



WritersTalk

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

Volume 31
Number 11
November 2023

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November Keynote

“Plotting Secrets: How Absence Can Drive Narrative,” with Laurie Ann Doyle

Jamal Khan

New Location

When: Saturday, November 18, 10:00AM

Where: Maker Nexus, 1330 Orleans Dr, Sunnyvale, CA 94089

Admission: \$10 for members, \$15 for nonmembers.



A meticulously crafted plot can compensate for a multitude of shortcomings. Just look at any bestseller list. Why is plot so important? As Christopher

Lehmann-Haupt observes, “The beginning of a plot is the prompting of desire.” Narrative propulsion enhances all genres of prose: a small portion is offered to whet

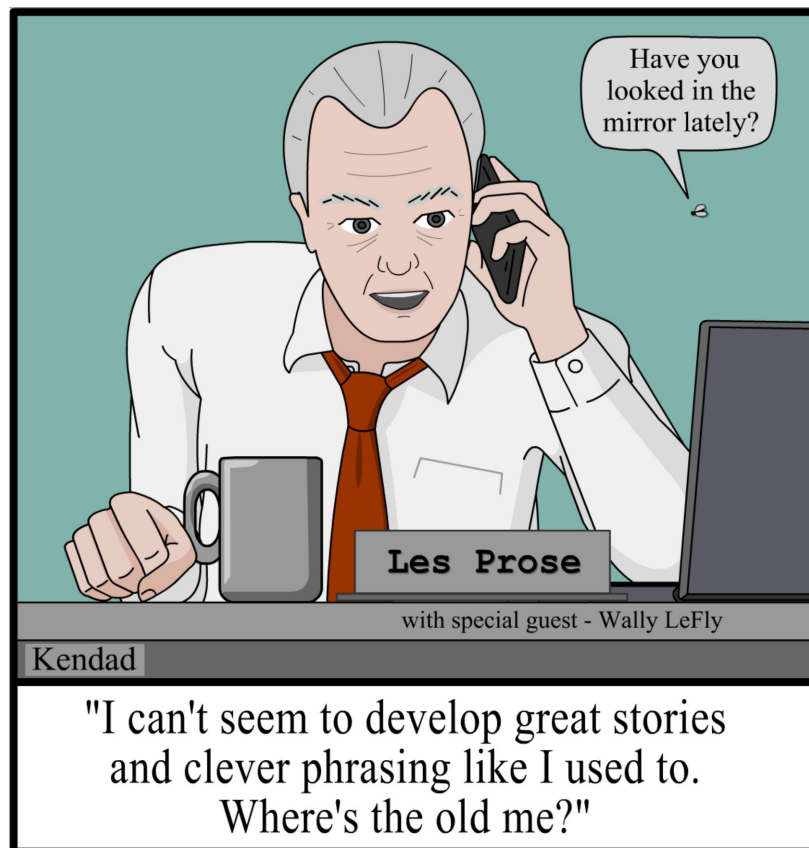
the appetite, and the remainder is tantalizingly promised. During our November 18 meeting, Laurie Ann Doyle, who writes both fiction and creative nonfiction, will guide us through the art of plot.

Laurie will discuss the importance of what's narratively not present—a missing father, a lost object, or an unexpressed feeling—as a major theme in literature, and a creative spark in her own work, shaping plot, character, and imagery. She will offer examples from well-known books, share a short excerpt from her own writing, and

provide craft techniques, as well as a brief writing exercise, to illustrate how a focus on what's missing can be transformative.

Laurie Ann Doyle is the author of the collection *World Gone Missing* and has won numerous awards, including being nominated for the Pushcart Prize. Her stories have appeared in *McSweeney's*, *Alta Journal*, *The Los Angeles Review*, and many other literary journals. She teaches at the San Francisco Writers Grotto and UC Berkeley Extension. Laurie is a popular speaker at writing conferences.

Les Prose by Kendad



President's Message

Edie Matthews

New Time!

New Date!

New Location!



Yes friends, we are moving! Our November 18 meeting will be on Saturday at 10:00AM.

