

WritersTalk

A South Bay
Writers Club Monthly

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Page 1

EMILY JIANG, CONTEST QUEEN, REVEALS HER SECRETS...

By Diana Richomme



Diana Richomme
VP & Programs

I want to know how she does it. Emily Jiang won the Writers Digest contest grand prize, including a trip to New York to meet with agents and publishers. But that's not all. Her fiction and poetry have received many honors, including Grand Prize in the Olympiad of the Arts Festival,

1st place in the Focus on Writers Contest, 1st place for the Foster City International Writing Contest, 1st place in the South Bay Writers "WritersTalk" Challenge, 2 awards in the Jack London Conference Writing Contest, the Sue Alexander Award for Most Promising New Manuscript, and the Kimberly Colen Memorial Grant.

Contests provide writers the opportunity to gain some recognition, money, and credibility with potential agents. However, there is more to winning contests than great writing. Unfortunately, contest organizers rarely tell entrants where they made mistakes that cost them nominations.

Join us May 9 at our regular monthly meeting and learn Emily Jiang's tips and tricks to winning writing contests. DR



Emily Jiang

MEMBER PROFILES

BY ANNE DARLING



Anne Darling

Contributing Editor

Say Hello to Suzy Paluzzi

"This is a dream come true," said Suzy Paluzzi, a new California Writer's Club member who has launched her own freelance writing business. And she has all the right skills.

Originally from New York, Paluzzi has

a B.A. degree in English and an M.B.A. in marketing and management.

The fantasy for writing began for Paluzzi at age eight. "I wrote notes about fairy tales I wanted to invent," she laughed. "By the time I had reached my teen years, I had won some local



Susan Paluzzi

writing contests, and got serious about writing."

Paluzzi, who writes for two to three hours a day, has joined the *WritersTalk* editorial

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)

A Look Ahead:

May	Open Mic, see p19 for details.
May 6	Board of Directors Mtg.—Garfinkle's at 2:00p
May 9	South Bay dinner Mtg.—6:00p, Emily Jiang
May 19	Editors Mtg, Orchard Valley Coffee, 10:00a
June 6	Board of Directors Mtg.
June 13	Dinner Mtg.—Elections

In this Issue:

Step Up (Elections)	p2	Challenge Winners	p11
Giles Recap	p5	Paluzzi— <i>Poetic Justice</i>	p11
Howsdén—CopTalk	p8	Daly—Upcoming Events	p12
Richomme— <i>JL Conference</i>	p8	Paluzzi—Business of Writing	p13
Accolades and Nits	p9	Darling—Networking	p14
Expertise	p10	Galvacs—Disappearing English	p15
		Burns— <i>The Ninth Hole</i>	p17

Step Up!

All around the globe, in every representative organization, at all levels of wealth, all colors and faiths, we go to the polls and select our leaders. We cast our opinion at all strata of governance, liking this and not that, we find our thinking represented by those we elect. Only occasionally are we surprised.

It's certainly the American way—if others. We say it's the duty of membership, of belonging. And these leaders, where do they come from? Well, they are us—the many who feel the “belonging” obligation runs deeper than voting and moreover, have something to offer that may make things better than before. Ergo, we grow and we prosper. Sometimes we just need to give the incumbents a break.

South Bay Writers is such a representative organization. That means we select from among us those leaders who will manage in a way that we want and not in a way that we don't. We may not, as individuals, realize this but South Bay boasts 180 members and certainly among us there are those who have something to offer. *Is one of them you?*

Step up if you have something to offer. In June we will have an election and three of our offices will be without incumbents: Secretary, Treasurer and Vice President. Our president, Bill Baldwin, has decided to stand for another term though he's been there for several—likes the job and so might you.

Serving your club is an honor. To be selected by your peers to carry on with leadership is commendable. And to do this work, in itself, brings a feeling of ownership and pride—you've become a part of the reason for its success.

The nominating chair, that's me, is preparing a slate and I'm seeking one that's robust. I would like to see names (that's plural) for each office. If you have any interest at all, contact me and I'll explain the involvement, cajole, embarrass and maybe persuaded to buy rounds. Briefly, the duties are:

President (Leadership, Vision, Policy, Precedence)

- 1 Leads the Branch through a productive and enjoyable term.
- 2 Envisions and fosters goals and direction in keeping with our bylaws.
- 3 Establishes/executes policies that address Branch goals and direction.
- 4 Sets agendas and presides over meetings.
- 5 Appoints committee chairs, a state rep, newsletter editor and webmaster.
- 6 Pursues efficiency and effectiveness.

Vice President (Advice, Programs, Stand-in)

- 1 Advises president and Board in Club matters.
- 2 Plans and executes monthly programs.
- 3 Prepares programs intro for newsletter.
- 4 Assumes the president's duties in his absence.

Treasurer (Finance Management)

- 1 Plans budget.
- 2 Controls flow of money consistent with budget and signs checks.
- 3 Maintains bank accounts,
- 4 Receives and deposits revenues.
- 5 Maintains books and accounts for cash flows.
- 6 Reports treasury activity and balances to the Branch Board and the Central Board.

Secretary (Branch Business Records Maintenance)

- 1 Records and publishes minutes of official-business, mostly meetings of the Branch directors.
- 2 Stores, in archive fashion, all approved and published minutes and official Branch correspondence.
- 3 Retrieves stored documents, upon authorized request.

Contact me, Dave LaRoche at dalaroche@comcast.net or (408) 729-3941 and let's talk about how *you* might help your club.

President's Prowling —Bill Baldwin



Bill Baldwin
President, South Bay Branch

Organizing My Writing

I'm still hung up on the whole question of how to organize my writing, for example how to organize a story or novel. I'm impressed by the way some stories can be redone over and over from

differing perspectives, with variations on a character or plot.

Homer told the story of the Trojan War from the Greek point of view – though allowing much humanity to the defeated Trojans. Virgil traced Rome's ancestry to the Trojans and naturally was more critical of the Greeks.

An "underdog" can often be portrayed with more sympathy than a "winner" – even when the underdog possesses serious flaws. Thus "Gone With The Wind" manages to make citizens of the Confederacy sympathetic through various selective views and omissions of actual details of that society (for that matter, returning to the Greeks for the moment, we are sorry to see Agamemnon hacked to death in his bath, even while feeling that he probably deserves it!).

It's all a matter of the manipulation of perspective, I suppose! If you are familiar with Arthurian legend, you understand that the story of the Round Table (Arthur, Guinevere, Lancelot, etc.), the story of Tristan and Isolde, and the story of the Quest for the Holy Grail (e.g. Percival, Galahad) have been told and retold from different, not always agreeing, sides.

I recently watched "Frankenstein: The True Story" – which, however, does not follow Mary Shelley's novel at all points. It claims to adhere to the *spirit* of the book while changing plot details and even inserting Byron's doctor as a character in the story!

