



WritersTalk

A South Bay
Writers Club Monthly

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Page 1

IF YOU HAVE TO WRITE ALONE, EDIT TOGETHER... Diana Richomme



Diana Richomme
VP & Programs

To many of us, writing seems a lonely pursuit. We fantasize about locking ourselves away in a cottage with only a laptop and nature to keep us company. Our April speaker, author of "Iron Shoes", Pulitzer Prize nominee and winner of many fiction awards, Molly Giles, writes during most of her day while enjoying her stay on the

Greek island of Paros.

But for Molly, the process of writing isn't a one-woman pursuit. First, came the woman who inspired her. "I started writing out of monkey-see, monkey-do-ness as my mother was a writer whose first and only novel (*Cold Heaven*, Doubleday) received critical praise when it was published in 1947. I admired the gray fur coat and jaunty beret she wore to zip off to the St. Francis Hotel and lunch with her agent."

Second, while her mother never did work with other writers, Giles's first experience had her hooked. "I was able to earn a scholarship to the Squaw Valley Community of Writers," she said. "I found myself up in the mountains with a hundred strangers who were crazy in the same way I was crazy and I never looked back."

Then Giles joined a critique group and her writing took off.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)



Molly Giles

COP TALK!

A new column by John Howsden

Hello, I'm John Howsden, a retired police sergeant and a member of California Writer's Club. When fellow writers discovered my police background, they started asking about police work.



John Howsden

It soon became apparent that writers wanted the straight scoop on police procedure, tactics, and tricks of the trade. Since good details help create good stories, I offered to start answering police questions in this column. E-mail your questions, and I'll answer them.

JWHowsden@comcast.net

Do police officers shoot to kill?

Police gunfights are sudden, shocking and often fatal; the only thing worse than getting into a gunfight is losing one. As quoted from a book I kept by my side for thirty years, *Street Survival: Tactics for Armed Encounter*, "You don't shoot to scare...you don't shoot to wound...you don't shoot to disarm. You shoot to *stop the action of a threat being made to your life or*

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A Look Ahead:

Apr	Open Mic, see p 19 for details.
Apr 4	Board of Directors mtg.—6:30p
Apr 11	South Bay dinner mtg.—6:00p, Molly Giles
Apr 21	Editors Mtg, Orchard Valley Coffee, 10:00a
May 2	Board of Directors mtg.
May 9	Dinner mtg.—Emily Jiang, winning contests

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(MOLLY GILES FROM PAGE 1)

"My first critique group was composed of fellow graduates from this MA program, all women, all smokers, drinkers, and mean as hell to each other," Molly explained. "One member I recall read every story of mine with a twisted face and an incredulous, 'Molly how seriously do you want me to take this?' We sent copies of our stories in advance of the meeting to each other so each of us had plenty of time to pen red inked insults on every margin. I brought Frances Mayes (of *Under The Tuscan Sun* fame) to one of these meetings and she left shaking her head and saying, in her soft southern accent, 'Molly, that's a pack of bitches.' But boy did that pack keep me honest! I did my best work thanks to their snapping and snarling and I miss them to this day."

For Molly, critique groups are an essential step in getting her work ready for publication, so after her first group split up, she began leading several herself. "For years I led the group Amy Tan started to write her books in and there I found it best to just read spontaneously, without previous copies being sent," she said. "The feedback seemed every bit as helpful and far less harmful when it came straight off the shoulder."

Many of our own members participate in critique groups and some are interested in starting their own. Molly's advice? "The perfect group would consist of one jealous resentful unpublished writer, one total sweetheart who likes everyone, one copy editor with an eye for detail, one poet with an ear for rhythm, one playwright with a sense of dialogue, and an editor just starting a national magazine who wants your stuff."

Please join us in welcoming Molly Giles, winner of every major short-story award, editor of Amy Tan's bestseller, *The Bonesetter's Daughter*, and current Professor and Director of Programs in Creative Writing at the University of Arkansas. She will discuss how working with other writers can help you prepare your own work for publication. DR

(COP TALK FROM PAGE 1)

someone else's." The best way to do this is shoot at a person's "center mass." To find center mass, put your finger on your forehead, between your eyebrows. Run your finger straight down and stop at your stomach. Imagine a three inch band from top to bottom and you have what is known as the center mass or the kill zone. Cops shoot here for two important reasons. First the brain...the major blood vessels...the spine...and most of the vital organs—are in this area—in short, the body's life-support structure. Secondly, by aiming at the center of the suspect, you increase your chances of hitting him. This second fact is more important to a cop than whether the suspect lives or dies. Every second delayed in hitting the suspect is a second more the he has of shooting the cop or someone else.

Can police officers lie?

Lying is such a harsh word, especially when you're accused of it. Instead of lying, we prefer to call it subterfuge. Yes, police under certain circumstance, lie through their teeth. How productive would an undercover officer be if ever time a drug dealer asked, "You ain't no narc are you?" the officer replied, "Why, yes I am now that you mention it." A police officer can try to trick a suspect by telling him a witness saw him do the crime, or his prints were found on the candlestick. An innocent person doesn't have to worry about this tactic because he'll realize the cop is bluffing. But the guilty person won't know for sure if we really have the evidence and may opt to confess, or at least break out into a cold sweat. On the other hand, never ever lie to a jury, to internal affairs, or to your partner.

As a rule, a good cop never goes hungry and never gets wet. Another rule is I can't give out legal advice. Other than that, let it rip, and really, there are no dumb questions. JH

One night a police officer was staking out a rowdy bar for possible DUI violations. At closing time, a patron stumbled out of the bar, tripped on the curb and tried his keys on five different cars before he found his. He fell onto the front seat and fumbled around for several more minutes. Everyone else had driven off before he finally started his engine and began pulling away.

The officer was waiting. He stopped the driver immediately, read him his rights and administered a breathalyzer test. The results showed a reading of 0.0. The puzzled officer demanded to know how that could be.

The driver replied, "I'm the designated decoy."

President's Prowling —Bill Baldwin



Bill Baldwin
President, South Bay Branch

Form Follows Function?

How to structure your writing, especially fiction, is often not obvious.

When I joined my first writing group, I had already written two novellas and developed a good writing style. But I wanted to know how to structure what I was writing.

Twelve years later I'm still working on structure, and I'm not the only one. Knowing how to structure your fiction can require innovation, ingenuity, and experimentation.

