



WRITERSTALK

Volume 16
Number 5
May 2008

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club

Persevering as a Truth-Telling Author

by Alexander Leon

Is there a way to survive and persevere as a truth-telling author in a world in which truth can be systematically buried and mired while fictional narratives are passed off and promulgated in its place? Our May speaker, Michele Simon, rises to this challenge in her book *Appetite for Profit: How the Food Industry Undermines Our Health and How to Fight Back*.



Michele Simon

Today, the arts of deception and propaganda have morphed into a science that relentlessly bombards us with useless information as we careen toward not-so-uncertain destruction of the planet, through global warming, overpopulation, pollution, poverty, famine, crime, instability, and wars as the truth is spun around, keeping us in a paralyzing net instead of offering solutions. Even who we get to vote for is carefully prescribed and dispensed for us: we won't get to choose much unless we start fighting for it.

And that goes for what we eat as well.

How have the press, radio, and television been enlisted in the deception? We are hard-pressed to see unadulterated truth in mainstream media that use spin and slant to deceptively sell us products that we do not need and that are not even good for us—including commodities we would normally expect to be good for us, such as food, water, and medications. Where's the way out?

A major challenge facing humanity today is the food supply, especially now that it is viewed as something more profitable if diverted toward energy rather than our tables, where, when it does arrive, it has been lathered with pesticides and doused with chemical flavor-enhancers, preservatives, and hormones—and at ever-inflated prices. At our May meeting we will learn about what is being passed off as food today and what it is like to write about such a controversial topic.

So how did food ever become so contentious? What is the truth about “how corporations operate and why we cannot trust the food industry?” How are they “fooling the public while lobbying against public health” and why? And making the situation even more poignant, “Global food security is fast becoming one of the most important issues of the 21st century and, while there is disagreement about how to tackle the problem, few believe that it will diminish in importance in the foreseeable future.” (“Surging food prices put the world on high alert,” by Richard Wachman, *The Guardian*, Sunday, March 2, 2008, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2008/mar/02/agriculture.food>)

Today, impassioned authors are practically the last line of defense against the erasure of the truth and champions of bringing it forth. These authors—including our May guest speaker—are up against armies of intellectual and media mercenaries armed with pens, word processors, cameras, microphones, broadcast transmitters, and courts raising a dense and paralyzing fog of confusion. What is it like to write and speak passionately for a just cause, for human rights, health, and peace?

Come hear a caring and concerned citizen share how she perseveres as a truth-telling author in this food climate. Learn from a first-time author's publishing experience the good, the bad, the ugly; how the writer's road, never easy, is made

Continued on page 9

South Bay Writers Election

by Suzy Paluzzi, Nominating Chair

This is a very important time for the South Bay Branch of California Writers Club.

We are working on our annual election.

It is crucial that members participate. Giving back is one motivation for running for an office. Sharing your skills, like financial expertise, is a good reason to be a candidate for Treasurer, for example. And, if you have ideas you would like to promote within the club, being an officer is the perfect avenue.

The job descriptions, courtesy of our current president, Dave La Roche, are as follows:

All Officers and Chairs—

- Attend regular and specially called Board meetings
- Participate in guiding Branch business including adherence to all ordinary management processes.
- Represent the Club well, inducing pride among members, prestige in the community and growth in both reach and ranks.
- Aspire, in all Club interests and direction, to the mission statement

Continued on page 8

Upcoming Deadlines

May 16

WritersTalk

Worth 500 Words Contest

See page 21 for details

June 1

SBW Anthology

See April *WT* page 5 for details

President's Prowling

by *Dave LaRoche*
President, South Bay Writers

Our Forum

When I was a kid I was required to go shopping with my mother, especially if her list contained something for me—like Sunday's scratchy tweedy trousers. "Going" entailed an afternoon's traipsing through several department stores (ding... "Mezzanine... Women's Lingerie") to the ends of infinity it seemed, as we always went on Saturdays. It occurred to me occasionally that the real reason I had to go was the schlepping—bags and boxes to my eyebrows—but she was an Irish lady with a humorous perspective that made it all fun. The big reason I went, however, had little to do with the list or the humor and a great deal to do with the "Forum."



The Forum, one of the better cafeterias or maybe the only cafeteria in downtown St. Louis, offered a selection of delectables that seemed endless. Never a fussy eater—a good thing in my day—the Forum presented insurmountable decision regarding choice. Choice for a thirteen year old is anguishing at best, but from a host of mouth-watering dishes in view of the eyes of a perennial appetite . . . well, it bordered on painful. Although encouraged to move along by the threat from an Irish tongue and a floor manager who carried a baton, I would hold up the line, checking out here and pondering there—chicken pie or braised chops, sweet peas, buttered cauliflower, or . . . Of course eventually I got through, eating every bite on an over filled tray, and at the next downtown request went again, looking forward to the Forum's gourmet offerings.

What's this all about, you may ask—decent question.

We, the SBW, now have a Forum—a Writers' Forum. It is an interactive part of our website and can be as appealing and robust as the one in St. Louis, though it needs population, and that's coming. And the good news: you don't have to dawdle in Women's Lingerie and the choices aren't difficult to make.

In the left series of buttons, on the website's home page, is one called (you guessed it) "Writers Forum." Press it and be transported to the Forum. On this page, what you'll see is open to the public, which is whoever happens to look—club announcements and invitations of interest to anyone are there—and no interaction as yet.

If you are a member of SBW, you can register with a screen name and password and create your own profile. Look for the "register" button on the top right of the page. This done, you can surf in the members' domain, view member-restricted topics and replies, and add replies of your own. With a reply, you can state your own views, post new information, or expand on the ideas presented. One caution: the moderator, the one who starts a particular topic, has complete discretion over what will remain, so best to stay near the subject discussed. Functional aspects are not complicated, but easy navigation requires a modicum of patience at first. So spend some time clicking, you can't hurt a thing.

Continued on page 9

Inside

Historical Fiction 4
Copyright for Authors:
Licensing Your Writing 5
Independent Bay Area Bookstores 6
The Journey of a Thousand Miles: 7
Accolades 7

View from the Board 8
New Members 9
Bookworms 9
Poetry in the Tavern 10
Poetry 11

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Join With Us

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



WRITERSTALK

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Submissions

Members of the South Bay Writers Club are encouraged to submit their creative works for publication in *WritersTalk*. Suggested word limits are not absolute; query the editor. Electronic submissions should be text or attached MS Word file sent to newsletter@southbaywriters.com; or mail double-spaced, typewritten copy to

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Guest Columns

Almost Anything Goes (400 words)

News Items (400 words)

Letters to the Editor (300 words)
to Andrea Galvacs
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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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Change of Address: Send changes of address to the Membership Chair at membership@southbaywriters.com

Subscriptions: Nonmember subscriptions are \$20/year; send a check payable to South Bay Writers Club to the Membership Chair.

Circulation: 200

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Editor's Perspective

by Dick Amyx
Editor

Here's the poetry and other things



The poetry starts on page 11. My thanks to our poets for responding to the call, and my congratulations to them for their fine work. Thanks, too, to Betty Auchard for whipping up some illustrations quite literally at the last minute.

In living color

All the photographs in *WritersTalk* are in full color in the Acrobat version uploaded to the SBW website. Several people who got previews of this issue commented in particular on the jellyfish graphic accompanying Steve Wetlesen's "Moon Jelly." You

might want to go take a look at it—southbaywriters.com; click on the Newsletter button on the left.

Now, while you're on the website—and after you've seen the pictures of the Half Moon Bay bookstores as well as the rest of the graphics in the poetry section—go back to the home page and click on. . .

Writers' Forum

The Writers' Forum contains a wealth of information to help SBW members improve their writing, find places to get work published, start or join critique groups, learn what other club members are doing, and get last-minute news that arrives after the *WritersTalk* deadline. It also offers a place where members can hype their own work, ask questions, offer suggestions, and voice opinions.

It includes these topic areas by name:

- Conferences and Literary Events
- Contests
- Networking
- Online Resources for Writers
- Publishing Opportunities
- SBW Author Events and News
- State (Central Board) Activities

All these main topic areas are broken down into subtopics. Networking, for example, includes Critique Groups, Educational Opportunities, Reading Groups, and New Member Mentoring.

Moderators can establish new topic areas as the need arises.

The Writers' Forum is a great resource for SBW members, and well worth a look.

While you're there, take a walk through the rest of the website. Webmaster Ro Davis has just redesigned the layout to make it easier to use. There's a lot of good stuff.

We have deadlines

May 16 is the *WritersTalk* deadline, of course. The deadline for any issue of *WritersTalk* is always the 16th of the month preceding the month of publication.

