



# WritersTalk

A South Bay Branch  
Writers Club Monthly

## Our Speaker for June, ANNY CLEVEN *Borders Bookstore District Manager* Talks about **SELLING YOURSELF TO BOOKSTORES**

by Edie Matthews

—o—



Congratulations! You've toiled for years and finally completed a fascinating book, and now it's going to be published!

*What?* You're supposed to have a marketing plan! That's right. The world of publishing has changed dramatically. Now the authors are expected to formulate their own promotional ideas.

*How?* Calm yourself, the solution is near. At the next CWC meeting, marketing maven, Anny Clevén, the District Manager for Borders' Bay Area Bookstores, will bring sample media kits and explain it all to you. That is, how to deal with bookstores, how to fill the seats at book signing, and achieve the bottom line—increased book sales.

Prior to working for Borders, Clevén founded the public relations division for Parker Group Advertising Agency in St. Louis. For eight years, she honed her skills in this a highly competitive field and also edited the *Public Relations Society of America Newsletter*. She describes the profession as "a game of the last man standing."

Clevén took a brief hiatus to get married in San Francisco and honeymoon in Hawaii. When she returned a month later, the company had resigned all of her accounts (monthly revenue amounting to \$6000 to \$8000), and it had been sold to VIACOM. (This was the beginning of the corporate conglomerates.)

She immediately phoned her husband and asked, "How's your

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## ACCOLADES

by  
Jackie Mutz

—o—

Welcome to our new column, **Accolades**, which highlights South Bay Branch members' accomplishments each month in the field of writing. Let us know if you have something to share. Contact us at [newsletter@southbaywriters.com](mailto:newsletter@southbaywriters.com). No writing accomplishment is too small for the recognition it deserves. A sampling of recent member accomplishments:

**Una Daly's** sonnet (pg 5) received a first prize in the College Division Traditional Verse from the West Valley Mission College Olympiad of the Arts

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## Mini Profile

By Jackie Mutz

### Susan Mueller

Susan Mueller will tell you her favorite genre in writing is "let me tell you a story." CWC South Bay Chapter Treasurer for the last ten years, she has been writing since about age 50, "when I could not write a

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### A Look to the Future:

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## President's Prowling—



### YES – I ‘DATE’ MY BOOKS

In the past month I've continued my romp through various books I've heard about, that have been recommended one way or the other to me.

And I read and am dissatisfied for one reason or another. In one book, the narrator takes forty pages to run away from home and then gives up and returns. Here we are, right where we started, forty pages later. In another book, the

narrator is standing in his room, tracking people on the sidewalk outside with his high-powered rifle. In a third book, the narrator is rambling on about his youth, traveling further and further back, describing scenes I can't imagine him remembering in such detail, tossing out nouns and adjectives I've never seen before. And the Henry James is just simply dense writing (laughs). Is this the first paragraph that will capture my interest?

And so we come to "Isherwood's Iron Rule of Writing." Actually, it's more like a question to ask yourself as you write: "Why are you telling me this?" An online reviewer quotes this in reference to a recent biography of Christopher Isherwood.

I've had two insights.

First: Constructing a story, novel or article is like creating a sculpture or building; you have to make a mold, build a scaffold, whatever. In order to create the final product, you have to go through a whole messy process where the ultimate product is hidden under a good bit of grime. You do whatever you have to do to move the project along. But then you take away the scaffold, chip away the mold. After you complete the draft, you remove what you don't need. But how do you decide what you need?

Second insight (and this is so obvious!): A story, novel, article or book is a two-way conversation with someone. The reader can at any time justifiably pose Isherwood's question. And the writer should be able to answer: "Why am I telling you this? Here's why..."

They may not buy it. Since a piece of writing is like a conversation, it may turn out that what interests the writer simply doesn't interest the reader. The writing style that appeals to the writer may annoy the reader. The reader may form a certain unfavorable impression of the writer – "He's showing off his erudition," or "Why does it matter what kind of draperies his mother had in her bedroom when he was five?" etc.

So picking up a book to read is a bit like going on a date: you

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### California Writers Club South Bay Branch

— o —

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Unless otherwise noted above, our email  
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#### Join Up

We have a membership category that fits you, dues are \$45 per year plus a one-time \$20 initiation fee.