When the composer Mussorgsky adapted Alexander Pushkin's historical drama *Boris Godunov* as an opera, he originally created a work in seven scenes. The opera focused on the history and psychology of the main character, a person with some similarity to Shakespeare's Macbeth. The work provided no love-interest for the lead character. Mussorgsky also utilized unusual harmonies in his music and melodic lines less refined and more "Russian" than what was popular in his day. Seven scenes was an unusual structure for an opera, and *Boris Godunov* was not a success. Mussorgsky revised the work, added a female character to provide a love-plot (and a female voice for contrast to the brooding Russian bass!) and restructured the original scenes plus additional ones into a more conventional structure of a prologue and four acts. The opera thereby became more "accessible." After Mussorgsky's death, his friend Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov reorchestrated the work to remove the more "jarring" harmonies, and the opera took its place as one of the great Russian operas, firmly in the world opera repertoire. For a century following Mussorgsky's death, analysts praised Rimsky-Korsakov for "salvaging" a flawed masterpiece.

But in the last several decades, people have realized that the original orchestration sounds surprisingly "modern" – "ahead of its time." Perhaps Rimsky-Korsakov imposed the standards of the day on a work which was simply too original. I personally also believe that the original seven-scene structure, strikingly stark, is much more modern.

But how do you tell? Some things are matters of taste. Decide what effect you want to make, and then figure out how to do it! *WB*

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Marjorie Johnson



Dave LaRoche

Managing Editor

Editor's Itch

Club Elections Coming Up

Club elections! What happens here is one thing, what ought to be is another. We elect officers once a year—maybe too often, theoretically. About the time one settles in to the job, it's time to move over, practically. The reality is different historically. Historically we have, with some minor variations, had the same folks in the chairs for years—maybe not the same chairs, but that's only material, academically. You see, while the juggling may change, e.g., the treasurer's numbers accrue to the secretary while the secretary's letters pass to the VP, the voices remain the same. Historically the theoretical of elections is only academic—practically speaking.

At our last meeting, President Bill Baldwin announced his need for a nominating committee chairperson (NCC) whose job it will be to change some of that... to develop a slate of candidates who espouse new ideas and, of course, the best of the same.

The NCC will select a few folks to work on the committee and together they will tout the value of "office", persuasively "tap" a qualified few and, by July, present to the club an ought-seven slate of visionaries, new and old, who are willing to lead. You may snicker but remember we're 180 strong, and among such a number there are certainly some willing and qualified. Note: the prepared slate is not the last word, as nominations may also be made from the floor on the night of elections. But... not fair to nominate those unwilling to run.

Vitality, enthusiasm and tradition are words I would use to characterize our leaders today. They like their jobs, do them well, stay on course and I don't know that I would want that to change. I do know that "new blood" flows vigorously; "burn-out" is a problem; and that when one is selected from among others, that "one" feels energized by the mandate... even if his chair is still warm. *DLR*

"Should we expect mediocrity from our leaders? They are selected by an unreliable process. But it's the only process we have and we must make the best of it. Occasionally we get smart, or lucky"

—Gabriel Gadfly



WritersTalk

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MEETING RECAP

We Recap Chris Baty—

nanowrimo and Thirty Days to a Novel

—Dave LaRoche

I all but skipped the March meeting. After the bumps and grinds of a rambunctious (and risky) beginning, I've learned to be traditional and conservative, and writing a novel in a month simply did not appeal. However, 'T&C' does not mean inflexible and now after the fact of Chris Baty, I must say my T&C is waning.



Enthusiasm Emanating

"Hey back there, can you hear me without a mic?" he asked, and the resounding answer was "yes" as Baty's natural projection was that of a stage actor saying lines at the old Seattle Orpheum (a big theater). He used the mic anyway.

"Okay, thanks for that amazing introduction." He laughed. "I am splitting my speaker's fee with Diana." And right away, we knew it was going to be fun.

Baty is a freelance writer—newspapers and travel print—but known famously as

founder and director of

National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo) dedicated to the proposition that everyone on the planet should spend the month of November writing a 50K word novel.

"Make a list of three things you love to read about in novels such as: outrageous characters, emotional conflict, happy endings..." He went on and I easily wrote: 'clever philosophical insights, irony, and moral dilemma,' and waited to expound... but that was the last they were mentioned—until the very end.

Twelve writers, floating in coffee-shop offerings, started the NaNoWriMo in 1999. They focused and wrote but soon broke into talk, re-focused and repeated the cycle before deciding that no one could relieve their coffee sloshing bladders until they had written a full thousand words. And that's how it started a few years ago and, at last count, they were 79,000 strong with enough money from donations and coffee-cup sales to endow seven libraries for children in Viet Nam.

Baty's message is: *no editing, none at all—just write*. Writing is fun, editing is dreary and while 'just writing' produces quantity, in time the quality will arrive. "If you start writing and keep writing the wombats will come. The wombats will find you," he said. His "wombats" are the things that turn critics' eyes, produce winnings and notoriety, and ultimately big bucks. Of course, not all novels crashed like this are, on their own, successful but he held up a handful that were and he personally has one being "seriously considered" today by a publisher. Now that's something to work for.



Why a month?

Increases productivity. Real life gets in the way until you commit and this is a sure fire commitment. We need *urgency* to produce and with this promise you agree to orient your life around writ-

ing for a month—promising and writing 1700 words a day. As you proceed and look back at your accomplishment, momentum is recognized and that recognition breeds more momentum. In a month you have a book. That's productivity!

Takes the pressure off. It makes writing fun and liberating—no time for the polishing—you just write. "It's truly fun," he said. "You don't compare or grade or 'do better' and there's no 'first chapter' syndrome." The quest is for completion, not perfection, and think about it; first drafts are never published anyway. "You often don't know what your book is about—until it is finished," he said and pushed further with this point, "You can revise a bad book into a good one but you cannot revise a blank page and this is the genius of writing a novel in a month."

It improves your writing. This is a bit magical but he said, "When you write for quantity over quality, you usually end up getting both." This is because we leave our inner editor at home. The guy who is shaking his finger in our face, telling us our plot is weak, our characters flat or our setting unbelievable, is off on vacation. Okay, this guy is valuable... but only with rewrites as while he is great at criticizing and second-guessing, he's damned poor at creating. Send him away on your first run through and call him back when you're ready.

Baty believes that the 'inner editor' arrived about puberty to take over and subdue our youthful imagination and exploration—our boundless unfettered creativity, and since has been permitted far too much authority. As writers we need to reach out, grab a wisp of an idea, an outrageous thought... anything, and run with it—fast and continuously for thirty days. And not worry much about quality as that 'inner' guy will catch up

soon enough.

This kind of thinking will take off the pressure, let you sleep well at night, and result in the evolution of wonderful ideas.

Should you buy in and shut out, he has five tips for releasing imagination:

1. Choose a word count, 50K seems doable, maybe an hour and a half a day.
2. Tell everyone you know you are doing it (you want the fear of personal humiliation hanging over you).
3. Drag as many as you can in with you. (Novel writing can be a social event.)
4. Delete nothing as you write. If you must eliminate, italicize, perhaps leaving the egregious phrasing for a future use. Think of building without tearing down.
5. Do not plan too much. Use an outline if you must, brief character studies are okay but no plotting. Be fully prepared to wing it.