As much as I loved the idea of meeting in the beautiful Triton Museum, it has been a challenging location. The biggest problem has been with acoustics. The cavernous room with its high ceiling and bare floor produce a reverberation. Secondly, we weren't allowed additional tables (even though we agreed to set them up and take them down). This made taking notes, while enjoying a beverage and appetizer impossible. Thirdly, we pay \$80 each meeting for security.

Certainly, we were grateful for the opportunity to be at the Triton. Especially after we outgrew the Headen-Inman House. However, instead of our attendees continuing to increase, at the Triton it leveled off. I attribute this to the poor sound quality. It became a disservice to the speaker and especially to our members.

WHERE

I'm happy to announce our new location is Maker Nexus in Sunnyvale. They have a spacious room especially for meetings with chairs, tables, screens, etc.! There is also convenient parking.

Most of you may not be familiar with Maker Nexus. I wasn't. However, I've learned that Maker Nexus is a multi-media workshop for the community. Their purpose is to help artists unleash their creativity. The 28,000 square feet is setup to cater to artists of various mediums. This used to be part of Google before they built their new location. The company still owns the building and has made it available to the community.

They offer classes in Jewelry, Stain Glass, Woodshop, Metal Shop, Textiles, Lasers, Plastic, Resin, Furniture, Adobe Illustrator, etc.

They have a wide variety of tools available to their members like a 3D printer, a Barudan industry embroidery machine, electronics & robotics, laser cutters, saws, sanders, routers, grinding jigs, lathes, etc.

WHEN

In November, we are switching back to Saturday mornings at 10 am. I know this suits many of our members who avoid driving at night. The move is just in time too, since the abundance of summer daylight is quickly diminishing.

It is always a challenge finding a new venue and an affordable location. Sadly, dinner meetings have become too pricey. Gone are the days of Harry's Hofbrau, when we had the use of the banquet room and reasonably-

priced meals. Nonetheless, at our new location, there will be beverages and snacks.

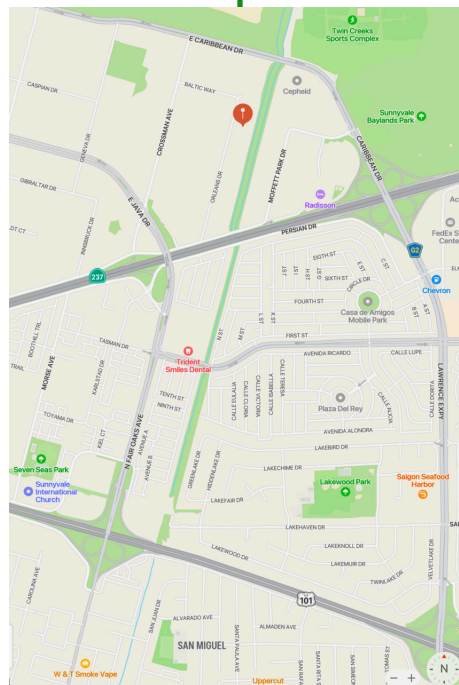
NOVEMBER MEETING!!!

Initially, we are meeting on the third Saturday, November 18. But beginning in 2024, we will switch back to the second Saturday of the month. The only change might be a half-day workshop. Looking forward to seeing you at our new venue!

WHERE: Maker Nexus

1330 Orleans Dr. Sunnyvale

WHEN: Saturday, November 18, 10:00AM



October Recap: The Literary Adventures of Sports Columnist Mark Purdy

Shari Clare

T rue confession: I have read the San Jose Mercury News every morning for many years, and without fail, skip over the sports section. After attending the October meeting, I now realize that this was a terrible mistake, causing me to miss out on the exceptional stories written by our speaker, Mark Purdy.

After putting on his viking hat and rubber nose Halloween costume, Mark wished everyone a Happy Indigenous People's Day and offered to explain to some of our younger members what a "newspaper" is. He went on to share his journey as a writer, including a few highlights from his 30+ years of writing a daily sports column, as well as writing tips that could prove useful to any writer, not just newspaper columnists.

Mark's writing career began at the age of 16, when a sports editor offered to pay him a whopping \$15 per article published by the local paper. That was good money in those days, so he jumped at the chance and has never looked back. His professional journey later took him to San Jose, where, as a midwesterner, he had no idea what his new audience wanted to read about. By interviewing a variety of people, he learned that there was little interest here in bowling or college basketball, but a lot of interest in pro football and the San Francisco Giants. Wisely, he shifted focus, pivoting mainly to stories that played to his reader's passions, though on occasion, he could shift gears and write about something quite unpredictable.