For the details contact our Member-  
ship Chair, Diana Richomme at.

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(Prowling from page 2)

may realize, from the first minute that it just isn't going to work. You may find yourself growing bored or annoyed, but something may intrigue you and keep you interested. You may simply find the whole thing enchanting, captivating, and impossible to set aside.

If not, understand this: It may not be "you," it may not be "him" (or "her") – the chemistry just isn't there. You can ask yourself why, but don't feel guilty if you don't like James Joyce, for example. Don't blame Joyce either. Perhaps you two just weren't meant to be. Find a book you truly like. And when you write – be prepared to answer Isherwood's question. But as people counsel you about dates – "be yourself." Be honest. *WB*

(Accolades from page 1)  
2005.

**Emily Jiang** received the Mary Daley Hough Grand Prize for Excellence in the College Short Story Division of the West Valley Mission College Olympiad of the Arts 2005 for her entry *Paper Daughter on Angel Island, August 12 1940*.

**Betty Auchard's** new book *Dancing in My Nightgown*, made the final cut in the 2005 IPPY Book Awards for the Memoir category, is published and available for your reading pleasure.

Way to go CWC South Bay Branch writers. As the kids say, you rock! *JAM*

Love is the triumph of imagination over intelligence.  
- H. L. Mencken

## Editor's Itch



As I relax on the deck of an economy vacation house dressed in garish mustard and brown, a fine breeze finds its

way through the vivid green oak leaves of a newly dressed forest only yards from my senses in the Ozark Mountains of Arkansas. They're called mountains but of course they're not... at least not to eyes that have seen the Sierra. The season is spring and the rain's blessing is manifest everywhere in lush fragrant growth that sings from sun up till down by way of its feathered inhabitants also with a fresh run at life.

This is not my first time here nor is it homecoming. It's a neutral place where I meet old friends. We play golf and eat well, remember old times, establish new and confabulate as opportune. I think it a move toward perspective, Karen calls it my sabbatical, I suspect a few think it a failing reach to a weak limb on an old tree.

Once as a child I was ensconced in the rear seat of an old family Pontiac with balding tires and noisy tappets, which I shared with strapped suitcases and a pair of younger sisters. We bumped along carefully, without map or road, precipitously descending layers of limestone, anxiously fording creeks and sweltering... as our mother directed our father to obscure relatives and their corn

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*WritersTalk* is a monthly newsletter published by the South Bay Branch of the California Writers Club.

### WritersTalk Staff

#### Managing Editor

David LaRoche (408) 729-3941

#### Contributing Editors

Una Daly

Jackie Mutz

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#### Guest Columns

— *Almost Anything Goes*

#### Regular Columns

to Una Daly

#### News Items

#### Literary Work

#### Announcements and Advertisement

#### Letters to Ed—*In My Opinion*

to David LaRoche

Submit as attachment to email  
to

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or

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**Announcements** are accepted on the basis of interest and value to writers, have no economic value to the originator and are published free of charge.

**Advertising** is accepted on the basis of its interest and value to writers and is charged \$7 per column-inch for members and \$10 for non members. Ads will be limited to three column-inches. Contact the Managing Editor.

**All Submittals** must be to an editor no later than the 16th of the month preceding publication. *WritersTalk* is published on the 1st of the month.

**ANNUAL JULY BBQ**  
**July 10**

**Don't miss it**  
Details Pg 11

*(Cleven from page 1)*

first day back? Mine's a little rocky."

Cleven didn't take long to recover. Nonetheless, she was sick of the corporate world and didn't care if she ever donned another navy suit with matching pumps. Her favorite bookstore at the time was Library Limited, a landmark in St. Louis about to be sold to Borders Bookstore because the owner's children weren't interested in continuing the tradition. Cleven went to work for the new bookstore. "I've always been a shadow artist," confided Cleven.

At the same time, the newlyweds were looking for an opportunity to move to the Bay Area. Serendipitously, her husband was offered a chance to relocate to the West Coast, and Borders happily agreed to transfer Cleven.