That film script was authored by Christopher Isherwood and his partner Don Bachardy. Those of you who attend our Open Mics know that Isherwood (a resident of Santa Monica for over 30 years) is one of my favorite authors. He drew much inspiration from the German Expressionist cinema of the 1920s and early 1930s – which experimented with unusual lighting and camera angles.

Isherwood himself is an excellent example of how stories can be retold and reborn using variation and differing perspective. His Berlin novels ("Mr. Norris Changes Trains" and "Goodbye To Berlin") retell his own life in Berlin, 1930-33, in two rather different ways. John Van Druten retold the stories again in his play "I Am A Camera" (later made into a film); and the whole thing was reinvented again twofold in the stage and film versions of "Cabaret" (each version quite different). Through all six of these retellings the narrator changes personality, new characters are introduced, mood is varied, and so on – just as variations of the Arthurian stories present different ways of viewing situations, characters, and so on.

But which telling is *correct*? Maybe there is no "correct" way to tell a story. But there may be a way to tell a story...so that many different interpretations can be suggested – an interesting prospect! BB

California Writers Club South Bay Branch

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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

Creativity — It Grows or It Expires

Among processes, the creative process is unique—of course we all agree—and unlike others, it must grow in order to exist.

I think of the creative process as being a child. With nurturing and a cozy environment, it grows, develops and becomes beautiful... and on through adulthood and old age (ugh). But neglected or abandoned, the child loses promise, the adult loses his way and that old man with his wisdom... he may never arrive.

Take almost any other process. I do mechanics and woodworking, camping, skiing, swimming and more and can let any of them go for a year, maybe ten, then pick it back up, shake off the dust and start right in where I left off. Try that with writing or the saxophone.

In the process of writing, we include skill, rules, talent and our fickle, often petulant muse. We practice and encourage them. And they grow. And it ain't like riding a bike, baby—the thing you never forget—it's like the more you do these constituents of writing, the better you do them and if you stop, it's like snow in the spring.

I write in the morning, nine to twelve; I like it at night when it's quiet; I write when I'm moved; and I 'nano-write,' thirty days at a time. We've heard these and more. And with none can you put it aside for a time and expect to pick up where you left off. For me it's a week. If I lay off for a week for any reason, I lose skill, motivation, and insight. I forget the fine detail that makes characters sing and suspense build till I fall outta my chair. It's more like a dead-end road and I need a "U" turn and a look at directions.

We must write... not just to produce work but to maintain and grow skill, exercise and build talent, help our muse with a faster, more climactic fandango and, for us older types, keep neurons healthy and flowing. And, we must do it continually or we'll have to drag out a map. DLR

If you can't describe what
you are doing as a process, you
don't know what you're doing.
W. Edwards Deming



WritersTalk

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MEETING RECAP

We Recap Molly Giles — Writers Groups are a bragging place but bring you truth —Dave LaRoche

“Crap!”
 “Stupid!”
 “Trash!”
 “It ain’t Kafka.”

“I’ve seen better on the bathroom walls at the bus depot.”

“My God, you don’t really expect me to take this seriously?”



Molly Giles

These are a selection of comments Molly Giles might have heard at her critique group in the City while ensconced at Cal State San Francisco. Things have changed, she proclaims. Writing groups are more civilized, perhaps more constructive, certainly more considerate of egos and psyches although that group, her group, with its taunts and put-downs, its boozy

behavior and radical discourse, lived on for twenty years and that’s something. After those twenty years of alternating transient and steady, it produced three known writers... and, she admits, that’s not much.

After whisking through a brief and entertaining history of her life on the planet, she treated us to her view of a good writing group and some comments about writing and writers. One thing that stuck in my mind, with

this, was: even in view of Hemingway and Faulkner (and my favorite, Thorne Smith), “...drunks and alcoholics do not make good writers.” ...and there I sat with that half gallon of Beefeaters I had just won.

Even bad feedback we need, she explained. In fact words of praise are of marginal value in a writers group. She attended the write-in at Squaw Valley, held every year (for a medium-sized fortune) and on this occasion she met with her pivotal moment—her epiphany. Without going into the details, she exclaimed that this particular workshop was high in the order of workshops for writers and that any of us



who could muster the cash would not be regretful. Ray Bradbury was in attendance the time she at-

tended and offered this reflection of somebody’s writing—may have been Molly’s. “It’s disgusting. Throw-up then clean up.” (Hmmm, was he a member of her earlier group in SF?)

She started her adult life and career with a year at Berkeley,

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)



(GILES FROM PAGE 5)

lacked some for motivation, quit and was married then divorced. (So far, fairly standard) As a single mom, with her new (archetypical) life and new energy, she turned back to academia, starting with a curricula at SF State that might lead her to writing. There she became enthralled with the hard times and loose language, joined that lovable but dysfunctional writers group (“pack of bitches” was Francis Mayes’ description) and dug in. She was awarded a degree, probably two, and stayed on to teach—remaining in this toxic environment (her description, my adjective) for about seventeen years until, quite by accident, she found Arkansas U. At the last turn of millennia, she packed up her experience and a few odds and ends, said her farewells, and headed to Fayetteville where she currently heads the university’s



creative writing department. Molly Giles, that’s a life, but don’t stop, there’s plenty more room.

One of her most productive writing experiences occurred recently on the island of Paros, a moderate swim from Greece. Having won a competition, House of Literature, she flew over expecting a hubbub of tourism—waddling Iowans wearing sneakers and shirts sporting beer ads or, at the least, a few pen-pushers. Sadly, at first, she found only morning chats with her slippers and widow scenes and afternoon tête-à-têtes with her computer sans internet (certainly there was Ouzo). But... disappointment soon waned and in six months produced serious quantities of work—might we take a lesson.

At the U of A, her most recent adventure, she discovered

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)



(PALUZZI FROM PAGE 1)

staff and will be penning a monthly column about the Business of Writing. She's also a free-lance author and reporter for the Santa Clara Weekly, and has published more than two-dozen articles since January 2007.

She specializes in human-interest stories and recently wrote an article called the "Vial of Life," concerning a free kit available for the public from fire departments and medical clinics. The vial, containing pertinent medical history is placed on a top shelf of a refrigerator. A sticker is placed on the refrigerator door which alerts first responders to readily available life-saving information.

Paluzzi lives in Cupertino with her husband and college-age daughter and also loves poetry. In fact she said, "Poetry is my passion and provides my creative release." She has applied for a copyright for "Poetry in Motion," a four-year project based on self-discovery, women's issues, loss and relationships. The music accompaniment and CD were produced by a musician friend who has his own studio, and once the copyright is granted the CD will be available on her website.

