

WritersTalk

A South Bay
Writers Club Monthly

Volume 15, Issue 7, July 2007

Non-member subscription \$20 per year

Page 1

South Bay Writers POTLUCK BARBECUE

**SUNDAY,
July 15, 2007, 3 PM**

Fire up the grill!
It's time for our annual BBQ. Come! Enjoy the garden ambience of dappled sun and sweet scents in the Matthews backyard and chat with old friends and new contacts, Savor good food and delight in good company.

It's always
magnificent fun.

POTLUCK CHOICES

Last names beginning with:

- ♦ A-K —Bring Salad
- ♦ L-R —Bring Appetizer or Dessert
- ♦ S-Z —Bring Main Dish or Side Dish

(The club hosts meat and drinks)

**There is no charge for this once a year spectacular,
just come and enjoy!**

Location

**Edie and Jim Matthews
917 Perreira Dr., Santa Clara.**

RSVP

**(408) 985-0819 or
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Member Profiles

By Anne Darling



Anne Darling

Contributing Editor

Say Hello to Meredy Amyx

When Meredy Amyx makes a commitment, she keeps it. Amyx, an editor by profession with Cisco Systems, decided two years ago to focus on writing fiction in her spare time.



Meredy Amyx

"I thoroughly enjoy my work as an editor," she said, her face radiant. "In my professional life, I've worked on all kinds of manuscripts and consider myself a pretty good judge of writing, but I don't have much of a perspective on my own writing. I have a short history with fiction," she said in a lowered tone of voice.

Amyx joined the California South Bay Writers Club in 2005 and has been a frequent contributor to the monthly *Writers Talk* newsletters. It's paid off. In addition to two honorable mentions for her work, she won first prize in the *Writers Talk* competition and a paid

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

A Look Ahead:

July	Open Mic—see p19 for details.
July 11	Board of Directors Mtg.—Baldwin's 7pm
July 15	Annual BBQ
July 21	Editors Mtg.—Orchard Valley Coffee, 10:00a
Aug 1	Aug Board of Directors Mtg.—LaRoche's
Aug 8	Dinner Mtg., 6:00pm, Becky Levine on editing

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President's Prowling —Bill Baldwin



Bill Baldwin
President, South Bay Branch

Goodbye – And See You Again Soon!

The day I am writing this – June 26th – St. John's Day (at least in Germany, I think - the exact day appears to vary by country) – is the feast day of John the Baptist, who (in the Christian tradition) proclaimed the coming of Jesus. This time serves as the setting for Wagner's opera "Die Meistersinger". And, in my religious tradition, the solstices (summer, winter) are the times when the Holly and Oak Kings exchange places on the seasonal throne of Britain.

So it's an appropriate time for transitions – and this is my final President's Message. It's been interesting being South Bay president these many years...serving as Central Board rep and State Secretary for part of that time. On the other hand – it's been a lot of work, and it's nice to be stepping down (although I'll miss it)!

Part of me has already gone on vacation. I've been working on my novel again – that's a nice feeling – and reading; and I've been getting new ideas for writing; which, after all, is what a *writers'* club is all about! I may even take a week off from my day job to write!

I'm afraid I'll miss our Summer BBQ – because every year I attend the Carmel Bach Festival; and I'm taking a little extra time this year.

But I'll still be around, and I hope to see many of you at our open mics around and about the San Jose area; and at the 2008 East of Eden Conference. I'll still be attending (Some? Most? All?) board meetings and conference planning meetings.

And I wish Dave and the new officers the best for the coming year. They're all very capable and I think we'll see great things from them. So Best Wishes, and Keep Writing!

Bill

Arts Council **YouWriteOn.com** is an exchange providing fellow-writer critiques of fiction as well as **free professional** critiques each month. Free critiques are for the highest rated five new writers and from editors for Curtis Brown, Orion and Bloomsbury who publish writers such as J.K Rowling, Ian Rankin and David Lodge.

Poetry will be introduced to the site in the future with free critiques from poetry professionals.

This site is funded by the UK Arts Council, the largest grant body for the Arts in the UK, to help new fiction writers develop through feedback. Go to **youwriteon.com**

California Writers Club South Bay Branch

— o —

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Join With Us

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

Contact our Membership Chair
Marjorie Johnson



Dave LaRoche

Managing Editor

Editor's Itch

There's a Wind Blowing—

I feel a wind blowing, a sailor's wind, a Jack London wind. A wind that brings increasing vitality, interest and growth, and fills our canvas with energy. I'm happy to be a part of it, in front of it.

I've felt it coming for a while watching our increasing attendance at meetings and a movement in our average age toward North; more participation in the newsletter—more submittals, more editors, now six—shall I mention again, Branch membership now reaching for 200.

Our workshop attendance is up and the instruction practical and valuable with much more to come. An outstanding East of Eden Conference completed last September with robust content, celebrity keynoters and exceptional attendance. I hear (and repeat) it compares favorably with those of the "professionals" costing five times as much. (Of course it isn't Hawaii...)

Our interest in supporting our student youth was manifested in a reduced membership fee and less at the door—see "View", page 7—and more can be done in that area. And we had an election last month and there were *choices*, and more than fifty ballots cast. Yeah, I know, the food hasn't changed but our increasing enthusiasm is beyond argument.

This didn't start yesterday. It started years ago when dedicated and patient, hard-working, imaginative people started this club, stuck with it and grew it. And now we're at a point where the breeze is picking up. We can tie out our spinnaker and head for the horizon where the prospects are only as limited as our willingness to sail.

Yes, we are in front of great possibilities, many within our grasp, and we do benefit from momentum. "Carpe diem," some say. Well, that may be a bit sudden as that age thing, while moving, hasn't yet found the pole, but we can seize the times. We can recognize our potential and do bigger things for our club and ourselves, for our youth and for our writing community.

Yes, I feel a wind blowing, an exciting new wind, a wind of vibrancy and interest... a prevailing wind with little turbulence and steady direction—just the wind to catch and sail on.

Opportunity often knocks when
you're least prepared. Make the
inviting arrangements as soon as
you hear the noise—if not before.

...still lookin



WritersTalk

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California Writers Club.

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Submittals are invited:

Guest Columns

Almost Anything Goes ≤400 wds

Repeat Columns

to Una Daly

News Items ≤400 wds

Ltrs to Ed—*In My Opinion* ≤300 wds
to Andrea Galvacs

Literary Work :

Short Fiction ≤1800 wds

Memoir ≤1200 wds

Poetry ≤300 wds

Essay ≤900 wds

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to Dave LaRoche

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(MEREDY AMYX FROM PAGE 1)

scholarship to last year's East of Eden Writing Conference.

Her winning entry, a fictional short story, sprung from a dream fragment according to Amyx. "The waking dream state is a very creative time for me." In a quickened voice pace, she added, "My story ideas often come to me in fragments. "When they do, my question is not 'What if?' but rather 'what makes someone do this? What explains this?'"