May 16 is also the deadline for the first *WritersTalk* Worth 500 Words Contest. Enter, and you could win a cash prize of \$35 as well as a framed certificate. See the details on page 21 of this issue.

June 1 is the deadline for submissions to the SBW anthology. Detailed submission rules were published in the April *WritersTalk*. If you can't find your April issue, it's available at southbaywriters.com → Newsletter → Back issues. WT

Historical Fiction

April Recap

by Carolyn Donnell

The April meeting began with what is rapidly becoming a new tradition—a President Dave joke.

Eddie takes flowers to the cemetery and notices six pallbearers walking around with a coffin.

“It’s a joke,” someone in the audience whispers as Dave continues.)

Two hours later, having placed her flowers at the gravesite, she looks up to see the men still walking around with the coffin. After her typical literary pause, she says to herself, “My God, I think they’ve lost the plot.”

Groans came from the audience, then laughter and comments.

“That’s sad, Dave.” “Have to thank her for that one.” “He does try.”

Announcements:

- SBW has 185 members! (Actually, according to my last note from Marjorie Johnson, we are at 190. By the time this goes to press, the number may be even higher.)
- Ro Davis completed the new website, including a forum and an event calendar.
- Susan Paluzzi is the new nominating chair. Send nominations for VP, Secretary, and Treasurer to svpaluzzi@mac.com.
- East of Eden—Eddie Matthews. Early bird prices until May 31st. Enter the contest. If you win, wear your ribbon. Eddie says that agents will notice. Don’t forget the Basil Stevens Memorial Contest. First prize—a conference scholarship. (If you already registered, you will get a refund.) Don’t know anything about sports? Suggestions included writing about how you hate sports or how you made out under the bleachers.
- Bill Baldwin—Open Mic. See dates in this newsletter or on the website. Practice reading in the middle of the bookstore. You’ll get lots of exposure and who knows, some agent might walk by.
- Cathy Bauer—no raffles until June.
- Robert Garfinkle—launching a new branch, the Fremont Area Writers

Club. They meet on the 4th Saturday from 2-4 at Sujus Coffee House.

- Cathy Bauer talked her husband into letting her go to a writing retreat. A balcony overlooking the “beautiful Apalachicola River . . .” Let’s see what stories she brings back. And maybe a raffle item or two?
- Bill Baldwin—The Foothill College Author Series. Firoozeh Dumas, author of *Funny in Farsi*, spoke on April 24. Upcoming events can be seen at <http://preznet.fhda.edu/fas.html>.
- Dave—SouthBay Anthology. See SBW Anthology: Editorial Plan in April WritersTalk and on the web. Page estimate is 130 and print date will be in 2009, in time for the SBW centennial. No word limit, just keep in mind the size of the Anthology. See WT contest standards for samples of file sizes, but limits are not set in stone.
- Cathy introduced guests, new members, and successes. See *Accolades and New Members*.

After the last break, Alex took the podium to announce the final count of attendance: 65. A full house! Alex reminded us of our May speaker, Michele Simon, and then said “For East of Eden there are only two words. Early bird, early bird, early bird.” (Wait. That’s six words). He asked for a volunteer to do (or learn) videotaping, to record meetings and load results to the web. Contact Alex at vp@southbaywriters.com.

The speaker for the evening was Jess Wells. She has a San Francisco Arts Commission Grant for Literature and is a fourth-time finalist for the Lambda Literary Award.

The Mandrake Broom, her first historical novel, concerns saving medical knowledge during witch burning times in Europe. The University of Salerno Medical School is the setting. Founded in the eighth century, this town sat at the crossroads of Asian, Arabian, and European trade routes. Medicine there was so advanced that successful ocular surgery for cataracts was recorded as early as the 1300’s. Herbal knowledge was extensive and many of the most learned herbalists and doctors were women. It was the last university to

close its doors to women before the Dark Ages devoured Europe. What happened? In a word—Inquisition.

Herbalists were branded as witches—an excuse for killing and confiscation of property—in a massive land and power grab to transfer knowledge and power from local herbalists to a centralized surgical power structure. One irony—



the slaughter included cats, the purported consorts of a witch. No wonder the plague followed on the heels of the Inquisition. Human cost including plague deaths surpassed 8 million. And 85% of the Inquisition deaths, according to Jess, were women. Wealthy women. Knowledgeable women. Powerful women.

Jess became fascinated with this era and began to wonder what would have happened if the women had fought back. This novel addresses those what-ifs, using the documented facts of the era as what she calls a factual backbone. Jess believes that having to deal with real facts helps the writer stay focused. It also helps that history has already filtered all the boring parts.

The down side is that you have to get facts right or you will get busted. Historians, she says, have sharp teeth. They will dismiss your work if you are wrong and send little notes to the podium while you are talking. You have some leeway, but just because it’s fiction doesn’t mean you can get it wrong. However, believability is primary. Get the availability of some-

Continued on page 10

Copyright for Authors: Licensing Your Writing

Part II of III

by Una Daly

Last month we discussed the issue of copyright—who owns the copyright to a creative work and how long this legal right lasts. This month's article will focus on the contract issues that authors



Una Daly
Contributing Editor

face when licensing or granting a publisher permission to use their work. It is important to grant as few of these "use rights" as possible in order to retain control of your work and be able to resell the original or modified versions of it in other markets.

First of all, let's review the privileges or "rights" that copyright gives you as an author. The author has the right to make a copy of the protected work. In addition, the author may distribute the work to others by giving it away or selling it; she or he may create new works based on the original; and she or he may choose to display or perform the work in public. When an author decides to sell a work, she or he must transfer one or more of these rights in a license to the publisher. Typically, an author needs to place some restrictions on the license, including the time period for which it is granted; the location for which distribution is granted, such as North America, Britain, or other parts of the English-speaking world; and the type of medium in which the work may be published, such as hardcover books, magazines, or electronic media.

If a publisher offers to buy your work but does not specify the licensing terms then most likely they are asking you to sell "first rights" of publication. First rights gives them permission to publish your work once *before* anyone else.

After they publish, all rights revert to you. This may appear in a writer's contract—with the publisher of a periodical—as FNASR (First North American Serial Rights), which further restricts the single publication to the

North American market. In the FNSAR case, you are free to license on other continents. If you are in doubt about the contract, ask before agreeing to the sale. (You may want an attorney experienced in publishing contracts to review any written agreement before signing and/or to be present at negotiations.) If you unintentionally surrender "all rights" the publisher is free to resell your work or publish it an unlimited number of times without paying you beyond the initial publication. Some writers will agree to these terms because they believe the value of having their byline in a prestigious publication is worth it.

"One-time rights" is one of the least restrictive license agreements allowing for a single publication of a work without guarantee that it is the first publication or the last. Offering "reprint rights" or "second serial rights" to a publisher is more specific as it tells a publisher that your piece has previously been published elsewhere. If you have previously self-published your work, either in print or electronically, it may be necessary to sell it as second serial rights, which typically are worth less than first rights.

An exclusive clause added onto a license such as "exclusive right to reprints" guarantees a publisher to be the only one who can reuse your work for the duration of the contract. Nonexclusive clauses favor the writer because you can choose to sell your work to another publisher at the same time provided that the publisher agrees to a nonexclusive contract.

Anthology and excerpts rights are other publishing terms that authors should be aware of. The publisher of a short story or poetry collection may request the right to publish your work in an anthology of similar pieces. It is often the case that these publishers are seeking pieces that were previously published. Excerpt rights allow the use of portions of your original work in an unlimited number of publications. It is recommended that you limit the period of time for excerpts to protect your work.

Electronic rights continue to be an evolving area as newer technologies provide an ever increasing array of publication media. Generally, the term *electronic publication* can refer to distribution on a CD-ROM, publication in an

online database, publishing or archiving on the Internet, or publishing through a yet-to-be-invented electronic medium. First-time and one-time rights are available as separate licenses for the electronic world, and the electronic medium should be specified. Archival rights are considered a subset of electronic rights and allow your work to be available to visitors of a website or online journal. It is suggested by many experts that you limit the granting of archival rights by specifying a period of time after which your work can be offered to additional publishers.

Clearly, there is a vast number of licensing options that can be incorporated into publishing contracts some of which we have discussed in this article. Your financial compensation and ownership of creative property depends on your understanding your rights when you agree to let your work be published.

In the next and final article in the series, we will discuss the concept of *fair use*, or how much of another author's work you can legally cite in your work. In addition, we will discuss a new alternative to traditional copyright called Creative Commons Licensing. This collaborative licensing concept originated in the music industry but is emerging as an important copyright method for the electronic world.