One of Paluzzi's biggest dreams is to earn a steady income from writing and to collaborate with her artistic daughter writing and illustrating a children's book. "My dreams also include making poetry commonplace and available for mass consumption; a resurgence of the genre, if you will, hence, my poetry on CD; I have been told it's easy to digest."

Paluzzi speaks highly of the CWC weekly Open Mic sessions which she has been attending since last fall. "I'm getting the encouragement and support I need," Paluzzi emphasized. "Hearing my own poetry read out loud gave me a different view of it—not only from my perspective but from the group response. Getting group feedback makes me feel like I have become part of a writers' community."

"Language is something that has always interested me," Paluzzi said. She speaks Russian, a smattering of Chinese and for several years had her own business translating Russian documents into English. She also acted as an interpreter for visiting scientists at NASA Ames. She feels her love of language stems from her (Czechoslovakian) parents—particularly her mother who took monthly *Reader's Digest* vocabulary tests and also liked to write. "My parents spoke a different language in the home in addition to English. It helped me realize the cadences, rhythms, sounds of language and its beauty."

Paluzzi put her love of language to work first as a volunteer, then instructional assistant and finally substitute teacher teaching English as a second language (ESL) in the Cupertino school district for many years. She was also instrumental in developing Cupertino's first after school homework club whereby volunteer high school students agree to help tutor elementary students.

During the past year, Paluzzi has devoted herself solely to writing and loves it. "In the past, writing was an avocation, now it's a dedication. I feel it's a great gift to have this opportunity at this point in my life to write. This is a dream come true for me—being able to write as much as I want."

Besides Emily Dickinson and Pope John Paul II, Paluzzi admires local poet Robert Pesich. Author Elizabeth Berg ranks high because of her superior writing skills and relevance of topics in Paluzzi's opinion. Paluzzi also reads any fiction by Maeve Binchy or Anne Tyler. She added, "I particularly enjoyed Jhumpa Lahiri's *Namesake* both because it showed multi-levels of the human condition and helped me appreciate another culture." AD

(GILES FROM PAGE 6)

"gentle and polite," the southern approach to most all sociability, and a difficulty in instituting critical review. She thought that might change, given her experience at Ca State, but the Arkansas culture is stoutly grown and cordiality of first order.

Big on critique groups, Molly Giles left us with a few related "do's" and "don'ts":

Do:

Limit time

Limit quantity

Limit genre

Mix gender

Meet often and regularly

Rotate hosting

Minimize food

Be honest but not mean

Don't:

Do couples or family

Argue with critic

Violate rules

All of this works best, she says, when the group transcends the mechanics and reaches for meaning. "This brings big help."

And thanks for *your* help Molly Giles. Best o' luck with the gnats and chiggers there in Razorback country, an we shore hope ya'll come back soon... ya hear. DLR



John Howsden

COP TALK

By
John
Howsden

They stink, chafe, and make you look fat, but they also stop bullets, and for cops, that's a good thing. Bullet proof vests are made of a fabric called Kevlar, which is five times stronger than steel. Vests don't deflect bullets, but catch them; much like a net stretched across the goal posts catches a soccer ball. Although bullets don't penetrate, they still deliver a mean punch. Depending on the caliber, the distance and the angle of the bullet, it's been compared to being hit with a line drive baseball traveling at 130 mph. Bruising and broken ribs still occur, but the survival rate is improving.

Fewer officers are killed due to this great invention, but just as many, if not more, are still being assaulted. In addition to wearing safety equipment, cops practice "officer safety tactics" that go unnoticed by the casual observer. Having cops use the following tricks of the trade in your book will add realism to your writing.

Police officers always keep their gun hand free. They can't grab their gun if their hand is filled with a ticket book or flashlight.

When knocking on a door, cops stand to the side. Wooden doors don't stop bullets.

Police officers like soldiers, know the difference between *cover*

and *concealment*. Concealment, such as the door mentioned above hides them, but doesn't protect them from bullets. A car or large tree trunk on the other hand, hides them and stops bullets; this is called *cover*.

To protect their backs, cops, like gunslingers of the old west, keep their backs against the wall. Something the late Wild Bill Hickok forgot to do on the night he was shot in the back while playing cards.

Officers stand sideways with their gun-side facing away from the suspect. Not only is it harder for a person to grab the officer's gun, but the officer is less apt to be kicked in the center mass below the belt.

Fear of death or injury invokes its own sense of humor. Some cops wore emblems or mottos embossed on their vests. One night I found myself laying on a gurney in the emergency room after a major police crash. When the nurse leaned over me and undid my shirt, she saw my red and yellow Superman emblem ironed onto the front of my vest. Without missing a beat she said, "Hit some kryptonite, did ya?" JH

An inebriated fellow was driving down the wrong way on a one-way street when a cop pulled him over.

"Where do you think you're going?" the cop asked.

The drunk answered, "Pfshh, I don't know obficer but I must be late 'cause everyone else is comin' back."

WHAT I LEARNED AT THE JACK LONDON CONFERENCE

Diana Richomme



Diana Richomme

My writing partner Carolyn and I had been up all night, e-mailing each other for

feedback on our synopses. By the time we arrived at the Peninsula Writers Tool Expo and Convention, a.k.a. *Jack London Conference*, we could have used tooth picks to prop our eyes open. I *had* to get there early so we could get one of those free tote bags. We weren't disappointed. They're quite nice.

Soon the combination of coffee, excitement and cockiness took over as I begged Daniel Handler, a.k.a. Lemony Snicket for an autograph and mentally rehearsed my pitch for an 11:54 agent appointment. Before we knew it we were off to sessions...

Here's what I learned:

Synopses are harder to write than books. "Synopsis" is singular and "synopses" is the plural for of the term. Writing one will help prepare a pitch to an agent.

Agents are neither demigods who hold our destinies in their generous hearts nor are they trolls who spend their time in the conference *Agent Cave* waiting to make themselves feel important at the

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)



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 26. Plurals

As a general rule, add "s" to make most words plural. To any compound word used as a single word, add "s": "cupfuls," "handfuls." Add "s" to the most significant word in hyphenated words: "sons-in-law," "by-products."

Add "s" to plural numbers, without apostrophes: "the 1950s."

Add "s" to most proper nouns to make them plural, such as "the Smiths." If a proper name ends in "es" or "z", add "es" for the plural: "Montezes," "Kineses." If a proper name ends in "y," don't change it to "ies," "the Kellys," not "the Kellies."

Add "es" to most words ending in "ch," "s," "sh," "ss," "x," and "z": "churches," "beaches," "foxes," "fizzes," "bosses."

When words have Latin roots, change "us" to "i," such as "alumnus, alumni," and words ending in "on" become "a": "phenomenon, phenomena." Add "s" to most words ending in "um," such as "memorandums," "referendums" but not to "addendum (addenda)," "curriculum (curricula)," or "medium (media)."