Drawing on all of her PR experience, Cleven continued to devise creative ways to publicize in-store events, tailoring them around the newly released books. For instance, before Edward Conlon, a New York police detective and author of *Blue Blood*, visited the San Francisco store at Union Square, Cleven sent invitations with copies of the book galleys to the local police precincts. Pedestrians must have wondered at the patrol cars lined up along Post Street because on the day of the book signing, policemen skipped Dunkin' Donuts and dropped by to meet the author.

On another occasion, Cleven was determined to help Mary Rakow with her first impressive novel, *The Memory Room*. "Her book is the most lyrical treatment of recovered memory and abuse." Cleven spent two hours with the new author creating a bullet-point marketing proposal. Fortunately, Rakow had the wherewithal to go to New York with the proposal in hand and fight for her book. She had to meet with the publisher on a train—from Manhattan to Connecticut—that was all the time he would give her. The book went on to win the Lannan Literary Fellowship, and Rakow wrote a thank you tribute to Cleven, which appeared in future editions.

Exemplary endeavors like this earned Cleven a Best National Events Program Award, an accolade especially created by Borders Bookstore to honor her.

"It's a tremendous effort to have written a book and gotten it published," said Cleven, "but it might die if you don't know how to promote it."

Join us at the June CWC meeting and learn from an expert how to promote your book. *EM*

**Lookout Bar & Grill**

605 Macara Ave., Sunnyvale

(Sunnyvale Golf Course)

6 PM, Wed., June 8

Members \$15, Guests \$18 (includes Dinner)

**Help Wanted — News Editor**

Will cover events of interest: Meetings, Open Mic, Book signings, etc.

Call or email Dave LaRoche

*(Itch from page 3)*

dishes with molasses, bag swings and craw-dads somewhere in the region of Mountain Home. In that time my view of Arkansas was "hillbilly".

My today's Arkansas is quite different. In addition to its breath-taking terrain is its "modernness" – broad roomy highways take one quickly to robust venues dealing with aspects *we here* might perceive exclusively "Bay Area". Theater, music, galleries, good restaurants and upscale shopping abound. Rich social investment prepares citizens that engage well at all levels. Personal warmth foretelling integrity, gregarious address and gracious consideration in the most casual interface are a large part of this enjoyable panorama.

There *are* a few chiggers though... which brought your editor to this Itch. *DLR*

**Recap— Paul Douglas**

By Jackie Mutz

—o—

Paul Douglass, a professor in the MFA Creative Writing Program at SJSU asked the CWC audience if he should sing for his supper. Speaking at the May South Bay Chapter meeting, he posed the thought that writing a biography is not so different from writing a novel. Writing his own book, an historical biography of Lady Caroline Lamb, best known for her role as Lord Byron's lover, was an eight year process. Sometimes frustrating, he noted that "living with a pro-

*(Continued on page 7)*



**Petrarchan “Beat” Sonnet**

by Una Daly

I here compose a Petrarchan sonnet  
 Named for the poet laureate of Rome  
 Who renounced all earthly pleasures save one  
 Blonde, pale skinned Laura, he could not forget  
 Fourteenth century ideals obfuscate  
 Chaste love for a married woman ain't hip  
 A crown of laurels ain't iconic, Skip!  
 Being on cloud nine is nowadays quest

But still a sestet follows an octet  
 Eight lines of verse embodies the theme  
 Six more lines turn the corner on the sonnet  
 The octet rocks to a Swedish band's name  
 While the sestet rolls its own rhythmic beat  
 Yet never may a couplet end the scheme



**Notice**

CWC Membership Renewal

**Renew your Southbay CWC membership by June 30 and... Save 20 bucks**

**"May Bee, June Bee"?**

by Pat Bustamante

Garden flowers MAY be late  
 As "April" still precipitates?  
 My sinuses the pollen hates  
 But: rain brings mold,  
 So, just can't wait:  
 --June roses for the Graduate!  
 --Sunny skies for wedding dates!  
 Oh June! Oh please--  
 Oh "don't 'chu lie"..  
 I'm moldy! Soggy! PLEASE be dry!

(Mueller from page 1)

thank you note that made sense.” Her employer needed someone to write public relations copy and encouraged her to the task. One writing class later, she was published in the Harvard Business Review and her writing career took off.

