



# WRITERSTALK

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Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club

## Every Book a Bestseller

by Alexander Leon



**Alexander Leon**  
VP/Programs

As writers, we need and want useful, actionable data—information to get our writing projects and careers to take off. Owing to our guest speakers, Michael Larsen and Elizabeth Pomada, keystones of the oldest literary agency in Northern California, our upcoming November meeting promises to add a cornerstone piece all writers must acquire in the building of their books and careers.

Actionable data for writers are tools that illuminate the way around the pitfalls, teach us how to write effectively and professionally, and act as compasses pointing the way to successfully publish sell, option, auction, and promote our creations in the maze of the publishing world.

Anyone present at our meetings and workshops throughout the year has been exposed to tools that assist in developing characters, plots, and dialogue, and analyzing and editing them; suggestions on how to perform investigative research and write journalistic pieces that tick with the pulse of the world; techniques for weaving facts and history into fiction; advice on sustaining oneself through the creative process; and descriptions of the similarities and differences in structure between a novel and a screenplay. So to round out our wonderful 2007 speakers' series, Michael Larsen and Elizabeth Pomada come to provide the perfect culmination to it. They come to tell us *How to Make Every Book You Write a Bestseller*.

Agents help writers navigate the difficult waters of writing and publishing by fulfilling numerous functions: as *scouts*, they search for the talent and titles that publishers seek; as *midwives*, they aid writers editorially and in other ways during the delivery of their creation; as *matchmakers*, they know which publishers are the best prospects for your book. They act as *mediators* and *negotiators* to hammer out the most favorable publishing contracts possible, to which they are personally linked since they earn their commission out of your earnings. They serve as a link between the publisher and writer to solve financial, production, and promotion issues; and to answer questions.

As founders of the oldest literary agency in Northern California, and having lectured at countless colleges, universities and writers' conferences, the Larsen-Pomada team has the experience and is in the perfect position to help writers become *writers*, mapping for them how to "establish a permanent relationship [with publishers and agents] that will grow more profitable and creative as the writer's career develops. They both face the perpetual challenge of finding books." Knowing how to write a bestseller could possibly be the most vital tool in the writer's toolset.

As members of the Association of Authors' Representatives, the Larsen-Pomada team has helped launch countless writers' careers since 1972 and secured publishing contracts for hundreds of books. Elizabeth represents commercial and literary fiction, and narrative non-fiction. Michael represents non-fiction and is the author

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## Screenwriting Workshop Review

by Jeremy Osborne

Writing a great story? First learn the rules, then learn when to break them.

"As a great storyteller, you often have to break the rules, but first you have to know what the rules are. Today, I'm going to teach you both," James Dalessandro promised the intimate crowd. "How many of you are screenwriters out there?" A few hands waved into the air. "Well, how many of you are book writers?" The remaining workshop attendees raised a majority vote of hands. "Good, because what I have to say is as relevant for books and novels as it is for writing screenplays."



**James Dalessandro**

Blue painter's tape and long sheets of brown paper covered some of the windows. A buffet of breakfast food was laid out. A white-haired, authoritative guy who didn't answer to, "Dave LaRoche," or, "El Presidente," stood in front of the room. The general meeting space of the Lookout Bar and Grill had been transformed into the October 21, 2007 Screenwriting Workshop. Okay, the setting hadn't really changed from the normal monthly meetings—but the fact that the amount of information directly applicable to writing my novel exceeded anything I had previously received in any of the general meetings was definitely different.

James Dalessandro, novelist and screenwriter, kicked off the day with what not to write about. "The minutia of your life is not the subject of high

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# President's Prowling

by *Dave LaRoche*  
*President, South Bay Writers*

## Critiques: The Third Circle

I've been thinking about those concentric circles of Barry Eisler's—you remember, the ones he calls his "lines of defense." There are about five: the writer and his work are in the center, with each circle moving out representing a customer. His first circle is his wife; that fits. The second is his family, the third his agent, on through to his publisher's editor, and, finally, the folks who purchase his books. I like this idea: that each level of reviewers constitutes customers for the story; moreover, that they feed back their complaints and applause. This includes the final customer who does or does not buy the book—that's also a message.

For a while I have been thinking and occasionally writing about critique groups and the value they bring to the author. Eisler didn't mention these dedicated folks who every other week or so read, as writers, four or five pieces of ten or twelve pages and point out the faults and the clever ideas and catchy expressions. I'm thinking that these folks form another concentric circle—the one just inside the agent—and that makes six.

I mentioned that these critics are dedicated. They work tirelessly, laboring over construction, consistency, chronology, phrasing, and more, yet may be arbitrarily ignored. They spend time. (I am one and spend four or so hours preparing and three more listening.) When it is time to speak up, it must be done very carefully with consideration for egos and the hard work put in as we submit our "creative best." Occasionally there is argument—not recommended and who needs it—but to read as a writer is to study, and when you speak out your "critical best" in the face of a "creative best," well, that's often not fun. In the end, each member will have aired his ideas, and, if you've submitted, you may benefit—no, you're likely to benefit mightily.

There are critique groups in the club and about. There are five or six, though I can't tell you more than that now. I spoke with Gary Dow, a new member interested in critique, and he "volunteered" to set up a directory. And in a couple of months we'll all know the what, where, and how of critique groups because of Gary's directory there on the hospitality table.

I like critique groups—they're my customers of the third "circle." Once seasoned, they're objective, and the more seasoned the better at ferreting out problems and making excellent suggestions. If you're Barry, they're the next "line of defense" after family. **WT**



## California Writers Club South Bay Branch

— 0 —  
**Board**

President—Dave LaRoche  
pres@southbaywriters.com  
408 729-3941

Vice President—Alexander Leon  
vp@southbaywriters.com

Secretary—Jeannine Vegh  
secretary@southbaywriters.com

Treasurer—Jeremy Osborne  
treasurer@southbaywriters.com

Central Board Rep  
Open

### Committee Chairs

Programs—Alexander Leon  
vp@southbaywriters.com

Publicity—Edie Matthews  
publicity@southbaywriters.com  
408 985-0819

Membership—Marjorie Johnson  
membership@southbaywriters.com

Raffle—Cathy Bauer  
cathy@bauerstar.com

EoE Conference—Edie Matthews and  
Kelly Harrison, co-chairs  
eastofeden@southbaywriters.com

Open Mic—Bill Baldwin  
408 730-9622

Webmaster—Ro Davis  
webmaster@southbaywriters.com

### Join With Us

We have a membership category that fits you. Dues are \$45 per year plus a one-time \$20 initiation fee. Contact the Membership Chair, Marjorie Johnson.

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## WRITERSTALK

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### Managing Editor

Richard Amyx  
newsletter@southbaywriters.com  
408 297-4438

### Contributing Editors

Richard Burns  
Jackie Mutz (copy editor)  
Andrea Galvacs (copy editor)  
Carolyn Donnell  
Lita Kurth  
Susan Paluzzi  
Una Daly

### Submissions

Members of the South Bay Writers Club are encouraged to submit their creative works for publication in *WritersTalk*. Electronic submissions should be text or attached MS Word file sent to newsletter@southbaywriters.com; or mail double-spaced, typewritten copy to

Richard Amyx  
994 No. 2nd Street  
San Jose, CA 95112

### Guest Columns

*Almost Anything Goes* (400 words)

### Repeat Columns

to Una Daly  
unadaly@mac.com>

### News Items (400 words)

### Letters to the Editor (300 words)

to Andrea Galvacs  
lady\_angel@comcast.net

### Creative Works

Short Fiction (1800 words)  
Memoir (1200 words)  
Poetry (300 words)  
Essay (900 words)

### Announcements and Advertisements

newsletter@southbaywriters.com

An announcement is information of interest and value to writers that does not provide direct economic benefit to its originator. Announcements are published free of charge.

Advertising is accepted on the basis of its interest and value to writers. Advertising rates for Club members, \$7 per column inch; non-members, \$10. We will assist or insist with layout.

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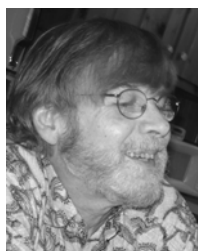
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## Editor's Perspective

by Dick Amyx  
Editor

### Ambience



If you've saved the editorial for last, you already will have read several oblique references to the October meeting: Still basking in the silly atmosphere of the CWC Halloween. The editors. The undulation. I would be editorially remiss if I permitted these references to go unexplained.

**Silly atmosphere.** How does one describe the atmosphere in a room, the mood of a crowd? The atmosphere in the room was electric? The bright lights, the décor in primary colors, the devil-may-care costumes, the nervous chatter throughout the room made it clear that something was in the air? The susurrus of serrated knives sawing through tough beef on cheap crockery places lent a comforting background to bursts of maniacal laughter from tables around the room? Whatever it was—the mood of the crowd, the phase of the moon, or Cathy Bauer's brownies—everybody got goofy.

**The editors.** The *WritersTalk* contributing editors who helped Dave LaRoche during his nearly three years as managing editor—Una Daly, Andrea Galvacs, Jackie Mutz, and Suzy Paluzzi—decided that they wanted to recognize Dave for his services. To do so, Una toggled them out in waterproof aprons (to protect against spattered ink or blood?), baseball caps to ease the glare of bright editing lights, and eyewear suitable for close reading.



Andrea, Una, Jackie, Suzy

On the aprons were the handwritten words

WT  
Editors  
Dave's  
ick  
Crew

The award was, of course, accompanied by appropriately solemn and respectful ceremony. Suzy reflected on the perils that writers face:

A writer died and was given the option of going to heaven or hell.

She decided to check out each place first. As the writer descended into the fiery pits, she saw row upon row of writers chained to their desks in a steaming sweatshop. As they worked, they were repeatedly whipped with thorny lashes.

*Continued on page 6*

# Halloween Meeting Recap

by Richard Burns

The October 10<sup>th</sup> dinner and SBW meeting was downright fun, one of the rowdiest in recent memory. Maybe it was the festive Japanese lanterns hung from the ceiling, the colorfully clever Halloween costumes, or perhaps all the new faces, young and not so young, we had a chance to get to know over dinner. It's safe to say it wasn't the lead-off joke told by Dave LaRoche.