Some of his best columns emerged from his being in the right place at the right time, even if it was for a sport that might be of limited interest to his current readers. One of his most unforgettable columns was about his trip to the 1990 Pan American Games in Cuba, where he came face to face with Fidel Castro in,

of all places, a bowling alley. In another exceptional column, he wrote about playing golf with Neil Armstrong in the pro-Am on the day of a lunar eclipse.



Woven through his talk, Mark exemplified his best advice: Find an interesting angle on the topic at hand, then get to the bottom of the story as quickly and coherently as possible. He summed it up with the phrase "Write with unique clarity." Sometimes with tight deadlines, it was all he could do to string together grammatically correct sentences. But when the stars aligned, he could conjure up compelling topics because he was curious, paid attention, and took full advantage of whatever situation presented itself. In 1984, with the Summer Olympics taking place in L.A. and The People's Court as the most popular show on tv, he identified a truly unexpected angle that focused on judges. The result was an interview with Judge Joseph Wapner, who eagerly shared his assessment of the controversy surrounding some gymnastic judges.

Mark is retired now, and working on an autobiographical book, which he is writing mainly for his granddaughter. He is, however, open to the possibility of coming back to share it with our group.

Here's hoping for an encore performance from a writer who has witnessed some amazing events and has opened my eyes to the fascinating stories that can be found in a sports column.



October Photos



Member News

Marjorie Johnson

It does my soul good to read your writing news. I love seeing you succeed.

I saw many of you at the SBW October meeting dressed in costume. To answer questions about my mini-costume—the piranha necklace, picture attached—that fish was dried, shellacked, and added to beads made of natural materials forty-some-odd years ago. I brought it for \$1 while standing in line outside in the Amazon jungle at the tiny airport at Iquitos, Peru. I used to wear it when the students at the high school where I taught had a Halloween dress-up day. The boys loved it; the girls didn't.

At our October meeting, I sat in front so that no one would trip over my cane. Covid did that to me—I spent July in hospital. *Fringe benefit*: I was close enough for our speaker, Mark Purdy, to read my name tag. He told us his secrets for writing successful sports columns for the *San Jose Mercury News*: Unique and Clarity. When he wanted that repeated, he called on me. He said he wasn't related to Brock Purdy. By the way, Mark Purdy was the first journalist inducted into the San Jose Sports Hall of Fame (2021).

Too much about me. Now the real news.

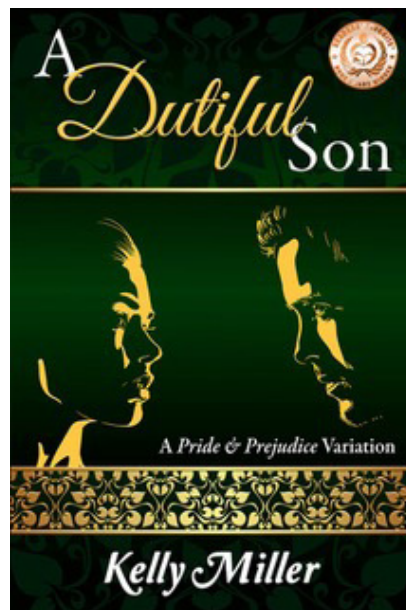


Here is the biggie: **Trenton Meyers** received the Jack London Award from California Writers Club on Sunday, October 22, at a meeting of CWC's Central Board. He was treasurer for South Bay Writers for six years and helped SBW Membership Chairman, Inga Silva, keep track of who's

in during the days of Covid. The Jack London Award is the only formal acknowledgement provided by the CWC to a branch member "whose service at the branch level has been exemplary, meriting the award independent of writing accomplishments." The entire ceremony

can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2sL5Gh60a9I> – Trenton is at 33:07.

Past Jack London recipients from SBW include Carolyn Donnell 2019, Sally Milnor 2017, Colin Seymour 2015, Marjorie Bicknell Johnson 2013, Dick Amyx 2011, Dave LaRoche 2009, Vicki Burlew 2007, Bill Baldwin 2002, and Edie Matthews 2001.