References

http://fairuse.stanford.edu/Copyright_and_Fair_Use_Overview/
<http://www.writing-world.com/rights/allrights.shtml>
<http://www.writing-world.com/rights/rights.shtml>

Disclaimer: The author of this article is an educator and not an attorney. The legal information contained here is not meant as a substitute for seeking legal advice in specific situations. WT

Mighty May

"I wish I may, I wish I might?"
Somebody tell us which is right!
Or: stick it in dialog when unsure,
"It's part of my *character's* grammar,
not pure!"

—Pat Bustamante

Independent Bay Area Bookstores

Part 1

by Carolyn Donnell

Do you like to frequent independent bookstores? What if you could find a place that has five within a square mile? Then take 280 (or 101) to Hwy 92 and head west. To Half Moon Bay.



Carolyn Donnell
Contributing Editor

The town itself has a total area of 6.5 square miles with a population of 12,688 as of 2006. Let's see now, that's one bookstore for every 2,536 people. How many independent bookstores would San Jose need to match that ratio? The population estimate for July 1, 2006, was 929,936. San Jose would need something close to 366 independent bookstores to compete. I think they have three, maybe a couple more if you count the comics stores.

Three of the HMB bookstores are located on Main Street within two blocks of each other (two in the same block and on the same side of the street). A fourth is one block south of Main Street, and the fifth is way over on Hwy 1 (.55 miles and a three minute trip away.)



Each bookstore is a little different and one of them is even for sale. Wanna own a bookstore? Here's your chance. See Coastside Books below. Ocean Books has used and rare, and out-of-print books. Coastside specializes in greeting cards and other non-book items. Moon News caters more to local writers, while Bay Books is a more traditional store. Ink Spell is the most recent addition to the community. And it is unique.

See future issues of *WritersTalk* for other independent bookstores in the Bay Area.

Ocean Books 416 Main St. (650) 726-2665

Used, new, and out-of print books are bought, sold, and traded. They specialize in acclaimed recent fiction, history, current events, art, yoga, archaeology, sports, and ecology.

Contact oceanbooks@earthlink.com

Coastside Books 432 Main St. (same block as Ocean Books) (650) 726-5889

Greeting cards are their specialty. They also sell, in addition to books of course, clothing, bronze figurines, wrapping paper, and tourist guides.

After 25 years in the business, the owners are retiring and looking for buyers. www.coastsidebooks.com



Moon News Bookstore and Newsstand 315 Main St. (650) 726-8610

Both an independent bookstore and newsstand, they carry international and domestic magazines and newspapers you won't easily find elsewhere. Book signings for local authors and staff pick displays are part of the special atmosphere. Locals call the old Main Street building the Tin Palace.

San Francisco/Peninsula CWC branch has Open Mic here on the 4th Thurs.

Musicians and artists are featured at book signings with an art gallery in back. Open daily.

See <http://moonnewsbookstore.com/>. (The website plays Bach on guitar.)



Inside Ink Spell

Ink Spell Books 500 Purissima St. 650-726-6571 (one block south of Main St. off Kelly)

Inventory includes new and used books, games, and DVDs and a large children's section with toys, games, books, and stuffed animals. Most Wednesday afternoons include Storytime with Mrs. Barbara. Eclectic collections, from rubber ducks to miniature shoes, line the tables strewn throughout the store and art from local artists decorate the walls. You can even order a coffee, mocha, or snacks directly from La Di Da through the window next to the sci-fi area and relax in one of the many chairs downstairs or at a table up in the gallery, where you will also find a couch with a giant stuffed dragon and other animals for the kids and a chess table for a quieter crowd. I could live here. Check it out at www.inkspellbooks.com.

They are having an Ink Spell Anniversary party on May 15.



Bay Books 80 North Cabrillo Hwy, Suite F (650) 726-3488

(Cabrillo Hwy is another name for Hwy 1) Next to Safeway.

Thirty years in business, Bay Books is a full-service independent bookstore.

Members in the book club receive a 10-20% discount.

Signings in the past have included Anne Perry (in April), Rita Mae Brown, and Dean Koontz.

If you haven't given up your pipe while you read, Bay Books can assist you with this as well. Pipes (imported briar) and various tobacco selections are available in addition to books, CDs, and videos. www.baybookcompany.com WT

The Journey of a Thousand Miles:

Very Nearly “A Room of One’s Own”

by Lita Kurth

In light of the economic downturn, it’s good to be reminded that the best things in life are free. However, in 1929 (unfortunate year), Virginia Woolf famously pronounced that women need a room (and money) of their own in order to write. How can we reconcile these opposites? I haven’t found free money yet, but I have discovered a free room (for women *and* men): Poetry Center San Jose in the Edwin Markham House, a quiet, old-fashioned space for reading and writing.

Being the mother of a youngish child, I’ve been to Happy Hollow Zoo a zillion times, but amazingly, until recently, I never made it one driveway farther to History San Jose, 1650 Senter Road.

When I finally explored it on a recent vacation day with two nine-year-olds in tow, I was entirely charmed by the Markham house, a volunteer-run resource and refuge that is free and open to the public (parking is usually not free, but it was that day; locals could walk or take the bus).

A welcoming volunteer who’s a poet from San Jose State was our guide. She showed us a whole shelf of well-chosen

poetry books for children, free to use on the premises. We stood around in the lobby reading aloud from an especially funny book, laughing and commenting. Then the volunteer led us through the rooms upstairs, one devoted entirely to haiku, which contained dozens of volumes (a book solely on haiku about cats!) and appropriate furnishings and decorations for gatherings of the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society, whose members extend across the globe (possibly including some of our members?). A brochure at the front desk showcased the winning entries in their haiku contest, which required writers to include specific “season words” such as “jacaranda,” “lemonade,” and “hurricane” in their entries. Inspiring and fun to read!

Also upstairs was a poetry library and reading room (they’re seeking more book donations and, of course, volunteers) where a person could sit in a comfortable chair and read and write

for hours. Those who inhabit noisy or crowded homes or just want to write in a new spot might find it ideal. And perhaps the spirit of Edwin Markham, he who wrote that lovely poem, “Outwitted,” still lingers. I thought it did.

Poetry San Jose’s website alerts us to the annual all-day, open-air, free California Poets Festival in September (featuring some huge names!). Last year, Robert Hass—US Poet Laureate 1995–1997, Francisco X. Alarcón, Wanda Coleman, and Jane Hirshfield were among the luminaries.

The site also welcomes writers to submit to *caesura* magazine (via email only) which publishes several genres besides poetry. You’ll have to wait until August for their next reading period, but—joyous news—there’s no submission fee.

When you’ve read and written to your heart’s content, you can roam the quiet recreated “streets” of History San Jose (for some reason, visions of the past really awaken my muse) and pop into the “hotel” around the corner for some great (cheap!) ice cream and coffee. Enjoy it all—freely! WT



Lita Kurth
Contributing Editor

Accolades

by Jackie Mutz

Because I missed the April meeting, the May Accolades is based on a recording and Carolyn Donnell’s wonderful notes.



- **Dr. Audry L. Lynch** recently won Jackie Mutz a national award Contributing Editor for her book manuscript, *Two Rebels With a Cause: John Steinbeck and James Dean* from the National League of American Pen Women, the oldest literary association for women in the USA. She placed second in the Nonfiction competition and will receive the award at the Biennial Convention in Alexandria, Virginia, at the end of April.
- **Suzy Paluzzi** was asked to be a

docent at the Edwin Markham House in History Park. The Markham House is the poetry headquarters for Poetry Center San Jose.

- **Cathy Bauer** noted that her husband finally agreed to her going on a writing retreat.
- **Meredy Amyx** placed her first piece of fiction in a national journal: the flash story “The Middle of Her Life” appeared in the online journal *Word Slaw* in March.
- **Mary Tomasi** was part of the Los Gatos Library author panel discussion on self-publishing April 17.
- **Steve Wetlesen** let us know that the Papachay website, to which he contributed both text and poetic art, is now up and running. Check it out at www.papachay.com. He also received a paid commission for a Mother’s Day poem and is available should you need a poem in time for this important holiday.

- **Marilyn Priel** set a record at the Barnes & Noble at Almaden Expressway and Blossom Hill in San Jose when her book *The Echo of Internal Awareness* sold twenty-two books in the first half hour.
- **Phyllis Mattson**, author of *War Orphan in San Francisco*, is giving 4–5 talks a month, which she considers a great experience.
- **Karen Llewellyn** will publish an article entitled “Attachment Disorder Complicates Love” in *Helping Hands & Caring Hearts*, a newsletter for the support of those who are adoptive parents through Bethany Christian Services.