Announcements included Alex Leon's reminder of future workshops, among them the two-day Big Sur Writers' Workshop. Four brave, costumed editors of this newsletter presented an award to a surprised Dave LaRoche for his nearly three years serving as managing editor of *WritersTalk*. Una Daly gave a speech about his role, mostly loaded with compliments. Andrea Galvacs read off her hilarious list of screwy article-submittal guidelines.

Introduction of guests included novices, published authors, younger writers, and a gentleman who received ten rejection letters and summarized himself as "a splendid but humble writer." The "Recent Successes" portion seemed to consist of a landslide of newly published books by attendees. Examples include *Accidental Secretary*, by Marcia Brandsdorfer; *The Jade Ruby*, by Valerie Wong; and *Bird Watcher*, by Marjorie Johnson.

Many of us were drawn to the meeting by the prospect of hearing the writing tips and success-secrets of guest speaker and thriller author, Barry Eisler. But first, he judged the costume contest. (Some people take the whole Halloween thing pretty seriously. Apparently Barry takes any "undulations," accidental or otherwise, in jest.) More than twenty costumed members and visitors flocked to the front to show off. Winners received shiny awards.

For the finale, Barry Eisler had his chance, keeping us spellbound with a steady flow of ideas for us blossoming into successful, published fiction writers. His half-Japanese, half-American John Rain character, authentic Tokyo locales, and atmospheric jazz club settings has helped his "Rain" series of thriller novels become well established among fans of the genre.

Outline of your essential goals:

- Where to get good story ideas
- How to nurture them (through story development, polished completion, and gaining a publisher's interest)
- How to sustain that nurturing through inevitable obstacles (including the many rejection letters)

For your ideas, tap into your very own interests and areas of acquired expertise. We all have those.

The story should be centered on *who, what, where* to reel-in the reader. "*Everything* fed out in your story should make the reader hungry to read more." (Every sentence should pass this test.) To be a writer, (1) read voraciously. All successful writers read a ton of stuff. (2) Write, write, write. In practicing daily, you improve your writing chops, analogous to learning to play piano.

After you've read a book for enjoyment, take time to read it again with a different filter, from the writer's point of view: ask why the author is writing the particular sentence/paragraph you are reading. How does the author get the maximum bang for the effort? Was this sentence essential? Why?

Barry said, "You can't teach art, but you *can* teach craft." All of us can *learn* craft. In



**Walking as he talks, Barry Eisler shares his secrets of success for marketing books as well as writing them.**

that good book you are reading, what draws you in? Why is this or that working so well? "As you become proficient at reading in this way, you'll find it becomes a habit." Once a part of you, you can't *not do it* according to Eisler.

Now, if he reads something bad, he knows it's bad at a glance. But importantly, he knows why it's bad, and he knows how to fix it.

How does Barry sustain his motivation to continue to nurture his work? He said that others profess a lot of positive clichés. But Barry confessed, what sustains him is fear. Olympic gold medalists hate to lose. That's at the heart of the drive to get better, to be better than just good. Barry said he was never afraid of not getting published. (That might take luck, market timing, the vagaries of reader tastes, things not under his control.) "I was afraid if a work didn't get published, it was my fault." That's the part he absolutely wanted to avoid.

He admitted how hard it is to avoid distractions like family, tiredness, and TV. That's why he doesn't watch TV. Think of your own distractions, those that keep you from your writing. How will you feel a year down the road if you don't have your project published? How will you feel if you do? He uses a remedy: "I ask myself: How are you going to feel *at the end of your life* [if you didn't get published]?" He claimed that he simply would not let that happen.

Barry Eisler ended with a rousing Q & A. To the question of whether to re-bug a [disinterested] agent a second time with an improved manuscript, his suggestion is not to. "You only get one chance to make a first impression. Your first submittal should be the most kick-ass book you can write."

His books were on sale afterward, among them, *Requiem for an Assassin*, *Rain Fall*, and *Hard Rain*. His website is [www.barryeisler.com](http://www.barryeisler.com). **WT**



## Costume Contest Winners



The costume contest winners, from left to right (more or less). Scariest: Security Guards Annmarie Garfinkle and Keith Eldridge; Most Unique: *WT* Editors Andrea Galvacs, Una Daly, Jackie Mutz, and Suzy Paluzzi; Funniest, Edie Matthews as King Lear's Fool (between Una and Jackie); Prettiest, Betty Auchard, wearing the nightgown in which she posed for the cover of her book *Dancing in My Nightgown*; Most Original, Bill Baldwin as "A Knight of the Iguana meets the Heart of Darkness, post-modern"; Most Literary, Susan Mueller as Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*.

## Accolades

by Jackie Mutz

In last month's column, I gave readers my personal email address to submit writing successes. Remember? It has been awfully quiet these past couple of weeks. Maybe



Jackie Mutz  
Contributing Editor

placement is everything, so I am putting it at the beginning of "Accolades"—email me at [j\\_mutz@yahoo.com](mailto:j_mutz@yahoo.com) to share your good news.

There was much good news to share at the SBW October 10 meeting featuring Barry Eisler (see recap story), one reason for such a big crowd. Several guests stood and introduced themselves; Paul Schmitt (fantasy thriller), Gerry (written two thrillers), Bev Ryan (starting first book) and Dave Berger

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## View from the Board

by Dave LaRoche

Attending a regular board meeting held at the president's residence on October 3 were Alex Leon, Jeremy Osborne, Jeannine Vegh, Edie Matthews, Ro Davis, Cathy Bauer, Marjorie Johnson, Dick Amyx, and Dave LaRoche. The following summarizes the action, most important to least.

From *WT* Editor Dick Amyx: A motion was passed to increase the *WritersTalk* Challenge award fund to \$320 from \$250 and to award one prize in each of the four genres.

Treasurer Jeremy Osborne: Given the current information, we may run in the red about \$377 for our second fiscal quarter, October through December, and the first quarter report to the Central Board was held pending a final statement from B of A.

Membership Chair Marjorie Johnson: Our year-end attrition reduced our rolls as 39 folks failed to renew.

Vice President Alex Leon: Barry Eisler would be our guest at the October meeting and to remember the

Dalessandro workshop Oct 21 and Larson and Pomada at our November meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup>. He also reminded that the Christmas party would again be hosted at the home of Betty Auchard.

Other items of interest include:

- California Writers Week is Oct 14 through Oct 21. Posters made up by Ro Davis will be distributed.
- The Central Board is considering the production of an anthology to include juried work from members of the CWC. Publication date is planned for the end of 2008.
- About "40 places" have received publicity releases for our screen-writing workshop on October 21.
- Five "Open Mic" meetings per month are operating at various B&N and Borders book stores including the new one in Fremont.
- A new "deadline date," the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month, is established for submittals to the newsletter.
- A Calendar of Events will soon be up

on the website as well as links to My Space and the Yahoo Group.

- The Raffle produced \$43.50 for the general fund from last meetings donations.
- East of Eden Conference has booked half the planned workshops, several agents, and Karen Joy Fowler, author of *The Jane Austen Fan Club*, is considering a keynote spot.
- South Bay Youth Writers, a club initiated and sponsored effort, moves forward with flyers distributed to schools, a well developed "MySpace" now linked from the main website, and the completion of a "permission slip" for those under 18.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 with the next planned for November 7. *WT*



*Ambience, continued from page 3*

"Oh my," said the writer. "Let me see heaven now."

A few moments later, as she ascended into heaven, she saw rows of writers, chained to their desks in a steaming sweatshop. As they worked, they, too, were whipped with thorny lashes.

"Wait a minute," said the writer. "This is just as bad as hell."

"Oh no, it's not," replied an unseen voice. "Here, your work gets published."

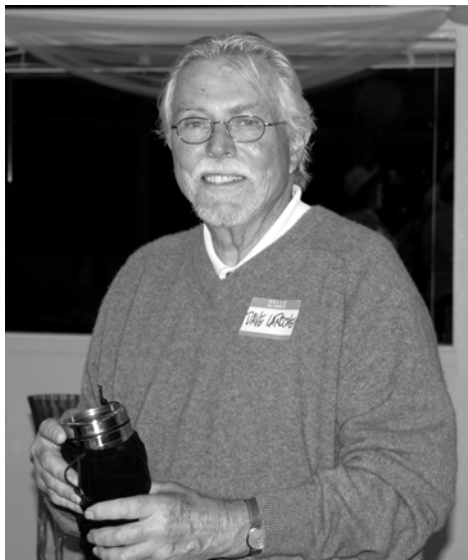
And that is no reflection on writing for the newsletter . . .

When the audience's groans had subsided, Andrea, *WritersTalk's* self-proclaimed chief nit-picker, read, in a voice that defied defiance, a list of rules for writers, which, if followed, would spare them from the editors' red pencils:

1. Verbs HAS to agree with their subjects.
2. Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.
3. And don't start a sentence with a conjunction.
4. It is wrong to ever split an infinitive.
5. Avoid clichés like the plague. (They're old hat.)
6. Be more or less specific.
7. Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are (usually) unnecessary.
8. Also too, never, ever, use repetitive redundancies.
9. No sentence fragments.
10. Don't use no double negatives.
11. Proofread carefully to see if you any words or misspelled something.
12. Eschew obfuscation.

Following the readings, the award was made: a copper coffee mug from Orchard Valley Coffee Shop, where the *WT* staff holds its monthly powwows. And the image of Una, Andrea, Jackie, and Suzy is now stuck in my mind as the *WT*ick crew.

**The undulation.** Hoo, boy. Well, here goes. See, it wasn't so much that we invited author Barry Eisler to speak to us as that SBW sort of *assimilated* him and made him a part of the collective for the evening. And Barry, being one heck of a good sport, went right along with it—accepting a role as judge of the costumes—without missing a beat.



**Dave gets a mug.**

Until he encountered the undulation.

Barry also awarded the prizes to the winners of the costume competition, among them Betty Auchard, who was wearing the title nightgown from her book *Dancing in My Nightgown*. When Betty went up to receive her prize, she . . . *attached* herself to Barry and gave him a hug.



**Barry gets a hug.**

It was probably all just a misunderstanding because, as Betty explained to me later, she didn't actually undulate against Barry; rather, she gave him a series of quick hugs in the same way that she hugged her children when they were young and hugs her grandchildren today: *hughughug*. It was just her way of letting Barry know that she had accepted him into the SBW family.

When Betty separated herself from Barry, she thanked him for the award, projecting her voice so that it could be

heard around the room: "I have a new boy-toy!"