Amyx, who is nicely dressed, leaned forward in her chair. She emphasized that attending the EOE conference really "...gave me a sense of identity. I asked myself what's the difference between a writer and a non-writer? The answer is a writer writes," she said nodding her head.

"Two years ago when I promised myself to work on my fiction novel" (the original idea came from a dream) "I vowed to write seven days a week." Amyx spends an average of twenty hours a week working on her novel. She also writes short fiction pieces in between. "I've completed four pieces in the past six weeks. I write every night without fail. It's like feeding and diapering a baby. There can be no excuses. It's my commitment."

There are four things Amyx particularly likes about writing fiction.

1. Playing God (I get to decide who lives, who dies and who has the power).
2. Getting revenge (I can make things come out right).
3. Indulging in all sorts of fantasies and obsessions
4. Enjoying the creative process

Like many writers, Amyx's love for writing began at an early age. The eldest of four siblings, Meredy grew up in Massachusetts surrounded by a world of academia. Her mother was an English teacher, her father a philosophy professor.

At age seven, Amyx produced not just her first story but her first novel! She burst out laughing as she described typing her five chapter book, dubbed *Murder Mystery* on her mother's old Olympia typewriter. "I still have the original manuscript," she added.

Imagining a cute little blue-eyed girl hunkered down over a typewriter, I asked how on earth she had learned to type at an age when most kids are just discovering how to read?

"The same way I still type," she indicated, "one

finger at a time."

In 1972, she received a B.A. in English from Boston University. She majored in English and minored in Philosophy. Four years later she met her husband-to-be while both of them were involved in *Mensa* publications; she was the editor of the Boston Chapter newsletter and later the editor of the national magazine.

Her husband, Richard Amyx, owned a home in San Jose, California, and in 1977, she moved west. She's lived in the original home ever since with her husband and two college-age sons. Grinning, she stresses the house has been remodeled throughout the years.

"Although I've had hundreds of articles and essays and even a few stories published in *Mensa* publications over 30 years' time, I've sold only a few pieces in the commercial world, and no fiction."

Amyx agreed writing requires a lot of time and energy, "...but it gives me a goal and a focus which at my age is not a small thing. To have a book with Meredy Amyx's name on it, that's my dream, but I'll settle for a short story."

We even touched on the subject of death. Amyx said it's the questions that one asks in life that are important. "My father was a professor of philosophy, so I have a natural bend in that direction. I hope I die asking a question. If not that, then I want to die laughing," she said blue eyes sparkling.

After interviewing this charming and talented woman, I have no doubt that she will achieve all her

Terse Verse
—by Pat Bustamante

July-Er

Tell me the truth
If my plot is too "hack-y"
Tell me my characters
Might be too "wacky".
Just don't tell me
To give up, not try:
I'm a writer! A great one!
(Now on that, you can lie..)

We Recap June's Meeting—

Jana McBurney-Lin and The Election

— Dave LaRoche

This “amazing lady,” (Diana said and we agree) with international credentials and a podium presence that politicians would lie for—not that *she's* political—had us starry-eyed for the hour. Within that ‘presence’ we heard her 12 karat heart pump out its message of understanding, appreciation and insight. For us, I thought, and maybe all of humanity, given she's holding up her half of the sky, but also her husband who knows about carp and we'll get to that later.

We liked Jana McBurney-Lin for just being there, but beyond that, she told us about those frustrating characters that are supposed to provide context and background but insist upon stealing the show. The guy in dowdy dress with his hat brim pulled down just leaning—a cigarette in hand, a stream of smoke rising, a street light in the fog of a harbor night. A horn blows. It's planned as a soft distant wail, a blow of loneliness and dismay but it's not. It's Doc Severinsen, reaching for high notes at the head of the NBC Orchestra and the guy in the hat is Gene Kelly... damn, there goes the plot. ‘But wait,’ Jana says... ‘Gene, stop dancing for a minute and tell me, where do you want to fit in? And Doc, take ten and let's talk this



Jana and Diana Richomme

through, I may have a spot.’

Her point, and she illustrated it with someone from her book she called “Madame Paper Cutter” who started her role as a ‘minor’ in McBurney-Lin's *My Half of the Sky* and soon pushed herself into top billing... her point was that the writer's best plans go astray. That characters you hire as chorus types, to spend their time reflecting light on a protagonist, may instead turn the light on themselves, and often it's not only reasonable but it works and works well.



Jana McBurney-Lin

no match—“M” simply popped up, so live with it.

This phenomenon, it seems to me, is most prevalent with writers who permit their characters to kidnap the muse and together drive away with the plot. Me, I'm a control freak. I map out my story with a PERT chart. (that's Navy for Program Evaluation and Review Technique) and every sneeze is planned and accounted for—no one ‘pops up’ unexpected. Of course that's not true but you get the point.

Jana's book is a huge success and “Madame” is somewhat responsible. She is strong and wise and the author, poor thing, is

McBurney-Lin spoke of other things... like inspiration and support, and she attributed the CWC with a share. Individuals like

Una Daly and Becky Levine wrote positive reviews and Alderson carried a line or so on her website. The people she met in Singapore, her family, friends and husband all excused her from the dinner table with

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)



“Go on, write; we’ll do the dishes.”

With her manuscript complete, more or less, she began working with Charlotte Cook, then an editor



and teacher, who provided her another big boost. Cook “bought in” asking for more detail and giving insight addressing character and plot. In addition to the expected. “Madame Paper Cutter” was further released.

When on a holiday visiting mom, sans working husband, Hui Hui, Jana assuaged her advantage of temporary freedom by agreeing to tackle the design of a bathroom while away. After several stymied attempts (designer’s block?), she gave in to a farmers market visit with her mother where she discovered a beautiful cloisonné wall-hanging of a carp. Ah ha, a good start, or *a* start, on the bathroom. Calling her husband with a progress report, she presented the purchase.

“Do you know what carp signifies in China?” he asked.

“Yes,” she replied. “It means luck.”

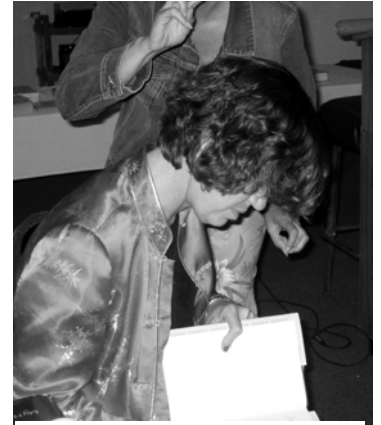
“Yeah, and we’re not going to put ours in the bathroom.”

Her daughter, on her father’s side of the call, was heard, “Dad, *some* people might need luck in the bathroom.”

And luck did follow. With the carp auditioning in mom’s bathroom, her husband was invited up into high-level corporate visibility, here-to-for truant, and Jana got a call from Komenar Publishing

who wanted her book for their next project.

So... if you’re looking for your half of the sky, let your characters pop up, get an editor who “buys in” and hang a carp in the bathroom. Great advice from a well-endowed writer. Thanks Jana McBurney-Lin.