Congratulations to all those who have experienced success in their writing endeavors. Send me your news at j_mutz@yahoo.com or fill out the success form located at the front table at our next meeting on May 13, 2008. WT

View from the Board

March and April

by Dave LaRoche

Our March meeting was held March 5 with all but Cathy Bauer (Hospitality) in attendance.

March

Directors' reports included the following:

- Alex – Speakers are booked for all but June and October meetings, Jess Wells speaking in April.
- Jeremy – Balances are healthy, anyone wanting numbers may contact him personally.
- Edie – With Dick, putting together a photo spread for the *Mercury News*.
- Marjorie – SBW stands at 183 members, largest branch in the CWC.
- Dick – Newsletter this month cost \$216 through mailing. Challenge winners will be announced at our March meeting.
- Ro – Website undergoing redesign. An interactive forum will be included for use by the membership only. Mailing list problem fixed (use again limited).
- Cathy – Last month's raffle brought in \$106 in donations.
- Gary – Requests a "Networking" page on the web site.

Old Business:

Dick will present an overall plan for the upcoming anthology next month. Pending approval of the plan, the board granted a "call for submissions."

Jeremy and Dick restated they would reformat the budget.

New Business:

Alex will head an effort to assess the feasibility of video recording our events and posting appropriate segments on the SBW website to encourage more interest in the Club.

The Board meeting day is changed to the Monday a week preceding the general meeting.

April

Our April meeting was held March 31 with all present but G Dow (resigned as Networking Chair due to personal obligations).

President Dave LaRoche reported:

- Our first mentoring meeting was completed with Carol Parris, who will join Cathy in her hospitality gig.
- Elections in June. Those contemplating an office begin thinking in concrete terms.
- Bob Garfinkle, acting as interim president, and Jeannine Vegh are forming the "Fremont Area Writers Club" intending to become a branch of the CWC.

Directors' reports included the following:

- Membership, Marjorie Johnson, reports 184 members.
- Publicity, Edie Matthews, sent out meeting announcement March 26th to 40+ media.
- Hospitality, Cathy Bauer, reported that the March donation raffle grossed \$57, three dollars above cost.
- East of Eden Chair Edie Matthews reported that early bird prices for the conference will cease on May 31, the Basil Stevens Contest is on again this year and plays will be included in the screenwriting category. To date there are five agents signed, and David Corbett, a current Edgar Award nominee, is a keynoter and will teach a workshop.
- Newsletter and Anthology Editor Dick Amyx reported the anthology editorial plan is ready and the overall plan will be ready next month.
- CB Rep Dave (acting) reported the next Central Board Meeting is May 3 with the likely agenda including:
 - E-business conduct.
 - New branch entry requirements and chartering.
 - Regional subdivisions (north and south).
 - Travel and expense reporting and reimbursement.

New business included the approval of Policies 5, 6, and 7; Workshops; Service Awards; and Mentoring respectively and the purchase of 40 CWC tote bags for use at South Bay functions or for sale to members. WT

Elections, Continued from page 1

which is:

To assist published, nascent and aspiring writers in the pursuit of their muse and the honing of their craft through conferences, educational workshops, lectures, opportunity alerts and networking; to spread our Branch reputation and credibility through the community so as to be known and solicited as writers.

President—Leadership, Vision, Policy and Precedence

- Leads the Branch through a productive, enjoyable term.
- Envisions and fosters goals and direction in keeping with governing documents.
- Establishes or approves processes that effectively address Branch goals and direction.
- Sets agendas and presides over meetings ensuring timely conduct and appropriate priorities.
- With consent of Board, appoints committee chairs, state rep, newsletter editor, and webmaster.
- Pursues efficiency, effectiveness and safe governance. Exhibits an audible voice and a collaborative orientation.

Vice President—Advice, Programs, Presidential Stand-in

- Advises president and Board in club matters.
- Plans and produces monthly programs obtaining and introducing speakers.
- Plans and produces occasional workshops.
- Prepares programs and workshop related write-up and photo(s).
- Assumes the president's duties in his/her absence.

Treasurer—Finance Management

- Plans flow of money (e.g., budgets), encouraging prudent and targeted use.
- Controls flow of money consistent with "plan."
- Establishes and maintains bank and/or investment accounts.
- Authorizes expenditures and signs checks.
- Receives and deposits revenues.
- Accounts for all movement of money through a bookkeeping process.



- Reports treasury activity and balances to the Branch Board monthly, and to the Central Board quarterly.

Secretary—Branch Business Records and Activity Prompting

- Records, obtains Board approval and publishes minutes of official business, mostly meetings of the Branch directors.
- Stores, in archive fashion, all published minutes and official Branch correspondence. At term's end, transfers archives to new Secretary.
- Updates events calendar.
- Follows and reports progress on actions accepted and motions made.
- Ensures Robert's Rules as the guide for Board meeting conduct.

Please consider working on behalf of your club and running for an office. Just remember, you must be present at the June meeting to have your vote count, and you may vote for yourself. The slate will be published in the June *WritersTalk* beforehand. Also, nominations are taken from the floor up until immediately before the vote, election day, June 10. Contact me at svpaluzzi@mac.com if you are interested in running for an office, or if you choose to nominate someone else. It is my job to confirm that those nominated are indeed willing to run. WT

Persevering, continued from page 1

more challenging by tackling a controversial subject while still making it more rewarding.

Michele Simon is a public health lawyer who has worked as public nutrition advocate since 1996, and is a legal specialist in the strategies and tactics of the food industry. She has published numerous articles on issues such as the National School Lunch Program, the USDA's dietary guidelines, the banning of obesity lawsuits, and corporate lobbying. She received her law degree from the University of California, Hastings College of the Law, and holds a master's degree in public health from Yale University. She is currently the Research and Policy Director for the Marin Institute, an alcohol industry watchdog based in San Rafael, CA.

Michele's book, *Appetite for Profit: How*

New Members

by Lita Kurth

A very warm welcome to our new members!

Katherine Hyde of Ben Lomond has had a children's book, *Lucia, Saint of Light*, accepted for publication, and has had published a short story and numerous journalistic works. She is also shopping around a finished novel. A copy editor and publication designer, she's looking for a critique group in fiction. Katherineh@cruzio.com

Marilyn Fahey of San Jose is a novel writer who has published nonfiction articles and works as a newspaper editor in Santa Cruz. If you contact her, please put South Bay Writers in the subject line. imarilynf@yahoo.com

Marilyn Priel of San Jose is a nonfiction writer whose completed work, *The Echo of Eternal Awareness*, debuted and sold out at Barnes & Noble on April 12! Look for her at the monthly meetings.

Ruthven Patrick of Mountain View is a published writer who is currently working on a novel and looking for a critique group. ruthvenp@sbcglobal.net WT

the Food Industry Undermines Our Health and How to Fight Back, is recommended by *Library Journal* as essential reading or as a follow-up book to *Fast Food Nation* and *Food Politics*. *Appetite for Profit* is also required reading for Marion Nestlé's nutrition students at New York University, and is available through major booksellers or through her web site (<http://www.appetiteforprofit.com>).

This will be a don't-miss night at South Bay Writers, where the truth of writing about hard truths and surviving as a truth-telling author will be revealed. Join us Tuesday, May 13, at 6 p.m. at the Lookout Inn in Sunnyvale for an enlightening program, great food, networking, and the chance to meet, hear, and learn from the astonishing and valiant author, lawyer, and food activist Michele Simon. WT

Bookworms

by Pat Decker Nipper

Bookworms do exist, in the form of the larvae of any of some 160 species of beetles. Because they devour books, that's probably how voracious readers got their nickname.

Last week I received an order for 12 of my books, which I self-published in 2004 (*Love on the Lewis and Clark Trail*). When I went to open a new box of books, from those stored in my husband's office, we found the books infested with tiny, wiggling, ugly white larvae! Of the three boxes we had left, two turned out to be full of ruined books. The paper on the edges had been eaten and even the floor under the boxes had been gnawed on. My husband thinks they were termites, but I believe they were some kind of bookworm.

Because of this I might have to have more books printed in the future, which I'm reluctant to do. I thought these three boxes would last for as long as this book sells. At least I have one box left. Let this be a warning for all members to check their stored books now and then to be sure everything is still intact.

How did we get rid of them? Hauled the boxes outside, saved what we could, and sprayed the rest with Raid.