She grew up in Detroit, then moved to Chicago with husband and children and

Susan finds her gift as a born story teller the most helpful thing in her writing, not to mention the CWC guest speakers, workshops and conferences...

holds degrees in education and accounting. A teacher and an accountant, she still does taxes, not to mention officiate at our monthly meetings, taking our dues and giving us the gift of her beautiful smile and wit.

Susan finds her gift as a born story teller the most helpful thing in her writing, not to mention the CWC guest speakers, workshops and conference, which teach her important ideas about writing, no matter the genre. Landing a job as a freelance writer for the San Jose Business Journal, she has published hundreds of articles. Currently, she has a children's dog story in journal form under review by a publisher and is working on a novel that is a “fictitious account of a family I knew” which contains all the elements of a rousing story: murder, sex, fame, money, generosity, jealousies and science.

Her biggest dream about writing? To have her novel published. May your dream come true, Susan. We're all rooting for you! JAM



Honey, Bear, Susan, Mean Beast—now which is Mean Beast?



## CONVERSATION

by F. Srmek Schorow

Hello, Flo, Is that really you?

What do you mean, is it really me? Who did you expect?

Oh, you know -- you keep changing your answering machine messages. I'm never quite sure that I'm hearing you or a new message. The last time I called, I talked for what seemed like five minutes before your beep sounded.

Well, it's me all right. What's up, Jean?

I'm having trouble with the last assignment, Flo. This writing something entirely in dialogue is so -- so -- so gimmicky.

What's wrong with using gimmicks if they help?

Oh, I don't know, it's just so workshop-like!

Exactly! That's what we're all about. We're a writers' group trying to learn to write. As far as I know, not a one of us is on the *New York Times Best Seller List*.

But --- writing a story in nothing but dialogue! It's so obviously an exercise for amateurs.

Oh, so you're Danielle Steele? Listen, Jean, That's what we are: amateur writers who would like to improve our writing skills.

Please don't insult me. Danielle Steele indeed! I wouldn't be caught dead reading one of her books, much less trying to write like her.

Pardon me. Virginia Woolf then? Or would you prefer Jane

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This column brings a series of brief grammar lessons by Pat Decker Nipper, a writer, a former English teacher, and a member of CWC...

## Nipper's Nits

By Pat Decker Nipper

### Lesson 4. Adverbs and Style

Though it might be true that adverbs have become less used by authors over the years, it's nearly impossible to write without them. They modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs and can be placed almost anywhere in a sentence.

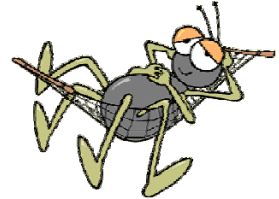
Adverbs tell "how" something happens, such as quickly, sharply. They tell "when" something happens, such as yesterday, tomorrow, now. They explain frequency, such as always, regularly, sometimes. And they tell "where" an incident takes place, such as southwards, downstairs, here, there.

The adverbs probably most distasteful to authors are adverbs of degree. Many of these adverbs end in "-ly," such as quizzically, suspiciously, and can be overused, yet they can also add understanding and beauty to a story.

Contact Pat at [pat@patdeckernipper.com](mailto:pat@patdeckernipper.com) for comments or questions.

## On the Web --

By Ro Davis



I used to love to go to the library to do research. When I was a kid, we lived in the country and the nearest public library was five miles away in Niagara Falls, NY. My older sister would take me with her to the city on Saturday mornings to the old stone library on Main Street. The smell of the cloth-bound books, the iron stairs to the balcony, the balcony itself with its glass floor, the huge wooden card catalog, and the long oak tables in the reference room -- those memories are still the definition of a library to me. When I was finished with my measly one-page report on the geography of Ecuador, I'd wander the stacks while I waited for my sister. She was in college, so whatever research she had to do took much longer and was more important, and, well, she had a driver's license and I was nine.

By the time I was driving solo, the city of Niagara Falls had replaced our quaint old library with a monstrosity of architecture: a cement behemoth with narrow windows in odd places that we quickly dubbed "the penitentiary." A few years after that, I was cutting class to hang out at the main branch of the New York Public in Manhattan. The NYPL was a wonderland to my writerly ambitions. I spent many happy hours wandering the rooms, seeking out ob-

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(Web from page 6)

scure books to fuel my fiction.