Don't use a possessive name as a plural: "four Wendy's restaurants," not "four Wendy's."

Don't use apostrophes when writing about words used as words: "too many ifs, ands, and buts."

Do add "'s" to single letters, as in "Dot your i's."

For multiple letters, don't use the apostrophe: "She knows her ABCs."

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



Jackie Mutz
Contributing Editor

Accolades

—Jackie Mutz

Did you read that Harry Bernstein has published his memoir at the young age of ninety-six? *The Invisible Wall: a Love*

Story that Broke Barriers, is a chronicle of his impoverished childhood in a mill town in England where Jews and Christians were strictly divided. Check it out; it will make you smile and encourage you to continue writing—as will our own CWC accomplishments, which are:

- 1 *Boudicca's Daughters*, Carolyn Donnell – *WritersTalk* March 2007, was also published in the Winter 2007 newsletter for the Celtic Women's International. Check it out at www.celticwomen.org/newsletter
- 2 A few months ago, Claudia Arndt was a semi-finalist (top 5%) for a screenplay entry in the 13th annual Writers Network Screenplay & Fiction Contest sponsored by *Fade-In* magazine.
- 3 On May 5, Betty Auchard is hosting *Second Act* (shortened version of *First Act* included for those who missed it) by Esmeralda Alderetti, a chronicle of her experiences as a transgender. Contact Betty for more information at btauchard@aol.com.
- 4 Steve Whetelsen shared he has received three more requests for poetic art submissions and is excited that there is success in the "poetry business."
- 5 Bob Garfinkel had his research paper published in the journal *British Astronomical Association*.
- 6 Marty Sorensen's labor of love *The Sandhill Review* 2007 edition will be published soon, featuring several of our own CWC members. Contact Marty at www.sandhillreview.org for more information.
- 7 Phyllis Mattson has started a sub group of BAIPG, the Bay Area Independent Publisher's Group. Contact Phyllis at phyllismatt@pacbell.net if interested in finding out more about publishing your own work.

Let me know what you are working on or have accomplished. As Mr. Bernstein shows us, anything can be accomplished at any age, especially in the writing field. So, fire up that muse, get busy and let me know when you are done at writerstalk@comcast.net. JM

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 Susan Mueller, John Howsden, Arlyne Diamond Dottie Sieve and now, Maureen Griswold —let us know. We will publish your offer and add you name to our directory.



Maureen Griswold

Expert Maureen Griswold can offer advice, leads, reality checks and even humorous anecdotes to writers dealing with subject matters and/or characters pertaining to nurses, hospital/medical settings, diseases/medical conditions. “I’m a medically-retired RN who did a stateside tour of duty as an Army nurse and worked on surgical and medical wards before specializing in neonatal intensive care and pediatrics. I also worked as a medical writer in the pharmaceutical industry and have some background in holistic nursing/integrative medicine.” Maureen has experience in print journalism as well and is no stranger to the pitfalls and walls we encounter as writers. She can be reached at: maureengriswold@sbcglobal.net

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(article above)

(WHAT I LEARNED... FROM PAGE 8)

wanabe writer's expense. They're business people who get away with talking to publishers because they promise to weed out half-baked submissions, presenting only completed materials to people who actually have the marketing and distribution know-how to get those books printed and in the hands of people sincerely interested in reading them. And agents primarily work for the people who pay them; the authors who write what they sell. BTW, I also learned that few agents accept submissions at conferences. That 3.25-page synopsis I labored on for over a month and gave birth to at 9:57PM never met anyone who might need it as marketing material for publishers.

Great Speakers are just like us only they talk better. There are courses and coaches for that. What I've learned from speaking coaches is that great speakers have confidence and focus **on the subject**. The *Jack London Conference* speakers covered a full array of writing; from fiction to scripts, and from making short people giggle and characters jump off the page to thickening plots.

Courage wanes by day-end along with cockiness and energy. Like five-year-olds in quiet bedrooms following their birthday parties, many attendees feel a let-down. We pay to spend an entire day listening to speakers who remind us that there's so much we didn't know. But courage is most important because all we really do learn about are the tools successful writers used themselves. Each of us has a partially filled tool box of methods and knowledge we draw on during our writing adventures. I took home a half a dozen new models with me to try out. Some will be brand new for me, some will replace that I used until yesterday, and some just won't cut it.

In the end, I found one willing publisher who agreed to take a copy of the fruit of my labors. I told her that it didn't matter if she read it or not; I just needed to know that all my hard work in the past 30 days wasn't going in the trash -- at least not right away. Of course, now that I've been through an entire day of learning what I didn't know, those 50 first pages the agent asked for might need a little more work. I'm kind of glad she doesn't have that synopsis. It could use a few improvements... DR

WritersTalk Challenge Winners

During our April meeting we honored winners of our semiannual *WritersTalk* Challenge for the period of Aug 15, 2006 through Feb 15 2007.

Every six months we editors join judges and review all submittals in genres of poetry, short fiction, memoir, and essay or article. Judges are provided guidelines for each genre and work is graded against them. A total of thirty points may be awarded to each piece. Awards are granted on the basis of total points among all pieces. All South Bay members who submit and are published in *WritersTalk* are entered.

The Challenge administration is rotated among editors and for this period, Jackie Mutz coordinated. Judges included Marjorie Johnson, Dave LaRoche, Jackie Mutz, Bill Brisko, Jana McBurney-Lin, Susan Paluzzi and Donna Poppenhagen—and a grateful thanks to them.

The winners:

First place to Carolyn Donnell for her short fiction, *Night of the Silver Moon*

Second place to Emily Jiang for her Poem, *Nanowrimoring*

Third Place to Kathryn Madison for her essay, *A New Author's Tough Reality*

Honorable Mentions to:

Marjorie Johnson for her short fiction, *Nicotine or Aspirin*

Sally Milnor for her poem, *What Time Takes*

Meredy Amxy for her memoir, *The Dark Flutes of November*

Jack Hasling for his essay, *Footprints on My Tongue*

Congratulations to all and thanks for your submittals. DLR



Left to right, Carolyn, Meredy, Susan, Marjorie, Emily, Jackie and Dave

POETIC JUSTICE

By Suzy Paluzzi

On the San Jose State campus, an emotional forum for poetry took place in the Spartan Memorial Chapel on April 21, 2007. “A Celebration of San Jose State University Poets: Past, Present, and Future” was scheduled to “pay homage to poets that have passed through our doors, instructed our students, and been inspired by this campus,” wrote Rachelle L. Escamilla, an inspiration herself. She and other students were mostly responsible for the inception of this very first SJSU tribute.