The room roared, and Barry blushed redder than I believe I've ever seen a grown man blush.



**The undulation reverberates.**

Blush or not, misunderstanding or not, Barry was so impressed by Betty's hug that he worked the word "undulation" into his talk no fewer than three times.

So there you have it: the silly atmosphere, the editors, and the undulation. As for describing the atmosphere in the room and the mood of the crowd, happily, a picture is worth a thousand words, so I had to use only 864. **WT**

*The humorous story is told gravely; the teller does his best to conceal the fact that he even dimly suspects that there is anything funny about it.*

— Mark Twain

*Every Book a Best Seller, continued from page 1*

of *How to Write a Book Proposal*, in which he delineates what agents, editors, and publishers seek. He gladly makes himself available to authors for consultation on proposals.

They are the co-founders of the San Francisco Writers Conference and the Writing for Change Conference. Together, Michael and Elizabeth have sold hundreds of books to more than one hundred publishers. Join us to hear the last of our 2007 guest speakers' series and make every book you write a bestseller. **WT**



# NaNoWriMo. It's Here!

by Carolyn Donnell

**M**idnight. Nov. 1, 2007. Did you hear it—the tapping sounds? Beetles in the woodwork? Bats in the attic? No. The noise came from keyboards, laptops, word processors, and even the scratching of a pencil or two, all creating beginning lines—“It was a dark and stormy night”, “The wind raced through her hair as she fell from the cliff”, “The cigar shaped disk plowed into the sand dune. A panel slid back and through the opening emerged ....” Fingers flying, typing in California, across the nation, the hemisphere and finally around the world—a chorus of writers stringing words into sentences, sentences into paragraphs, until their word count reaches 50,000. NaNoWriMo has begun.

Na ... No ... what?

National Novel Writing Month.

The NaNoWriMo website describes it like this: “National Novel Writing Month is a fun, seat-of-your-pants approach to novel writing. Participants begin writing November 1. The goal is to write a 175-page (50,000-word) novel by midnight, November 30.”

Said to be the largest writing contest in the world, it was started in Oakland in 1999 by Chris Baty with only 21 people participating. He claims that his “butt-in-chair method” has yielded more completed first drafts worldwide than any other program. Since 1999 the event has expanded to almost 80,000 participants in 2006 (and that doesn’t count the Youth Program). The number of words officially logged by participants that year was 982,564,701. Chris may be right. That’s a lot of words. (Chris spoke to South Bay Writers last March. See WritersTalk for March and April 2006).

Baty attributes this success to the fact that the original participants had never tried to write a novel before. They didn’t know what the official journey was supposed to be like. He claims that “just being idiots,” as he puts it, made possible things that otherwise might have seemed impossible. He assumed that there was a brick wall between the world of the novelist and his world, but soon realized that with a slight shove and a lot of coffee (Chris recommends caffeine, in massive doses), the wall disappears.

**WHEN IS IT?** It starts on Nov. 1 and lasts through 11:59 on Nov. 30.

**IT’S NOT TOO LATE TO SIGN UP!**

**WHERE IS IT?** Sign up at <http://www.nanowrimo.org/>.

**WHO CAN ENTER?** Anyone, anywhere. Write from home, school, or the office (better be careful there, though), or at your neighborhood coffee shop (there’s that caffeine again).

You can do it alone or with groups. Find out if there is already a group near you on the NaNoWriMo website. Check the Regions directory for California—SouthBay, or you might look at Santa Clara as well. (SF Peninsula and East Bay are also possibilities). Also look under Forums -> NaNo Groups -> Writing Groups and Clubs-> CWC-SouthBay Branch.

**WHY DO THIS?** Have you ever wanted to write a novel, but been scared off by the amount of time and effort needed or the expertise you think is required? NaNoWriMo gives you a chance to write where the only mandate is output. Chris Baty calls it a “Kamikaze” approach. “Lower your expectations, take risks, and write on the fly.”

With NaNoWriMo, you have to discard self-defeating attitudes. No time for editing, polishing, agonizing over the precise term (although a handy Thesaurus can’t hurt) or stressing over syntax and structure. Lowering expectations helps the writer to produce words without the constant nagging of the internal editor. Most



Carolyn Donnell  
Contributing Editor

words won’t be prodigious or illuminating; some of them may even be crap. But amidst the refuse you may find an entrancing character, some great dialogue, or a fabulous plot twist. The rest can be revised later, but you can’t revise a blank page. The writer will have to abandon both perfectionism and procrastination for a month, but it can be done.

Will the result be a brilliant, ready to publish book when you finish? Do you win a prize? Is there money involved? No—to all of the above. Winning means simply writing (from scratch) 50,000 words in 30 days. That’s all. The words don’t even have to be English. The website itself is translated into four other languages: Deutsch, Nederlands, Español, and Français. What you will receive is a certificate, a web logo, a first draft, a boost in self confidence, and an excuse for not doing your chores for a month. So put away your vacuum, car wash mitt, dishrag, and lawn mower, enlist the aid of friends and family, store up lots of caffeine and snacks, and write.

Let’s see. Have I covered all the excuses?

- No confidence?
- No one is going to read this unless you allow access.
- No expertise? No one cares at this stage.
- No tolerance for errors and imperfections? Get over it, for 30 days at least.
- No ability to schedule and organize? The 30-day deadline forces activity.
- No time to sit and type a lot? Do you commute? Use a recorder with voice recognition software.
- Arm in a sling? Voice recognition software is available here too.

Assistance can be found on the website, in the official guidebook—*No Plot? No Problem!*, (advice and tips from Chris and other NaNoWriMo veterans), and from pep talks, this year from established authors Sue Grafton, Tom Robbins, and Neil Gaiman.

NaNoWriMo. You can do it; you should try it. Join in this month and just write. Write. WRITE!

For more information see [www.NaNoWriMo.org](http://www.NaNoWriMo.org), or contact [press@nanowrimo.org](mailto:press@nanowrimo.org). **WT**

## The Journey of a Thousand Miles: Poets & Writers Magazine

by Lita A. Kurth

An aspiring writer surfing the web or even a bookstore magazine stand may have great difficulty separating the wheat from the chaff. What's legit? What's respected? What is simplistic and exploitative? One resource everyone seems to know is *Writer's Digest*, probably my least favorite writers' magazine (though some of the books it publishes are helpful). A for-profit publication and organization, *Writers Digest* seems to have sprung up around the money to be made from the vast population of aspiring writers. As soon as I subscribed, I became deluged with mail from vanity presses, bogus contests, and misleading "publishers," including some outright scams. *Writers Digest* is a world unto itself that introduces writers to its own proprietary products and events. From it, you won't get a window into the fabulous and rich world of writing around us.

I took a course in fiction writing through them and was very unhappy with the lack of feedback and guidance I received from my so-called teacher. (To be fair, though, a friend of mine took their short story course, and after she complained about her first teacher, got a second one with whom she was pleased.)

Given the amount of unqualified buzz parading as guidance, where is a writer to turn? Try *Poets & Writers Magazine*. *Poets & Writers*, a nonprofit organization, gives you more for your money at the same subscription cost of \$19.95 per year (most libraries also carry it). Although it has gotten a little more glitzy in recent years, which some people may like more than I do, this is the place to go for knowledgeable information about respected conferences, genuine contests, grants from state organizations and nonprofits, writers' residencies and retreats, and college programs.

Recent issues offered this: the Big Six

publishing houses, a guide to print-on-demand publishing, interviews with Chicano writer Helena Maria Virmontes and novelist Richard Ford, MFA programs and how to apply, an article on evaluating criticism of your writing, profiles of writers with just-published first novels, a dozen debut poets who "sealed the deal," four pages of publishing opportunities, and performance tips for reading your work in public. Check out their lively website, updated daily ([www.pw.org/mag](http://www.pw.org/mag)) and let us know what you think in a letter to the editor! **WT**

*Accolades, continued from page 7*  
(tech writer) to name a few.

Some member good news:

- Marjorie Johnson now has copies of her book for sale, \$15.00 each.
- Marsha Brandsdorfer has just published *The Accidental Secretary*, a chronicle of her experiences working in law firms.
- Jeannine Vegh has created a South Bay *MySpace* ad to draw younger writers to our group. It's a great way to advertise and it's free.
- Bob Garfinkle writes book reviews for the *Tri-City Tribunal* and even the *San Francisco Chronicle* if your book was published within the last six months. See him about your book—good advertising.
- Bobbi Bond, a science fiction writer, has started a blog on paranormal experiences. Post your true experiences on [www.odtruth.blogspot.com](http://www.odtruth.blogspot.com).
- A South Bay Open Mic is the place to read your favorite author or even your own writing. Check out the calendar in *WritersTalk* for times and places.
- Valerie Whong (pen names Valerie Lee and Valerie Wong) published her book *The Jade Rubies*, the story of two young sisters sold into slavery in China and later taken to Vancouver, BC in 1915, had her first book signing October 6 in San Jose. Another book launch will take place in Vancouver, BC on October 28th.

Keep the fires burning as we move into the autumn glow—keep writing, keep moving, keep "those creative juices flowing"—and send me your good writing news. **WT**

## The Business of Writing

by Suzy Paluzzi

### Paths to Publication: Part II

Back in the August issue, I promised a second article regarding publishing. I could say I wanted to keep you in suspense to underscore attention to our October meeting speaker, Barry Eisler, writer of

mysteries. Wrong! (But it was a good attempt at humor for the fun theme of this issue!)

That August column was devoted to self-publishing. And a couple of corrections need to be addressed. First of all, Sally Ashton did *not* create DMQ Review. She said in an e-mail recently, "It was the vision and creation of founding editor J.P. Dancing Bear, who handed it off to me in 2003 when he went to other pursuits. He is still the host of Cupertino's KKUP weekly poetry show, 'Out of Our Heads,' which can be heard each Wednesday at 8 p.m., as well as editor-in-chief of the American Poetry Journal which he also founded."

Secondly, Sally Ashton wrote: "The other correction is one of terminology. Technically, 'self-publishing' means taking your own work to print, whether electronically or hard copy. This is *not* what the DMQ has ever done, other than in the form of an editor's column known as 'from the ether' .... To be accurate to our publication, the line should read: 'Online publication is thus another form of publication to consider for your work'".

