



South Bay
WRITERS

Silicon Valley's Premier Writing Group



August 2026 Newsletter v2

"The first week of August hangs at the very top of summer... like the highest seat of a Ferris wheel when it pauses in its turning"

Natalie Babbitt (Tuck Everlasting)

Welcome to South Bay Writers August News

- **Membership Renewal Deadlines**
 - **August 8 Meeting on Dialogue + New Member Orientation**
 - **President's Message**
 - **Notes from the Board [corrected]**
 - **SBW BBQ Recap**
 - **Member Contributions - BayCon 26**
 - **Upcoming Events**
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RENEW YOUR 26/27 MEMBERSHIP \$45 before Sept. 1, \$65 afterwards

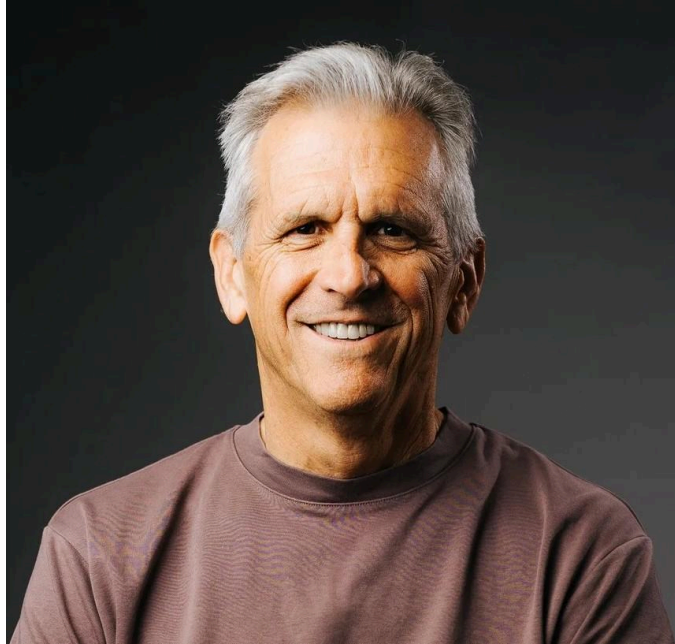
- Pay at **August 8 meeting** with cash, check, or credit card or mail check to:
CWC-SOUTH BAY WRITERS
PO BOX 3254,
SANTA CLARA, CA 95055
 - **Pay online with PayPal (\$47)** anytime!!
 - New members only, **submit an online application**. Join us August 8 at 10am for new member orientation.
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Bruce Overby on Writing Dialogue for Impact

by Shari Clare

The South Bay Writers Club welcomes Bruce Overby as our August speaker, where he will give a presentation on "Writing Dialogue for Impact."

Bruce's writing journey has taken him on a circuitous route, starting as a journalism major in college before finding his way into high tech, as an editor and manager in technical publications and professional services. For 30 years he put his writing skills to good use at Cisco, Stratus, Sun, and Ariba. Though he wanted to write fiction since his undergrad days, he realized that he needed more life



experience, waiting more than 20 years before enrolling in and completing the MFA program at Queens University of Charlotte. That life experience paid off, and his first novel, "The Cyclone Release" became a finalist in the Blue Moon Novel Competition, while his story "Bookmarks" won first prize in the Lorian Hemingway Short Story Competition. In addition to writing fiction, Bruce is a songwriter who believes that music and writing go hand in hand. You can read more about his fiction and even hear one of his songs on his website, bruceoverby.com.

Bruce's engaging style and interesting journey make this a must-see presentation for anyone interested in this aspect of the craft of writing. Click here for more info about [Bruce Overby](#)

When: Saturday, Aug 8.

10:00 Orientation for new members

10:15 am Check-in for meeting

10:30 am Meeting starts

Where: Saratoga Senior Center, 19655 Allendale Ave, Saratoga CA

Admission: Members \$10, Non-members \$15



President's Message

Welcome to August and I hope your summer is going well at this mid-point of the season. We had a terrific picnic last month socializing with other writers and sharing great food. Read on to find more writerly activities coming up this month and next including a Fall Writing Contest for members-only.