Back to the original list. "When we write, include what we look for in what we read."

Baty is a personable, comfortable, animated presenter who entertained and enlightened with his insight. While I suspect that some of us, the T&C crowd, will avoid the 30 day constraint but all that he left us is applicable to any pace, and we were surprised with the notion and delighted. Thanks, Chirs Baty, for a terrific hour at the Grill.

For more information

about National Novel Writing Month, go to www.nanowrimo.org. DLR





Pat Decker Nipper
Columnist

NIPPER'S NITS

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

Lesson 25. Quotation Marks #2

Place quotation marks around expressions that follow phrases such as: "the word(s)", "the term", "designated as", "endorsed", "signed", "named", and "entitled". For example: Perhaps the word "responsibility" is not in his vocabulary.

Do not place quotation marks after "known as," "called," or "so-called," unless the word is unsuitable or slang. For example: The man known as Captain America was shot.

Place quotation marks around the names of individual parts of a publication, such as chapters, stories, songs, and so forth. Place titles of publications, such as books, periodicals, plays, and reports, in italics. For example: My short story "The Idaho Gold Dust Murders" is included in the anthology *The Way West*.

Place quotation marks around a person's thoughts if they are verbatim. For example: "Surely," Elizabeth thought, "my boss won't require me to take this road trip." If thoughts are not word for word, do not use quotation marks. For example: Elizabeth thought that her boss was a jerk.

When writing dialog between two or more characters, begin a new paragraph each time the speaker changes. For example:

"Hi, Mark," Sally said. "How did you get here?"

Mark replied, "I took the catamaran."

Contact Pat at pat@patdeckernipper.com for comments or questions



Jackie Mutz
Contributing Editor

Accolades

—Jackie Mutz

It is amazing what people will do when they see an empty box; they fill it up!

Which is exactly what some CWC members did at our March meeting featuring Chris Baty—they wrote little notes about their accomplishments, which is the sole purpose of this column, to tout members' successes no matter how small. Here is what I found in the box.

1. **Martha Alderson** is teaching a plot workshop at the Jack London Writers Conference. Don't miss it!
2. **Robert Balmanno**, whose published novel *September Snow* has gone into its 2nd printing, is doing book signings throughout the Bay Area through May 2007. See the Calendar of Events on www.blessingsofgaia.com for details.
3. **Marsha Bransdorfer** is publishing a memoir (sorry, title not mentioned) of her experiences working over two decades in the attorney world, using the print-on-demand publisher, Xlibris. Look for publication this summer.
4. **Daniel Colby** has sent off his sci-fi fantasy short story "Number 13" to the magazine *Sci-fi and Fantasy*. Good luck Daniel!
5. **Becky Levine** has two talks scheduled: "Dipping Your Toe into the Electronic Writing" located at the Gilroy Library in March 2007 and "What to Do to Your Manuscript Before Hiring an Editor" at Sisters-in-Crime in Los Angeles on June 10, 2007. Check out www.beckylevine.com for details on these upcoming events.
6. **Jill Pipkin** recently received her adult education certification and will be teaching a class on Travel Photography soon (watch for announcement!).
7. **Beth Proudfoot** has finally published her first ezine! Congratulations Beth! Go to www.bethproudfoot.com to view her newest creation.
8. **Juliana Richmond** has published her memoir *Dancing Mama*. Look for her books at the May CWC meeting.
9. **Terri Thayer's** new book *Wild Goose Chase* is coming out in January 2008. Sign up for Terri's newsletter at www.terrihayer.com for updates.

Well, there you have it for March. Look for the Accolades box as you pay your dues at CWC's April Meeting featuring Martha Giles. And if the muse strikes, sit down and write. Or send me your own success bit at editor@writertalk.com. I can't wait to hear what you've done. ~ jam

MEMBER PROFILES

WITH UNA DALY



Una Daly
Contributing Editor

Say Hello to Rosanne Johnston Davis

I watch people. I want to know why they think, act, or do what they do ... I make up a story about why they are the way they are, explained Ro Davis, South Bay Writers Club webmaster, on



Ro Davis

what makes her a successful writer. In fact, she also manages the website for the San Francisco Peninsula Writers Club and the state California Writers Club (CWC). Attending one of the CWC Asilomar conferences in the mid-

nineties, Ro was cornered by our own Edie Matthews and has been a member ever since. Along with publication in the *Christian Science Monitor*, she was a finalist at the 2003 Jack London writing contest for her high fantasy novel, *Starpriest*. She has completed two other novels plus tinkering for the last five years with a historical novel about the 18th century Italian composer and ordained priest, Antonio Vivaldi, and the women who loved him.

"My seventh grade English teacher was the first person not a relative who told me I should consider a writing career," said Ro. Growing up in a blue collar, second generation Italian family in Niagara Falls, N. Y., she thought that meant writing for a newspaper. The Vietnam War was all over the news and she was not interested in covering the mayhem. In college, she discovered Tolkien and Middle Earth, which started

her creating her own fantasy worlds.

Her day job is in the aerospace industry, Ro has been fascinated by space since John Glenn went into orbit in the sixties. For the last twenty years, she has tested flight software for satellites. A professional career has made the thought of chasing freelance writing assignments too much effort for too little return.

Dave LaRoche, newsletter editor for South Bay Writers, appreciates Ro's no-nonsense approach and straight talk at Board meetings. "Ro cuts through the fog and distraction to see and to summarize the bare substance of things."

"The project I can't put in a drawer, yet can't seem to finish is my high fantasy novel, an epic tale about a boy who grows up thinking he's a god," said Ro about her current writing project. Although a big-time NY editor and a medium-time NY agent were interested, she knew that something wasn't quite right yet. Attending Tod Goldberg's story structure workshop in January, opened her eyes to what she didn't like about the story and how to fix it.

Favorite fantasy authors include: Susanna Clark, George R.R. Martin, Katherine Kerr, Melanie Rawn, Elizabeth Hand, and Neil Gaiman. Dickens remains a favorite for characterization, Steinbeck for the big themes, and Salinger for the stories that can be read over and over again.

Ro is married with two (adult) stepsons. Living in a seven gabled house under a 500-year-old oak tree in the Santa Cruz mountains, she adds, "My avocations lie in the domestic arts: cooking and gardening. I love my home. I never wanted to go into space, just work on the stuff that does." *UD*

"False is the idea of unity that would take fire from men because it burns, and water because one might drown in it; that has no remedy for evils, except destruction of liberty"

-George Washington

Conception (Liberalitas)

By Jeremy Osborne

I wait in the indigo darkness for my destiny in this world, and according to my predictions it should happen right... about... now! A brilliant yellow blast ignites over the fountain, sizzling away my night sight. A moment later the bell in the clock tower heralds the first warning of midnight, the thunder after the flash of lightning. As expected, hell likes to be on time.