I respect Sally Ashton, excellent instructor, writer, and organizer of the recent California Poets Festival, and am grateful for the clarification. One is always learning things, even while under the deadline gun. This brings to mind Horace Greeley's quote: "Journalism will kill you, but it will keep you alive while you're at it". But I digress ...

This is my tongue in cheek "take" on publishing. I promise I will end the year with the article done in a more serious vein. And thanks to those kind and knowledgeable authors whom I interviewed for their patience in seeing



Suzy Paluzzi  
Contributing Editor



Lita Kurth  
Contributing Editor



their advice printed. I know I asked for input often at bad times, and I truly apologize for the delay. I am, however, still basking in the silly atmosphere of the SBW Halloween meeting of October 10.

So, courtesy of Margaret Abruzzi, a writer of childhood memories of World War II mentioned in an earlier issue, I am quoting Clive James, from an article about J.K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter series, and publishing.

“Journalists are too used to hearing that Jeffery Archer or John Grisham sold a million of their latest book in a week. But the average book doesn’t sell even a thousand copies in a year. The average book is lucky to sell a hundred in its lifetime. The average book doesn’t even get published.”

“Until recent times the average writer could always tell himself that he was suffering for his art and the blockbuster bestselling author was merely cashing in on a formula...”

“But JK blew that consolation away. She was obviously working from creative inspiration, and her global audience so obviously love the stuff ....”

“If would-be writers aren’t capable of writing a book for its own sake, they shouldn’t be writing at all. I speak as one who would have found it hard to make ends meet as a writer if I had not been wearing another hat in show-business. I can’t honestly whine about having pushed my pen in vain but if I had done nothing else except write books I would be raking the leaves on one of JK’s front lawns by now, and glad of the gig.”

Now, this seems discouraging. But, Clive James goes on to say, “And I’m one of the lucky ones. The thing to grasp is that if you’re getting published at all, you’re one of the lucky ones. You’re expressing yourself, and the bookselling business is still willing to take a chance on someone like you. The publishers are still looking for a hit, and one of the reasons they are doing so is JK. No matter what you hear about the depredations of mass merchandizing and the destructive effect of supermarket discounts, her success gives a lease of life to a whole industry.”

So, see, there is hope. I intend to talk about distribution chains in more detail,

## Alice Walker at Hickleebee’s

by Suzy Paluzzi

Alice Walker is perhaps best known for her Pulitzer Prize winning novel *The Color Purple*. A poet, too, Walker has turned her hand to writing children’s books. On September 25, she read and signed her most recent book, *Why War Is Never A Good Idea*, which the author insisted is for all ages. “The best children’s books are for everyone,” she said. Hickleebee’s Bookstore in Willow Glen sponsored the event.

*Why War Is Never A Good Idea* is “my small attempt to change consciousness early,” offered Alice Walker. “The book is written for parents to teach children about war instead of them buying war toys for their children” she added. Walker feels that war is often glorified and accepted, when it should not be. “War is against people, who we all are by definition. When you are bombing others, you are bombing US. When you are bombing another country, you are bombing your house,” Walker exclaimed. The book was released on September 21, The United Nations International Day of Peace.

Alice Walker gives one the sense that she is confident but deeply aware and grateful for the gifts in life. “I am actively involved in life, and life is coming at me in all its wonderful forms. Things and people speak to me—the earth included,” she explained. “How magical the world is, how precious every person is,” Walker beamed.

Walker was generous with her time. Hickleebee’s created a personal atmosphere and the author was respectful of young and old alike when the audience asked questions. A book that made an

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as well as marketing, in future The Business of Writing articles. Until then, don’t forget to write! **WT**

**AUTHOR’S NOTE:** *Clive James AM (born on October 7, 1939 in Kogarah, Sydney, New South Wales) is an expatriate Australian writer, poet, essayist, critic, and commentator on popular culture. James material used in this article was presented on the BBC News on July 27, 2000.*

impression on her at an early age was Gulliver’s Travels. She is working on a children’s book now called, *I Was Born To Hold A Cat*. And, when asked about the process of writing, the author of twenty-nine books answered, “It’s truly mysterious—writing. I don’t write notes. If it stays with me (in my head), it’s mine. If it is still there a week or two later, I can start working. It feels right to me, very holistic.” She also “edits furiously” in her head.

Other books Alice Walker has written are *Absolute Trust in the Goodness of the Earth*, an adult poetry collection, and among her total of five children’s books so far, *There Is A Flower*



**Alice Walker**

*At The Tip Of My Nose Smelling Me*. She wrote her first book when she was twenty-one, and is currently transcribing forty years of her journals, which she may share as “excerpts.”

Finally, when asked about *The Color Purple*, Alice Walker said she wrote it as a “thank you to her ancestors.” Alice Walker’s writing is timeless. A good indicator is that *The Color Purple* was published in 1992 and produced recently as a Broadway musical, and also was in cinema form. Currently, it is playing at the Orpheum Theatre in San Francisco.

Alice Walker lives in northern California and feels that as she gets older she enjoys writing children’s books more to “offer some of the protection that in a traditional society elders provide by telling them [children] as much of the truth that they can take.” She also wants to “share the wonder of life. I am stunned by the simplest things.”

Let us hope that Alice Walker is here to guide us all for many more years to come. **WT**

### Deadline

The deadline for the December issue of *WritersTalk* is November 16!

## Showtime for Esmerelda

by Betty Auchard

Esmerelda Andrete is my transgender writer/actress friend who also plays jazz on a saxophone. We met six years ago in an active singles' club in San Jose, where she eventually met her boyfriend and I eventually dropped out. I call her Es (with a z) for short. Es is *not* short but a tall, slim, dignified woman inclined toward plainspoken honesty.

Earlier this year, a number of South Bay Writers volunteered twice to be a test audience in my intimate, living-room "theater" for Es's one-woman show *Misery is Optional*, a narrative of her incredible journey from life-threatening depression to self-acceptance and joy. After each presentation we applauded her courage and made pertinent points

that she found valuable in shaping the final performance. Using our suggestions and those of her drama coach, Es then hired a director, who has since helped make *Misery is Optional* ready for the stage.

*Misery is Optional* will be presented in four performances during November at the Theatre Rhinoceros in San Francisco. It's an opportunity to spend time with a remarkable woman, hear an enlightening story, and enjoy an evening you'll never regret. You'll be privy to facts that may be completely foreign to you and you'll laugh at issues you never laughed at before. For details, contact Betty Auchard at [Btauchard@aol.com](mailto:Btauchard@aol.com) or call (408) 356-8224. **WT**

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*Screenwriting Workshop, continued from page 1*

drama," he reminded us, refraining from the obvious rhetorical inquiry. "But that doesn't mean that you can't write about anything. The best writers out there are the ones who know how to make even the small scenes work."

A brash yet amicable speaker, James made it clear in the beginning that we were going to get our money's worth. We spent most of the morning talking about the rules to writing a great story. Every great story follows three major rules and a long list of little rules. The major rules are the most important, and never really get broken on purpose. But not knowing the major rules, you might break them by accident, causing the death of your story, and that would be bad.

The first major rule is start with a great idea. "In one of these workshops a woman about 80 years old stood up and asked if her idea was a good one for a story," James told us. "She told us, speaking kind of slowly, that when she was young she lived in Mexico, and when she was seven, Pancho Villa kidnapped her. During her detainment, he fell in love with her and after some time returned her home, unharmed, and for no ransom. That's a hell of an idea for a story! I gave the woman my card and told her to send me everything she had written immediately!"

The woman never contacted James again. He used this to define the importance of the second rule. Every story must have an obvious beginning, middle, and end. "Being kidnapped by Pancho Villa is an excellent idea for a story," James said, "but if all they did was wander around the desert on horses, you can't turn that into much of a story." Ideas must be able to persist for 120 minutes or 50,000 words.

Once a story has a great idea and it can be architected, a voice for the story must be created. The voices of the narration and the characters provide the real information for the audience, all the while disguising the information as part of the story. "*Amadeus*, the movie, what made it interesting was that it was told not from the point of view of the title character, but by Salieri." *Amadeus* wasn't really about a musical prodigy, it was the voice of mediocrity threatened by the power of genius.

With the major requirements (idea, architecture, and voice) drilled and detailed, it was time to learn the other rules, the breakable ones. "Start with an end in the story, like in *Witness* where they begin with a funeral," James said. A bit of silence. "Wait, how many of you have seen *Witness*?" Only a few people raised their hands. "You're a bunch of great people, but you're culturally deprived. Your homework assignment is to watch *Witness* by

Thursday of this week."

- "Every scene should start with character development then segue into plot."
- "You're allowed one big lie in any story, but the rest of it had better be logical."
- "Answer the questions posed to the audience at a slower rate than you create new questions."

"Every protagonist needs to deal with two problems: one internal and one external."

The rules reviewed and drilled, we practiced their application. Dalessandro unpacked his Dolby 5.1 surround sound portable home theater. We darkened the room as best possible, lowered the movie screen, and watched *Chinatown*, "The last, and best, private detective movie." Every few minutes James stopped the movie and dissected what worked, what followed the rules, and what broke the rules. "One rule *Chinatown* broke is that the protagonist [Jack Nicholson] and the antagonist [John Huston] don't even meet each other until halfway through the movie. Another, it doesn't have a happy ending."

James was very generous with his schedule and spent extra time answering the many questions we all had. "My wife and I went to the theater some time ago to see *Lethal Weapon* for the first time. There was a scene early on in the movie where Danny Glover shows Mel Gibson how he is remodeling his house. I watched the scene, turned to my wife and whispered, 'You see that pneumatic nail gun? At the end of the movie Danny Glover is going to get in a fight with a bad guy and shoot him in the head with a 16-penny nail.' My beautiful wife moved two seats away from me and unfortunately I had to watch the movie by myself."

He said that he didn't teach the class to curse us into antisocial movie watching. He just wanted us to learn how to write great stories that would get us published. He hoped to see us again, and promised if we had him back he'd cover different topics in more detail. I'm looking forward to that, too. **WT**

*Easy reading is damn hard writing.*

– Nathaniel Hawthorne

## SHORT STORY

# Camelot! (Sing It with Me)

by Rosanne Davis

"That song's driving me crazy," said Jane. "Ever since you took me to see *Mame*, I can't get that damn song out of my head. 'You coax the blues right out of the horn, Maaaame.'"