Kelly Miller wrote "My book, *A Dutiful Son*, won the bronze medal for Romance, 2023 Readers' Favorite Book Awards." Great news, Kelly. Book cover attached.

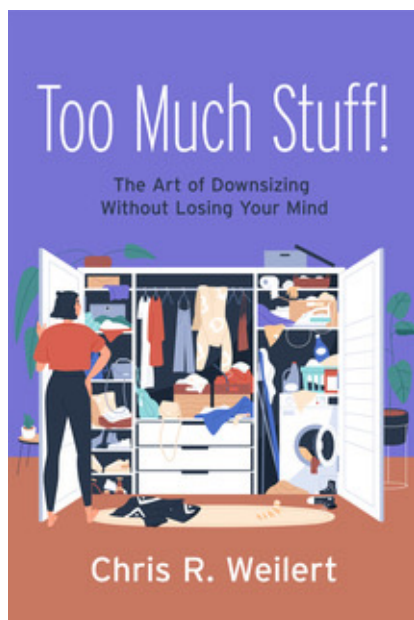
Carolyn Donnell shared: Thank you for your submission to the Northwind Writing Award, sponsored by Raw Earth Ink. **Congratulations!** While your piece "Nothing the Matter With Me" was not selected as a winning title, it has been **selected to be included among the best of the best as an Honorable Mention in Poetry!**

Chris Weilert announced his book, *Too Much Stuff! The Art of Downsizing Without Losing Your Mind*. See cover and advertising blurb attached. Wow, Chris! A must read.

Please share your writing news by sending it to membernews@southbaywriters.com.

Book Release:

Too Much Stuff: The Art of Downsizing Without Losing Your Mind by Chris Weilert



Where am I supposed to put all this stuff!!

Even though the average size of an American home has tripled in the last 50 years, this is the question so many Americans find themselves asking. We feel trapped by all this stuff! And why wouldn't we when...

- Rented storage is the fastest growing segment of commercial real estate and 1 in 10 Americans rent an offsite storage space.

- 3.1% of the world's kids live in the US, but they own 40% of the toys.
- Shopping malls outnumber high schools.
- The typical American family spends \$1,700 on clothes every year, but the average American throws away 65 pounds of clothing in the same time frame.
- The home organization industry is worth \$8 billion, a number that has more than doubled in just twenty years.

We all need less stuff! But how do you do it without *losing your mind*?

That's where author Chris R. Weilert comes in.

He'll take you on a tour of all your stuff: what it is, how you got it, why it needs to go, and how you can get rid of it without making the Earth's problems any worse. With both humor and heart, Weilert will have you chuckling at the cute collection of porcelain children you were convinced you couldn't live without—even as you box them to get them out of your house.

What are you waiting for? Now is your chance to lose all this stuff ... without losing your sanity.

Jack London Award recipients 2023 from all California Writers Club branches.

The recording of the ceremony is on YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2sL-5Gh60a9I> - Trenton is at 33:07.



Astrology Taught Me Manners

Tamara Bell

In writing this, I realized I could have also titled it, “Giving More—By Giving Less”. My awareness now when analyzing astrology charts, is to allow the flow to be more organic. Otherwise it may be too much information for my clients to process. Plus they might not feel as heard.

I have delved deeply in my astrology studies and certifications for the past eight years. A byproduct was a vast improvement in my manners. Don’t get me wrong, I believe you might have thought of me as a sweetheart before. But astrology exchanges have enlightened me to become more attentive.

In my birth family of ten, we were promoted by cleverness and abilities. Dinners were interesting since we weren’t allowed to reach for what we wanted. However, if you asked, the serving plate would make the rounds opposing you as each person eyed you impishly as they scooped out a portion for themselves and eventually handed you an empty plate. Intelligence was mandatory. To outsmart, was the name of the game. I always say the world is a better place due to the members who came out of the roots of my family. The greatest fear of my mother was if she raised boring children. She was successful. None of us are boring.