My vision returns quickly, details dribbling down like the broad brushstrokes of a sloppily painted mural. One quarter of the moon illuminates the sky behind a fan of feathered cirrus clouds. I scan the north sky for Polaris, but can only find Venus poking a hole through the night's canopy. The visual remnants from the yellow flash dissipate into an orangish urbanized glow, sending a blaze across the distant horizon.

The red warning lights atop the skyscrapers flash in unison. I smile at the memories they have provided me through the years and know each of them by their intimate names: Finance Point, Golden Gateway Hotel, Market Place, Sky Corp, Capital and Enterprise. One of the qualities I most admire about human beings is their willingness to reach for heaven even while stuck here on earth. To me, each of these buildings is a testament to their human potential; an unmarked memorial for me.

The bell tower gongs a second time, reminding me that this isn't about dwelling on my own thoughts, but I want my memory to be perfect. I take a moment longer to take in the rest of the view, the simple things. A Ferrari races by and I catch sight of the personalized license. Yes, BOBSCAR, you are quite flashy, but if you waited around I believe someone like you would be impressed by our car. BOBSCAR speeds right through the red light and away from me, rightly

not interested in this moment.

A third gong, and my eyesight clears enough to focus on my tactical surroundings. To my left is the open expanse of the rugby field, a large enough area to give birth to its own fog bank. To my right, an ancient brick wall stands up against the red and white traffic lights rolling up and down the street. A mere six inches of brick will separate me from what might follow out of the fountain. The caretaker's house stands directly in front of me, now functioning as a small souvenir shop for visitors. Who'd have thought this would all go down at the east visitor entrance of my mortal Alma Mater?

On the fourth herald of midnight I stare directly into the core of the now dissipated miniature power flare that blinded me ten seconds ago. Figuring out Sharee's destination nexus took about a half an hour, and that the location sat right on top of an active fountain made me laugh for another half an hour. Life had a sense of humor when it designed the gateways to hell.

She lies there inside the fountain amidst a column of fuming steam. I see her head lolled to the left, eyes closed, horns pointing skyward. A shin, a calf, a foot, one forearm and a hand drape limply over the lip of the pool.

I walk out of my shadowed corner, stepping over to the perimeter of the rapidly dissipating steam. She looks just like a normal woman, with horns, but not red skinned or anything stereotypical. Nor does she look capable of the awful feats she is supposedly capable of performing.

"Sharee," I say.

I touch her hot skin, my clothes dampened from the humidity pushed out of the brimstone heated fountain. I hook my hands underneath her armpits and lift her on top of a blanket spread next to the fountain. I wrap her up like a burrito, maneuvering the insulating cloth around her well-built frame and the few rags that just keep her within city decency laws.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

(CONCEPTION FROM PAGE 9)

"I see you survived the trip," I say.
Eyes still closed, she says, "I'm freezing cold."

"You'll get used to it soon," I say.

"Is this really it?" she asks.

"Yep, and you're even on time for your first appointment," I say.

"What are you talking about? Who are you?" she rattles off, shivering and shaking inside the blanket burrito. I think I should have brought more blankets. At the twelfth stroke of midnight I think that blankets occupy the bottom rung priority. A flip of my mobile phone, and a punch of a speed dial, places John within earshot with the magic of technology.

"Hey John, punch it," I say and hang up. Off in the distance I hear the screeching of his tires. A rush of adrenaline aids me when I pick up the Sharee-burrito, and I head over to the gate. I flick the lever down beneath my weight and pull open the door with my left hand. Just enough room to squeeze my own body and my miracle package through the threshold.

I look south down 4th Street and watch what has to be John's car speeding toward me. To my left the gate slams shut, and the little "surprise" I melded into the gate kicks in with sparkly notification of activation. Through the open bars in the gate I hear the fountain bubble up. I hope John gets nothing but green lights. He's three blocks away, maybe fifteen seconds, when I hear a slimy suction sound. I can defend myself, but defending a shivering and shaking demon from its own kind is another question all together.

I hear a phlegmy gurgle behind me as John pulls up along the curb in my favorite car, the one I made him buy for just this occasion. The door to the speed-yellow, 1994 Porsche 911 pops open and I dump Sharee into the passenger seat. John squeals away the passenger door shutting under the force of acceleration, off toward Sharee's first

destination.

I want to leave the area, since I've done everything I came here for, but I need to stay for just a bit longer. The sound behind the gate grows and drowns the traffic whirl and drone of urban life. No other living being is nearby, and that is good.

The nexus holds open long enough, just as I expected, and a scaly tentacle scours the courtyard. A lone gate and wall stands between me and the deadly inquisitive appendage. I smile, waiting for my inevitable fate. A reptilian face pokes up and out from the fountain.

"I hear you and smell you, human," the demon gurgles.

"I hear and obey you," I say, sarcastically pretentious.

The arm extends upward out of the depths and slaps against the gate. The demon, obviously not the smartest enforcer they could have sent, vibrates wildly against the ancient metal. The ward I left worked, paralyzing the demon mid-entry into this world.

"You underestimate what I gave up for this mortal life," I yell back, inappropriately proud of my tricks.

The exposed giant upper body of the demon seizes against the blessings of the gate, and I have just a moment to contemplate my destiny. I could die here now and return my mortal body to the soil, regaining my place within the heavens. In fact, I should die here now, that's the way it's supposed to go, fighting valiantly against my mortal enemy.

But why waste my life here? Humans have become quite efficient with their killing technology. I leave the demon to his fate of frightened law enforcement officers and their 9mm bullets. I'm not done here.

I turn south along 4th Street and pull out my cell phone. "Hey Koji, I didn't end it here," I say, mid-stride. "Come pick me up along 4th Street. I'm not done here yet." I pick up my pace and head towards my next stop. **JO**

About this time last year, I was thinking about the East of Eden Conference, and the writing competitions. The Basil Stevens contest for sports writing was going to be a real bonanza for someone, but I'm so indifferent now to sports above high-school level that "someone" obviously wouldn't be me. But then, I recalled a vacation trip I had taken a few years ago, when I went back to revisit some familiar scenes. I remembered that there had been a time . . .

ONE BOY'S FIELD OF DREAMS

Robert Miller

If a young boy was lucky, he had a Field of Dreams, his own personal Yankee Stadium, where he imagined playing with Joe DiMaggio and Scooter Rizzuto. Maybe it was a school or park, maybe just a vacant lot. Or, if he lived at the edge of a dusty, windblown little town where Wyoming's mountains faded into the great plains, it might have been just the upper yard of his family's old place. He might return one day to look with an old man's eye and see if his field matches the memory. He might wonder if it helped make him the kind of ballplayer he is today.