Signing Her Book



Slanted Crop



Strange Crop

Did I mention elections. June was the month we elect officers to serve in the coming year—July 15 through the following 12 months—and we have selected the following:

President—Dave LaRoche
Vice President— Alexander Leon
Secretary—Jeannine Vegh
Treasurer—Jeremy Osborne

They promise a robust year, reaching out with their resources, and reaching in for our message. We can be sure we’ll hear more.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Our new officers and what they said



Dave LaRoche — President

I will invite access and influence into Club planning and promote accountable execution. I will encourage outreach to our youth, to our schools and to our public at large. I favor: more workshops, networking opportunities and a greater exposure to resources including directories for critique groups, genre interests and expertise donors. I support a broader line-up of speakers, perhaps adding magazine and travel writing, short fiction and political essay.



Alexander Leon — Vice President

Though initially a professional musician, life's meanderings eventually led me to electrical engineering. I currently work for Hewlett-Packard in global manufacturing support. South Bay Writers gave me the insight needed to publish my work. If elected Vice-President, I intend to expand our speakers' sharing of know-how, experiences and understanding of the publishing industry. I also will bring non-fiction authors who may inspire us about content and lead us to create richer and more powerful fiction and non-fiction



Jeannine Vegh — Secretary

I pledge integrity, commitment, and hard work. Community Service has enriched my life and helped me to grow as a person. I hope to help expand the South Bay Writer's Club by bringing in younger members, who will teach and inspire us. Young and old, we can work together to create a very powerful network. I welcome your support in assisting me with this role.



Jeremy Osborne — Treasurer

On February 16 of 2007, I quit my normal 8-6 job to follow my dream of writing. As a side benefit of doing the right thing, my quality of life positively altered. As Treasurer for the South Bay Branch of CWC, I will provide that same positive improvement to the operations of our group. Feel free to come to me about things that go beyond my standard Treasurer job description. I'm at your service.

A View From the Board —The SBW Board meeting was held at Carrows in Santa Clara with Baldwin, Bauer, Johnson, Burlew, LaRoche, Mathews, Garfinkle and Osborne attending.

VP: Diana reported (email) that Becky Levine will be our guest speaker in August and will lead a discussion on the editing process and value, and that there is a screenwriting workshop tentatively planned for September.

Treas: Vickie reported that renewal memberships are coming in, and she is preparing the books for transfer to the new treasurer.

Secretary: Cathy will turn over a hard copy of minutes to the new Secretary.

Central Bd Rep: Bob reports that state elections are on July 15 (he is running for prez), approx 200 have cast ballots so far for the bylaws change (4 mandatory meetings to 1 with specials by call of the Board, presumably to save money)

Publicity: Edie reported that new writers show up every meeting from website, open mic, word of mouth.

Newsletter: Dave reported a new printer (Createive Tech) will save us about \$100 per month, a 50% reduction in costs

A Motion was carried that will permit those under 22 to join the club for \$10 per year, attend meetings for \$10 per mtg.

East of Eden: Edie reported that Marjorie Johnson was appointed EoE treasurer for the 2008 conference.



COP TALK

John
Howsden

~Pigs, Plots and Bullets~

John Howsden Recently Maureen Griswold asked me what kind of gun her protagonist should carry. It's a good question and one often asked. It seems that if you write long enough, and often enough, sooner or later someone in your book is going to get shot, especially if it's a love story.

Picking the right gun is like picking the right pen. It really comes down to personal preference. Conversations abound with the pros and cons of guns and ammo as noted below in the discussion of two cops taking a coffee break.

Deadeye, a rail thin officer with fox-like eyes, shifted in his seat and said, "Listen Slugger, I know you like flat guns (automatics) more than you'd like eating this last donut, but they jam (malfunction) too much for me."

Slugger, a bear of a man with rippling shoulders, said, "True enough, Deadeye. But wheel guns (revolvers) only hold six rounds (bullets) and I like guns with plenty of bullets, so I can spray and pray." (shoot a lot of bullets)

"Rumor has it that your all-day-shooter (auto with high capacity magazine) is loaded with dum-dums." (bullets with and x cut into the lead to enhance expansion)

Slugger inched his gun hand towards the last donut and said, "No way. I only carry departmental approved hollow points (bullets hollowed out at the factory). The Geneva Convention prohibits hollow points in wars, but we still carry them on the street." (patrol)

When Deadeye saw Slugger going for the donut, he diverted Slugger's attention by asking him a question he couldn't resist, "What caliber (diameter of the bullet) do you think has the most stopping power." (not necessarily killing, but incapacitating the shooter)

Slugger grinned, leaned back and said, "That's easy Deadeye; the .45 caliber is the best. Getting shot with that is like getting hit with a fast moving brick. But caliber isn't everything? Remember the husband that caught his neighbor in the house with his wife and punched his ticket (killed him) when he drilled him between the running lights (eyes) with a 22 (.22 cal.). They were so close the guy's forehead was tattooed." (gunpowder around the bullet wound)

"Yeah, I remember, but there's a lot to be said about hydrostatic shock (the effect of a high speed bullet on flesh). After the military examined all those pigs they shot with high speed bullets, some felt a small bullet traveling at supersonic speed (1,087 feet per second) was just as effective as a big bullet traveling below supersonic speed."

The debate was far from over, but dispatch came on the air and detailed (assigned) them to a 415 PC. (415 Penal Code, Disturbing the peace). Slugger, like most cops, hated paper work and knew the rule of thumb was that for every ten minutes of activity there would be an hour's worth of report writing. Slugger slid the donut towards Deadeye and said, "If you take the paper, you can have the last donut."

Deadeye, an aspiring writer, grabbed the donut and said, "Let's roll." JH

Do You Have EXPERTISE?

Do you have a specialty that you will share, that might be of help to a writer looking for authenticity in a scene? Do as those below—let us know. We will publish your offer and add you name to our directory.

Directory of Experts

Police Procedures:

John Howsden
jwhowsden@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 ,
ALyne@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 in April 2007 issue)

Hospital and Nursing Environment:

Maureen Griswold, mau-reengriswold@sbcglobal.net
(article in May 2007 issue)



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 28. Square Brackets []

Brackets are always used in pairs. They are classified as the following types: parentheses or round brackets: (); box brackets or square brackets: []; curly brackets or braces: { }; angle brackets or chevrons: < >. This brief article emphasizes square brackets.

Use square brackets to set off information introduced by someone other than the original author. For example: "Whenever you contact him [the author] tell him I liked his book." They can also express corrections in case of error, such as: "I found the quote on page 200 [198]."

Use brackets to add a title, such as: "In his book [The Kite Runner], Hosseini writes about Afghanistan."

When quoting poetry, use brackets to change a letter from uppercase to lowercase, if necessary: "In 'A Rare Find,' the poet talks about immediate rapport with a new friend: '[t]hough it's hard to explain...'"

You can also bracket the uppercase letter to start a sentence that's not part of the quotation. For example: "[Y]ou sleep hard all night if you work hard all day..."