Here's a web site if you'd like to know more about these destructive pests: <http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/don/dt/dt0440.html> WT



Prowling, continued from page 2

The Forum is an SBW sanctioned exchange. It will be maintained in a fashion consistent with our other communicative activities, in that, within the members' domain: identity protection is foremost, content appropriate, and our intent to create value pursued and, hopefully, evident. So visit, ponder, partake, and take your time. There is no Irish mother's sharp tongue in waiting, or floor manager with a baton. WT

Poetry in the Tavern

by Betty Auchard

In the early 1930's, my aunt owned a tavern called the Uptown Village where liquor and beer were cheap and hamburgers, at 15 cents each, were almost free. Uppity people called the Village a "beer parlor," but Auntie Marge said it was a family tavern. "There's a big difference between a beer parlor and a tavern, and people who come here *know* the difference," she said. Much of the time I didn't know what Auntie was talking about, but since she talked to me as if I were a grownup, I pretended I understood every word she spoke. She seemed to appreciate that a lot.

My mother was one of the cooks at the Village, and my father tended bar alongside Auntie Marge and Uncle Al, so I practically grew up there. The bar ran along one wall, with booths along the other. A big ceiling fan turned lazily above us, not producing enough air to mess our hair or to cool us down in the summertime. Dad said, "Those damn fans are no use to man or beast and are just for atmosphere." I didn't know what that meant either.

Uncle Al's favorite spot in the tavern was at the far end of the bar near the kitchen where he could keep his eyes on the clientele at all times. He considered it his job to make sure the family atmosphere was as orderly as he felt it should be.

One of the booths near the kitchen was larger than all the rest. That "family booth" served many purposes. My aunt and uncle sometimes sat there to do their bookkeeping or have a beer with friends. The booth was always stocked with lots of unlined paper, boxes of crayons, coloring books, and picture books to keep me busy. The daily newspaper was in the family booth, too, and my favorite times happened when Dad was on break. He would sit in the booth with a cup of coffee and a cigarette and read the *Cedar Rapids Gazette* while I drew pictures in a Big Ben tablet. The family booth was a cluttered and cozy place to be.

When I turned three, Auntie Marge and Uncle Al started showing me off to their patrons. They would place me on the

bar with my legs hanging over the edge so that I could recite nursery rhymes to any customers who expressed the slightest interest. My uncle would say, "Mr. Polochak, I invite you closer to meet Betty, my talented little niece. She's Waneta's girl."

"Waneta, who's married to Butch?"

"Yes, Butch's little girl."

"His little girl? I thought he had a son."

"Yes indeed, he had hoped for a son, but we all know how lucky he was to get Betty. Won't you join us, sir? The program is just about to begin, and tonight my niece will recite 'Mary Had a Little Lamb.'"

Uncle Al was quite elegant and used grand gestures when introducing me. For a while, I was the main attraction at the Uptown Village. The customers loved it when I couldn't remember all the words and just made up my own. Every evening, they huddled around drinking their beers and waiting for me to start. But I never began until Uncle Al told me to. After my uncle had quieted the small audience, he gestured in my direction with a graceful move and said, "All right, Betty, you may begin." I'm told that "Mary Had a Little Lamb" went something like this:

Mawy had a wittow wam and its fweece was white as snow was...an da wam goed to scoo wif her an (while shaking my head no) the wam don't sposed to go to scoo and it made the kids waf vewy hard when dey seed a wam at scoo.

And I would laugh since I thought it was so funny.

In appreciation for my efforts, the Village patrons dropped pennies in a glass coffee cup. I liked reciting on the bar for pennies, so I would take a deep breath and stumble my way through another verse. I could *never* remember the last line that had something to do with "wagging his tail behind him." I didn't understand what the words meant, even though Auntie Marge explained it over and over. "Betty, the lamb's tail is behind him and it's wagging." My confusion resulted in a slightly different version:

Weave em awone ta come back home and uh...HIND-EM-TAILS. Da END!

Applause was something I learned to like even more than the sound of

pennies clinking in the cup. I didn't know it then, but reciting poetry in a tavern was a prediction of things to come. WT

Historical Fiction, continued from page 4

thing and the social impact right and all else can be forgiven. Jess now keeps a footnoted version of novels to remind her where facts came from.

She does, however try to stick to places and events that are not so well known. Finding a link to where a historian has documented a fact, even an obscure one, provides some protection from from those "big-toothed" historians.

According to Jess, a historical novel is a three-dimensional chess game. The emotional arc of character is the base. On top of that is history. (Jess said she had to keep moving the time period around to get the Inquisition and the following plague to fit in her timeline). Language is the top layer. You can't write in *thee* and *thou*. The language needs to resonate with modern readers, but must reflect the time of the story.

Research, though fascinating, is both bane and boon. It's not writing. Like reading, it is someone else's dreamland. Your job is to go to your own dreamland. "Research like crazy and percolate the information through yourself. But then you have to allow it to come out through your own imagination."

One of the last questions to Ms. Wells was, "Did you have a plot in mind or did it all come from research?"

A smiling Jess Wells answered, "I would plot it out if I had to do it over again." Laughter followed by applause closed the evening on a happy and upbeat note.

Ms. Wells's other writings include two novels, *The Price of Passion* and *AfterShocks*, and several short stories and essays. She also teaches a workshop—"Making Time for Creativity"—and heads up JW Marketing. See more at her website: <http://www.jesswells.com/>

Jess would love to receive email from anyone in South Bay Writers to include in her mailing list. Please contact her at jesswells@earthlink.net WT

I Miss My Human

So many single women
use art for comfort
and validation.
Clay, wood, and paper
are not quite as nice
to touch or hug
as a flesh coated lover.
I miss the tightness of hugs
and nibbling on ears,
the snores at night,
and sometimes by day,
the quiet presence
and intimate closeness of
a special human.

I love my art and paint,
my words on the laptop, and
praise from others regarding
my talent. I certainly do!

I love it all, but I cannot love
all of those things
in the same sweet way
that I loved the look,
the sound, the touch,
the taste, the smell,
the noise and quiet,
the thrifty, cautious,
caring, funny, supportive,
faithful, wise, comforting,
closeness, and affection
of my very own
life-sized
skin-covered
human.

—Betty Auchard 10/31/99

AUTHOR'S NOTE: After the last day of a juried show where I sold my leaf-printed shirts, scarves and tote bags, I realized that many of those artists were single, divorced women. A year after Denny died, I was spending so much of my time with women that I felt more lonesome than ever and wrote this poem with no effort. It poured out of me. After I typed and *centered* it on the page, I discovered it was shaped like a penis. So in this version I have left justified it so as not to offend the faint of heart. Betty Auchard 2/21/02

Melancholy

Silent Spirit Strays
Starless Evening's Lonely Haze
Carbon Copy Days

—Sally A. Milnor

The Treasure Seekers

The Composer and motionless music
The Sculptor and formless clay—
The Painter and colorless canvas,
The Writer and lifeless play.

Fleeing the confusion
Of the outward bound—
Pursuing through the silence
A far-off sound.

Shunning the profusion
Of tangled thoughts—
Searching secret regions
Of hidden plots.

Seeking symphonies of brightness
The brilliance of a Sage—
Struggling in the shapelessness
Of a stagnant empty page.

Brushing deep within the darkness
Of a cold and daunting night—
Shaping beams of wonder
And dazzling gleams of light.

Finding Timeless Treasure
In the Brooding Artist's Home—
Creating a Song or a Sculpture,
A Painting or a Poem.

—Sally A. Milnor



Gems of Spring

Every Spring, the Flowers Get More Beautiful—
Pearl white dream, winter's still heart longs
Blossoms waking, dazzling colored fronds
Emerald green, ruby red, carnelian throngs
Sapphire-winged birds sing sweeter songs
Every Spring, the Flowers Get More Beautiful.

—Sally A. Milnor

Today

Today is the day . . .

I will awaken to the Beloved's sweet softness.
Today I will breathe in popcorn puppy,
black raisins peeking out from babushka covers.
True puppy love.

Today is the day . . .

My heart will open, the day will unfold
And. I will just be.
Today I will not do any thing I am supposed to do.
And do what I want.

Today is the day . . .

I will write, just today.
And maybe tomorrow
I will do it all again.
After today.

—jamutz

Illustration by Betty Auchard

Answers

Bound to maze inevitable plan, time confined Mortal Man.
Consumes day's observing to nothingness, hourglass haze.

Questing thinking He, "I" plus hour's control.
Rushing totally confused as why, to concur hidden goal.

Thoughtless unconcerned, of wholes director.
GoOD GOD cause of all causes, Mortals Protector.

He alone knows, observes universal order.
Mortal Mans directive, be Brothers wordier.

Almighty dictates technological chances.
Our purpose "ALONE"; Keep to social advances.

Your Only Purpose!

—*Darwin Mathison, 1997*

Night Thoughts

Night people
Don't necessarily believe
Academy awards define our stars.
Bursting pinwheel palettes
Van Gogh's brainstorm
Stir night skies into deliriums
Of tiny colored suns or
Dancing sky rocks oh so close
Though really light years' fireworks-far.
So take it from an expert:
Night people
Can often be quite lonely
Even in the company
Of a billion stars.