CWC Statewide Board News

Our statewide California Writers' Club held elections in July and Jordan Bernal is our new statewide president while Roger Lubeck assumes the immediate past president position. The complete officer slate was unanimously approved:

- President Deborah “Jordan” Bernal
- Vice President Cristen “Crissi” Langwell
- Treasurer Bernard Wozny (retained)
- Secretary Evelyn LaTorre

We are in the midst of our annual Membership Renewal with an earlier than usual deadline of September 1st. After September 1st, membership applications and renewals will take place through our statewide website (CALWRITERS.ORG). The statewide website is being completely redesigned along with our Members Data Base and renewals of membership will assume an anniversary model. This means that your membership will expire on the anniversary of your last renewal or joining. You will be notified by email before this occurs. Dues will be funneled to the branches through electronic transfers.

CWC Statewide Bulletin

Reminder to send in your Member Publications notices for recently published or upcoming publications of your work(s). You can send them to editor@calwriters.org. The deadline is August 15 for the fall bulletin, which is coming out on September 15. Format for notification was shared in an email sent to all California club members on July 17.

San Jose Festival at Eastridge Center

South Bay Writers is pleased to sponsor a table at the [San Jose Book Festival](#) on **Saturday, September 12**. Members can meet with publishing professionals and/or sell their books. Sign-up for 2-hour table shifts available from 10-5pm, by contacting vp@southbaywriters.com

Our normally scheduled September meeting (2nd Saturday of the month) will be postponed to Saturday, September 19

Self-Publishing Interest Group

A dozen members have joined the self-publishing interest group and are actively sharing tools and tips on best practices for self-publishing their manuscripts. [Join today if you need more information or want to share your expertise.](#)

Best Regards,

Una T Daly (president & interim editor)

Notes from the Board

- **FALL WRITING CONTEST** Submit a 100-to-150-word description of your favorite dish, family tradition, or a fiasco! It may be a holiday tradition, an exotic meal in a foreign country, a dish you hated but were made to eat as a child,



or a yummy childhood treat like the penny candy from the corner market.

First place prize: \$50. Top four runners-up will receive a Barnes & Noble's Gift card. No entry fee required. YES, IT'S FREE!!! However, you MUST be a member of South Bay Writers (or a dual member) to be eligible to submit to the contest. If you haven't already [renew or join us now](#).

Contest Deadline: Oct 15, 2026

- **NEW MEMBERS - Come early August 8 (10am) for New Member Orientation.** All members are welcome but especially those who have joined in 2026.
- **SOUTH BAY WRITERS website migration and redesign is underway.** Thank you to Hal Schoolcraft, Kalpana Ramakrishnan, and Ryan Davis-Marsh for taking this on. Targeting mid-September for launch and **volunteers are needed**. Contact tech@southbaywriters.com to join the team.

Image: quimono on pixabay.com

South Bay Writers July BBQ



We had a great summer BBQ at Edie's house on July 12. Special thanks to Edie and her grandson James who cooked the chicken. Also, thanks to Billy Warren who played bartender for the event and all our wonderful board members who helped with setup, raffle, membership, and clean-up.

Member Jim Marshall won the big raffle prize, a free pass to all remaining 2026 Member meetings, for a \$30 value. All members who had renewed for 2026/27 were included in the raffle.

In addition to the delicious chicken, there were salads, fresh corn, and some great pies including cherry, apple, and chocolate cheesecake to choose from. Thank you to Carolyn Donnell and Ken Yale for the photos.





Member Contribution



A first-timer's BayCon experience

*Darren Davis, with contributions from
Valerie Frankel*

BayCon, the local speculative fiction conference, happened over the Fourth of July weekend in Santa Clara, as it has for the past few years. Though previously on Memorial Day weekend, it's a long-running local con, which was celebrating its 42nd year with plenty of Hitchhiker's Guide references, as one does in geek space. As a new attendee, it was exhilarating to see the world expand with possibilities: meeting new people, discussing fascinating topics, and learning more about writing and editing. At the same time, there was also a dimension where the conference itself would benefit from an expansion of possibilities.

The panels were a big draw, and I spent most of my time there. It was definitely worthwhile, with many fascinating discussions! Some looked at the connections between life and writing: "The Reality of Fiction" included reflections on how choices and their consequences permeate both our lives and the stories we write, while "Writing our Nightmares" discussed ways that stories help us think about or cope with things happening in the world.