Use square brackets to indicate a mistake that occurs in the original quotation. "In his report, the executive wrote: 'The project was finish [sic] after the customar [sic] signed the contract.'"

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



Jackie Mutz
Contributing Editor

Accolades

—Jackie Mutz

I brought my mother to the recent meeting where Jana McBurney-Lin spoke so eloquently about the subject *When You're Really Done With Your Manuscript*.... It was interesting to hear her perspective on the meeting, especially the part where people stand up and share their good news about writing and/or publication of their work. She told me that it is a good thing that writers share their accomplishments, as good news makes everyone feel good. So here is some good news:

- 1 Robert "Bob" Balmanno's novel *September Snow* has sold over 1500 copies and over 85 percent of these sales are in the greater San Francisco Bay Area.
- 2 David Colby has been accepted into the ALPH workshop for science fiction writers and noted that his ELF novel has reached 55K words.
- 3 Carolyn Donnell took 1st prize for her short story *Walking Shoes* and 3rd prize for *Last of the Oatmeal* at the June 8/9 Frontiers in Writing Conference, Amarillo, Texas.
- 4 Tina Glasner, who collaborated with author Henry Fast, shared her excitement at the recent publication of his memoir of *Fragments of a Forgotten People*.
- 5 Jack Hasling shared a bit of his own writing wisdom: "You can be a successful writer without publishing a lot." The definition of success in writing is different for each of us. Though Jack took an Honorable Mention at the 2207 New York Book Festival for his *Footprints on My Tongue*.
- 6 Becky Levine gave a talk on "Revising Manuscripts" at The Sisters in Crime, Los Angeles No Crime Unpublished Conference. She will also be our Guest Speaker at SBW's August meeting. Don't miss it!
- 7 Audrey Lynch has published four travel articles for Plus Magazine, San Luis Obispo, California.
- 8 Phyllis Mattson will speak at Borders July 26, 7pm. She also announced a new publishing venue—retirement homes.
- 9 Jana McBurney-Lin received Honorable Mention in Forward Magazine Book of the Year 2007 and was a

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)



Suzy Paluzzi
Contributing Editor

THE BUSINESS OF WRITING By Suzy Paluzzi

INVESTIGATION PART 2

Most of the writers whom I have interviewed when I began the survey believe that a writing income needs to be augmented. Consider also the answers of other writers I spoke with later.

As a review, I asked the questions:

1. Do you think a writer can make a living by writing?
2. Do you do so, or do you make a living through related employment?
3. Do you have any general advice for writers?

Sally Ashton, editor of *Disquieting Muses Quarterly*, an online poetry publication, and an adjunct professor of literature and creative writing, echoes prior statements. "Income derived from actual composition is negligible. Most writers I know who come anywhere close to supporting themselves with their writing have come a long way around. Typically they've pursued some variety of journalism or technical writing. Non-fiction seems to be one genre that pays...Most of my writer friends make their living by other work, chiefly teaching."

Martha Alderson knows many CWC members. She writes a free internationally known Plot Tips eZine and conducts workshops "teaching other writers about plot. When writers asked me for my techniques in book

form, I published *Blockbuster Plots Pure & Simple*. Four live plot workshop DVDs, the *Scene Tracker Template*, a CD, and the *Scene Tracker Kit* followed." Martha has been writing historical fiction for about 15 years. "Although not yet published in fiction, my writing has earned awards," she says.

The advice Martha gives to someone who wants to make a living by writing is this: "Find some aspect of writing that you love and show up for it, say yes to every opportunity that comes your way, and you'll be amazed at what can happen. My life has been absolutely transformed because of saying yes to helping a fellow teacher guide some youngsters with their writing. And, as they say, the rest is history. Because teaching requires the deepest understanding, my own writing has improved as I have helped others improve theirs."

The general advice that Martha gives is this: "So much of writing is an act of courage. We writers spend countless hours on projects that may not find success in the marketplace and still we persevere. I remember hearing early on a writing teacher say, 'If you can do something else, do it. Writing can break your heart.' What I know is that writing can heal it too."

Which brings up another point. Sometimes the compensation one gets from writing is not only monetary. Dr. Sharon Bray specializes in leading expressive writing groups for men & women living with cancer. Sharon is the author of *A Healing Journey: Writing Together Through Breast Cancer* (Amherst Writers & Artists Press, 2004) and *When Words Heal: Writing Through Cancer* (North Atlantic Books/Frog Ltd., 2006). She has also written and published a children's book, poetry, memoir and many professional articles. A former executive, Sharon offers professional development courses (Writing To Heal).

"A bout with cancer forced me to reconsider how I wanted to live. I'd always written—loved words and language, fiction and poetry—and I decided to dive in and pursue my passion in earnest," says Dr. Bray.

One piece of advice that Dr. Bray offers is "Persistence and topic or story that ignites interest/imagination pays off!" I will include more of Dr. Bray's advice in my August article.

Finally, Margaret Abruzzi, published in *Western North Carolina Woman* magazine, has yet another approach on writing as a career. Currently, Margaret is expecting a chapter entitled "How I Became An

(Continued on page 11)

(ACCOLADES FROM PAGE 9)

finalist in the Ben Franklin Award 2007(shortlist).

- 10 Susan Paluzzi realized her dream of publishing a story in the Santa Clara Weekly recently, something she has wanted to do since she was 20 years old. Congratulations Suzy!

At the end of the meeting, I asked my mother her overall impressions. She said that we are a nice group of people and "I can see why you come to these meetings." We are a nice bunch who gathers every month to support our writing endeavors. And we are a nice bunch anyway, aren't we? Find out at the annual SBW BBQ at Edie Matthews's house on July 15 See you there and don't forget to email me your news:

editor@southbaywriters.com

Upcoming Events —Una Daly

Contests

Summer Writing Contests with Deadlines in July

As summer descends, many poetry and short story contest deadlines approach. We've compiled a list of contests with deadlines in July from various publications so polish up those literary gems but do check the websites or email for format and entry fee requirements before submission. And don't forget about our own South Bay *WritersTalk* contest which runs year round with \$\$\$ awards announced in September and March. Any work submitted to WritersTalk is automatically entered.



Una Daly

Contributing Editor

Byline Magazine Prizes range from \$40 to \$10 for short stories, inspirational pieces, spooky stories, narrative and other poems. Submission fee is \$3 per entry. Deadlines vary by genre. www.bylinemag.com/contests.asp

Glimmer Train Press, Fiction Open A prize of \$2,000 and publication in *Glimmer Train Stories* is given twice yearly for a short story. A second prize of \$1,000 is also awarded. Submit a story of any length and theme with a \$20 entry fee by July 15. Susan Burmeister-Brown and Linda Swanson-Davies, Coeditors. www.glimmertrain.com/fictionopen.html

Literal Latté, Poetry Award A prize of \$1,000 and publication in *Literal Latté* is given annually for a single poem. Submit up to six poems of no more than 2,000 words each with a \$10 entry fee by July 15. www.literal-latte.com/

Opium Magazine, Writing Contest A prize of \$1,000 and publication in *Opium Magazine* will be given biennially for a work of prose. This year's prize will be given for an autobiographical essay of less than 500 words. Submit a manuscript of between 50 and 500 words with a \$10 entry fee by July 11. Todd Zuniga, Editor. todd.dfw@gmail.com www.opiummagazine.com

Writers Digest A prize of \$100 and publication in an upcoming issue of *Writer's Digest* is given every other month for stories based a short, open-ended prompt. Submit a short story of 750 words or fewer based on that prompt. You can be funny, poignant, witty since it is your story. www.writersdigest.com

(PALUZZI FROM PAGE 10)

Evacuee" in the book, *Wild in our Breast for Centuries: Women and the Returning Realities of War* (Fulcrum Publishing) to be published in Spring 2008. Her part of the book is written from her point of view as a child about her experience in World War II. Margaret was born in Great Britain and lives in North Carolina, "where there is a tradition of story telling."