I left New York City when I was twenty and have not been back. I've done research for my writing in countless other libraries, ranging from the University of Denver's Penrose nestled under the giant spruce to the Los Gatos main, tucked in with police headquarters and city hall. For me, nothing used to beat the experience of sitting in a library, immersed in a study subject, following a trail like a pioneer, like a super sleuth, as my imagination ran amok with ideas of how to put fictional flesh on real-life bones.

Used to. My rapturous library experiences are increasingly rare. It isn't just a matter of finding the time. The atmosphere is gone. I can do without the oak tables and the metal stairs. What I really must have is quiet. The dictum of silence is as unheeded in libraries as it is in movie theaters these days. How can I become immersed when I'm sitting between the child who only has an outdoor voice and the muttering homeless dude?

Fortunately, technology has come to my rescue. I no longer have to leave my house or my bathrobe to lose myself in research. Public libraries are taking their collections to the Internet -- not everything, of course, but the lists grow everyday. Get online and look for your favorite, [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org), for example, or start at the top with [www.PublicLibraries.com](http://www.PublicLibraries.com).

See you on the Web, Ro

(Douglas from page 4)

ject for many years pays off; the best topics choose you, warm you and keep you going."

In general, basic writing principles apply to any type of writing. The setting, whether in a novel or historical setting in a biography, plays an important part in how well the book is received, not to mention the strength of a book's opening --beginning the story in an effective way to gain your reader's interest.

Writing a biography means countless hours of sifting through material, in order to find the tidbits that will help in the shaping of the character; Lady Caroline, in this case. Often referred to as "mad, bad and dangerous to know," she was in fact quite an educated and published author herself, as well as composer of musical lyrics, such as the "Waters of Elle," graciously sung by our guest speaker in ballad form. Unfortunately, and thanks partly to Lord Byron and the aristocratic rules of convention, her "mad woman in the attic" image never left her.

It was this "raw deal" that prompted Paul to search for, find and present a more authentic view of Lady Caroline Lamb. The fruit of his labor can be found in *Lady Caroline Lamb*, a story that he hopes will tell itself. JAM

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*Editors note: "Whatever Happen to..." is a new column that anyone can write. I am doing the first to get it started. Please jump in with about 400 words.*

## Whatever Happened to Harold Robbins

By Dave LaRoche

At the awaited stroke of noon, I was off to my car in the parking lot of my employer with "brown bag" and a copy of *The Adventurers* and there, for an hour, remained immersed in the imaginings of Harold Robbins. Robbins was hot in the 50's and 60's, titillating many and certainly my colleagues, seeking relief from around-the-clock humdrum of corporate rigidity and the impossible demands of new family. I didn't think then and certainly not now that Robbins was the "world's best writer" (his humble reflection) but he did, with adroitness, transmute me and my cohorts into delicious hyper-heroic vs down-right scurrilous fantasy.

He published two dozen books that sold over 50million copies in 30 odd languages -- the guy was a machine. Although the story varies, he was born in 1916 (Harold Rubin) son of well-educated Russian-Polish immigrants and, by way of commodity trading, became a millionaire by twenty. He married five times and a Hollywood success-classic (rags-to-rags), he died broke, a cocaine addict alone in a wheelchair -- some say, womanizing on a white beach in southern France. Robbins began his career atop middle-class rearing including a small part of a high-school education -- courtesy

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(Conversation from page 6)

Austen?

Oh, Flo, sometimes I think you don't even try to understand what I mean.

All I know, Jean, is that ever since Meg left, we've been at a standstill -- bringing in old manuscripts, chit-chatting about this and that. We needed something to get us going again.

We never needed gimmicks when Meg was in the group. She always had these great ideas. I miss her. Why do you think she quit the group, Flo?

I don't know. Maybe she got tired of -- of --

Tired of the group?

Well, maybe not all of the group.

I don't think so, Flo. She never, never said one word against anyone in all the times I called her.

You called her, Jean? Did you call her often?

Oh, just when I needed some ideas. Well, yes, I guess you could say I called her often. but she never seemed to mind. She was always so helpful even when I stopped by.