—*Pat Bustamante*

Mourning

I shook the memories from my mind
And made the long climb
Up the stairs.
Dad's absence was present
At the airport reception room.
No bear hug, or bristled mustache kiss
No wince, as he stooped to retrieve my bags.
Dad was not waiting there
With his cigar smells, and bright face.
I had no welcome,
Just an empty space.

—*Susan Paluzzi*

Baying South

Yodel the mangy coyote
Has jilted my shepherd dog.
Orea is one heartbroken female scorned,
She is old, she is barren,
She barks every forlorn night:
Where is he?

"Yo" is in the hills howling
One octave above the baying of wolves.
Do you hear me? he is asking.
He has lost his pack.
He forages at a backyard dog-dish
Trading dignity for recognition
That he is alive.
We all call the moon
At some dark night of our lives
When there is nobody else . . .

—*Pat Bustamante*

Strawberry

Moist, bite size bud
The color of blood.
Your incense is intense.
Tongue-numbing
You crackle with seed.

—*Susan Paluzzi*



A Celebration of Redwoods

Sequoia Sempervirens—*coast redwood*

Sentinels silently stretching skyward
inhabit a humid microclimate
of rain siphoned through reddish furrowed trunks
descending into soft sorrel meadows
layered on thousand-year-old sibling roots

Spirals of green needles absorbing light
fuel densely populated groves bedecked
in huckleberry blossoms woven through
forest canopy spotted with century
lichens slowly surrounding sparse burnt-out
crowns tapering into infinite blue

Sequoia Sempervirens—*always green*

—*Una Daly*

A New French Horn Comes Home

Why go farther, my girl? This place is as good
As any, to lay down your prize.
Sit there alongside. Pull it close. Find the locks.
Dare open them and feast your eyes?

Cushioned within, a bright gleam of cold brass,
Round as the rising sun.
Trace those circles. Feel them begin,
Small as your small fingertip.
They curve and grow,
Build on themselves.
Spiral upward to meet their valves.
Glinting brass turns,
Loops back upon itself.
It broadens to the bell, opens to the world.
A glittering concerto builds
To a last wide-echoing note.

Now kiss the cold circle of mouthpiece,
Breathe into it, as goddess breathed life into
Earth's cold form. Feel it warm.
Call up the ghosts of Mozart and Strauss.
Press young fingers to virgin keys.
Caress them, press them, feel them move.
Leave your prints upon them now.
Let your palm tarnish the untouched roundness,
Your right hand stain the sweep of the bell.
It's yours now, girl. Play. Let it tell.
Let it speak now of castles and woods,
Lost glories and heroes and gods.
It's late. That's enough for one day.
Polish it clean, close it away.
Still, the prints of your hands on that new-warmed brass
Remain etched. And though a hundred years may pass,
Long as music remains and voices ring true
It will still hold an echo of today and you.

—*Jamie Miller*

Education Center, Drake's Bay: To a Cormorant on a Shelf

Why are you here, unfortunate bird? Why here instead of the sky?
You perch unmoving on a driftwood scrap,
With those wings,
Now frozen forever, half furled, half spread.
Wings are to reach out and feel the air. Wings are to unfold and fly.
What a bleak place this, here where you perch eternally on your shelf!
"Environment Ed Center", the words on the door.
Your classroom?
No. Your classroom was edge of a nest where your
Downy wings stretched, testing the wind, learning its secrets for yourself.
Did I see you once, silent bird? Did you fly, raucous, over my land?
You were winging southward. Or was it north?
Was it far?
How did you first know that path never seen?
Wings now stilled once spanned the sea, to a home somewhere on the sand.
You fell to Earth but nest-mates flew on. Did any look back or call?
They're gone now. Naught remains but feathers adrift
On the waves.
A bird's just a moment, you alone endure.
Here for us to see, to touch and hold, you wait in this empty hall.
So tell me quickly, what is it like to carve a path 'cross the sky?
What did you see? What shall I tell them? To find wonders
All around?
My task is to teach them. But how little I know!
It's time now, bird. Our class is here. Show us what it's like to fly.

—*Jamie Miller*

Supporting Them

“Support the Troops,” thy commanded, those plastic magnet-ribbons
Clinging like yellow lichens on a million car-trunk lids.
We patriots answered, bought a million little
Flags, Stars-and-Stripes banners to flutter from
The windows of our cars. Big flags to fly over the
Beds of a million pickup trucks. Of course I bought
A flag. It came quite cheap, at the local car-parts store.

I flew that flag, supported our troops,
While the troops I supported died,
Died in places with a hundred unknown names.
Two thousand mothers tried to explain
Why Daddy won’t come home.
Six thousand young soldiers learned to walk
On a new, shiny, springy, computerized leg.
I supported the troops as our nation’s debt tripled.
(Who do we owe that debt to?)

I supported our troops, lest I be charged
With pale patriotism, a wish to Cut and Run.
Our Leader counseled courage, standing proud before
A flag the size of my house. He urged us to bear every
Sacrifice. In a Texas tavern, his daughter had a small problem
Concerning some underage drink. So thus she supported our
Troops, and Exxon oil shares rose from forty dollars to
Ninety-five-point-twenty-nine. I’ve made thirty thousand dollars
And change. Less, of course, the cost of my flag.

Support them? Of course, but for a moment I forgot, blinded by the blue lights
leading me on. But yes, I support them with yellow ribbon, now faded,
And letters now unreadable. My faded banner flutters, whipped by winds.
White stripes tear away from red, red is torn from blue, like a nation
Broken and damaged. My local car-parts store no longer carries flags
Or yellow ribbons. So . . . so how shall I support our troops now?

—*Jamie Miller*

Green River Formation

I peel apart the rocks like paper leaves,
My blade probing for chapter, page, and verse.
We search this stony hill like bookstore thieves,
Seeking to read despite author’s dire curse.

There! Small ‘lumination, exposed, revealed!
A fish, once live, once dead, now live again.
Fifty million years of secrets unsealed,
From sea-bed silt now lifted o’er dry
plain.

You swam before my kind e’er
walked the land,
Watched continents move, mountains rise
and fall.

What say ye? Were we both made by God’s
hand?
Or are we raised and slain by chance’s call?
And shall I hope, as time I contemplate,
That rocks like yours may someday tell my fate?

—*Jamie Miller*



Cold Temptation

For months I hardly know you exist, thank God.
One day, I slip. I glimpse your outer wrapping at the store;
I allow it, a small sin in the scheme of things,
But this is the enticing beginning of my fall.

I hide you in a cold, icy place for a day, maybe, a week.
All the while you bide your time,
Tapping your impatient fingers, waiting for me ... for tonight.
You play possum, you naughty thing.

I take you out and open you.
The kitchen finally warms you up, a little longer than is absolutely necessary.
Waiting enough time is important to bring about
All the joys of the delicious debauchery yet to come.

I scoop and set your delicious twin peaks
In that fresh and innocent bowl.
Oh, how my mouth waters as I write this.
I know I am no match for you.

The light plays on you, your rough, textured side
And the other side of you that gleams and swirls.
You are the earthy color of rich loam after rain, a glossy mud.
Your fragrance is subtle, provocatively astringent, and all your own.

Cold one, you melt and grow wet where the bowl in which you lie touches you.
I like it; don't take offense.
Oh, cold and cruel temptation,
Be gentle with me.

I see that the caressing warmth of the room
Slickens the silken sides of you, melting and flooding the bowl-bottom,
Your cream oozes down your curvy, voluptuous slopes.
I'm afraid my firmest resolve to resist you is swept away.

So, with silvery spoon, I take and ravage you.
Without mercy, you ravage me back.
I place you on my tongue; you paint my mouth with your tawny wetness.
Your intricate flavor is but gentle competition to your perfect succulence.

I swallow you and you glide into me, onto me.
I know not how to stop.
You thrill and fill me, and ultimately, you kill me,
Oh, cold temptation; oh, chocolate dream, oh, chocolate ice cream.

—Richard Burns © 2007

To Dance

To dance is to be silly, really
To be silly with someone special,
Afloat on music composed by someone else's toil and soul.
The string band plays a good Appalachian groove. They have practiced long for this, as well.

Dance is joyful movement. It's being out of a chair. It's minor work and major fun,
Among other dancers, happy and high,
Out on the wood floor showing off their sassy moves and classy lines;
Glad, happy, sassy, high, ... and silly, really.