Margaret "wishes schools can encourage children to realize that everyone has something important to say." When Margaret became discouraged about her own writing, one of her writers' retreat's advisors, Peggy Millin of Clarityworks, encouraged her and said, "Who is going to tell your story?" Margaret remembers when the British poet John Betjeman spoke at her school and emphasized too, "Everyone can be a poet."

Margaret believes that it "helps to create a net-

work." Local colleges are a good place to start. She is enrolled in the Great Smokies Writing Program at the University of North Carolina in Asheville.

Abruzzi feels that "it's extremely difficult to support a family by writing. One can be a successful author with several books published and lightning may strike for you as it did for J.K. Rowling."

I have heard that writers may also choose to become editors or proofreaders. One example of this is Marijo Moore, a writer in her own right, who edited the book: *Wild in our Breast for Centuries: Women and the Returning Realities of War*.

So, it seems that the most important thing to know about writing for a living is to realize that it is "hard, hard work," as Dr. Sharon Bray reminds us.

My next article will address the different routes to publication. *SP*

A California Writer Goes (Back) to Texas —By Carolyn Donnell

June 8 and 9, 2007 marked the 36th consecutive year for the Frontiers in Writing writers conference in Amarillo, Texas. It is presented by Panhandle Professional Writers, that claims to be the second oldest writers group in the nation (We know who's first! ☺)

The conference was headed up by speakers Barry Eisler - one of the bright new stars of espionage and thriller fiction, and Jodi Thomas - a prolific author of twenty-four novels and a recent inductee into the Romance Writers of America Hall of Fame. Also present were Britta Coleman — an award-winning author, Solana Delamant — Poet, writer, fluent in English and Spanish, Andrea Brown - Executive director of the



Frontiers in Writing — Conference Plenary Session



And look what they give California Writers

and Hilary Sares - acquiring editor with Kensington Publishing in New York.

The workshops were very good. I would highly recommend most of them. Jodi Thomas gave a workshop on Making Characters Come Alive. Melanie Rigney is the one to consult for alternative publishing resources. California's Andrea Brown told us what to look for in an agent and also what's hot in the children's market (but you'd better have it polished and correctly categorized before you submit!). Hilary Sares, on the other hand, will take manuscripts not

completely finished if she likes your writing.

South Bay Branch was represented by me. I managed to win two prizes in the short story category - first and third. (I wonder if anyone else entered?)

Saturday's lunch was a typical Texas barbeque,

tasty and messy. The banquet on Friday night, though, was not up to our standards - not even the monthly dinners, much less the East of Eden evening soirees. The speaker (Barry Eisler) was great, but the food ... Texas, I'm disappointed in you.

Where were the steaks! Or at least a

really good Mexican fare. There's a restaurant in Amarillo that used to serve 15 different kinds of enchiladas and several varieties of margaritas. I suggest they have their banquets there next year. Oh well. Can't have everything.

So if you get a chance to go to Frontiers in Writing in Amarillo in future years, do go to the workshops, but maybe watch out for the evening meal.

Links will be posted in Yahoo Group, http://groups.yahoo.com/group/southbay_writers_exchange/.

Not a member? Go to the URL and click Join. Follow the steps and wait for acknowledgment from the Moderator.

Take Me Back -C.Donnell

Ride in a carriage o'er a gray stone bridge
that spans a gently flowing stream.

Sand curves round soft flowing sea.
Rain clouds cover mountains green.

Rock walls winding through the fields,
marking boundaries of my dreams.

Thatched-roof cottages, walls so white.
Take me back to Ireland tonight.

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 Sep15

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

Dinner, Google, A Synchronistic Journey —Maureen Griswold

Attendees of the April dinner meeting witnessed a coincidence of two new members, myself and Pam Walls, reuniting for the first time in 35 years. It was only the beginning.

Google Power: Chapter One: Earlier in April, Pam had been located by our other childhood playmate, Maureen Doyle McQuerry of Washington state. This Maureen became a writer, an educator, award-winning poet, and a newly published novelist with *Wolfproof*, (2006, Idylls Press). She's two years our junior and still precocious: www.maureenmcquerry.com

Maureen simply Googled Pam's name which produced a contact phone number. With Maureen's June 14th author's appearance at Borders in Oakridge Mall, our trio reunited after three decades apart.

I thought of trying Google to locate two wonderful people from my Army nurse days at Reynold's Army Hospital, Ft. Sill, OK. One was Steve Chartrand MD, a young pediatrician and Rich Haas, an RN. Both were fun, mature, and smart. Saturday, April 28th, I ventured.

Chapter Two: Heartbreak & Benevolence—First Google result: Steve Chartrand, MD of Omaha passed away April 18, 2001.

Dr. Stephen A. Chartrand, July 28, 1949 - April 18, 2001

51 years old, father of five, cardiac arrest while hospitalized for treatment of a rare auto-immune hemolytic anemia, Professor & Chairman of the Dept of Pediatrics, Creighton University School of Medicine, international research pioneer in cures for pediatric infectious diseases.

A former Omaha Children's Hospital ad serves as tribute to Steve's work in saving children's lives globally. Discover *The Hero No One Knows*: www.chartlaw.com/steve.pdf

Google produced yet another link: the Chartrand Charitable Foundation, a recently founded non-profit to benefit children: www.chartrandfoundation.org

Chapter Three: More Writers

The Chartrands: journalist David Chartrand, an award-winning syndicated columnist, humorist, and commentator. His book, *A View from the Heartland: Everyday Life in America*, is a beautifully composed testimonial about the love and resilience of family (2003, Globe-Pequot Press).

Rich Haas: somewhat similar to Steve, Rich entered academia and is Program Director, York College of Pennsylvania/Wellspring Health Nurse Anesthetists Program. He also authors scholarly articles published in professional journals.

Motifs & Moral

Work & Children: Maureen Doyle McQuerry's career; Pam Walls, author of *Abby Adventures* children's series (Tyndale House Publishers); my nursing specialty in NICU and pediatrics; Steve Chartrand's outstanding career and legacy in pediatric medicine and research; and, the Chartrand Charitable Foundation.