You stopped by?

Oh yes, she only lives a couple of blocks from me. And with three kids and her invalid mother, she was almost always home and probably glad of the interruption.

Sure, everyone needs a break now and then.

Just what I think too. I think she really appreciated my bringing her my copy to edit before submitting to the group. And I never said one word of criticism when her Bobby spilled juice over a couple of pages even though I must say Meg is a better writer than a disciplinarian. Luckily, she has a Mac and I could re-do the work right there and then.

You used her computer too?

Oh yes, she needed to change Bobby and pick up her daughter from pre-school so the computer was free. I felt a little bad about losing Meg's copy before

(Continued on page 9)

(Whatever Happened from page 7)

NYC. As in the dreams of the many, mesmerized by the success-despite-antics of Hollywood "celebs", he and his first wife -- broke, after a panic-induced plunge in the sugar market -- found their way to the West side of Los Angeles. At Universal Pictures, he began again as a shipping clerk and soon found a high-back leather chair on the studio's windowed row. In 1957, Robbins shed the weight of executive decision and turned exclusively to writing. Among the stories we remember are *The Dream Merchants*: 1949, *A Stone for Danny Fisher*: 1951, *The Carpetbaggers*:, 1961, *The Adventurers*: 1966, and *The Betsy*: 1971.

**All eyes turned to her as she opened the door. For a moment she felt self-conscious, then with her model's walk she glided to the center of the room and slowly turned around.**

**'She's got a good clean figure,' the producer said.**

**'Not enough tits for me,' the pratfall kid chortled.**

**'I'm a T-man, myself.'** (from *Stiletto*, 1960)

He died in 1997—having startled and entertained though never quite attaining the literary standing he not only sought but thought he deserved—a scant 81. DLR

### Script Writers Attention!

#### CALL FOR SCREENPLAY ENTRIES

The screenwriting competition that offers a grand prize of producing the winning screenplay into a movie reminds writers that deadlines are fast approaching.

Screenwriters can enter via our website, or via [WithoutABox.com](http://WithoutABox.com). Those entering via [WithoutABox.com](http://WithoutABox.com) can save \$5 off the entry fee.

The winning script will be produced by an independent production company the winner receiving 50% of all revenue from the sale of the movie, including DVD sales.

Writers who have never had a screenplay produced for theatrical or television release are eligible to enter. All information is posted at [www.makemyscreenplay.com](http://www.makemyscreenplay.com), and the final deadline is August 15, 2005. The winner will be announced September 15, 2005.



(Conversation from page 8)

I could figure out how to insert my own, but she said that it probably wasn't any good anyway since she wrote it between midnight and two AM the night before.

I suppose you told her that she needed to organize her time more effectively.

Oh, Flo, thank you. I do try to help others learn the skills that seem to come so naturally to me. Actually, I didn't have much of a chance to tell her since her husband came home and was just a wee bit peeved that dinner wasn't on the table.

I would guess that you helped in that situation too.

I try to do what I can. He and I had a couple of martinis together so that Meg could feed the kids and get dinner ready.

I'll bet Meg really appreciated that.

Actually, she didn't have a chance to thank me because her mother started complaining that she was being ignored, and Meg felt that she had to spend time with her.

Listen, Jean, I have to say goodbye.

Oh, not yet, Flo. I want you to hear a little something I put together.

Actually, I think someone just rang my doorbell and --

Oh, go ahead and see who it is, Flo. I don't mind holding on. Meg always said she didn't know how I had the patience to wait for her to get back to me. Honestly, sometimes she took -- Flo? Flo? Are you there? fss

### 826 Valencia announces June's seminar for aspiring adult poets.

Panelists will discuss the challenges and joys of writing and publishing poetry.

Featured is Robert Hass (1995-1997 U.S. Poet Laureate), Brenda Hillman, and Joyce Jenkins. James Kass, executive director of Youth Speaks, will moderate.

**Sunday, June 12, 2005 from 6-9 PM.**

**826 Valencia, 826 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110.**

Sign up by mail, online or in person. By mail: Send a check for \$100.00, made out to "826 Valencia," to 826 Valencia St., SF, CA 94110. Online: Go to [www.826valencia.org/workshops/adult](http://www.826valencia.org/workshops/adult). In person: Sign up at our storefront at 826 Valencia.