When last I saw it, early in this twenty-first century, my field looked pretty much as it had nearly sixty years before. A barbed-wire fence was slowly falling down, just as it was when I was a boy of twelve. When we played then, the sagebrush from the hillside to the east seemed to be trying to re-establish itself where once it had been cleared away. It seems now to have given up and left the yard to the grasses that shoot up green and lush for about a day and a half and then die, leaving only foxtails to bury themselves in my socks. To us, foxtails were the natural ground cover for a baseball diamond. Those dudes that want manicured green grass nowadays are sissies.

Out beyond third base, we got into the tough, dry, deep-rooted, foot-snagging sagebrush. Out there, you had to watch where you were putting your feet or you were likely to trip. So catching a long foul down the third-base line was usually out of the question. Not that we ever hit anything there. The upper yard was not flat. From home plate at the north-west corner, the elevation of the ground rose about fifteen feet to the south-east corner. The difficulty of hitting a ball uphill just about canceled the outfielder's nagging concerns about tangling with a sagebrush or col-

liding with the rusty barbed-wire fence. No matter. It was nearly 180 feet from home plate to the fence, and until high school I never knew anyone who could hit a ball that far.

Hitting to right was better. Right field was nearly level for sixty or eighty feet before it began a gentle downhill slope, so a well-placed ball might roll on easily through the smooth-trampled foxtails, clear into the deep corner. Since we usually had only one or two outfielders, that hit stood a good chance of producing a home run. Besides, nobody I knew could throw from deep outfield to home. Too long a hit wasn't good, though. The fence was closer, only about 125 feet from home plate. A ball knocked over (or through) the fence was a ground-rule time-out. We only had one ball, you see, and if it rolled into the gully beyond and someone had to go searching for it, it could take a while.

Real danger lurked in that upper yard. You had to watch where you stepped. A fielder backing up to catch a ball had to remember to look down. There were burrows going downward, burrows maybe five-eighths of an inch across. Down in each lurked a deadly tarantula. Six inches across, if they spread out their legs! (Well, maybe an inch and a half. Thinking about it now, I realize a six-inch spider might have had difficulty fitting into a five-eighths inch hole.) The truly fearful thing was that if you planted your foot too close, they would leap out of their burrows and run up your pants-leg. Then you had only a few seconds to shuck off your overalls before they sank their fangs into your leg. That would be your last baseball game. Us guys knew that to be an absolute true fact. One guy knew a fellow who had an uncle that swore this actually happened to a buddy of his, many years before. You had to be ready for anything when you played baseball in our upper yard.

Big league baseball these days could make their games more exciting if they borrowed a trick or two from us guys. They probably clear out the tarantulas nowadays and fill in their holes, but when they're there, they really keep you alert.

Playing on a hillside was exciting, too. Rounding third base, it was all downhill to home. Man, could we get moving!

That was my kind of baseball, my Field of Dreams. That's where I learned all I know, and to this very day, when I stand around talking baseball, people say I'm still somewhere out in left field. RM

TAXES, TAXES... AND MORE TAXES

Marcela Dickerson

How did this happen? It's almost midnight and our tax appointment is tomorrow... again! *But we just did them*, I tell myself as I grab anxiously another stack of papers.

I vaguely remembered calling in for the appointment early in the year, and penciling it in my personal agenda. Still the reminder call took me by surprise. *Is it already one year?* But we were there just a month ago. And only recently we paid our fourth and last estimated tax payment.

No, no on all counts. A year has gone by, my stack of papers has increased, and I still have four full envelopes to get through before tomorrow.

I walk to the kitchen to make a cup of chamomile tea. I would love a glass of wine or maybe a Margarita, blended if possible, but either would put me to sleep, and I need my brains.

My husband softly snores in the bedroom since 10:30. He is organized and also took a day off from work to do them. His information is neatly completed, waiting expectantly on the dining room table.

"Business expenses" is the next item on my "Be prepared list" sent out by our accountant. Reluctantly I pull out the receipts for "meals." Aha! Now maybe I can have a bit of fun.

The first restaurant, in yellow paper, states: "The Frozen Fish." I look at the amount and at my note at the bottom: *Dinner with April to talk about investment in the new project.* We also talked about her kids, my kids and her first grandchild. She was VERY happy!

The next one: "Pink Dandelion – Vegetarian", *Amy needs advice for son's problems.* I remember she cried, and how she cried... And I had to pay because her husband had had recent surgery.

"The Scrapping Squirrel," a Western-style eatery where our Book Club met "to plan a fundraiser." I only could deduct half of this one, the other half we paid for with the money from fines. Fines? Yes, we did pay fines when our language exceeded the limits of decorum during the meetings.

Next I pull out "Gifts": "Baby layette" for *Ercilia*. Ercilia did the cleaning at our office and we threw a shower for her and her new baby girl.

And so it went. At 1:30 am my work was ready.

The only thing that compensated the drudgery and disgust of the preparation was going through the papers that reminded me of some events of the past year, which had cheer and tears, planning and completion.

I went to sleep exhausted but relieved. *It was over!*

I only wish we could decide how our taxes are spent. Then I would contribute less painfully! MD

Terse Verse —by Pat Bustamante

April Fuel-ish

I'm driving here,
I'm driving there and
Suddenly finding one more errand.
I should be writing,
I'm not lazy!
But this Ms. -finishing
Is driving me crazy.

This piece was published in Orange Ink, the newsletter from Orange County Branch of CWC and is repeated here, in part, with the permission of Teresa Shuff Trujillo, a publisher and its author.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

By Teresa Shuff Trujillo

Teresa Shuff Trujillo is the president of Book Workshop, Inc. She has been in the printing and publishing industry for nearly 30 years. The following questions were posed to her by the editors of WOW—Women on Writing at <http://wow-womenonwriting.com/>

1. How many hands does the manuscript go through to get to the senior editor?

There is no firm number answer to this question. If an author works with a small publisher there may only be one or two individuals in the decision making process. If the author is working with a large publishing house, it is conceivable that an unsolicited manuscript would first be reviewed by an intern assigned to the slush pile, followed by an acquisition editor, group editor, senior editor, and executive editor, then publisher. But, this is dependent on the management structure of each publishing house.

2. How do manuscripts end up in the “slush pile?” And, emerge to be published?

It is estimated that only 3% of the material submitted for publication actually is published. The slush pile is where unsolicited manuscripts land when the mail is delivered. There is no priority for reviewing these submissions. There are a lot of dead trees in the slush pile.

I recommend that every writer join a critique group. Most of these groups are free, or very low cost. Your challenge is to find a group you're comfortable with, and that has a competent leader. The group has to be capable of offering constructive criticism in such a way that the author grows as a writer. Conversely, the author must be open to input from other writers.