Writers/Authors: Maureen McQuerry and Pam as children/YA authors; my journalism/ medical writing career; Steve Chartrand and Richard Haas, authors of scholarly articles; and, David Chartrand, journalist and book author.

Moral: Attend Branch dinners and utilize Google—amazing connections and journeys can result. *MG*

BOOKWORMS GATHER —Suzy Paluzzi

The Book Group Expo, founded by Anne Kent, met for the second annual event at the San Jose Convention Center on June 8-10. Authors and members of book groups have the opportunity to meet and talk at the many literary salons scheduled there. Among the authors attending this year were Anita Amirrezvani (*The Blood of Flowers*), James Houston (*Farewell to Manzanar*), Susan Vree-land (*Girl In Hyacinth Blue*) and Anna Quindlen (*Blessings*).

Khaled Hosseini, author of *The Kite Runner*, participated as he did last year in the kickoff salon on the first night of the Book Group Expo. Susanne Pari, Program Director of Book Group Expo, moderated Hosseini's talk. She is the author of *The Fortune Catcher* and believes "that story telling is the purpose of writing."

Hosseini, a local physician on leave to write, has written another

of view there and has already gotten great reviews. Hosseini feels he "owes a debt to book groups. They turned *The Kite Runner* into a pop culture phenomenon by word of mouth."

The salon was conducted like a book group. Hosseini read a few paragraphs from his new book and then the moderator, Pari, followed by the audience, asked questions.

One of the nuggets the audience learned is Hosseini "underestimated how difficult it is to write a second novel." He also said he was "the medium for the characters." In addition, Hosseini returned to Kabul in 2003 and commented, "Some scenes in the book, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, are reflective of what I saw in Kabul in 2003. Also, family is the crux of your life (in his culture). Both novels are multigenerational, and show how complex parent/children relationships are. Finally, Hosseini doesn't think about "how many books will I sell?" when he is writing. "That is pressure for the publisher," he said.

Pari introduced the bestselling author, Hosseini by giving some of his background. Khaled Hosseini was born in Kabul, Afghanistan in 1965. His father was a diplomat and his mother taught Farsi and history. In 1980, the family moved to San Jose, CA. In 2006, Hosseini was named U.S. envoy to UNHCR, the United Nations refugee agency. He has taken an incredible journey in his 42 years of life.

Khaled Hosseini did not plan originally to publish his book, *The*

Kite Runner. "It was an exercise" for him. His wife encouraged him to publish, so that people could learn the true nature of Afghanistan. His timing was good in the release of that first book, since Afghanistan was in the forefront of the news. However, that is why Hosseini hesitated at first. He didn't want to be considered an "opportunist."

That confession summarizes his down-to-earth and selfless attitude. Khaled Hosseini underscored that "public voice is a powerful thing" at the end of his discussion, and he urged that people write their leaders to put pressure on the government of Sudan. Also, Hosseini said, "Lives depend on the money you send. If you send money to UNICEF, the Red Cross, and UNHCR, you will help."

Even though Hosseini's first book, *The Kite Runner*, will be released as a movie in the fall, he still feels the need to do something else to make a difference. "The U.N. is launching a major campaign to address the crisis in Darfur and Eastern Chad. 80% of refugee camps are women and children," Hosseini said. When Hosseini signed his new book for fans, bookmarks were distributed reminding readers of this.

This first in a series of literary salons was quickly sold out for the Book Group Expo. Anne Kent, Book Group Expo originator, reported that over 1600 bookworms attended the Book Group Expo over the weekend. **\$P**



Khaled Hosseini

book about Afghanistan called *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. The new novel focuses on the female point

Getting to Know New York State —Una Daly

Upstate is the 99% of New York state not contained in the famous city of the same name and is where we spent two weeks of June visiting family and exploring new territory. Full of rolling hills, farms, wineries, and lakes, we learned of the many famous reformers and thinkers from this region including Susan B. Anthony, Frederic Douglas, and Joseph Smith as well as the industrialists George Eastman and (?) Corning who would change the landscape irrevocably.

Flying into the third largest city, Rochester on Lake Ontario, we were pleasantly surprised by the graceful homes and beautiful tree lined streets. Home to University of Rochester, Rochester Institute of Technology, as well as headquarters for Kodak, Bausch & Lomb, and Xerox, the city has had its up and downs with the fluctuations of its major employers. There is plenty to do here including touring the International Museum of Photography at the George Eastman House and enjoying the yachting harbor.

Rochester is also a jumping off point for the Thousand Islands area along the Saint Lawrence seaway on the southeastern shore of Lake Ontario. Over 1800 islands ranging in size from 22 miles long to a few square feet make up this region which native people called *Manitonna*, Garden of the Great Spirit. We were fortunate enough to spend the weekend on Mudlunta, a small island that had been in the family for over 100 years and still flies the Canadian flag. The clear cold water and abundant bird life made it a naturalist's dream. Blue herons fishing and even an eagle's nest in a snag tree are common sights.

Venturing further into foreign territory, we drove a few hours north to Toronto, the cultural capital of Canada. Walking around this relaxed but expansive city, we enjoyed the ethnic restaurants, the waterfront, and the Hockey Hall of Fame where fans can spend hours watching videos of their heroes on and off the ice. The Shoe Museum residing near the University of Toronto is an essential stop for those who want to understand the important social distinctions of footwear throughout recorded

history.

Continuing our counter-clockwise loop around Lake Ontario, we stopped on the Canadian side of Niagara Falls and enjoyed some terrific fudge at the Horseshoe Falls. Although we didn't have time to ride the Maid of the Mist, we watched blue-slickered passengers get soaked in the swells.

Our next port-of-call was the Finger Lakes region in the center of the state. Geologists believe that the long slender lakes were formed by the friction created as two ice age glaciers ground against each other. Lake Cayuga, the longest of the lakes and home to the city of Ithaca that houses Cornell University and Ithaca College, was our destination. We stopped for lunch in Seneca Falls on the western bank, the small town where the first women's rights convention was held in the 1870s. Traffic in Ithaca was miserable with lots of detours and road construction in process but luck was with us when we chose the weekend of the International Double Reed Convention. We enjoyed an amazing free bassoon and contrabassoon concert at Ithaca College, which culminated in a large contrabassoon ensemble playing classical hits. Hard to top that, we had tapas for dinner in the surprisingly sophisticated restaurant scene of Ithaca.

No trip to upstate would be complete without visiting the Adirondacks, a premiere wilderness preserve stretching six million acres with peaks of over 4000 feet. Short on time, we eschewed the more popular Lake Placid resort, home of the Olympics, for the less traveled Blue

Mountain Lake in the southwest corner of the preserve. Still in the shoulder season, water remained

(Continued on page 16)



Fort Ticonderoga



Blue Mountain Lake

THOUGHTS OF THE OLD DAYS . . . WORK AS A CONSTRUCTION MAN —DARWIN MATHISON

Getting up in the morning, going outside with the sky so blue it boggles the mind.

The crunch of new snow under foot, on a – 20 ° day. The way the hairs in your nose seem to freeze together.