"Oh, I know," Sally said. "It was the same for me, but now I've got a trick for that. My friend Linda, you know the one who sings in that chorus? You met her at the thing we went to? Over at that place? Well, she told me that her chorus director told her that when you get a song stuck in your head, you sing 'Camelot.' They don't know how it works, but it does. You sing 'Camelot' and the stuck song gets unstuck, but for some reason 'Camelot' doesn't get stuck in its place."

"Oh, I loved *Camelot*," Jane said with a rapturous sigh. "Remember the movie, the one with Richard Harris and Vanessa Redgrave when they were so young and she was so beautiful, so Guinevere-y."

"Except for all that eyeliner. Yuk. I mean, yeah, the movie came out in the — what, late sixties? — but did they have to make all the girls look like they'd just walked off Carnaby Street? I mean they might as well have put a Mustang convertible next to the Round Table, it was so — what's the word? — anachronistic, and everything was way too clean for the Middle Ages, if you ask me."

Jane wore eyeliner. She wondered if she wore too much? Was Sally trying to tell her she looked yuk?

"Anyway," Sally was saying, "try the 'Camelot' trick. It worked for me."

Jane did try it. At first, she Camelot, Camelot-ed her way into the opening lyrics to "C'est Moi," which was not as silly as it sounds because "C'est Moi" does start out as a refrain to "Camelot."

Either way, singing *Camelot* was a nifty little trick. Almost at once, "Maaaame" was no longer running through Jane's head and neither was "Camelot."

She told her husband about this. She also told him the other thing, that Sally told her she wore too much eyeliner. "Do you think I wear too much eyeliner?"

"Sally said that?"

"She implied it."

Later, Jane mentioned to her husband that she thought Sally was just saying that because she couldn't wear eye makeup. "It bothers her contact lenses. I think she's just too lazy to make the effort."

Next morning, Jane said, "I honestly don't understand why, after she's known me for *twelve* years, Sally never mentioned before that I look like a throwback to the 60's. I mean isn't that what friends are for, to tell you when you look ridiculous or when you got broccoli in your teeth or toilet paper hanging out the back of your jeans? How can I even consider someone like her a friend?"

"You really know how to beat a dead horse, I'll give you that," said her husband as he left the house for work.

On her way to work, Jane called her oldest daughter, who was away at college. "I don't know how Daddy can be so insensitive to my feelings."

"Maybe he's just trying to tell you to lighten up."

"What do you mean by that?"

"It sounds like you're making a big deal out of nothing, Mom. Again."

"What do you mean, again?"

"It's your thing, like your hobby, you know? Some Moms knit, cook. You spin up on stuff." She laughed, like this was funny.

Jane thought about this all day at work. She could barely concentrate on what she needed to get done. She felt like her world was falling apart. Her daughter, her husband, her best friend! Maybe it wasn't a big thing, the eyeliner, but it was the emotion behind it. They should all understand that. For Sally to not tell her she looked like an out-of-date freak, in today's world, where image meant so much, something like that could cost Jane her job!

On the way home, Jane was so upset, she didn't notice the car next to her was trying to merge and she almost hit it. That scared her.

"I have to stop spinning on this," she yelled at herself in the rear view.

She could hardly see the eyeliner on her lids. How could Sally say she looked like a Carnaby Street bimbo?

That night, Jane could not sleep. She tossed and turned in the bed and in her mind. She got up. She splashed water on her face. She needed to get some rest or she would look like a freaking hag tomorrow. She had an important business meeting. She had to be at her best. She had to be sharp. She had to stop this right now.

She shook her head hard, made her hair fly all over. She grabbed her head with both hands.

"Stop spinning!" she hissed at her reflection.

She thought her eyes looked small and dull without eye make-up. They always had. That is why she wore it, for the love of God!

She would continue to wear it. Screw Sally.

Jane let out a big breath.

Still, reaching this conclusion and fully accepting it did not stop the thoughts from going round and round and round

*Continued on page 12*

# A New Breed

by Marcela Dickerson

It had never happened to me before, not even in Chile, my developing country of origin; where in spite of sanitary codes stray dogs still roam the streets and sometimes mate unashamedly under the shade of centenary trees. I had never even been chased by a dog. And I have visited some of the worst neighborhoods and poorest rural areas of many countries in the world.

As the saying goes: "If it has to happen it'd better be in style."

About three years after relocating to Santa Clara, in the heart of Silicon Valley, I was bitten by a dog.

At the time I was working as a therapist for a local hospital, doing home care visits.

I had been treating a patient for several weeks. He was recovering nicely from a stroke and in fact, this particular day I was making my last visit.

That afternoon we sat as usual at the kitchen table and I started assessing his progress, especially in the mobility of

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*Camelot, continued from page 11*

and round in her head.

Jane admitted to her own face that it was futile, stupid, that Sally probably hadn't even meant to insult her at all, but she could make her mind stop going round and round and . . .

Jane blinked. Her mouth went to one side as, for the first time in days, she thought of something else.

She cleared her throat.

"The rain may never fall 'til after sundown," she sang in her softest soprano so as not to wake her husband or her two children who were still at home. "By eight, the morning fog must disappear. In short, there's simply not a more congenial spot for happily-ever-aftering than here . . ." she bounced her head with the beat "in . . . Camaaaaaahhhhhllot!"

She yawned. She got back in bed. "Hmm, mm, mmm," she hummed. "Hmm, mm, mmm."

Damned if it doesn't work. **WT**

his compromised hand.

At the end of the room I saw a mid-sized dog, half pit-bull, sound asleep on a rug. I don't remember having ever received instructions regarding household dogs, and he seemed harmless enough, so I continued doing the treatment.

Suddenly and without warning the monster sprung from his sleep and as I stood up, he grabbed my left hand with his teeth and wouldn't let go. I started bleeding and heard my patient calling for someone. Finally, I managed to dislodge myself and immediately he attacked my left breast through the white coat that covered my clothes. His teeth cut all the way to my skin. As I cried out in pain, the patient's teenage granddaughter appeared. She managed to control the animal and took him away.

I washed my wounds in the privacy of their bathroom. After completing my patient's treatment I headed back to my base hospital. I was treated with much sympathy in the Emergency Room where to my embarrassment the nurse on duty happened to be the only male nurse on staff. I was discharged after my two wounds were covered with antiseptic, paper stitches, and wrapped in mounds of gauze.

I received precise instructions to rest, take all the antibiotics and use the pain medication as needed.

Fortunately, the hospital staff found out that the dog's shots for rabies were current, which saved me from the extra pain of those shots.

The shock of it all did not hit me until I arrived home and was ready to rest. I wanted to cry but I held my tears. It didn't make sense to cry alone.

As soon I heard my husband's key in the keyhole I started bawling.

In a second he was in the bedroom. He paled when he saw me sitting in bed, my left hand on a pillow and my left breast in a cloud of gauze.

"Honey, what happened?"

"I was attacked by a dog!"

"Where? When? How?"

I explained the whole ordeal.

"What kind of a dog was it?"

"I only know that he was half pit bull."

I didn't know much about dogs. I had a Schnauzer once when I was little, but he barked too much and my father gave him away after a week. The only other breeds I knew were Cocker Spaniels and, of course, Lassie, from the movie.

When my husband realized that everything was under control he comforted me and I stopped crying.

He brought me dinner and as my mood improved he started teasing and trying to make me laugh.

"I will love you with or without a scar," he said.

"Hum."

"Remember the movie *Young Frankenstein*?"

"Huh?"

"The one with Gene Wilder where there's a guy all stitched up and the other says, 'I won't call you Frankenstein, you'll be Frankenstein?'"

"Hum?"

My pain pill had kicked in, I was safe, well fed, and loved. Definitely my day would end better than it'd started.

The icing on the cake was the answer my hubby gave to his friend when he called. I could only hear his side of the conversation:

"Hi . . ."

. . .

"Kind of okay . . ."

. . .

"Something happened . . ."

. . .

"Marcela was attacked by a dog."

. . .

"A new breed . . ."

. . .

"A tit bull!" **WT**

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## Nov.—No Vexing!

Be warned about writers

Who've poisoned a pen.

—Short days and short fuses:

(Those are the excuses)

Insult one:

It comes back times-ten!

—Pat Bustamante

# And the Eleventh One Is Free

by Luanne F. Oleas

My wallet bulges with cards from local stores. They're not the plastic fantastic sort that allow you to charge everything you don't need. They keep those away from starving writers.

No, the cards that cause my billfold to split a seam are those cheap little business cards. Every time I visit a new establishment, they give me one. You know the scheme.

You buy a cappuccino, they give you a card. Buy ten and you get the eleventh one free. They stamp a smiley face in a grid on the back of the card as you work your way to your free whatever. Spend twenty bucks on hot water dripped through dead, ground beans and, voilà! You get one free.

This catchy marketing technique knows no limits. It's at bookstores, video stores, car washes, and ice cream parlors. But if you think about it, who really cares if they get their 11th pizza free?

Why can't this apply to the stuff you really want in life? If you take ten units at the local college, you should get the 11th one free.

If you buy ten gallons of gas, why can't the 11th be free?

If you buy ten memberships to CWC, well, I'd better not suggest it.

How about a car? Anyone who buys ten cars in their life should get the 11th one free.

This should be applied to all aspects of life. For those who want big families, the 11th child should be free. If you need multiple visits to the psychiatrist after that 11th child, the 11th visit should be free.

Now comes the big question. Suppose all of life operated on the "11th One Free" principle. Your 11th vacation? Free. Your 11th computer? Free. The 11th tire, the 11th stamp, the 11th house, all of it, free, free! FREE!!

Would every facet of society, including the world's oldest profession, benefit from this? Certainly—though some restrictions may apply. The airline industry has it already. It's called frequent flyer miles.

If this does take over the universe, who is to say where it will end?

After all the human possibilities have been exhausted, will the Big Guy buy in? Probably. It would be my luck. I can just see it.

I die on a busy day. I'm standing in a long line outside the pearly gates. Milliseconds before my unfortunate demise, two things happened.

First, ten Sisters of Charity in a rickety bus had finished five years of serving poor starving people in a third world country. As they traveled back to the convent, singing and praising their Maker, their bus plunged off a cliff.

Second, after a lifetime of refusing to reform, the world's worst serial murderer died in his cell from natural causes. (He had avoided the death penalty because he was the tenth serial murderer convicted that year.)