*826 Valencia* is a non-profit organization supporting students with their creative and expository writing skills, and helping teachers inspire their students to write.

### Call for Submissions

*Shakespeare's Minivan*, a new online literary magazine, is seeking submissions for its first issue.

We publish quality fiction, poetry and essays by people with full-time, non-writing jobs and families to support. If you get up at 4 a.m. to write, if you can't quit your day job, this is the magazine for you.

**We will look at work in all genres, as well as fragments of unfinished projects.**

For submission guidelines, log onto our website at:  
[www.shakespearesminivan.com](http://www.shakespearesminivan.com)

### Kids 8 to 18, Choose Either

#### Jack London Writers Camp

Saturday, June 25th, 2005 - 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM

Cost - \$85 for full day (includes lunch)

Workshops include "Poetic Perceptions", "How to Lie Effectively", "Personification Play", and "What Do You Think—Opinion Writing"

—Or—

#### Writing Intensive

Saturday, June 25, 2005, 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

Cost \$100.00

*Brainstorm, organize, draft, edit, and finalize.*

For Information on both E-mail [peninsulayoungwriters@yahoo.com](mailto:peninsulayoungwriters@yahoo.com) or call (650) 325-7951

Contact now as registration is limited

*A melding of thirty years  
dressed in finery  
shaped in the scent of unknowns.*

*Are we as we were?  
Tight bodies and smooth hair  
worn with the air of success.*

*Now we are dressed in our parents' bodies.  
Adolescent eyes peek through  
folds shuttering Youth.*

## Reunion by Jackie Mutz

I arrived at Brandon's restaurant with Brad, my date for our 30 year high school reunion, since neither spouse had a remote inclination to attend. Brad was my boyfriend from 7<sup>th</sup> grade. We were an item for two weeks – a long time in 1969.

Neither of us had given much thought to attending this who-are-you party and hooked up only two days before we were to see how old we all looked and have a good laugh.

Brad was handsome in his slacks and a cool shirt, its color favored his eyes. He still had his winning smile and infectious laugh; the kind of individual you can't help feeling good around. I imagined myself a hot little number – in a black and white polka dot swing dress and sassy black slip-on Cinderella sandals. My little red flower toes and weak attempt at a French twist completed the look.

So who were these people? I'm still not sure. Walking in, my first thought was how vulnerable we all must have felt, high school all over again, only this time in our parents' bodies. Would Brad and I recognize anyone? Would anyone know who we were? I could smell the anticipation – the scent of excitement and anxiety as we milled around, marking our territory. Thankfully, this did not last long as a visit to the bar took care of any apprehension.

Then Brad disappeared, leaving me in the bar, alone. I felt awkward, an adolescent all over again. Moving between feeling eighteen and forty-eight was exhausting. Where was my escort, my date... my emotional support? I saw a familiar face, found a group, and relieved, broke

into "the here and now" and out of "the then and when."

The foyer buzzed with questions. Who was that short guy with the bad hair dye-job and the young wife... a nursing baby? (Was this the nursing family picnic?) And the tux guy who wanted so desperately to be noticed as the cool and handsome dude he was at that moment, not the nerdy little guy he wanted to forget. Thirty years can soften the blow of bad memory.

So there we all were – mirror images of our parents, not the shining youthful faces we remembered. And somehow we connected the past with the present – even if the cutest guy in class, with his surfer-dude blonde hair, was now a balding grandpa. We had changed yet something remained the same – our connection with that time. We were all connected by the collective shared experience of our youth.

One gal in particular struck me. She sat, adorned in a big flowered hat, sipping a cocktail, dragging on a cigarette. She smiled at us through drugged, dark pools of humor calmly discussing her imminent death. Now that was a class act, I thought. Leslie died three weeks later, a testimony to our own mortality.