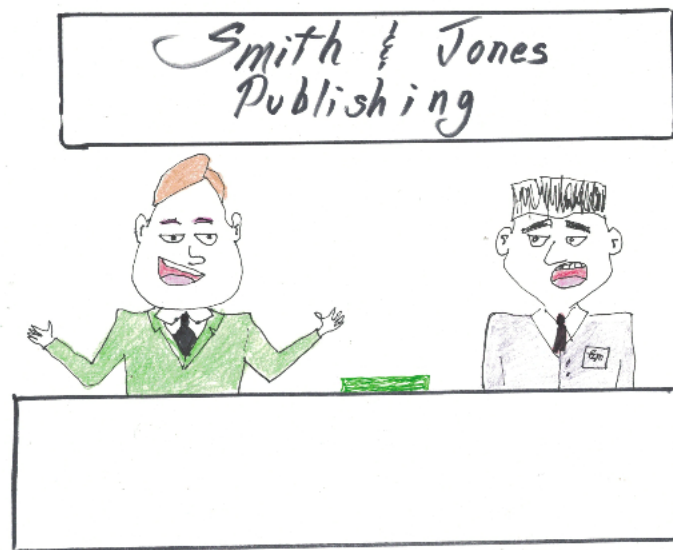
I wanted to be a high achiever for my astrological clients. My first few years as an astrologer, my readings were exhaustive to put it nicely. I wanted them to know that I had studied hard. I hoped my clients felt they had gotten their money’s worth. I never had a return customer.

In taking “Consulting Skills Training” certification through OPA, I learned from Kay Taylor and Alexandra Karacostas how to view what I was saying through my clients ears and eyes. Also I was taught to listen to what clients were asking for during the reading.

I stay sensitive to my contacts even if it’s just the cashier at the drugstore. I make eye contact and thank them for their assistance. I slow my go to make sure no one else behind me is needing me to keep the door open. I call females “Miss” no matter how old (a politeness I learned in Mexico) and all the males “Sir” no matter how young they are. I keep in the present no matter what my schedule is. I continuously acknowledge people around me with a smile and a compliment. If someone wants to speak, I’m ready to listen. I breathe, keep curious and I laugh easily.

People tend to want to hear something cheerful. So I focus on something useful and enabling. People don’t really want to know the background of what you’re saying, just enough information to tell them what actions they might explore, and about upcoming changes which have the potential to show up in their lives. If they want more information, they will ask directly about what they are curious about.

Bringing my new understanding of personal relationships back into astrology readings. I stay curious about my client and allow them to share. My job is to satisfy; not to wow.



"Your book has an original story, gripping scenes and captivating characters, but don't worry, we can fix it."

View from the Board

Carolyn Donnell

October 2, 2023

Edie Matthews, President

November speaker: Yet to be determined.

Possible speaker had to withdraw.

Jack London Awards will be presented on October 22nd by NorCal CWC in Oakland. \$65 to attend. Trenton to receive an award.

Marjorie Johnson, MRMS

Talked about the membership listing that was sent out.

Treasurer, Alice Wu/Trenton Myers

Treasurer's Report

Account Growth: +0.8% increase in funds since August

Bill Baldwin, Open Mics continue on the first and third Fridays.

One open mic since our last board meeting.

September 15 – 9 readers, 9 readings. May be able to use a South Bay Writers Zoom account for future online meetings.

Possible Anthology - Several South Bay Writers are interested in a branch anthology. Some issues:

- Do we want a theme?
- Would it be open to all genres?
- Would submitters have to be members of South Bay Writers, or simply CWC members?
- How strict do we want to be about style and format?

NorCal

The NorCal Leadership Conference was September 24.

Main suggestions (short version): Create excitement for your members! Emphasize what you can offer them! Keep with current trends as far as outreach (e.g. social media, meetings, etc.)

Central Board

Reminded that the third week in October was California Writers' Month.

Carolyn Donnell: Facebook/Contests/Markets

- Working on the calendar for the newsletter. Working on updating newsletter cumulative index.

Inga Silva: Membership

Discussed replacement for Inga.

Membership Report for SBW : September 2023
Lifetime 2, Active 88, Student 1.

Una Daly: Web Editor

Website was updated with speaker info and WritersTalk.

Open Discussion:

Planning to move to a new location at Maker Nexus 330 Orleans Dr, Sunnyvale, and new time – Saturday morning. Starting in December, will be second Saturday of the month.