3. What are the current trends in publishing today?

Trends change as fast as the wind blows. Current wisdom is that chick lit and memoirs have been a little overdone in the last few years—so these segments are cooling-off for the moment. Shoppers will see a lot of A list fiction authors publish books between now and the holiday shopping season. The publishing industry is worried that there will be buyer fatigue and that many of the books will remain on the shelves after the holiday shopping season.

4. How has online networking influenced the publishing industry?

The publishing industry has been slow to fully

adopt online and internet strategies. Big publishers like the business model that has worked for decades. But, online networking has allowed authors to interact with more of their fan base. A strong author fan base translates to book sales. Authors are using the internet to communicate with book clubs, online chats, blogs, and other online communities.

5. What is the job of a publicist? A publicist's job is to get the author and book mentioned in the mainstream press. They will schedule interviews with radio, television, and print journalists. They will often act as the book tour coordinator.

7. Would it be rude to ask the local bookstores if they'll permit a book signing?

Not at all. Bookstores are in the business of selling books, and author signings help sell books. Authors might find more success making this request at independent bookstores than at the big chain stores. Some of the big chains have policies on signings that don't favor authors—but authors should

still ask.

9. What's the biggest challenge for an unknown author to overcome?

Being unknown—of course. I always encourage writers to submit works for publication in magazines and journals so that they can start building a “writing resume.” This is easier for non-fiction writers to accomplish due to the numbers of magazines covering vast topics. But, there are still avenues for fiction writers to publish shorter works in an effort to create some type of notice for their work.

10. What are the percentages for manuscripts received that are

(a) Publishable—without editing?

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 14)

WritersTalk Challenge

Creative Writing Awards are offered to those publishing in *WritersTalk*

Genres:

Memoirs <1200 wds
Short Fiction <1800 wds
Poetry <300 wds
Essays <900 wds
Articles <900 wds

Awards:

Twice yearly, Mar 15 and Sep 15

First Prize - \$60

Second - \$40

Third - \$25

Honorable Mentions

Entrance:

All work in the genres above, published in *WT* during the periods Aug 15 through Feb 15 and Feb 15 through Aug 15, is entered. (*WT* editors are excluded from participation)

Judging:

Is to be done by genre-related Club members selected by the editors.

Judging approach:

Ten points are available for each piece, to be allocated over several categories of grading in each genre. The allocations are available from *WritersTalk* Editors

The three pieces with the highest scores will win (regardless of genre)

When you submit to *WritersTalk* and are published in the genres above in the word allotment indicated, you are entered. You need do nothing else.

Note: Publishing in *WritersTalk*, excluding ads and announcements, is limited to members of the Southbay Branch of the California Writers Club

(QUESTIONS ANSWERED FROM PAGE 13)

(b) *Publishable—with editing?*

(c) *The “no way” ones*

(d) *Actually published?*

There are no manuscripts that are publishable without editing. Whether the editing is for content, spelling and grammar, length, or clarity—all manuscripts require some amount of editing. Unfortunately, most authors are too close to their own work to objectively edit their manuscripts adequately. Whether a well written manuscript is publishable depends on if there is a market for the work. I can't take a financial risk on publishing a book I can't sell, so I may pass on a well written manuscript for purely business reasons. I have seen a lot of manuscripts that are “no way” deals for me, but might fit another publisher's marketing and sales plan.

The main reason that many manuscripts are not published is that the business people who manage publishing don't wish to wager/invest their money in books that won't make money for themselves and their investors.

I do see a lot of badly written material. I can usually identify something that I do not want to work with within a few pages. Remember, publishing is a business—and writing is a creative art. Art is not something that is universally appreciated. If a publisher passes on a manuscript, it is a business decision and not a personal slight.

11. How many books have to sell before the publisher makes money?

This depends on the individual book. What I can tell you is that many publishers lose money on the majority of their catalog. The top 10%-30% of their catalog allows them to lose money, or make a long term investment on the rest of their offerings. One big blockbuster can pay for a stable of “also ran” titles. A “long term investment” may be a new author who they think will develop a following as their work matures. In 2004 the average book only sold 3,500 copies—and that was a year that JK Rawlings had Harry Potter in the bestseller list! The publisher will only make a few dollars over the production and marketing cost of the book—so it is plain to see that more titles lost money than made money.

12. Any suggestions for how a new author could get her first review?

Participate in writers' workshops and contests. Many universities offer some type of writing workshop and review contests for new and emerging authors. There is a list of annual writing contests in the *Writer's Market*. Don't invest in contests with high entry fees. Anything over \$25 is excessive.

14. What chance does a new author have to get reviewed by some prestigious places like *Library Journal* or *Booklist*?

Fiction authors have less of a chance for review than non-fiction trade book authors getting reviews.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 15)

(QUESTIONS ANSWERED FROM PAGE 14)

15. How meaningful are reviews?

I think independent booksellers are more of a factor in the success of a new author than reviews. Independent booksellers actually know their customers' reading preferences, and make individualized recommendations to readers who are more likely to follow the advice of a trusted bookseller than a reviewer. After all, the reviewer doesn't really care if you purchase a book at all—and the bookseller wants to make sure you keep coming back to the store to buy their product. Which one is more invested in the relationship with a happy reader?

Emerging authors are better served by developing relationships with independent booksellers than chasing elusive reviews. The independents can cause a groundswell of support for new works that will push sales in the larger markets.

The biggest change in bookselling in the last two decades has been the decline in independent bookseller while the mega stores flourish. This is bad news for emerging authors.

16. Since most senior editors work with established writers, a new writer often has to find his or her own support team. That said, would you recommend having a professional critique service look over a manuscript before submitting?

I recommend that every writer join a critique group. Most of these groups are free, or very low cost. Your challenge is to find a group you're comfortable with, and that has a competent leader. The group has to be capable of offering constructive criticism in such a way that the author grows as a writer. Conversely, the author must be open to input from other writers. I always recommend that writers find a competent proof reader and pay for proofing services. Nothing sinks a manuscript faster than bad spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Most editors won't look past a badly prepared manuscript.

17. How much fact-checking does a publishing house do? Or, is that basically left up to the author?

Little or no fact checking is done by the publishers. The challenge of fact checking came to light earlier this year when the website *www.thesmokinggun.com* exposed James Frey's fabrications in his "memoir" *A Thousand Little Pieces*. Publishers need to trust that the work an author represents as factual, original, or unique is as represented. fact check every

piece of work destined for publication. Unfortunately, publishers were faced with several high-profile deceptions by authors in 2006. If publishers find it hard to trust new authors, it will make it harder for unpublished writers to find someone willing to gamble tens of thousands of dollars (or more) on their work. By the way, authors found in violation of their contractual obligation to provide work as described can be held liable for damages in a court of law. James Frey and Random House recently settled their contractual dispute over *A Thousand Little Pieces*.

