on a keyboard, but handwritten thoughts and descriptions that precede the creation of a manuscript also count as productive writing.

Straight writes:

*For those of you who are beginning your stories, who might believe, as I once did, when someone tells you there are certain conditions necessary to be a serious writer, a real writer, let me say: I am writing this in a dollar notebook from Staples, with purple gel pen...I am not alone...but I am outside, where my neighbors are grilling carne asada, and a homeless man is pausing at the corner with his shopping cart making that shimmery rattle...*  
(Susan Straight)

References:

Martha Delgado, "Susan Straight on Writing and Teaching," University of California, Riverside: <https://www.theodysseyonline.com/susan-straight-on-writing-and-teaching>

A.M. Larks, "'I am a wanderer': An Interview with Susan Straight." *Ploughshares at Emerson College*: <https://blog.pshares.org/i-am-a-wanderer-an-interview-with-susan-straight/> (added for further reading about the value of traveling for many types of writing)

Susan Straight, "Susan Straight on learning to write without a room of one's own," *Los Angeles Times*: <https://www.latimes.com/style/la-xpm-2014-apr-09-la-ca-jc-susan-straight-essay-20140413-story.html> — WT

## Cinderella Came to San Jose

by Marjorie Johnson

Alma Deutscher (born in 2005) wrote the opera *Cinderella* (2016) when she was eleven years old. On November 12, 2022, *Cinderella* opened at Opera San José with Alma conducting.

Like Mozart (1756 – 1791), Alma was a child prodigy, playing piano at two and violin at three and composing a piano sonata at five. *Cinderella* had its European premier in Vienna in 2016 and its US premier a year later. Alma made her debut at Carnegie Hall in 2019 in a concert dedicated to her own compositions.

You can read more about Alma Deutscher on Wikipedia and listen to her music on YouTube. Such musical genius comes only about every 200 years. — WT

**Note:** This article was submitted for November *WritersTalk*. It is included here because Alma Deutscher is such an unusual young musician. I had the pleasure of meeting her on November 27, 2022.

## CWC Resources You Should Know

Kymberlie Ingalls  
CWC Representative and  
Program Chair  
Napa Valley Writers

Did you know that, as a member of South Bay Writers, you are welcomed as a member to all of the 22 branches of the California Writers Club? We are more than just a gathering of friends and colleagues in our branches. We are a larger family of 1700+ members statewide.

What this means is that if you live in the vicinity of another branch and have the means to travel, you can extend your writers support circle. For those far away or unable to travel, some of our branches are still virtual or doing hybrid meetings and online extracurricular groups to keep us bonded beyond the pandemic. To join an additional branch is not required but only \$25 per year which is just enough to lend support for their offerings.

People have often asked me why I've belonged to so many branches at one time and my answer is simple: each has its own unique vibe! I've been fortunate to learn and be encouraged by so many, to see more wonderfully informative speakers and to build a strong platform, and more importantly the opportunity to lend my own supportive hand. I've also had a wider net for publishing, speaking and learning.

I've been fortunate to lead marketing support and accountability groups and to mentor writers of all levels and genres (Berkeley, Tri-Valley, Napa Valley). I invite you to join us; we meet monthly. You can find information at each of their websites. Find all branches at our parent site, [calwriters.org](http://calwriters.org) — WT



Drat! I lost my  
cellphone.

# Future Events: Mark your calendars.

## Powerful Plot Workshop

Jordan Rosenfeld

January 28, 2023

Saturday, 9 am to 2:30 pm



Plot is a journey of transformation for your characters as well as the method in which you write a page-turning tale. Structuring your story into a best seller requires knowing and understanding the essential elements of a powerful plot. This workshop demystifies the components such as: action, emotion, and theme, as well as scenes, backstory and front story, increasing the stakes, building the tension, creating causality and believability, assessing your pacing, exploring a variety of plot structures, and more!

Jordan E. Rosenfeld, the author of three novels and two books for writers, *Make a Scene: How to Craft a Powerful Story One Scene at a Time* and *Write Free: Attracting the Creative Life*. She is a contributing editor to *Writer's Digest* magazine, a book reviewer for KQED Radio, and has been published in *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *The St. Petersburg Times*, *Marin Magazine*, and more. She's a popular instructor at writing conferences across the country.

### **COST:**

Member: \$85, Nonmember: \$95

Early Bird Registration: January 15.

Member \$75, Nonmember \$85

**Sign up early and save!**

Go to [southbaywriters.com](http://southbaywriters.com) to register.

Use PayPal or mail a check made out to South Bay Writers. Mail to  
South Bay Writers, PO Box 3254. Santa Clara, CA 95055

### **WHERE:**

Headen-Inman Historical House Museum  
1509 Warburton Ave, Santa Clara  
(Located behind the Triton Museum)





**California Writers Club**  
South Bay Branch  
P.O. Box 3254  
Santa Clara, CA 95055  
[www.southbaywriters.com](http://www.southbaywriters.com)

## MAIL TO

Address Correction Requested

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***Holiday Party December 11***

Details Page 1

## Happy Holidays



Full moonlight on frost.  
Fir forests glitter for miles.  
Sparkling fairyland.

– Stephen C. Wetlesen