The date of the event: “A Celebration of San Jose State University Poets: Past, Present, and Future” has significance. April 21st was the birthday of Henry Meade Bland, a prominent English professor at SJSU who was California’s Poet Laureate in 1929. April is also National Poetry Month. And this largest gathering of SJSU poets reading their works honored SJSU’s 150th anniversary.

My goal in attending was to soak up some much needed strength from hearing poets like Lorna Dee Cervantes, a famed Chicana poet. Judith Peterson, Nils Peterson’s spouse, was there “to hear my husband and support the poetry community.” Nils has been a speaker at CWC South Bay, according to Una Daly, and has great stature in the community. Kate Evans read some of her very relevant poetry. She too has been a more recent speaker for CWC



Suzy Paluzzi

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12)

(PALUZZI FROM PAGE 11)

South Bay.

When asked why she attended, Clarissa Cua—locally published Filipino poet—said, “I want to integrate myself more with the writing community in San Jose...Valerie Whong (soon to be South Bay member) and I are forming a group called Asian Pacific Artists and Writers. “This was definitely the occasion to do just that. Mary Lou Taylor, author of “Cotton and Spirit” and “The Fringes of Hollywood”, San Jose State graduate, and a driving force at Poetry Center San Jose (one of the cosponsors of the event) was sitting directly behind me!

Sally Ashton, Board member of Poetry Center San Jose, presenting poet, and teacher at the approaching May Gold Rush Writers Retreat, said there were 140 people at the gathering. She said in an e-mail, “truly, the event was remarkable, once in a lifetime perhaps. Though I hope there is some sort of reunion event in the years ahead. This one captured wonderful voices and presences indeed.”

Kudos to the newly founded SJSU student organization: Poets and Writers Coalition. This group was the main sponsor. We got the ‘go ahead’ in February! “We’ve worked so very, very hard.” Rachelle Escamilla, President of the group, said. She also read her poetry at this venue.

Michael Shauf, a founding member of Poets and Writers Coalition, said the group itself has only been in existence a short time. “We discussed the idea (for the Poetry Celebration) in English class in November and planned it during the winter break.”

The dedication was evident. From the comprehensive, tasteful program to the actual convocation of creativity, this event was a memorable success!

Please direct any questions or comments to Suzy Paluzzi:
jomarch06@yahoo.com.

Upcoming Events From Una Daly

Classes

De Anza Foothill College Continuing Education Many writing courses offered (memoir, magazine, poetry, etc.) throughout April, May, June, and July.
<http://www.ed2go.com>, click on Writing and Publishing link to get complete list of classes.



Una Daly

Contributing Editor

Los Gatos-Saratoga Community Education Memoir and other writing courses are offered to seniors program (55+) at reduced rates. <http://www.lgsrecreation.org>, click on Classes and then Seniors to get a complete list of dates, times.

Santa Clara Adult Education Creative writing classes offered daytime and evening. <http://www.scae.org>, enter Creative Writing in search keywords text box to find times, locations, and instructors.

Conferences

Gold Rush Writers' Workshop in Mokelumne Hill. Break-out sessions, panels, specialty talks, workshop intensives, and celebrity lectures with successful novelists, screenwriters, biographers, short story writers, poets, and memoirists. May 4-6, 2007, <http://www.goldrushwriters.com>

Santa Barbara Writers Conference Founded in 1973, SBWC presents their largest conference in June, which gives fledgling writers the opportunity to improve their craft, to associate with helpful professionals and to mingle with other writers. June 22-29, 2007, <http://www.sbwritersconference.com/>

The 31st annual Foothill College Writers' Conference, Foothill College, Los Altos, Meet many successful writers in fiction, creative non-fiction, and poetry. July 6-10, 2007, <http://www.foothill.edu/la/conference/>

The 38th annual Community of Writers at Squaw Valley. Brings together poets and prose writers for separate weeks focusing on poetry, prose, and screenwriting in late July and early August. <http://www.squawvalleywriters.org>

Outdoor Writers Association of California Fall Conference Gather in Calaveras for a 3-day, fun-filled all inclusive conference in some of California's most beautiful outdoor settings with California's finest outdoor journalists. October 7-9, 2007, <http://owac.org/conferences.html>

A new column to run monthly, each presentation with a different aspect on the business of writing.

THE BUSINESS OF WRITING

By Suzy Paluzzi



Suzy Paluzzi

Contributing Editor

Inspiration

I am in the process of setting up my own business to make a living as a freelance writer. My education is an M.B.A. in marketing and management and a B.A. in English. I intend to include information about how to establish a business as a writer in this regular column. I also will address how to submit one's writing for publication, and other related topics, in future issues.

The first thing a writer must do is to make a commitment. "Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, and always ineffectiveness."

Concerning all acts of initiative and creation, there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: That the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too.

These words of Johann Goethe are incredibly true.

Writing has been my avocation since I was a child. Poetry is my avenue of emotional release, but I had the opportunity to write articles for pay as a young adult. Having reached middle age, I recently decided to research how both could bring me income.

That is my first step.

I participated in career testing and workshops at the Connect Center in Sunnyvale and got advice from career counselors there too.

I began this journey by taking pertinent classes, e.g. "How to Publish Your Writing", an adult education course. I honed my poetry skills with my first online class through De Anza College and was encouraged by teachers to share my poems, but couldn't muster the courage.

It was then I realized how motivating it is to get support from those in the field and as the writers groups I knew were too far away, I explored a course at UCSC: "How to Start a Writer's Group." I shared my poems for the first time in a safe, small setting and was then motivated to read them aloud at my first Open Mic, sponsored by the California Writers Club.

Things started to build upon one another. I approached a musician friend, who had a studio, in order to record my poetry readings. He was inspired to add music and before

we knew it, we had created a CD. I learned that it is best to get a copyright for that and contacted the Library of Congress online. That brought up the issue of claims and I was advised to also register with BMI, Broadcast Music Inc.

From the UCSC course, I connected with members of The California Writer's Club. I realized there was a momentum here, so I decided to investigate the business aspect of writing even further and to increase my networking.

I created inexpensive business cards by going online to Vista Print. I attended other poetry readings and there met an editor of a local paper. This relationship led me to writing articles for the paper.

First, though, I needed to organize a portfolio and learn how much to charge if I were to be a freelance writer. And I needed to know how to structure my time.

From writing sporadically, I now find that I need to schedule the best hours to write and cannot write only when inspired. The morning hours seem best for that joy. No interruptions are allowed, including phone calls. My poetry vehicle has changed from writing by hand in the woods to computer entry at home. I also come up for air and clear my head, from creativity, by reading. There is even a book entitled Reading Like A Writer by Francine Prose, which is a *guide for people who love books and for those who want to write them*.

As an aside, I also read other poets and books like Elizabeth Berg's Escaping Into The Open, The Art of Writing True. Through the years, my journal has been a way of refueling too.