Next Board meeting: November 6, on Zoom. SBW members always welcome. Send request to attend to Edie Matthews at pres@southbaywriters.com

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Have you ever thought,
“If I was in charge of the newsletter, I would change _____.”
Well, that opportunity is waiting for you!
Please email pres@southbaywriters.com
to jump at editing WritersTalk in 2024!
Training and coaching included.

.....

Rotating Editing Team:

Marjorie Johnson, Ken Roberge, Carolyn Donnell, Dave LaRoche, Marty Sorensen, Edie Matthews, Bill Baldwin.

If you are interested in being a part of the editing team, please email newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Submit writing to WritersTalk using this form:

<https://tinyurl.com/writerstalk>

Contests and Markets

Carolyn Donnell

Let us know if you have any success with any of the contests listed in Writers Talk. (Or any other contest for that matter.) Send your writing victories to membernews@southbaywriters.com and upload new stories, poems, articles, etc. to tinyurl.com/writerstalk.

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.sfw.org/other-resources/for-authors/writer-beware/>

LOCAL (PUBLISHERS AND EDITORS) AND OTHER CWC BRANCH RESOURCES: See branches at <https://calwriters.org/cwcbranches/> Some allow all CWC members, others – dual members.

NAME	URL	COMMENTS
SF/Peninsula Branch.	https://www.cwc-sfpeninsula.org/writers-resources/writing-contests	Lists other resources
Fremont Area Writers	https://cwc-fremontareawriters.org/resources-writers/	See Writers Resources tab
North State Writers	https://www.northstatewriters.com/nsw-anthologies.html	Planning a new anthology soon
The Literary Nest	www.theliterarynest.org	visual art theliterarynest@gmail.com
<i>Catamaran Literary Reader</i>	http://www.catamaranliteraryreader.com/	West Coast quarterly literary/visual arts journal

OTHER CONTESTS AND SUBMISSIONS

NAME	DUE	URL	COMMENTS
Sequestrum		https://www.sequestrum.org/	Themed and general submissions
Chicken Soup For The Soul *		https://www.chickensoup.com/story-submissions/submit-your-story/	Ongoing topics
Writer's Digest		https://www.writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions	Contests year round. Also classes/webinars
Romance Writers of America		https://www.rwa.org/chapterevents	Lists by month
Narratively Memoir Prize	Nov 30	https://driftwoodpress.submittable.com/submit	
Red Penguin Books		https://redpenguinbooks.com/open-submissions/	Various ongoing submissions
		SITES THAT LIST OTHER CONTESTS	
Winning Writers *		https://winningwriters.com/	their contests and others listed
Authors Publish *		www.authorspublish.com	Lists contests, etc.
Funds for Writers		https://fundsforwriters.com/contests/	Subscribe to hope@chopeclark.com
Trish Hopkinson		https://trishhopkinson.com/	blog
Freedom With Writing		https://www.freedomwithwriting.com	

POETRY CONTESTS, SUBMISSIONS, AND RESOURCES

NAME	DUE	URL	COMMENTS
Academy of American Poets	n/a	https://poets.org/academy-american-poets/american-poets-prizes	Lists contests/submissions
Writing Matters		http://www.randalssanctuary.wordpress.com/2020/08/11/publishers-of-poetry-books-chapbooks/	30 Publishers of Poetry Books & Chapbooks
Up the Staircase Quarterly		https://www.upthestaircase.org/	
Minotaur Books/Mystery Writers of America First Crime Novel Competition	Dec 15	https://dystopianstories.com/events/minotaur-books-mystery-writers-of-america-first-crime-novel-competition/	
Poets & Writers		https://www.pw.org/content/upcoming_contest_deadlines_87	Lists upcoming deadlines
Poetry Society of America		https://poetrysocietyofamerica.submittable.com/submit	
The Thimble Magazine		http://www.thimblelitmag.com/submissions/	quarterly online journal.
Poetry Foundation		www.poetryfoundation.org	
Poetry Pacific		www.poetrypacific.blogspot.com/	Published and unpublished.
Everywriter		www.everywritersresource.com/best-poetry-prizes/	
Reedsy		https://blog.reedsy.com/guide/chapbook/how-to-make/	lists reputable chapbook contests
Gyroscope		https://www.gyroscopereview.com/welcome/guidelines	4 issues a year
Poetry Soup		https://www.poetrysoup.com/poetry/contests/	
Gregory O'Donoghue International Poetry Competition	Nov 30	https://dystopianstories.com/events/gregory-odonoghue-international-poetry-competition/	Other contests listed as well
Rattle chapbook prize	Jan 15	https://www.rattle.com/chapbooks/prize/	
The Moth Poetry Prize 2023	Dec 31	https://www.themothmagazine.com/a1-page.asp	
Mslexia Women's Poetry Competition 2023	Dec 4	https://mslexia.co.uk/competitions/	women any nationality any country. Other contests as well.