In line in front of me is the serial killer and in front of him are ten nuns. St. Peter passes the ladies through, no questions asked. Harry Horrible gets in because he's number 11.

Now they pull up my life file on the big monitor in the sky and scroll through it. Naturally, I am sent downstairs for an overdue library book.

My only hope, as I approach the inferno, is that there are ten real schmoes in front of me. And the 11th one goes free. **WT**

## FLASH STORY

### Class

by Meredy Amyx

Philip's fingertips lightly brushed the skin of Kristin's bare shoulder, causing her to tingle with anticipation as she followed the maitre d' to their reserved table, where candlelight glowed on creamy linen, and gleaming silver reflected the delicate pink hues of miniature roses. Above the mellow tones of a harp, the refined murmur of elegant conversation in several languages swirled around Kristin like eddies in a river, making her feel almost faint at the thrill and at the same time more alive than she had ever been. At nineteen, on the arm of a man of the world, she was crossing the boundary into a realm of polish and privilege that

had never been opened to her before. Trembling, she took her seat, almost too excited to breathe.

Overwhelmed by the excess of proprietary passion in Philip's eyes as he smiled across the table at her, Kristin looked away and cast her gaze around the crowded dining room, with its porcelain-potted vines and its gilt-framed Parisian scenes mounted on panels of rich, dark wood. Suddenly, unbidden, it occurred to her that most or all of the affluent, stylishly attired, self-assured diners grouped in smiling pairs and quartets that Saturday evening at Guillaume's to partake of the social ritual that masked the raw barbarism of tribal feeding had but an hour ago—maybe even all at the same time!—stood naked in the shower, sudsing their genitals.

What's more, she thought, assessing the clientele now with a swift but incisive glance that had less of dazzled admiration in it and more of the cosmetician's eye for artifice, a lot of them — maybe as many as a third — had spent part of the morning vacuuming.

In the next instant, Kristin realized that she had lost her appetite for experiencing escargots and wished they had gone out for a pizza. **WT**

*Satire is a sort of glass, wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own.*

— Jonathan Swift

# Saving the Planet— One Tire at a Time

by Cathy Bauer

Conservationists across the country are working diligently to come up with ideas to keep worn tires out of landfills. Gone are the days when a set of white-walls on the front lawn was considered tasteless. Whether from a car, a tractor, or even a bicycle, it is common to find rubber tires gracing the driveways of homes just as wagon wheels did in the past.

Gus Fink of Winnemucca, Nevada, used a recalled Firestone radial from his Ford Explorer as a step to the back door of his mobile home. “You just gotta be careful where you put your foot,” he



said, “especially at night.”

An extra-large tire from a front loader found its way into the back yard of Glennie Mae Elmore. The Glenwood Springs, Colorado native grows prize-winning tomatoes in her rubber bordered garden. “I don’t have to bend over to tend to my plants,” explained the feisty seventy-eight year old. “And by laying a couple of old glass windows across the tire, it becomes a hot house. I can get a jump on the growing season.”

Recycled tires and technology have meshed together on Hank Midgett’s balcony in Naperville, Illinois. “I came up with the idea of weighing down my satellite dish with a tire after my landlord told me I couldn’t mount it on the side of the apartment building. It

was sure easier to roll a tire into the elevator than to haul up a bunch of concrete blocks.” Hank isn’t the only one to incorporate this idea. Across town, Sidney Morris uses a steel-belted radial to anchor his dish in his front yard. With the addition of day lilies and a family of plastic deer, it has become the focal point of his landscape.

Combining tires and flowers is not a new concept, but Ida Fiegal has taken the idea to a higher level. The walkway to her front door is lined with small automobile tires painted to match the colorful flowers planted in them—orange zinnias fill an orange tire, red impatiens cascade from a red one, and variegated green hostas leaves are enhanced by a green-and-white-striped radial. The Cumberland, Maryland grandmother said, “In the winter I fill the tires with rocks painted the same as the tires. It brightens up everybody’s day.”

Down the road in Connellsville, Pennsylvania, Rutha Taylor has placed a row of half-buried tires across her front yard as a fence and painted them white. The scalloped border accents the trim on her front porch. “I tried a white picket fence,” she said. “But it didn’t last more than a couple of years before it looked bad.” When asked how she accumulated so many tires, she blushed. “I asked my grandson to get them. I thought he was going to ask his friends for their old tires or maybe go out to the dump. It turns out the rascal was ripping them off cars that had broke down on the highway.”

Buck Worley of Hammond, Louisiana, has used tires as bumpers on his boat dock for years. “Don’t cost nothing,” he remarked. “If one falls into the water, I just leave it and pick up another one from side the road.” Pointing to a stack next to a storage building, he added, “Lookie, I use them to make tables, too. Stack four of five of ‘em up and throw on a piece of wood and you got a spot for cleaning fish. Made a place to eat in my carport by using two stacks and a four by eight sheet of plywood.”

Buck isn’t the only one who uses tires for entertaining. Ham Polk uses a large John Deere Tractor tire to hold ice and beer on his patio. The Birmingham, Alabama stock car racer explained, “I used to use an old bath tub to hold my beer but my mama wanted it back, so I

got the tire from an old man who said he found it on side the road. All I had to do was line it with a old tarp.”

Erosion control is what Arnie Dickson of Sanderson, Texas, calls his use of discarded tires. He has eliminated run-off problems on his sheep ranch by piling tires up on the side of the creek banks. “Too dry to grow kudzu,” he said. “Gettin’ tires ain’t no problem. Folks dump ‘em out in my back forty all the time.

Swings are not the only way a tire can be used for recreation. A large tractor tire is ideal for use as a sandbox, and when filled with concrete and a pole, it can hold up volleyball, tennis, or badminton nets. The economic factor makes them ideal for public projects. A park in Lafayette, Louisiana, contains a large number of half-buried tires for children to leap over. The red, white and blue display is a real eye-catcher.

All across the United States people are using their imagination to solve a problem. The next time you get new tires for your vehicle, save the disposal fee. Use one of these ideas or create a new one. By keeping your tires out of the landfill, you can help save the planet. **WT**

## At the Recital by Carolyn Donnell

She sat two rows in from of us at the recital. Long, thick red hair, straight, but curved at the bottom, shining like it had its own personal spotlight and swinging with the bounce of health as she moved her head.

My date couldn’t take his eyes off her all evening. I immediately hated her.

At one point in the evening she turned around. Her skin was pasty-white, her eyebrows so light an orange they were almost invisible and her thick pale lips only partially covered a large set of horsy teeth.

Hooray, I thought in a pique of catty jealousy, just nice hair, nothing else.

But my date never saw the face, the pale bulging watery eyes, or the huge teeth. For weeks he kept raving on to everyone about the beautiful woman at the recital. He was blinded by the hair.

Maybe I should let my hair grow long and dye it red. **WT**



# Suburban Hunter

by Edie Matthews

"I'm stuffed." Sam arched his back and rubbed his protruding stomach. "Was that the deer you shot up in Canada?"

"Yep," said Mac.

"How'd ya get venison to taste like filet mignon?" asked Sam.

"Secret formula." Mac cocked his chef's hat to one side and thought about his twelve-hour marinade—a precise mixture of vodka, ketchup and Karo syrup.

"Is it the smoked mesquite chips?"

"That's part of it." The sun had descended, the blue sky softening to gray lavender. Mac switched on the patio lights, Chinese lanterns, patriotically colored red, white, and blue.

"Don't get him started," said Mac's wife, Dora. "He drives me crazy with his concoctions. I don't even want to know what's in it."

"You've got a point." Sam's wife, Bonnie, said, brushing crumbs off the table into her palm and dropping them on her plate. "Once in college my roommate made spaghetti and accidentally seasoned it with fish food."

"Yuk!" said Dora, making a face. "Did you get sick?"

"Not until I found out."

Mac sat down and tipped more Pinot Noir into his glass, angled his chair away from the table and gazed at the backyard from the elevated deck.

Sam scooted his chair next to Mac. "This yard must take a lot of work."

"Not that much." Mac was proud of his domain and scanned the area, admiring some of his favorites: the flowering angel trumpet, the tropical ferns, a huge philodendron, and redwood trees that lined the back fence. This forested ambience provided a home for hummingbirds, sparrows and squirrels. Only the two-black electrical wires stretching from the second story roof to utility pole in the back corner of the yard were reminders this was still suburbia. At that moment a silhouette slinked across the wire.

Sam leaned forward, adjusting his glasses. "Is that a rat?"

Mac stiffened.

Dora and Bonnie stopped clearing dishes. "Where?"

"Up there," Sam pointed, "on the top wire."

Dora pressed her hand to her heart. "Oh my goodness, we've got rats!"

"They're roof rats," said Sam. "You can tell by the elongated tail. They use it to balance like a tight-rope walker uses a pole."

"That's what I heard scurrying around," said Dora.

"What? When?" Mac's eyes stayed locked on the creature traversing the heavy wire.

"The other evening in bed when I was reading."

"And you didn't tell me?"

"You were sleeping and then it stopped—I thought it was the wind."

Bonnie hugged herself. "Don't rats carry the bubonic plague?"

"That was in the 14<sup>th</sup> century," said Sam. "They called it the Black Death. Rats infested with fleas stowed away on ships from China. It killed half the population in Europe and Asia—wiped out entire communities."

Bonnie shivered. "It gives me the creeps."

"They come out at night to forage for food." Sam pointed toward the house.

"There must be a nest in your attic."

Mac's eyes narrowed. He walked to the edge of the deck and watched the rat

disappear behind the branches of the redwood tree that obscured the utility pole.

"You better buy some traps tomorrow," Dora said.

"Rats aren't that easy to catch." Sam came up beside Mac. "They're cautious. Won't approach anything new, sometimes for weeks—until they're used to seeing it."

"Weeks?" Mac wheeled around. "I'm not going to live with rats in my house that long."

Dora went back to clearing the table. "We could set out some poison."

Mac shook his head. "What if it dies in the house?"

"Or worse in the wall," said Sam.

"I've heard of that happening," said Bonnie.

"A dead rat can stink up an entire house—then you have to tear out the plasterboard to get out the carcass." Sam added.

"Well, I've got to do something." Mac's jaw tightened.

"I hate to say it buddy, but there's probably more than one."

Bonnie's eyes widened. "I heard if you spot one, there's usually three or four."