The practical advice for a portfolio came from calling a contact who has been a San Jose freelance writer for years. Renee Euchner, a member of the Authors Guild, instructed me to keep both hard copies of clips and online versions. I purchased a binder and plastic sleeves to contain the clips. Renee also recommended that I keep a listing of contacts, which is very wise.

Finally, compensation for a freelance writer varies. In answer to the question, "Can one make a living as a freelance writer?" Marcia Yudkin writes, *most have followed one or more of these strategies*:

- ♦ *Develop relationships with magazines that use their work regularly*
- ♦ *Cultivate related sources of income, e.g. from teaching, consulting, writing for businesses.*
- ♦ *Write books.*

Debra Jason, The How-To Writer, says, *Overall, there are three areas to examine*

1. *Your overhead.*
2. *Your experience.*
3. *Your geographic location.*

Her webpage at <http://www.writedirection.com/rprt300e.htm> is worth reading.

If you have any questions, please email me at jomarch06@yahoo.com. \$P

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

Networking Opportunities Libraries Are a Great Asset

—By Anne Darling



libraries from Gilroy to Palo Alto hold valuable resources that can help you with writing that great American novel or find that elusive fact. Most libraries from my youth were small, dark, and dank. A recent tour of the libraries in Santa Clara County provided a wonderful surprise. They're bright, airy, have computers, cafes, community meeting rooms and study areas. Some even command outstanding views.



Anne Darling

Contributing Editor

Most libraries have a non-profit volunteer organization, Friends of the Library, which organize author/speaker programs and hold book sales. Friends of the Saratoga library (www.fslonline.org) have a monthly Breakfast Club series where they offer refreshments followed by a guest speaker in the library's Community Room.

In April, I attended a standing room only lecture by Keith Johnsgard, PhD, Emeritus Professor of Psychology at San Jose State University and author of *The Exercise Prescription for Depression and Anxiety*. According to Johnsgard, "...consistent exercise is just as effective as psychotherapy" for treating depression and has the added advantage of fewer side effects. After Dr. Johnsgard's interesting and informative talk, I was able to collect business cards from several attending psychologists. Who knows when I might be writing a psychological thriller and need professional tips? Once a year, the Saratoga library honors local main-stream or self-published authors in its *Saratoga Hall of Fame*, according to Community Librarian, Dolly Barnes.

The numerous libraries—categorized as public, city and county—can be accessed by internet. The home page of each of these libraries contains links to news and events, reference and data bases, facts about the libraries, up-coming book sales and much more. Check out specific activities for your library of choice at the following web sites:

- ♦ Los Gatos Public Library: <http://library.town.los-gatos.ca.us/> .
- ♦ Mountain View Public Library: <http://library.ci.mtnview.ca.us> .
- ♦ Sunnyvale Public Library: <http://sunnyvale.ca.gov/departments/Library> .
- ♦ Palo Alto City Library (2 branches). <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/library>.
- ♦ San Jose Public Library (contains links to all branches) <http://sjlibrary.org>.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library and San Jose State University Library share the same building in downtown San Jose, at 150 E. San Fernando St. Although they are separate organizations, the general public and SJSU students have access to all services. There are over twenty other San Jose City Library Branches which can be accessed by going to the <http://sjlibrary.org> then clicking on the link to individual city branches.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 15)

(LIBRARIES FROM PAGE 14)

Santa Clara City Library has two branches which can be found at <http://www.library.ci.santa-clara.ca.us>. Santa Clara County Library branches, (Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Altos, Milpitas, Morgan Hill and Saratoga) <http://www.santaclaracountylib.org/> have access to special resources for research which can be helpful for writers

May events

Wed. May 2nd Saratoga Library. 9:30 a.m. Cynthia Swenson McAllister, local author will speak on her recent book *Criss Crossing the Globe: Crazy Life of a Charter Flight Attendant*. Refreshments are provided. Free. Library Community Room.

Thu., May 3rd 7:00 p.m. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library. Nancy Newlin *The Gem of Edenvale: San Jose's Historic Hayes Mansion*. History overview of mansion and Hayes family. Newlin will share frustrations, treasures of historical research. Free. Limited seating.

Sat. May 5th 9:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m. Dr. Martin King Jr. Library. San Jose Area Writing Project hosting Super Saturday with Young Adult author, Adrian Fogelin. Contact Dr. Mary Warner at (408) 924-4417.

Sat. May 5th 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Tully Community Branch Library. Nha Ca will introduce latest book *Duong Tu Do Saigon*. Part of the multi-author series VietREADS! Exploring literature, food, music and arts of Vietnam.

Tues. May 8th 7:30 p.m. Campbell Library. Author Carol Terwilliger Meyers *From Morro Bay to Mt. Shasta* will discuss California weekend travel adventures.

Wed. May 9th 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Palo Alto Main Library. Search Like A Pro! Learn tips and tricks used by librarians to get results off the Internet. Sign up online.

Wed. May 9th 7 p.m. Santa Clara Central Park Library. *The Golden Age of Astronomy Is Now—Nasa Interplanetary Missions to the Solar System*. Join NASA/JPL Solar System Ambassador Eric Norris to learn about astronomy and space exploration. Stop by reference desk or call (408) 615-2900 to sign up. Free.

Thu. May 10th Thu May 17th and May 24th Santa Clara Central Park Library. Internet classes. Stop by reference desk or call (408) 615-2900 to sign up. Free.

Wed. May 16th 10 a.m. Special Program: Searching the Library Catalog. Professional librarians will teach you how to use online catalog to it fullest in one hour. Free. Sign up online.

Fri. May 18th 7:30 p.m. Town Council Chambers, Friends of Los Gatos Public Library. Susan Shillinglaw, *A Journey into Steinbeck's California*. Refreshments, Book signing.

Sat. May 19th 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Evergreen Branch Library. Author Elizabeth Giarratana will discuss her book, *Old Willow Glen*, a historical look at architecture of Willow Glen area homes. AD

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF CORRECT ENGLISH

By Andrea Galvacs



Andrea Galvacs
Contributing Editor

Shakespeare is turning in his grave! The English language is definitely on the decline and has been for quite some time. It started with books being badly edited, then hardly being edited at all, causing great annoyance to purists like me. Later, for

some reason that I cannot fathom, people started saying "For you and myself", "Between you and I" and newspapers, I guess to save space, began using acronyms. I am sure that many people don't even know what the majority of them mean.

About thirty years ago, *Time* magazine ran an article bemoaning the lack of good editors in the big publishing houses. They were paying little or no attention to grammar or structure or even spelling; as a result, books were being published in poor English.

I completely agreed with the article which then listed the top ten worst edited books in the previous year. One of them was *Sophie's Choice* by William Styron. I had read it and was delighted to learn that I was not the only one who thought that it was badly written.