18. How important are contacts in the business? Can conferences help?

Conferences can help authors make contacts. Choose conferences wisely. It's hard to get seen or heard at big conferences like Maui. A better option would be to find a well-respected writing program and apply as a student. Iowa, UC Irvine, Cal State Long Beach, UCLA, Harvard, and many other programs will help authors hone their writing skill and introduce them to industry professionals in a much more meaningful way than a conference can.

19. What do you wish authors knew or would do before submitting their manuscripts? Or, what's your pet peeve regarding authors/manuscripts?

If I listed all of the things that make me crazy when I review a manuscript it would take a week to read. First and foremost—spell check! Incorrect grammar, spelling, and punctuation will distract the editor to the point that they will only see the blemishes and not the hard work. Next, submit the manuscript in the accepted format 11 or 12 point, Times. Nobody in the editorial department wants to see the author's attempt to design the book. Don't format headlines, subheads, and various devices that take emphasis away from the words on the page. Those devices will get entered on the page by the design team. Authors should never harass the publisher about their unsolicited manuscript. It only makes me less likely to read it and/or work with an author who may prove to be difficult in the long term. If a manuscript is truly good, and submitted to the right publisher, at the right time, in the perfect market conditions, and the hand of God points to your perfect manuscript—your prayer of publishing might be answered.

The golden rule of publishing is "*He who has the gold makes the rules.*" Learn to play by the rules. *TS*

Announcements Announcements Announcements

****WRITERSTALK ANNOUNCEMENT****

Flash Fiction Issue in June

We had such great response with the poetry request—thank you for your submittals—that we are thinking now about another focused issue. Say spotlighting flash fiction? Okay, I heard a cheer, so for the June issue we will entertain submittals of fiction of not more than 200 wds—a challenge for some and a breather for others. So sharpen your pencils—just once is required—and send in your wildest expressed in your fewest.

Wikipedia expounds:

Flash fiction, also called sudden fiction, micro fiction, postcard fiction or short-short fiction, is a class of short story of limited word length. Flash fiction is not only fun to write but improves writing skills since you must still include characters, plot, and resolution but in a much tighter space.

While word length requirements differ, for this issue of *WritersTalk* we will limit all ‘FF’ submittals to 200 words or less. Bring em on, we’ll be waiting...

Note: This emphasis is just that... and not meant to dissuade or will we set aside any other writing we normally feature. *DLR*

JACK LONDON AWARDS

Jack London! He’s the guy credited with founding this club—he and a few others. The reality is Jack was an *honorary* member of CWC and had actually formed, with others, the Press Club of Alameda from which the CWC and its branches were

spawned. At this point, however, it’s all ancient history and we, the CWC, have adopted our “honorary member” as the hallmark of our club and with doing that have named an award after him.

The Jack London Award is presented, by the State Board, to a member in each branch who has provided that branch with “exemplary service.” It is offered in the odd years (though it once was once yearly) to one selected by Boards of Directors from nominations by Branch membership.

In our branch, South Bay Writers, nominations, for this award, are now being entertained by our president, Bill Baldwin, and will close on May 30th—we do have time.

So let’s look around. Do we see someone we think deserving because of outstanding service to our branch? Do we see more than one? Please write an email to Bill, naming the member(s) and supporting your nomination with reminders of each nominee’s service.

Now here’s a rub. For reasons I do not fathom, a member may receive the award only once—that’s once in a lifetime. (When I heard this, I wondered... does this imply we are capable of good service for only two years... or that we are advised to ease off after winning... or that award winning service cannot be improved upon? I don’t know, the logic escapes me)

In any case, here are the previous winners who are still registered members and, while may be nominated, cannot win:

- ♦ Carolyn Downey
- ♦ Beth Proudfoot
- ♦ Bill Baldwin
- ♦ Edie Matthews
- ♦ Susan Mueller
- ♦ Tina Farrell

Again; send your nomination(s), with supporting articulation to Bill Baldwin at

WABaldwin@aol.com.

Any Board member will carry your message as well.

DLR



APRIL FOOL John Wilson

Winter loves Wisconsin. It was the first day of April with a bright sun in a clear blue sky but no heat. Stiff and crisp, the snow from last month's storm still lingered. It lined the church driveway in grubby gray banks, showing little consideration for the passage of the mourners.

Consideration had never been one of Doug's virtues. Doug had been a good friend, not a close friend but a good friend. Eighty-one years old, he had lived life to the fullest. His three marriages, six children and thirteen grandchildren were testament to that.

The church was packed. Considering how few friends he had in life and how many people he owed money to, I was surprised. His family occupied the first three rows. The casket was open. Laid out on a blanket of white silk trimmed with blue satin, Doug looked almost regal. Hell, he looked better than he had ever looked in life. Truly a magnificent sight, it seemed a shame to have to close the lid.

Two of his children, two grandchildren and four friends were pallbearers. They carried Doug's casket from the church down the stairs and into the waiting hearse. The gray ice with its dusting of white snow made the journey more exciting than it should have been. After a few minor imbalances the casket was slipped into the rear of the shiny black hearse. Cold as it was, a small group gathered waiting for the

hearse to leave. As it started to drive off one of the back wheels hit a large chunk of ice and the vehicle lurched severely. Amidst loud screams from the bystanders, the back door of the hearse slowly swung open releasing Doug's casket. It began a journey which neither Doug nor his family had planned on.

The gleaming, polished casket bedecked in wreaths and flowers began a brief but highly entertaining journey. As it started down the hill towards town, one brave man threw himself at the casket hoping to check its downhill momentum but to no avail; if anything, this gallant and ill advised attempt helped it on its way. As precisely aimed as a guided missile, the casket sped down the hill and out through the church gates. The casket resembled the world's most luxurious sled. Mourners started chasing after it shouting, "Watch out, clear the way," all the time hoping that its carefully prepared contents wouldn't spew out all over Main Street.

Cries of "Stop it," echoed down the street, preparing the unknowing for the imminent arrival of the speeding wooden projectile. It left a trail of flowers and dismembered wreaths in its wake. Veering first right then left the casket avoided obstacle after obstacle, like a running back heading for the goal line.

Battered and bare, the casket entered Kresge's drug store by the front door mowing down two old ladies and a small dog. It came to an abrupt stop, practically standing up vertically in front of the druggist's counter.

A gaggle of out of breath mourners slowly stumbled into the store and surrounded the casket. As they watched, the lid of the casket cracked open and a voice was heard to say, "Do you have anything to stop this coffin?"

JW

Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did. So throw off the bowlines, Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream.