"Don't worry," Sam slapped Mac on the back. "It's hasn't a chance against Bwana here."

At dusk the following night, Mac sat on his deck wearing an orange hunting cap, holding onto ends of two fishing lines, waiting. Earlier he'd cast a thirty-weight line over the wire, looping it back.

Dora joined him on the deck. "What are you going to do?"

"When that rat shows up, I'll flip him off the wire. If he survives the fall, I clobber him with the shovel." Below the wire, the garden tool with its heavy metal scoop rested against the house.

"I heard him again early this morning, scratching around." She hugged herself. "It gave me the willies."

"I'd liked to blast him with a .22, but I'll get him this way."

"Okay," she smiled, "but what about traps?"

"If this works, I won't need traps."

Moments after Dora went in the house,

*Continued on page 16*

Mac saw the rat creep from under the gable and approach the wire.

"Hello, Mr. Rat." Mac's lips twisted into a snarl. "I've been waiting for you."

The squinty-eyed rodent poked his nose in the air, flicking his whiskers. Finally, it stepped onto the wire.

"That's it," Mac coaxed. He wound the fish line around his fist, careful not to disturb the wire. "Take a nice little stroll to the valley of no return." When the rat reached the midpoint, he pulled. The rat hung on.

"Get off of there, varmint!" Mac yanked again—two, three, four times before the rat leaped off, executing a complete somersault. Mac raced from the deck to the shovel. The rat landed on its feet and dashed across the lawn into the bushes. Mac chased it, jabbing at the lush asparagus fern. But it was dark now, and all he could see were shadows. "Damn it. Okay, Mr. Rat, that's one for you. But, tomorrow night," Mac sneered, "I'll be back."

On the second night, Mac stationed Dora on the deck to man the fish line, while he sat in a patio chair near the wire, armed with the shovel. Below the utility wires he'd placed a row of containers ready to catch the rat when it fell: a wooden barrel, garbage cans, plastic pails, and buckets. He'd traded his hunting cap for a hard hat.

"Are you sure he'll come back?" Dora asked. "I didn't hear him this morning—maybe he's dead."

"Not the way he ran off." Mac's hands tightened around the shovel. "The fall never even fazed him. Now, remember what I told you. Give it a good yank."

"I will."

Mac stared up at the gable, the corners already in purple shadows. Gradually the light faded. Then out of the gap came the rat.

"There he is," Mac said.

"Yuk."

The rat tipped his head upward as though listening for a signal. Slowly he swiveled his head left then right. Then he slunk onto the wire and started across.

"He's moving fast. Be ready. But wait until he's over the containers."

"Okay."

Like Barry Bonds at bat, Mac gripped the shovel. "NOW!"

Dora pulled. The rat curled its tail around the wire. She tugged again. The wire swayed back and forth. The rat hunkered down and hung on, riding it like a swing.

"Harder." Mac commanded. "You've got to jerk it."

"I'm trying." She swung her arms sideways.

The rat wavered, then dove headfirst, legs extended like a downhill skier. It grazed the side of the trashcan and slid off onto the grass. Mac swung the shovel, gonging the aluminum can. The rat sped off into the shrubbery under the redwood trees. Mac chased it, whacking his favorite gardenia bush, beating the star jasmine, flattening the rosemary, until he was lightheaded from the floral fragrances.

"Did you get him?" called Dora.

"I don't know," said Mac, catching his breath, "maybe—it's too dark. I can't see."

"He was so fast. The fall didn't even slow him down."

"I'm going to get that son of a bitch."

"Maybe we should call an exterminator?"

"NO. They'll just set traps or poison. I can do that myself."

"Well, do it. He may come back later tonight."

"Okay," Mac frowned. "I'll buy some traps. But I got to figure out something else before tomorrow night."

On the third night, Huxley, Mac's buddy from work, arrived with his dog, a mastiff named Brutus. The animal was brindle colored with a head the size of a bowling ball.

"Brutus hates rats." Huxley stroked the dog's flank, and the mastiff barked twice as though agreeing. "If it lands in the yard, it's a goner. Brutus has jaws like a shark."

"Great," Mac said, setting up floodlights to illuminate the shrubbery. He hated so many rings left on his lawn, so he had cleared away the smaller containers and only set out the larger garbage cans and an old wooden barrel. He handed his friend an old football helmet. "Sorry, I don't have another

hard hat."

Huxley pulled on the helmet. Then he unhooked the leash, and the dog trotted off. "He's just getting the lay of the land."

In a powerful gait, the mastiff circumnavigated the backyard, pausing to lift his leg, marking a redwood tree, the bougainvillea with magenta blooms, and Mac's prized white camellia bush. The animal sniffed his way across the lawn, halted in the middle and did his business. Mac's eye twitched.

"Sorry about that." Huxley chuckled. "You know how dogs are."

"Don't worry. Just as long as we get that rat." Mac turned to his wife up on the deck. "You got the line?"

"Ready and waiting, Rambo." Dora saluted.

Mac gazed at the dusky sky. "He'll be coming anytime now." He hurried into the shed, returning with another patio chair for Huxley.

"There he is," Dora said.

Huxley whistled. "He's a big one."

The rat crept slowly toward the wire and hesitated. He studied the trap on the roof set with bacon dipped in peanut butter.

"I set a few traps on the roof and along the back fence, just in case," said Mac.

"Good idea." Huxley slapped his thigh. "Come here, Brutus." The dog loped over to his master.

Mac grabbed his shovel, glanced at the mess on the grass and back at the rat just as it stepped onto the wire.

"Oh, no," Dora said. "He's taking the other wire."

Mac glared. "Son of a bitch."

"What do I do now?" Dora asked.

Mac cocked his arm and chucked the shovel like a spear. He missed the target, and the shovel came down, kerplanging into the trashcan. Brutus barked at the commotion. The rat sped up. Huxley took off his helmet and hurled it, hitting the wire in front of the rat. The rat stopped and hissed. Brutus spotted the creature and barked louder. Mac retrieved his shovel. Huxley flung up the patio chair. The dog ran in circles, making futile lunges in the air. Mac winged the shovel again, striking the wire, but the rat hung on. The shovel hit the other wire and came

earthbound toward Mac. He lifted his arms for protection, sidestepping into the mess on the grass. "Crap!" The shovel clunked down on top of his hard hat. "Ouch."

"He's getting away," Huxley yelled. The rat disappeared behind the branches of the redwood tree.

"Are you all right?" asked Dora.

"Shit." Mac limped on one foot and rubbed the back of his head. "I'm okay. Damn, he never uses that wire."

"Those rats are cagey." Huxley shook his head.

"Oh, my god!" Dora pointed. "Here comes another one."

On the roof a second rat approached the trap, smelled it and turned away.

"We've got to get this one." Mac adjusted his hardhat and picked up his shovel. "Just knock him off the wire."

Huxley retrieved the two patio chairs. "How many rats are up there?"

"Hell. I've still got shit on my shoe." Mac picked up the football helmet, handing it to Huxley. "You'd better put this back on."

Brutus growled.

"Hold your weapons until I say 'fire.'" Mac aimed the shovel. Huxley cocked back the first chair, ready to pitch it.

The second rat approached the edge of the roof and whiffed once before stepping onto the wire.

"He's taking *my* wire," Dora said.

"All right, wait until he gets out and this time really *jerk* it."

"I will." Dora gripped the line in both hands, positioning herself like a boxer.

The rat hastened across and Mac ordered, "NOW!"

Dora wrenched the fish line with all her strength. The electrical wire snapped loose from the house, pitching them into darkness. The line undulated in the air like an enraged serpent, crackling and shooting electrical sparks.

Brutus yelped. The men drew back. The live wire slashed at the wooden barrel, setting the dry wood on fire.

Dora had fallen over and got up rubbing her backside. "Is everyone okay?" Mac looked around "Yes, we're okay."

"I'm dialing 911." She rushed inside the house.

ESSAY

## I Don't Have to Write

by F. Srmek Schorow

I don't have to write. I could easily fill my life in lots of other ways, doing things that I actually love to do. I could make my patio area spectacular. I could fill the planters with lovely, glowing flowers, work hard to get rid of all those nasty weeds, maybe plant a new shrub in that empty space at the fence.

I don't have to write. I could clear up those messy, dusty shelves where all the photographs are stored and make room for stuff that's still in the garage, never having been unpacked in the ten years since I've moved here. I could sort through all the albums, use the new printer-scanner that my son gave me to make copies for everyone in the family. I could date each picture, maybe write a quick explanation or pithy comment for each.

I could study poetry again. Memorize Tennyson's *Ulysses* or some special lines from Shakespeare like "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is/To have a thankless child!" I could re-read my

---

Mac turned on the garden hose and sprayed water on the barrel. "Did you see what happened to the rat?"

"Who knows?" Huxley called Brutus to him and clipped on the leash. "You're going to have to call the power company."

"I suppose."

"I bet they charge you for tearing down that wire."

Dora returned with a flashlight.

"They're on the way." She descended the stairs from the deck. "Be careful of that live wire."

The fire was out, and Mac turned off the hose. In the distance they heard the scream of sirens approaching. At that moment the trap on the roof snapped shut.

"What was that?" said Huxley.

Dora flashed the light up on the trap as a commotion ensued. Her spotlight followed the trap, clattering and jerking to the edge of the roof, wavering. "Look out!" she said.

Mac stepped back as the trap fell and flopped at his feet. **WT**

favorite poets: Jane Kenyon, Philip Booth, Philip Larkin. Or I could try to finally understand the poetry of Robert Creeley and Sylvia Plath.

No, I don't have to write. I could take long walks in Memorial Park, feed the ducks there, watch the children playing on the swings, give sage advice to all the young mothers. I could drive up to Ranchos County Park, follow the path to the farm animals, and then take the trail through the hills, careful to watch for snakes and poison ivy.

There are plenty of things I could do if I gave up trying to write. I could organize a reunion for my high school class. I could volunteer to work for the Democratic Party. I could clean my windows with vinegar and paper towels. And then I could do the same with all the mirrors in my apartment, every one of them. I could learn Spanish, maybe Chinese too. I could run for Mayor or the School Board or write letters supporting physician-assisted suicide.

I could do the *New York Times* crossword puzzle every morning.

I don't have to write. I could join another exercise class, learn to play bridge, join a book club. I could give lectures on the Bloomsbury group. I could attach that thin piece to the carpet sweeper and clear the debris that's gathered under my washer. I could put all of my spices in alphabetical order.