Two or three weeks later, *Time* published a letter sent to them by William Styron himself. He was very upset with the magazine for including his book in the "Ten Worst Edited" list and defended his editor stating that he was one of the best in the industry; the book could not have been completed without him, blah, blah, blah...

I was not going to let Styron have the last word because I firmly believed that he was wrong. I wrote to him saying that I agreed with the article; his book had been very difficult to read because, among other reasons, his sentences were so long that by the time one arrived at the end, the beginning was long forgotten.

Since I had no street address for him, to make sure he

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 16)

****WRITERSTALK ANNOUNCEMENT****

Flash Fiction in June

We, here at WritersTalk are spotlighting flash fiction for the June issue and will entertain submittals of not more than 200 wds—a challenge for some and a breather for others. So sharpen your pencils and send in your wildest expressed in your fewest. You may submit more than one—bring ‘em on, we’ll be waiting...

Note: This emphasis is not meant to dissuade nor will we set aside any other writing we normally feature.

JACK LONDON AWARDS

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 to one person selected by Boards of Directors from nominations by Branch membership.

In our branch, nominations are entertained by president, Bill Baldwin, and will close on May 30th.

Do you see a deserving candidate, more than one? Please send an email to Bill, WABaldwin@aol.com, naming the member(s) and supporting your nomination with a brief reminder of each nominee’s service.

A member may receive the award only once. Listed are previous winners.

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

Again; send your nomination(s) to Bill Baldwin

WABaldwin@aol.com.

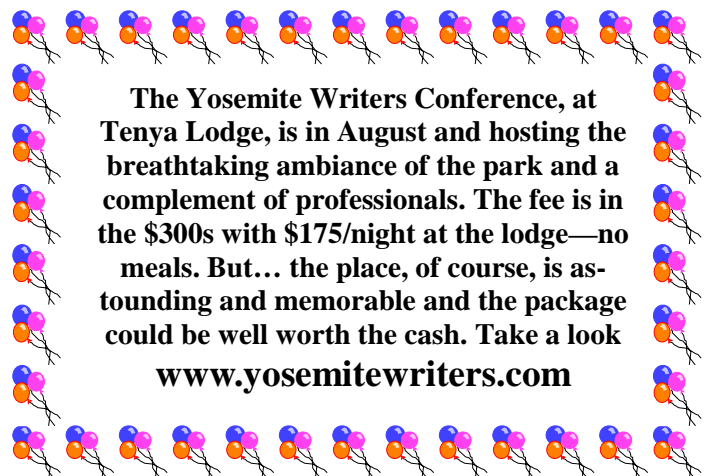
(DISAPPEARING ENGLISH FROM PAGE 15)

received my letter, I sent the original c/o *Time* and a copy to the town in Massachusetts where he lived. In those days, the post office was more cooperative than today and I thought that they would know where to deliver it. I do not know which one he read, but I received a reply. Unfortunately I did not save it (I wonder how much I could obtain for it today on eBay?) but I remember that it was enlightening. Styron was more upset with me than with *Time* and informed me that he had written his book for people with a higher level of intelligence than mine.

Having been put in my proper place, I continued to notice the errors, not to mention the appearance of four letter words in what was purported to be literature. I joined the Society for the Preservation of the English Language and Literature, an organization dedicated to call attention to the misuse and abuse of English in a constructive way. Some people thanked me for “teaching” them, but more often than not I was told to mind my own business, so I gave up.

A few years later, computers with spell check made the problem worse. This language aide is helpful but not full proof. Unfortunately, too many people rely on it, thinking it is foolproof.

It can be argued that language evolves. This is true, but I do not understand why it has to become incorrect in the process. It always bothers me when I see or hear badly used English, but by now I am convinced that hardly anybody cares. Those of us who do, should spread the fact that correct language is necessary for good communication. Shakespeare would smile on us! *AG*



The Yosemite Writers Conference, at Tenya Lodge, is in August and hosting the breathtaking ambiance of the park and a complement of professionals. The fee is in the \$300s with \$175/night at the lodge—no meals. But... the place, of course, is astounding and memorable and the package could be well worth the cash. Take a look

www.yosemitewriters.com

The Ninth Hole

By Richard A. Burns © August 2006

The Canadian Rockies can be beautiful in July and so they were in 1980 a day after the finals at the Calgary Stampede.

My wife and I had gathered our nickels and dimes to be able to treat her parents to this world famous rodeo event. My wife's folks, Harry Tom and his wife, Jessie Brady Tom, were white haired and pushing seventy when we invited them to go. Harry was no stranger to rodeo and a former saddle-bronc champ at Nampa, Boise, and Reno back in the 30s. Harry was from the Southfork, Nevada Shoshone Reservation known as the Tamoak Band and Jessie was originally from the Ruby Mountain Band, also Shoshone.

It was the right thing to do, to have given these two elders of the Tom tribe a once in a lifetime chance to crack salty peanuts and gulp down foamy beers while younger men and women spurred their broncos, tied up steer, and barrel raced, leading to a grand ending when skilled drivers raced old time chuck-wagons drawn by powerful teams of straining horses skidding around the half-mile oval, clods of dirt, mud, and unidentifiable curse-words flying.

The day following the completion of the rodeo in Calgary, we spent the morning driving westward to the famous ski resort area in Banff.

After the view of the thundering Bow River rushing its winding course toward the Alberta plains, we roamed the grounds of the astonishing, incredibly beautiful Banff Springs Hotel. This ten-story luxury hotel of the 1920s still stood tall and romantic as a castle, a wonderful grey, stony edifice rivaling the surrounding mountains for soul-lifting majesty. How I cherish those flickery color movies we have of the trip there, Jessie shouting angrily at her aging and partially deaf cowboy-husband to look at the camera. The expression on her face was so irritated – just like her. My wife and I tried to tell her that Grandpa Harry was fine, all candid and informal, looking around at the yellow flowers there in his light-grey, felt Stetson hat, his cheeks fat and sun-browned. "Lighten up, Jessie," we said. Finally, she got it and

graced us with her rendition of a weathered, leathery, *hubeezhoe* (old woman), Indian smile. Finally, standing together and looking over a rock ledge of the terraced pathways, they both looked at the camera, a classic shot in our album and memories, with the giant, multilevel hotel reaching up to the heavens behind them.

On a lark, I breezed by the golf shop and asked if there were any openings for a round of golf. The Banff Springs Hotel Championship golf course is world famous and I'd always wanted to play there someday. Amazingly, ten minutes and a quick kiss for my wife later, I was teeing up on the golf course I'd only seen on the covers of magazines. I always felt it rivaled Pebble for gotta-play courses. More easily than I thought, I had talked the family into picnicking without me. They would be back to find me in three hours or so.