NOVEMBER 2023						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 NaNo WriMo begins	2	3 SBW Open Mic 7:30 pm	4
5 Daylight savings time ends		7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15 <i>Writer's Talk Deadline!</i>	16	17 SBW Open Mic 7:30 pm	18 SBW mtg 10:00 am Maker Nexus
19	20	21 SF/Pen Open Mic 7:00 pm	22	23 	24	25
26	27	28	29	30 NaNo WriMo ends	1	2

South Bay Writers branch

1st & 3rd Friday 7:30 pm

www.meetup.com/south-bay-writers-cwc/

NaNoWriMo

Check NaNoWriMo South Bay events for any updates.

<https://nanowrimo.org/regions/usa-california-south-bay/events/upcoming>

Write-In at the Morgan Hill Library

Morgan Hill Library 660 W. Main Ave., Morgan Hill CA

Wednesday, Nov 1, 2023, at 6:00 pm PDT • Duration: 2:30

Wednesday, Nov 8, 2023, at 6:00 pm PST • Duration: 2:30

Wednesday, Nov 15, 2023, at 6:00 pm PST • Duration: 2:30

Wednesday, Nov 29, 2023, at 6:00 pm PST • Duration: 2:30

Saturday Write-In at the Coleman Panera

Panera Bread 503 Coleman Ave, San Jose, Saturday, Nov 4, 2023, at 2:00 pm PDT • Duration: 2:00

Saturday, Nov 18, 2023, at 2:00 pm PST • Duration: 2:00

California Writers Club
South Bay Branch
www.southbaywriters.com

Executive Committee

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Web Master TBD

SBW Mission

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



Join Us

We have a membership category that fits you. Dues are \$45 per year plus a one-time \$20 initiation fee. 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
Note: California Writers Club uses a fiscal year that runs from July 1 through June 30 each year.

Contribute to WritersTalk

Members of the South Bay Writers Club are encouraged to submit their creative works for publication in WritersTalk. Submissions are now being accepted on this form:

<https://tinyurl.com/writerstalk>

Submission deadline is the 15th of the month.

Inclusion of graphics are by the discretion of the editor.

Short Fiction (1000 words)

Memoir (1000 words)

Poetry (300 words)

Essay (1000 words)

Send information about your news or achievements to membernews@southbaywriters.com.

Information should be 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. The 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation status of California Writers Club, prohibits WritersTalk from accepting advertising of events or services that benefit an individual, or of politics.

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



California Writers Club
South Bay Branch
P.O. Box 3254
Santa Clara, CA 95055

www.southbaywriters.com

MAIL TO

Address Correction Requested

Winter Bash!

The South Bay Writers Club will hold the annual winter party on
Sunday, December 10, from 5:00PM - 8:00PM, at the Matthews.'

Potluck, games, singing, and gift exchange!

Please look out for an email with the details.

Meanwhile, block the time out on your calendars!

December Writing Prompt:

When a friend tells me about their December-January traditions, I listen with delight. What is this about seven fishes? The family watches *Die Hard* movies every year? The Nutcracker is a must? Why do you leave pineapple out? If you're a Kiwi, you'd know.

For the December newsletter, research a December-January tradition that you want to know more about. The tradition can be secular or sacred, be from any location, be from a different time period, be personal or trendy, be specific or general. Write about the origin of the tradition and its subsequent history. Let's say, keep it at 300 words. Upload your word document by November 15 to tinyurl.com/writerstalk. *Call open to current members of South Bay Writers.