—Mark Twain

AT 8:00 O'CLOCK, FOR SIX BUCKS,
TAKE YOUR VERSE TO THE SAN JOSE
POETRY SLAM (EST 1998)

EVERY:

First Tuesday: Open Mic with music
by Rebelskamp
Second and Fourth Tuesdays: Poetry
Slam with music by Jay Rush
Third Tuesday: Head-to-Head Po-
etry Bouts with special guests.

At The Britannia Arms

173 W Santa Clara

Downtown San Jose.

www.sanjosepoetryslam.com

Playing with Words by Emily Jiang

I munch on words
then spit them out
not like a Big League player,
more like a machine gun
or a tennis ball machine,
set on stun.

I savor words,
my teeth cracking open
the hardest consonants
to get to the creamy vowel fill-
ing.

I catch words
on my tongue
and roll them around,
salty, sour, bittersweet,
tastier than sticks or stones
but harder to swallow.



Emily Jiang

Note:

We are happy to
announce that at the
Jack London Con-
ference, March 26th,
Emily took second place (First
Runner Up) in the Charles and Lois
Cook novel writing contest with
her new novel, *Paper Daughter*.

Expert

My other
life, as a fulltime
art teacher,
edowed me with
expertise in the
following sub-
ject areas: drawing, painting, pho-
tography, ceramics, spinning,
weaving, basketry and crafts of all
kinds. I also played the violin and
minored in vocal music and thea-
ter.



Betty Auchard

Should your writing have need
for advice in these areas, please
contact me. I am eager to share my
expertise. Contact me at

Btauchard@aol.com

Do you have expertise?

*Do you have a specialty that you will share, that might be of help to a
writer looking for accuracy in a scene? Do as Susan Mueller, John Hows-
den, Arlyne Diamond and Dottie Sieve—let us know. We will publish your
offer and add you name to our directory.*

Police Procedures: John Howsden jwhousden@comcast.net
(article in Sep 2006 Issue)

Profile Writing: Susan Mueller samueller@worldnet.att.net
(article in Oct 2006 issue)

Character Development: Arlyne Diamond Ph.D ,
ArLyne@DiamondAssociates.net (article in Jan 2007 issue)

Doctors' Office Environment, OB-GYN: Dottie Sieve,
pdrsieve@yahoo.com (article in Feb 2007 issue)

Teaching and the Arts: Betty Auchard.
Btauchard@aol.com (article above)



A Reminder....

Our Yahoo Group, South Bay's
locus for writers resources,
is active and growing.
Go to:

**[http://groups.yahoo.com/
group/
SouthBay_Writers_Exchange](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SouthBay_Writers_Exchange)**

- ♦ Hit "JOIN" button
- ♦ Fill in form
- ♦ Wait for email approval

THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT.
COME JOIN US ON THE WEB

Note: If your are a South Bay mem-
ber, you're qualified.

POETRY CENTER SAN JOSÉ ANNOUNCES THE POETRY LOUNGE at
THE BLUE MONKEY —Poetry readings and discussion most Tuesdays
Co-sponsored by the Creative Writing Department at San José State University
ADMISSION IS FREE

The Blue Monkey Bar and Taquería
1 East San Fernando Street
San José, CA 95113 www.pcsj.org

Announcements Announcements Announcements

Creative Writing Classes

Looking for more skill and feedback on your writing?
Edie Matthews M.F.A.
teaches creative writing classes on Tuesdays.

- 10am-noon Westmont Retirement Center, 1675 Scott Blvd., Santa Clara.
- 1:30-3:30 pm Valley Village, 390 N. Winchester Blvd., Santa Clara,

For more information, contact
www.scae.org
or show up.
Enrollment fee is three dollars.

Here's an Opportunity

A website that features book reviews on video is looking for interesting and knowledgeable people, that's us, to be interviewed about the books they are reading. We also would have a chance to mention being an author and any of our published works.

What's more

They pay \$20 per interview for books on their list and \$15 for others.

(If you have interest, a copy of their list is available.)

Visit their website
www.bluerectangle.com

to see what it's all about or contact

Jessica McCartney
2052 Edison Ave
San Leandro, CA 94577

Creative Nuggets in the Gold Country!

Yes, the time's come to stake your claim on this year's

Gold Rush Writers Workshop,

slated for

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in Mokelumne Hill - the very center of the 49er gold rush. This event offers a unique venue, agenda, and brings together unique (and fun!) personalities!

The faculty includes best-selling authors, award-winning writers, and university professors. They'll lead small, interactive workshops in short story, poetry, novel, memoir, young adult fiction, non-fiction, flash fiction, and biography... all in three days... whew! Not to mention featured luncheon and dinner speakers!

Be sure to bring your latest writing to share in the workshops... and in the devilishly late-night
Pirate's Workshop
to be held adjacent to the hotel bar!

Check it out...

www.goldrushwriters.com

Bone and Gristle —C Donnell

I am made of meat, bone and gristle.
I am not made of leaf and thistle.

Why can't I eat what's like me?
I don't want to grow into a tree.



South Bay Writers Open Mic

First Friday each Month

7:30 — 9:30 p

Barnes & Noble

Almaden Plaza, San Jose

Second Friday 7:30 — 9:30 p

Borders Books

Santana Row, San Jose

Third Friday 7:30 — 9:30 p

Barnes and Noble

Pruneyard in Campbell

Fourth Wednesday 7:30 — 9:30 p

Borders in Sunnyvale

Read from your own work, from your favorite authors, or just come to listen. Contact Bill Baldwin

(408) 730-9622 or email
wabaldwin@aol.com

A WRITER WANTED

Cathy Bauer's Critique group is entertaining applicants to fill a vacancy created by the flight of Duncan King to the east side of the Sierra where he prefers an association with nature, suffering in bitter cold and generally a most miserable life—though the absence of urban distraction may be good for his writing...

If you are a fiction writer, preferable short stories, and deign to fill his vacancy, please let Cathy know.

She can be reached at
cathy@bauerstar.com

Or behind the raffle table



California Writers Club

South Bay Branch
PO Box 3254
Santa Clara, CA 95055

www.southbaywriters.com

Stamp(s)

ADDRESSEE

Address Correction Requested

SAVE THESE DATES

Board of Directors Meet
Apr 4 6:30 somewhere

General Meeting (Dinner):
Apr 11,
Molly Giles

Open Mic:
Apr 6 7:30p
B&N, Almaden Plaza
Apr 13 7:30.p
Borders, Santana Row
Apr 20, 7:30
B&N in the Pruneyard
Apr 25, 7:30
Borders, Sunnyvale

WritersTalk Inputs: Apr 16/23

Editors Pow-Wow:
Apr 21, 10:00am
Orchard Valley Coffee

**General Dinner Meet — Apr 11, 6:00
At**

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

See Map Below

Take 237 to
W Maude to Macara