Playing golf alone occasionally is generally pleasant to me, and I am quite used to it. For me, the game's the thing when it comes to golf. It might, after all, give me a chance to play two or three balls as I get away from the wardens at the clubhouse. On that day, I pretended it would be Arnold Palmer against Gary Player.

An hour later, I teed up at the eighth hole, a famous par-three called *the Devil's Cauldron*. I waggled the club and gazed out at the wowwie-kazzow view of a nearby shear peak, snow at the top even in July when it was 70 degrees on the fairways. The wide, shallow green, 190 yards away, lay below, its distance away thrown out of perspective by the closeness of the massive mountains. On this picture-post-card hole, the ball had to carry over a curving, shade dappled little lake covered with lily pads. While the pros could get there today with a seven or eight-iron, in those days it was a six-iron for even good players. Being a short knocker, I'd have to rip into a four-iron, the shot low and rising; I'd have to get all of it, and it better draw just a little because that's my most solid hit. If I didn't stay down all the way past impact, of course, I'd have skulled the ball and fed my shiny white Titlist to the frogs croaking in the moss-bordered lake.

I took a deep breath and filled my lungs with

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 18)

(NINTH HOLE FROM PAGE 17)

the scent of pine needles and evergreen-tree bark. I swung easy and stayed down, and, whoa, I felt the solid feel of a well-hit long iron. The white pellet rose against that timber on the collar of the mountain. It is still a picture I can play back today, one of the little triumphs of my life.

I found the ball nicely on, twenty feet short and a bit right. Two putts, an easy par.

With that par, and the sweet four-foot birdie-putt dropping on the seventh, I was really enjoying myself. Gary Player was two up on Arnold Palmer.

The ninth hole was a long par four into acres of the greenest grass, the fairway surrounded by a million pine and fir. Two yawning sand traps about 230 yards out, and then it was another 210 yards to a well-trapped. I hit a fair drive, catching most of the ball, but it leaked a little and it headed toward the corner of the right bunker. I figured I was safe, one benefit of not being Freddie Couples. Two humps in the fairway blocked my view, but arriving at the ball, it was ten feet short of the trap, a good lie in the fairway. A three-wood was the longest fairway wood in the bag, and I hit it poorly. The ball burned the grass-tops, skittered, and bounced in the direction of the green. I swore and pounded the club head on the ground.

Suddenly, the familiar low drum-roll of a motorcycle vibrated through me, a sound strangely out of place on a golf course. The sound came from behind me and to the left side of my fairway. I heard it coast to a stop. The engines revved a few times. A young punk showing off, I thought. Why doesn't he let a man golf in peace? The biker hollered something. I turned and saw his silhouette in the distance. *What was he hollering? Who was he yelling at?* It seemed like it was the syllables, "Pull. Pull!" that echoed back from the mountain behind the Devil's Cauldron. He sat up straight on his seat; his arm and forefinger were thrust toward a point straight behind me. Again, I heard, "Pull!"

I shrugged.

But as I picked my golf bag, something in his voice, an urgency, convinced me to interrupt my game long enough to focus in on where he was pointing. I almost wet my pants. There, trotting up

behind me, a mere 20 yards away, was a full-grown, scruffy grey wolf. The biker had been hollering, "Wolf!"

I swallowed. My throat was dry as Death Valley in August. I tried to blink this startling vision out of my eyes. But the animal was still there. Time stood still; my hearted thudded in my chest. Yes, a hungry-looking, fully-grown wolf had just quit trotting at me and now crouched tentatively, ready, it appeared, for evil doings, a ripping good time, on the ninth hole of a damn golf course.

I quickly looked left; then right. Maybe it was stalking a nearby deer. There were deer and elk ... oh, yes, elk, in Canada. Let it be an elk that wondered on to the golf course.

Nope. Not today.

Except for me and that wolf, the fairway was empty. The cyclist had even just putted back down the utility road.

Heck, I was only playing a nice round of golf.

The three-wood was still out. I choked it with both hands in an iron grip and made a threatening gesture at the menacing beast. He seemed unconcerned and got up from his crouch and moved in toward me. It seemed the only thing holding it back was its wondering what it might have afterward for dessert. I imagined I saw drool coming from its razor teeth, a sinister yellow, plainly visible when its black and glistening top lip quivered and pulled back.

This was one of those laugh-while-you-cry moments. My expression morphed into a crooked smile. My new situation seemed oddly funny in a messy, blood-smeared kind of way. Never had I seen a wolf in the wild. Yet here the two of us were.

I said to myself as I looked at the pathetic three-wood: *This isn't enough club.* And then I chuckled. The sound startled the wild thing. It stopped and came to attention, ears tall, tail up and fluffed out.

Lamely, I fumbled into my golf bag and snatched out the shorter but much heavier sand-wedge. The beefy, forged steel head of the club, old and scratched as it was, gleamed in the sunlight. It had to be the best weapon in the bag. I was ready to

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 19)

Announcements Announcements Announcements

(NINTH HOLE FROM PAGE 18)

raise it and chase after the beast with an un-Palmer-like whoop and holler, when the wolf turned and, just as unexpectedly as it appeared, trotted off. It turned once and pierced me with its devilish, red-eyed gaze as if to say: *You would have been too stringy to eat anyway. I can do better.* I watched it head toward the forest away from the clubhouse and the golf course.

I moved on, and not a bit slowly. I picked up both the balls I was playing. Periodically I checked behind me. I kept the sand-wedge in my hand. The next hole I skipped and caught up with the blithely unaware foursome in front.

They were duly impressed with my story. Under the circumstances, they agreed to add me as a fifth to their foursome, even if that did break a golf course rule printed clearly on each person's score card: four is the maximum number of people per group. **RB**

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YAHOO!


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

- ♦ 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 member, you're qualified.

 **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

Terse Verse
—by Pat Bustamante

Mayo. Mustard. Pepper. Salt!
If it's not spicy, not my fault.
This romance ms. is going out
With evidence the author
(Beyond a doubt)
Proofed while snacking,
And finished with a malt..

The only difference
between a rut and a
grave is the depth.

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

Stamp(s)

ADDRESSEE

Address Correction Requested

SAVE THESE DATES

Board of Directors Meet
May 6, 2pm Garfinkle's

General Meeting (Dinner):
May 9,
Emily Jiang

Open Mic:
May 4, 7:30p
B&N, Almaden Plaza
May 11, 7:30.p
Borders, Santana Row
May 18, 7:30
B&N in the Pruneyard
May 23, 7:30
Borders, Sunnyvale

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

Editors Pow-Wow:
May 19, 10:00am
Orchard Valley Coffee

General Dinner Meet — May 9, 6:00pm

LookOut Bar and Grill
605 Macara Ave., Sunnyvale
(Sunnyvale Golfcourse)

See Map Below