Getting up on a summer morning, in a small Illinois town, down by the Missouri border. Quiet hot sultry the air so thick that you can't breathe. Don't know where to go eat? How are you going to get something for lunch? What will this job be like, with people I don't know? No money in your pocket to amount to anything. Don't know how you will get thru the week?

(DALY FROM PAGE 15)

chilly but the experience of being the sole boat on the lake at night watching a nest of loons was worth it.

Our final stop in upstate was the famous Fort Ticonderoga on the eastern border of the Adirondacks. French, British, and American forces all controlled this fort at one time, which has now been restored and houses a museum of art and tools from the colonial period. It also features actors in period costume including bakers, woodworkers, and historians.

The car ferry from Ticonderoga took us into Vermont and the Green Mountains thus ending our New York journey. I am already planning our next trip when we get to go back and visit the spots that we missed and revisit the many places that merit another stay. *UD*

Maybe you can get a drag on your wages? That bare bulb room you have, where you exist out of an ice chest.

The twelve-hour day job, the seven-day weeks on the night shift, when you can't sleep because it's too hot, or too cold, too noisy, the curtains won't keep the light out. Your tired, so tired. How will I get clean clothes to wear? Will they pay on Thursday so I can go to the bank, or on Friday when the banks are closed, when I get off of work? Will Joy come this weekend? Will something happen to the car? My God it's so hot. I'm so tired! Will I be on the layoff list today? Have I earned enough to make the house payment this month? I wonder if three bucks worth of gas will get me home? What are the kids doing? What are the kids doing? What what what.

Did that contractor send that check? Money means food, you know. I wonder who stole my tape measure? My God this turbine is scalding hot. The wind blowing off that lake feels like ice, my fingers are freezing. I wish they would close that roof hatch. My neck is getting cooked. Where the hell is Hibbing, Minnesota, Menominee, Michigan, and Byron, Illinois, how far away is Wausau, Wisconsin, can I get home from Kenosha, WI. In three hours, where is Tomahawk, WI, Morton, ILL, Eureka, CA, San Ardo, CA? Will the material come in, or will they shut the job down? How will I get shed of these fleas I got in that fleabag motel? Will the shower water be hot? Does anyone else really care?

A tardy Flash, left in the pan —ed

Footsteps in the Night By ArLyne Diamond, Ph.D.

It was late and Sharon and I, both 15, were walking along a dark and deserted section of Jerome Avenue. Suddenly we heard the sound of footsteps behind us.

We looked at each other anxiously and quickened our steps.

The footsteps behind us, which we could now clearly identify as two sets, quickened as well. We slowed, they slowed.

We knew instinctively that we shouldn't run but should brave it out.

Practically not breathing because we were so afraid, we continued walking at what we assumed to be a normal pace.

The footsteps followed, not slowing down or quickening. They seemed to be deliberately keeping pace with us.

Finally we came to a well-lit intersection with other people around. Sharon and I were able to breathe once again.

With much bravado, I turned around to accost our followers.

It was Pete! Pete and his buddy were following us, not sure whether to approach or not because Pete and I had had a bad argument a few weeks prior and he wasn't sure if I would want to talk to him.

I fell into his arms, so grateful that he wasn't Jack the Ripper. The argument was forgotten.

Adapted by **Jerry Mulenburg** from: <http://www.trizle.com/how-to-finish-big-projects/>

How to Finish Big (and little) Writing Projects

Scenario: “*I need to plan everything, then work incrementally by parts until I get there! Then, I’ll have a super-awesome completed manuscript on time. Yay!*”

You know how it works:

- ♦ Plan every-and-all the writing project details.
- ♦ Work on each part one-by-one until they are all finished.
- ♦ At the end, combine everything into your finished manuscript.

You’d think you’ll make it by the deadline; but weeks/months — no years! — pass, and you wonder what happened. The problem with completing writing projects using conventional methods? They’re inflexible. If you need to change something, it affects everything else. Planning stages? That’s right: seemingly, it’s time to plan everything all-over.

Traditional Planning

It takes too long. You won’t get a working product until you’re done; by then, market conditions change — meaning you’ll have to adapt from your plans. Oh no!

It becomes de-motivating. Remember building that last big writing project? “I had passion when I started, but that quickly faded...” and you’re probably telling yourself. By the latter stages, you’re tired, groggy, and working like a snail on weed.

It gets you a blah-product. *Complacency produces mediocrity.* Instead of filling the every nook-and-cranny of the project with juicy-good fillet mignon, you start filling it with burnt-soggy-hamburger. Need real-world examples? Read 95% of what’s published today!

To rock your writing project, do sumthin’ else! The Solution: Adopt Agile Writing Development All-world software developers use a method they crazily call: Agile Software Development, or its street name: ASD. That is: **They build a releasable product within weeks.** Then, they build outward to create successively bigger product releases.

The first releasable product has the most important stuff done. They’ll term it Version 0.1 (or, something similarly nerdy). Next, they’ll expand that version outward with additional features — those crazy-kids will term it Version 0.2 — releasing that version within weeks as well. Gradually, the successive small releases ultimately form one frickin’-juicy-good completed software item. **Completo!**

Why Does Agile Development Rock?

You start focusing on the most important sucka in the project — get that out of the way, then fill in the other parts.

Then move on to the next product. That way, you allow yourself to create the magic right away — instead of waiting for a completed product with lesser important parts. Remember, in whatever humongous product you’re building, keep this in mind: 20% of the project serves 80% of the importance. Likewise, regarding that above ‘20%,’ 20% of that 20% includes 80% of its value. In other words, completing 4% of the project (i.e. 20% * 20%) serves the absolutely-freakishly crucial role in the project’s success, which you can complete **within weeks (or days/hours)**. So, instead of aiming to complete 100% of your big-frickin’ writing project, complete the crucial 4%. Then, build outward with successive releases.

Example: You + Your Great American Novel

Let’s say you’ve decided to write the most influential novel in the world to date using Agile Development. So what does your butt do? You start building the novel with its most crucial parts — where you set a two-week launch date. After those two weeks: “I gotta start selling my novel, or else!” you scream at the mirror So, you get the essential parts done to sell in 2 weeks:

- ♦ You produce a 1-page query letter detailing your awesome stuff.
- ♦ You provide examples of your best previous writings.
- ♦ You solicit testimonials to wow prospective editors on your marketing plan.
- ♦ You create a submittal list to send your query to online.
- ♦ You polish your sample chapter(s) and get an MFA.
- ♦ Ta-da – its in the mail! Now what?

You start selling your writing sample by your deadline.

Now, seeing how magical you were, you now tell yourself: “It’s time to service the next sector!”

So, how do you expand your writing audience? You give yourself two weeks to target the periodical sector. You identify 5-10 possible periodicals that fit your novel (think Writer’s Market). You focus on the novel details and create an article that fits periodical requirements.

To not confuse your initial goal (remember the novel?), you term the new article, Periodical 1.0.

You describe the bottom-line advantages of your article to the readership emphasizing its need.