There's not a reason in the world to keep struggling to write when there are so many other much more useful and pleasurable ways to use my time. I could join a church choir and sing the Messiah at Christmas. I could become a member of the Raging Grannies, the League of Women Voters, the Red Hat Girls, the Hospice Helpers, the Save the Whale organization, the Toastmasters Club.

I could organize my closets. I could get rid of all those size tens I'll never get into again. And the white gloves I haven't worn since 1959. Ditto the eyelash curler, curling iron, the containers of face powder, rouge, and eye shadow that clutter up the top drawer in the bathroom. I might give the bathroom a coat of paint. I might not.

It absolutely boggles the mind to think what I could do if I didn't have to write.

**WT**

## Go for a Spin

by Pat Bustamante

How to entertain visiting relatives? Here's a tip: cross the Golden Gate Bridge and you'll find Highway 1 rolling towards the scenic Pacific..."rolling" is THE word.

Uncle Al from the East Coast had found us, a family of four plus the dog (who adored car rides). "You can't visit California and miss Highway 1." The car was small, options for amusement limited by budget; summer wildflowers fit well.

Lupine and poppies--purple and gold: staring out the windows, squeezed together, we tipped sideways on every rollicking curve. You go up, you go down (and Uncle Al was "down with us" only 1 more day). I noticed he was pale but still smiling gamely. My husband never met a winding road that could slow him. The dog groaned, followed by other noises...

"Look," I pointed, hoping to distract. "A whole field of lupine."

"My dear," Uncle Al said, teeth gritted, "It is we who are doing the loopin'!"

WT

## Bone and Gristle

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

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

—Carolyn Donnell



## CWC

### Around the Bay

These are the published meeting times and locations for the CWC branches in the greater San Francisco Bay Area. If you're thinking about attending one of their meetings, be sure to check the website first for details.

**Berkeley:** Meetings are held from **10 a.m. to noon** on the third Saturday of each month, except for July and August. Unless otherwise noted, our meetings are held at Barnes & Noble bookstore, in Jack London Square, Event Loft, Oakland.

<http://www.berkeleywritersclub.org>

**San Francisco/Peninsula:** Meets on the 3rd Saturday of each month from 10a.m. to noon at the Belmont Library, 1110 Alameda De Las Pulgas, Belmont. <http://www.sfpeninsulawriters.com>

**Central Coast:** Meets on the third Tuesday of each month except December at Buzzard's Backyard BBQ, adjacent to the TraveLodge, 2030 N. Fremont, Monterey. The dinner hour begins at 5:30 p.m. and the program begins at 7 p.m.

<http://centralcoastwriters.org>

**Mount Diablo:** Meets the second Saturday of each month, except July and August, at 11:30 a.m. at the Hungry Hunter Restaurant, 3201 Mount Diablo Boulevard, Lafayette (corner of Pleasant Hill Road and Highway 24). <http://mtdiablowlriters.org>

**Tri-Valley:** Meets the third Saturday of each month, except July and August, at 11:30 a.m. at the Oasis Grille, 780 Main Street, Pleasanton.

<http://www.trivalleywriters.com>

**Sacramento:** Meets at 11:00 a.m. the 3rd Saturday of every month, except July and August, at Luau Garden Chinese Buffet, 1890 Arden Way, Sacramento 95815.

<http://www.sacramento-writers.org>

**Marin:** Meets on the fourth Sunday of every month at 2 p.m. at Book Passage in Corte Madera.

<http://www.cwcmarinwriters.com>

**Redwood:** Meets the first Sunday of the month, from 3 to 5 p.m. at Marvin's Restaurant, 7991 Old Redwood Highway, corner of William St., in Cotati. <http://www.redwoodwriters.org>

## NaNoWriMo with Friends

Join with Diana Richomme in the Starbuck's area of the Alameda Barnes & Noble from 9:00 a.m. until noon Tuesdays and Thursdays during November to work on your NaNoWriMo project in the company of others. Encouragement and coffee.

Contact Diana Richomme at [diana\\_richomme@yahoo.com](mailto:diana_richomme@yahoo.com) if you have questions or want more information.

## Directory of Experts

*Do you have specialized knowledge that might help a writer bring authentic detail to a scene? If you are willing to share your expertise, let us know. We will add your listing to our directory of experts.*

### Character Development

ArLyne Diamond Ph.D.  
[ALyne@DiamondAssociates.net](mailto:ALyne@DiamondAssociates.net)

### Character Traits

Jeannine Vegh M.A. M.F.T.I.  
[ladyjatbay@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ladyjatbay@sbcglobal.net)

### Computer Dingus and Full Time Nerd

Jeremy Osborne  
[jeremy\\_w\\_osborne@yahoo.com](mailto:jeremy_w_osborne@yahoo.com)

### Doctors' Office Environment, OB-GYN

Dottie Sieve  
[pdrsieve@yahoo.com](mailto:pdrsieve@yahoo.com)

### Hospital and Nursing Environment

Maureen Griswold  
[maureengriswold@sbcglobal.net](mailto:maureengriswold@sbcglobal.net)

### Police Procedures

John Howsden  
[jwhowsden961@yahoo.com](mailto:jwhowsden961@yahoo.com)

### Profile Writing

Susan Mueller  
[samueller@worldnet.att.net](mailto:samueller@worldnet.att.net)

### Teaching and the Arts

Betty Auchard  
[Btauchard@aol.com](mailto:Btauchard@aol.com)

### Television Production

Woody Horn  
408-266-7040

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
November 2007				1 NaNoWriMo starts 9:00A NaNoWriMo with friends at Almaden B&N	2 7:30P Open Mic Barnes & Noble Almaden Plaza, San Jose	3
				8 9:00A NaNoWriMo with friends at Almaden B&N	9 7:30P Open Mic Borders Books Santana Row, San Jose	10 11A Editors' Powwow
11	12	13 9:00A NaNoWriMo with friends at Almaden B&N	14 6P Monthly Dinner Meeting Larsen & Pomada Lookout Inn, Sunnyvale	15 9:00A NaNoWriMo with friends at Almaden B&N 7:00P Open Mic Barnes & Noble 3900 Mowery, Fremont	16 7:30P Open Mic Barnes & Noble Pruneyard, Campbell <b>WritersTalk deadline</b>	17
18	19	20 9:00A NaNoWriMo with friends at Almaden B&N	21	22 9:00A NaNoWriMo with friends at Almaden B&N	23	24
25	26	27 9:00A NaNoWriMo with friends at Almaden B&N	28 7:30P Open Mic Borders Books Sunnyvale	29 9:00A NaNoWriMo with friends at Almaden B&N	30 NaNoWriMo ends	
Future Flashes						December: Christmas in the Auchard annex

## Stay Informed!

Sign up for the SBW Email List to receive meeting and events announcements.

[www.southbaywriters.com](http://www.southbaywriters.com)

## South Bay Writers Open Mic

Read from your own work, from your favorite authors, or just come to listen. See calendar for schedule.

Contact Bill Baldwin  
(408) 730-9622 or email  
[wabaldwin@aol.com](mailto:wabaldwin@aol.com)

For Fremont Open Mic contact  
Jeannine Vegh  
[ladyjatbay@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ladyjatbay@sbcglobal.net)

or

Bob Garfinkle  
[ragarf@earthlink.net](mailto:ragarf@earthlink.net)

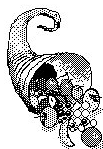
## Pushcart Press Editors' Book Award

A prize of \$1,000 and publication by Pushcart Press is given annually for a fiction or creative nonfiction manuscript that has been submitted to but not accepted by a commercial publisher. The award recognizes "worthy manuscripts that have been overlooked by today's high-pressure, bottom-line publishing conglomerates."

Manuscripts must be submitted with a formal letter of nomination from an editor at a U.S. or Canadian publishing company.

There is no entry fee. Send an SASE for complete guidelines.

Pushcart Press, Editors' Book Award,  
P.O. Box 380, Wainscott, NY 11975.  
Bill Henderson, Editor.



## San Jose Poetry Slam (Est. 1998)

8:00 p.m., \$6.00

First Tuesday: Open Mic with music by Rebelskamp

Second and Fourth Tuesdays: Poetry Slam with music by Jay Rush

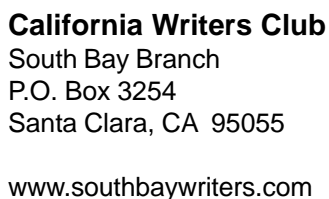
Third Tuesday: Head-to-Head Poetry Bouts with special guests.

At The Britannia Arms  
173 W Santa Clara  
Downtown San Jose  
[www.sanjosepoetryslam.com](http://www.sanjosepoetryslam.com)

## Poetry Center San Jose Announces the Poetry Lounge at The Blue Monkey

Poetry reading and discussion most Tuesdays Cosponsored by the Creative Writing Department at San José State University  
**FREE ADMISSION**

The Blue Monkey Bar and Taquería  
1 East San Fernando Street  
San José, CA 95113 [www.pcsj.org](http://www.pcsj.org)



## Address Correction Requested

**Next Monthly Meeting—Wednesday, Nov. 14, 6:00 p.m.**  
Lookout Inn  
605 Macara Avenue, Sunnyvale  
At the Sunnyvale Golf Course

This is a grayscale street map of Sunnyvale, California. Major thoroughfares are depicted with thicker lines and include Highway 101 running diagonally from the top left towards the center, and Highway 237 running horizontally across the middle. Other significant roads shown are Bayshore Fwy at the top, Mountain View-Alviso Rd running parallel to Highway 237, and Central Expy at the bottom. The Sunnyvale Municipal Golf Course is shaded in a solid gray color and occupies a large central portion of the map. An arrow points to Macara Ave, a road that borders the southern side of the golf course. To the south of the golf course is Encinal Park. The map is densely packed with various residential and commercial streets, many of which are labeled, such as Macon Rd, Clyde Ave, Logue Ave, Maude Ave, Benecia Ave, W Maude Ave, N Mary Ave, Palomar Ave, N Pastoria Ave, Vaqueros Ave, Del Rey Ave, W Maude Ave, Hermosa Ct, Shirley Ave, and Indio Way. The map also shows several smaller parks and green spaces interspersed among the urban areas.

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