At the end of the evening a few of us sat on a bench, having been kicked out of the restaurant. The horrible dj music had quit piercing the air and we could hear each other talk. The air felt clean. Someone had a room at the hotel and wanted to party. I declined, although Brad kind of wanted to go, I think. We had our goodbyes-hugs and, "We'll see you next reunion!" Would we? Hard to say, but I am glad I went to this one. It gave me some closure on what had been a turbulent time in my life and let me frame my school memories in a whole new light. *JAM*

**The Saturday Poets** present their reading series followed by an open mike featuring:  
**Toni Mirosevich: Wednesday, August 17,**  
**Nellie Wong: Wednesday, September 21,**  
**Robert Pesich: Wednesday, October 19**

7:00 pm, Il Piccolo Caffè, 1219 Broadway,  
Burlingame.

Contact Amy MacLennan at  
[amy.maclennan@saturdaypoets.org](mailto:amy.maclennan@saturdaypoets.org)  
650-631-5732 or [www.saturdaypoets.org](http://www.saturdaypoets.org).

*Announcements*

*Announcements*

*Announcements*

**BBQ**  
**Sun, July 10**  
**3 pm**  
 hosted by  
**Edie and Jim**  
**Matthews**  
**917 Ferreira Drive**  
**Santa Clara, CA**

**Bring a dish to share—**  
**last names beginning with**  
**A - K: Main or Side Dish**  
**L - R: Salad**  
**S - Z: Dessert**  
 (Club will provide the Protein)

**RSVP to Edie at**  
**rsvp@southbaywriters.com**  
**Or 408 985-0819**  
 (Please)

**(No meeting in July)**

***Congratulations***  
***Betty Auchard!***

For your outstanding success with *Dancing in My Nightgown* and your new speaking career.

We applaud your courage, note your rewards and may be tempted ourselves to let go...





**Write a column—**  
*Anything Goes (Almost).*  
 That's the name of the column space and we mean it. Your ski down Mount Everest, your first PGA tournament, your thoughts on the "book table" or the Arts Community in Nepal. Make it opinionated, informational, persuasive, and. Email it to Una Daly, our columns editor, before the 16th of the month.

newsletter@southbaywriters.com

**The BOOK TABLE**  
**at Club Meetings**  
**hosting old reads and**  
**new adventures**

—o—

Clean off your shelves and bring in your old books—those you've read a dozen times or won't read at all. Bring them to our club book table and give others an opportunity ...

And you TV couch potatoes, come pick up new readings por nada. It's a great deal— and the return policy is quite lenient.

—o—

**Every monthly meeting, the Book Table is set.**

*"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes."*  
 -Marcel Proust

**GOT NEWS?**

Know of an event that needs reporting—one coming up or happening now. Email our editor—he'll hop on it or appoint one of his many staff members.

**Book Reviews**  
**Committee Meetings**  
**Critique Groups**  
**Reading Fours**  
**Book-store openings**  
**Conferences**

If it's of interest to writers we want to publish it.

writerstalk@comcast.net



**South Bay Writers'**

**Open Mic**

**First Friday** each Month  
 7:30 — 9:30 pm  
**Borders Books**  
 50 University Ave, Los Gatos

**Third Friday** each Month  
 7:30 — 9:30 pm  
**Barns and Noble**  
**Pruneyard in Campbell**

**R**ead from your own prose or poetry, from your favorite authors, or just come to listen. It's good experience and great fun—and if your knees wobble a little, we won't notice.

For a spot at the podium, contact Bill Baldwin beforehand.

408 730 9622 or email  
 wabaldwin@aol.com  
 or reserve at  
 www.southbaywriters.com



California Writers Club

South Bay Branch  
1125 Miguel Ave  
Los Altos, CA 94024

www.southbaywriters.com

Stamp(s)

MEMBER

[Empty box for member name]

Address Correction Requested

General Membership Meeting—2nd Wednesday

**LookOut Restaurant**  
**605 Macara Ave., Sunnyvale**  
**(Sunnyvale Golfcourse)**

See Map

*SAVE THESE DATES*

- Board of Directors  
Jun 1, 7p, Susan's
- General Meeting  
Jun 8, 6p  
Lookout Restaurant
- Open Mic  
Jun 3, 7p  
Borders, Los Gatos  
Jun 17, 7p  
B&N in the Pruneyard
- WritersTalk Deadline  
Jun 16 to editor
- Editors Pow Wow  
Jun 20, 10am  
Orchard Valley Coffee