—Richard Burns © 2007



Illustration by Betty Auchard

America, Don't Pass Me By

Fifty-nine and just laid off, I need to make a buck.
I'm livin' in the city streets, guess I just ran out of luck.
Everything that I now own is on my achin' back;
All the food I'll eat today is dried up in this sack.

Hey, mister, can you spare some change? I helped to make this town.

For years and years I did my best, but now you all look down.
I helped pay for the statue there, that torso, strong and nude.
America, don't pass me by; I'm hungry for some food.

Hey, brother, can you spare some scratch? I helped to make this state.

My vote restored the capitol, majestic, broad, and straight.
I worked hard at the factory; I paid my debts and tolls.
America, don't pass me by, I only need some clothes.

Hey, sister, got a Washington? I helped to build The West.
My wife for life, we raised three kids; we did our level best.
Now one's a nurse, god, one's a curse, one sells her art in Rome.
America, don't pass me by, I only need a home.

Hey, Mack, please, a couple bucks? I made the U.S.A.
My folks they did it way back when, my kids do it today.
I know I smell and haven't shaved, but I don't mean no harm.
America, don't pass me by, I still hain't bought the farm.

Hey, man, ha'you got a skinny dime; I helped improve the world.
My taxes put that flag pole there where stars and stripes unfurl.
I'm hangin' on, collecting cans. Don't want to be no pest.
America, don't pass me by, I'm old and need a rest.

Hey, mister, got a bit of change? We share this universe.
You build big circuits and machines, I say this little verse.
So tell me why I stoop and shake while cold winds push and shove.
America, don't pass me by; I only need some love.

—Richard A. Burns © 1986

Silence Is Golden

Silence is golden, or so you once said,
So I'll just be content hugging pillows in bed.
'Cause though I've searched far, I haven't found one, yet,
As golden as you in that one Carmel sunset.

Settle for silver, I say in my mind.
Don't pound on the wall, just forget and unwind.
And so I stay silent though heavy as lead.
Some words are diamonds; some best left unsaid.

—Richard Burns

How Are Things, Mr. President?

How are things, Mr. President? Are they all going Right?
Does your Congress take orders from your big house of white?
Since you bought all those blue votes, cherry-picked justices, two,
Did you trip up and so rip up the red, white, and blue?

How are things, Mr. President? Can you still sleep at night
After telling so many people trumped up reasons to fight?
Is Osama in his lair? Is Al Qaeda everywhere?
Is the best way to win this to stand 'em naked on a chair?

How are things, Mr. President? Where's that WMD?
Have we helped build better nations with your huge spending spree?
Will our grandchildren pay? Will to Allah they pray?
Or will they halt all this lunacy and proceed a different way?

—Richard Allan Burns



Holy Ground

This is Holy Ground,
You have desecrated
our Holy shrines.

Words said throughout the ages
to excuse Mankind's warring
and destructive ways.

But what is Holy Ground?
Where battles were fought,
or won or lost?

What is a holy shrine?
Where a person was born,
or lived, or died?

Is Holy Ground a man made thing?
Or is it forests, mountains
and teeming seas?

Look at the universe far and wide.
Where else can mankind live?
Nowhere we have found.

Our precious blue planet,
humanity's only Holy Ground,
is all we have.

How much more death, war,
and destruction has to come
before we learn?

Will we reach out to one another,
to rescue, to preserve this,
our solitary refuge?

Or will we persist in slaughtering
people, animals, plants,
and lose the true Holy Ground?
We can preserve this rare and shining orb.
Or piece by piece destroy,
our blue and living Earth.

Time grows shorter every hour.
Leaving us with less and less.
What will you do?

Today.

—Carolyn Donnell

Slavic Eyes

Her hair is blonde.
Her skin is fair.
Her sparkling eyes,
a sky blue pair.

Yes, she's a Swede
you say. For sure,
or at the least
an English girl.

You think you're right.
And most would be.
A closer look, though
and you'll see.

Those eyes of hers,
they may be blue.
But that long shape,
West never knew.

It's seen on faces
farther East,
Where broad and darker
are most cheeks.

So somewhere back
in this girl's past,
there was a one
unlike her caste.

Her great, great gran,
or hers before,
had Slavic eyes come
through the door.

—Carolyn Donnell

Illustration by Betty Auchard

My Mother's Name

Born with just my mother's name.
Father unknown, what a shame.
Who needs a man's name to have
pride?

Why is a woman's so vilified?

Who would cause us all that pain?
Father or not, I'm still the same.
My name is mine. I'm satisfied.
I'm who I am, my peace I'll bide.

I suppose that a boy, a guy
needs a man to identify
his own self's masculinity.
A pattern followed, what to be.

But I'm a girl, a woman and more,
like my mother and hers before.
I'll wear my mother's name with pride.
Hold my head up, deign to hide.

She paid the price, carried me then.
No father where he should have been.
To give a man more rights than she,
is the opposite of liberty.

If my father ever looks for me,
he will have to beg to be
allowed into our family.
Not his right, but grace's be.

—Carolyn Donnell

Khakis and Tee

He sits by his desk, khaki shorts and tee.
His blond hair is cut very short.
A new stereo covers the wall behind him.
He smiles at his proud new possession.

Take a closer look though, and you can see
a long black sharp-tipped object
pointed horizontally on a nearby shelf.
No one is looking in that direction.

This is no dorm, no university room.
That unspent bomb fell very near
the place where he now sits, in that photo
that shows he was safe that day at least.

Wait until later that week and you'll see
a uniform instead of khakis and tee.
And in the background there would be
his helicopter helping fleeing Vietnamese.

I never knew if he made it back.
His letters stopped arriving.
We weren't married, we had no kids.
So no one would have notified me.

But his name is not on that big black wall.
Does that mean he is well somewhere?
I often wish I knew, what did happen to
that blond sergeant in khakis and tee.

—Carolyn Donnell

Promises Made

She opens the door and there he stands.
A dozen red roses in his hands.
She steps aside to let him pass
and watches him come in.

His black hair gone, his shoulders stooped,
he slowly walks across the room.
Like a dream the scene unfolds.
All of the years roll back.

They sit down at the table to talk
She's watching her grandson learning to walk.
They talk of the past, the reasons for loss,
and how things went so wrong.

"I wasn't there," he says "for our son,
but I promise I'll be here for this one.
You should have had help, I should have been there.
You had to go on alone.

I can't go back and change what's done.
There's really no place left to run.
We can only try to go forward from here.
I promise I'll do all I can."

She walks to the couch and lifts the child.
He looks at them and starts to smile.
He gets up and comes to sit by her side.
Grandpa with Grandma at last.

Promises Gone

I wrote the first verse a while ago.
I was going to rewrite it but now I don't know.
The roses that came with the promises made
have dried like a desert long after the rain.

He said "I should have been there back then.
You shouldn't have been all alone to fend.
I promise to do what I can from now on."
And other promises that are now gone.

I knew it felt like a dream that day.
Those promises melted like mist on the bay.
At the first sigh of woe they were gone in a flash.
Doors slammed with a resounding crash.

Yes, he got sick and that was bad.
But instead of faith he panicked and ran.
Took back everything he said that day
and tried to make it all go away.

He died last week with it all undone.
Stubbornness runs from father to son.
Broken hearts now bleed anew.
Old wounds reopened with promise untrue.

I should have finished the first verse when I could,
'cause now I can't stand to look if I would.
The first inspiration has become moot.
And left in its place are ashes and soot.

—Carolyn Donnell

Oh Caledonia!

Beautiful hills of green
rise beyond the tranquil lake.

Unruffled nature spreading out
'til from our dream we awake.

Old loves lost, but found
again upon that shore.

A rose passes between lover's hands
as in days of yore.

Peace and harmony abound,
the song of the morning doves all around.

Oh Caledonia, will my heart
ever find that peaceful part?

—Carolyn Donnell

The Hawk

Beautiful hawk
with wings spread wide.
Soaring over land and sea.

Would that I could be inside
that feathered heart for just a beat.
And fly on high with thee.

—Carolyn Donnell

Minnesota Autumn

Poem and painting by Carolyn Donnell



Shimmering trunks of gray-white birches
reflect and sway, standing in dark
back-water washes left by abandoned beaver dams.
Mosquitoes flee Jack Frost's approach.
He leaves behind glints of auburn-orange
and yellow-gold. Luminous leaves,
storing up the last of summer's sun.
Soon enough winter will arrive to sculpt
all but the evergreens with its icy breath.
But for now, enjoy
Autumn. My favorite time
to be up North.

Moss Beach Observations

Northward Migration

Pelicans—
the strangest bird.
Their huge
triangular beaks
are
unmistakable
as they travel
in V shaped
formations.

They were worthy of
being
the only birds
I knew of,
back in Berkeley,
having
a poetry journal
named for them.