For marketing collateral, you solicit testimonials from your previous admirer’s list. You start to get responses to the queries within 2 weeks from those periodical-folks. 2nd Ta-da!

Now not only do you (1) have a novel out for review, but you’ve also (2) complemented the novel with your periodical 1.0 to the business crowd. Next thing you know, your writing career starts to rocket as you continually build outward — and slowly-but-surely, it becomes one freakish behemoth with tons of profitable offerings, servicing 52 countries around the world, getting you on the cover of Writer’s Digest and People Magazine, snatching you a million-dollar movie deal with Brad Pitt/Angelina Jolie starring your life — and, finally, the ultimate of it all: **You get on Oprah!** JM

Collision

Richard A. Burns

It was just up the steps leading to the glass double doors of P&M Insurance and to my first day of work. It mattered not that now was the height of the great depression. I was almost jubilant.

At the reception desk: “Wilson! You’re Sam Wilson, aren’t you?” Fast approaching was Mr. Parker, who hired me.

We shook hands. He had indicated I would be compiling reams of actuarial datas, a perfect job for a recent USC graduate in mathematics.

But something about Parker gave me a chill. His eyes darted; his handshake, too brief.

“Shuck that coat and tie, Wilson.”

For six hours, I mopped four floors of that sprawling building; I scrubbed toilets and washbasins. By mid-afternoon, I was livid. *Enough!* I sprinted toward the double-doors to exit that nightmare.

Crash! A lady went down.

I had seen her earlier at lunch. Easy on the eyes; slim; long-legged.

Kneeling, she picked up her purse. “Quite clumsy, aren’t you?” A smile briefly hovered on her lips.

Three months later, I dropped my keys, struggling to carry her over the threshold.

“We’re home,” I said.

“Quite clumsy, aren’t you?” she said.

Announcements Announcements

BE AN EDITOR OUR OLD(ER) ONE IS RETIRING

**OUR WRITERSTALK TEAM, NOW 6
HARD-WORKING AND PROLIFIC TYPES,
IS LOOKING FOR A NEW MANAGING
EDITOR.**

Aside from assuring an editorial policy, the duties include:

- ♦ Taking event photos
- ♦ Writing (lots of help here)
- ♦ Collecting submittals (email attachments)
- ♦ Layout and composition
- ♦ Proofing (there is help here)
- ♦ Mailing off to printer
- ♦ Attending Board meetings

Currently, the applications involved are MS Word and Publisher, Photoshop and Acrobat

Our retiring ed will assist in the turn-over (or not)—perhaps make it easier.

If you are interested, please send your indication to Dave LaRoche.

NEW OPEN MIC IN FREMONT

On a trial basis, we will do a new Open Mic at the Barnes and Noble on 3900 Mowery in Fremont.

Our first will be in August on the 16th (which is the 3rd Thursday) from 7-9 pm.

At least five committed people are required at each meeting to move forward (a B&N requirement)

**Interested writers should contact
either**

Jeannine Vegh
ladyjatbay@sbcglobal.net,
Bill Baldwin
WABaldwin@aol.com
or Bob Garfinkle
ragarf@earthlink.net

ATTENTION ALL CWC MEMBERS!

You may register yet for the
Foothill Writers' Conference

In person at the conference.

For info go to

www.foothill.edu/conference

The address is 12345 El Monte Rd
(off Interstate 280)
Los Altos Hills

Total cost is \$53.50 for California
residents and it runs from
July 6 through July 10.

Our own

Kathryn Madison, author of
Woman's Sigh, Wolf's Song, is
teaching a
UCS Extension course
entitled
“Writing True Fiction”

It will meet four Sundays
July 15—August 5
1180 Bordeaux Drive
Sunnyvale

Tuition is \$225 no required text

Enroll on line at
ucsc-extension.edu
(Course #20509-001)
Or call 800 660 8639

Twenty-four magazine and book publishing professionals, including best-selling author David Morrell, will speak to aspiring and published writers at the
2007 Yosemite Writers Conference, August 24-26, at the Tenaya Lodge.

Additional information is available at
www.yosemitewriters.com or by calling 877-849-0176

Announcements Announcements Announcements

**GRACE CATHEDRAL
TO HOST FIRST ANNUAL
"WRITING-FOR CHANGE"
WRITERS CONFERENCE
AUG. 24-45**

"The conference is based on Michael Larsen's belief that the right book will change the world," said conference co-founder Elizabeth Pomada, a literary agent. "Now, more than ever, there is a need for books that serve as catalysts for change."

Sponsored by Grace Cathedral and the San Francisco Writers Conference, the event will be held in the Wilsey Conference Center on the lower level of the cathedral, and is limited to 150 writers. For information and registration, visit www.sfwritersforchange.org email sfwriterscon@aol.com, or call 415-673-0939

Attn Mystery Writers

All Santa Clara County Library locations will be hosting appearances by prominent local mystery authors this summer. Panels of mystery authors will meet to discuss the genre and writing, and to answer your questions. Most events begin at 7:00pm. The last event of the series is August 23. See the partial schedule below. For the complete schedule and directions to the libraries, visit <http://www.santaclaracountylib.org/summerreading/adults.html>

July 9, 7:00pm - Los Altos Library - Cara Black, Rhys Bowen, Deborah Grabien, David Corbett

July 11, 7:00pm - Saratoga Library - Cara Black, Deborah Grabien, James Calder, Lora Roberts

**NEWS FROM YOUR
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR**

Join or Renew Today

Benefits of membership:

- ♦ Participation in active club
- ♦ Savings at meetings featuring writing-issue speakers
- ♦ Two free socials a year
- ♦ Savings on conferences/seminars
- ♦ Networking and fellowship
- ♦ Posting on web site
- ♦ Membership in YAHOO Grp
- ♦ Monthly Newsletter
- ♦ Critique Group access
- ♦ Motivation and camaraderie

Renewals: The 2006-2007 CWC South Bay membership year ends June 30. Dues are late after July 1.

Send a check for \$45 (Renew)
Or \$65 (Join)

Application may be downloaded from southbaywriters.com

Mail your check to
**CWC South Bay, P. O. Box 3254,
Santa Clara, CA 95055
Attn: Marjorie.**

Suzy Paluzzi

Freelance Writer

PO Box 2244
Cupertino, CA 95015

408 568-8283
svpaluzzi@mac.com



**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

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 Poetry Bouts with special guests.

At The Britannia Arms

173 W Santa Clara

Downtown San Jose.

www.sanjosepoetryslam.com

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



California Writers Club

South Bay Branch
PO Box 3254
Santa Clara, CA 95055

www.southbaywriters.com

ADDRESSEE

Address Correction Requested

SAVE THESE DATES

Board of Directors Meet
Jul 11, 7pm Baldwin's

General Meeting (Dinner):
No July meeting
Come to BBQ at Edie's

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

WritersTalk Inputs:
July 16 (non-proofed)
July 23 (proofed)

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

Potluck Bar-B-Que

At

**Edie and Jim's
917 Perreira Drive, Santa Clara**

See Map Below