Other panels brought a lot of insight to questions I've had about writing, like the line between helpful and excessive influence of personal experiences, how to accurately and fairly represent backgrounds and perspectives that aren't my own, and how to accommodate both factual realism and artistic license. Some panels also had a lot of valuable lessons about writing, editing, and publishing processes – a fast track to hard-won knowledge. Plus panels about storytelling skills, which sparked insights about bringing ideas to life, and plenty more. The convention features authors, with many like regular Larry Niven and guests of honor Charlie Jane Anders and Annalee

Newitz who have won top awards in the genre, so it's a wonderful place for new writers to learn.

The conference was brimming with additional possibilities: gaming on tabletops and with a simulator, sing-alongs and dance, cosplay, anime, shopping, afrofuturism, a charity auction and blood drive, and a game show. There were free snacks, theme parties, and giveaway books and trinkets everywhere. Something for everyone interested in speculative fiction, and far more than what one person can do at a time.

Meeting people was also a major highlight. It was delightful connecting with people who also loved to read and write, and fascinating to hear about their lives and writing ambitions. Being able to walk up to and chat with authors (and other panelists) was also a welcome surprise. I loved how BayCon dissolved barriers between authors and readers, and between readers. It made me feel part of a like-minded community, especially in a world that too-often downplays the kind of deep thought and reflection that can be such a big part of writing.

All in all, I had a great time as a first-timer, and the conference was well worth my time – even on the Fourth of July weekend. But I had to wonder: where were all the other first-timers? I didn't see many others, at least where I went. The crowd skewed older, and the few kids and teens there had been attending with their parents from babyhood (often in adorable costumes). Many people appreciate reading and writing even in (and perhaps because of) modern times, and would probably love to have these kinds of experiences. Discussions of speculative fiction from classics like *Hitchhiker's* to trending works like *The Mandalorian* and *Dungeon Crawler Carl* offered something for all types of fans. But how would they know that the opportunity exists, and what will it mean for BayCon if they never do?

I hope that more people can learn about BayCon in the future – perhaps they can spread the word through libraries, book clubs and similar meetups, board gaming cafes, and other places where BayCon would be of interest. And perhaps BayCon could have programs that make it easier for newcomers to know what to expect and to meet each other. This would create more of a path to all the great things BayCon has to offer. In a genre category that often looks to future possibilities, hopefully BayCon can move toward its best possible future.

Authors below: Millie Abecassis, G. David Nordley, C. Sanford Lowe, Alice Wu (as author Yulin Wu), Valerie Estelle Frankel, Sandra Saidak, Dave M. Strom, and Jonathan Erman. (thank you to Valerie for the photo)



Member News:

DO You Have Any Member News?

If you have writing progress, accolades, publications that you'd like to share in our next newsletter, please send to: membernews@southbaywriters.com

Upcoming Contests & Events

- [San Jose Women's Club Chill Out & Read: Ice Cream Social and Book Fair](#) is taking place August 16th. Come out and support our local authors.
- [Poetry Center San José : Twelfth Annual Poetry Festival](#)
The small press fair will held on **Sunday, August 23, 10:00am to 2:00pm**, set up at **9:00 am** under the beautiful oak tree in front of the Edwin Markham House (near Empire Fire House) in History Park San Jose.
- [House of Writers](#) - **August 27, 6 p.m.** will host live Readings at the San Jose Clubhouse on Thursday, August 27, from 6-8 p.m. This month's topic will be "Writer's Choice: When the Theme is No Theme At All" and will include local writers sharing poetry, essays, excerpts of fiction and memoirs, and perhaps even a song. @houseofwritersbayarea
- [San Jose Book Festival – Sept 12, 2026, 10am-5pm](#), Two hour shifts available at the South Bay Writers' table. Reserve your time slots by emailing vp@southbaywriters.com or signing up at a meeting.
- [Sequestrum](#) Desire + Science Fiction and Fantasy Submissions Open! [Desire welcomes](#) writing driven by longing, ambition, hunger, and need—the forces that complicate our lives, propel us forward, and lead us toward triumph, ruin, or something stranger. [Science Fiction & Fantasy](#) invites work

that reimagines what is possible, from distant futures and alternate worlds to mythic landscapes, speculative histories, and magic hidden inside the everyday.

- [Poets & Writers Writing Contests, Grants & Awards](#) maintains an extensive database of upcoming contests, grants and awards.

"You know what you can do. You know what you're capable of.
Don't let anybody get into your head."

– Kim Ng



Saratoga Senior Center
Image: Courtesy of Joe-Ming Cheng

South Bay Writers-The Silicon Valley Branch of the California Writers Club | PO Box 3254 | Santa Clara, CA
95055 US

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