Sarah

Sweet innocence.
On the seashore,
quite unexpectedly,
a little blonde girl,
she can't be over four,
comes running up
and gives me a gift:
an ocean rounded
white granite stone.
"She likes to give people rocks,
her father tells me.
I will treasure it
forever.

July 16 Haiku

Overlooking waves:
light gold flowers grow at the
fallen cedar's roots.

Marine Mammal Release

Sea lions,
like cats,
don't want to leave
the humans who feed them.

Loneliness

Ocean beauty.
Sweet
gentle emotions.
Childlike recollection of one long gone.
I want to cry, Lord,
because I don't have anyone
to share this moment.

Mermaid Truck

For the second time in my life
(the first time was a ranger
whose car
was similar),
I am surprised
at Fitzgerald
Marine Reserve
to again encounter
a motor vehicle
painted up
to resemble
an underwater scene,
but this time
beneath the waves
besides a mermaid
(to be expected)
is also found
a red two horned rhino
(or is it a strange dog?),
a large bright yellow
somewhat
Van Gogh-esque
flower,
a whale and
1960s light hued
tie dye pattern
on the seats of
the interior cab,
and finally,
seldom seen by
those who dive and probe
the ocean depths,
the sun with a human face
and a dark crescent moon
with a woman's eyes and lips.

The driver,
a woman,
and her pretty little
daughter
argue among themselves
whether to call
the transformed Datsun
"Sea Life"
or
"The Goddess,"
leaving this question
an unresolved
mystery.

*To Heidi Mumford and her lovely child, in
appreciation.*

—Stephen C. Wetlesen © 2008



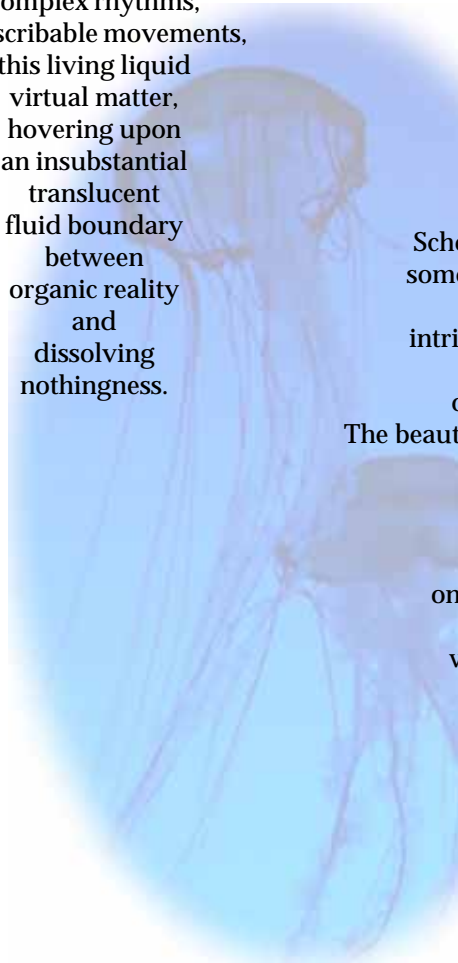
Wig-Wags

They are mostly gone,
vanished
museum pieces,
whitewashed,
dark line painted
works of sculpture,
bits of railroad lore
and history
long replaced
by crossing gates,
save in a few
out of the way
heavenly places,
but one can still see
in the mind's eye
the hanging cherry red
candy lights
swinging endlessly
from metal posts
dancing an eternal
two step,
bells ringing,
loudly singing,
as the great black
Espresso Maker
hisses by,
the moment forever
frozen in time,
never to return.

—Stephen C. Wetlesen © 2008

Moon Jelly

It dances within itself,
choreographs its own inner
undulating
waltz,
as some have speculated
might be the essence
of higher dimensional
Mobius like
directions,
endlessly thrusting in
pulsating
jet propulsion
complex rhythms,
indescribable movements,
this living liquid
virtual matter,
hovering upon
an insubstantial
translucent
fluid boundary
between
organic reality
and
dissolving
nothingness.



Schools of thousands
sometimes congregate
in cities of
intricately transacting
diaphanous
oceanic gauze.

The beauty of watery parachutes
and practical
undersea
locomotion
are become
one and the same,
combining
widely diffuse,
separated
aspects,
facets
of a saline
cosmos
into
simple
unification,
a literally
brainless
achievement
Einstein,
seeking lifelong,
in his
barely comprehensible
genius,
to bring together
nature's deep truths
into one
elegant,
harmonious
explanation
could never
emulate.

—Stephen C. Wetlesen © 2008

Only in Santa Cruz County

Felton.
Henry Cowell Redwoods
State Park,
right next to the
Roaring Camp
railroad line.
The songs of narrow gauge
steam locomotives
regale me
with their high pitched whistle
as I sit on a bench,
surrounded by
the groves of ancient giants
filling the forest
with their glory.
A couple of ladies
just happen to pass by
discussing how,
down on
the Santa Cruz beaches,
a few miles away,
a man standing on
jagged rocks
was nearly swept away
by sudden fluke waves
as he was wearing
fake
angel wings,
posing
for some strange woman
with a camera.
This kind of thing
happens around those parts
all the time.
It's quite mundane
normal and
common.

—Stephen C. Wetlesen © 2008

EAST OF EDEN
Writers Conference

September 5 - 7, 2008 Salinas, CA Steinbeck Country

- Agents
- Editors
- Publishers
- Keynote speakers
- Writing workshops



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Third Basil Stevens* Memorial Writing Contest

What: Previously unpublished essay, article, story, or poem, 750 words maximum. Topic: sports theme.

Prize: First prize is a scholarship to the East of Eden Writers Conference, September 5-7, 2008, Salinas, CA, \$500 value (includes extras). Second prize is \$100 credit for the Conference. Third prize is \$50 credit for the Conference.

Entry: Fee is \$10 per entry, one entry per person. Open to all, except that previous first place winners are not eligible to enter. Make your check payable to "East of Eden Writers Conference." Do not send cash.

Deadline: July 1, 2008 (postmarked). Winners announced August 1. All entrants will be notified via e-mail.

Submittal Format: Text on one side of numbered pages, double-spaced in 12-point type. Title in the header on all pages. No personal identification of any kind on any of the pages. Name and contact information, including e-mail address, on a separate page or index card attached to your entry with a paper clip.

For more information: www.southbaywriters.com (California Writers Club, South Bay Branch), or Robert Garfinkle (510) 489-4779 (after noon).

Send your entry to:

Basil Stevens Memorial Writing Contest
California Writers Club
c/o Robert Garfinkle
32924 Monrovia Street
Union City, CA 94587

* Basil Stevens was a sports writer and long-time member of South Bay Writers. He passed away in 2004 and is sorely missed. This contest is being run primarily with funds donated in his memory.

Sell Your Book at East of Eden Writers Conference

If you are a published member of CWC and attending this year's East of Eden Writers Conference, you are invited to sell your book there. If Barnes & Nobles can order it, they will sell it through their bookstore, or if you are self-published, we will allow you to bring books and sell them. There will be a special table for authors to sell and sign their books.

At the last conference we had about 300 people attend, and we all know that writers are readers. Come sell your book, enjoy the conference, and be inspired to write the next one.

Contact Edie Matthews in advance if you are interested in taking advantage of this opportunity.
edie333@sbcglobal.net.

The *WritersTalk* "Worth 500 Words" Contest



The rules are simple: all you have to do is write something to suit the illustration above. Genre doesn't matter; the only qualification is a maximum length of 500 words.

Entries will be judged in the same way as *WT* Challenge, except that there will be only one winner, who will receive a certificate and a \$35 cash award. The *Worth 500 Words* contest is planned to be held annually, most likely during April.

Deadline for entries is May 16. The winning entry will be published in the June issue; the award will be made at the July meeting (if we don't have a picnic), or at the August meeting otherwise. *WT*

Call For Submissions Love After 70

What is love—in all its forms—like after 70? Do we still have unrequited crushes, fall head over heels?

"I realized I'm never going to fall in love again," a friend in her early 70's confides. "I love my children, and my grandchildren. Many people. But I'm never going to fall in love again. I don't know what I think about that."

"When I close my eyes and listen, I could be listening to teen-agers," a woman describes the post-80 romance of her best friend. "Who would ever have imagined." She herself, at 74, is going through a divorce after more than 50 years of marriage.

What is love like for us after 70? Is our love for our grandchildren more ardent than our love for our children ever was? Is our love for our spouse more romantic than it was in our thirties? Has something more difficult to describe but more durable and pleasurable come to take its place? What love do we feel for departed spouses? Ill ones? Ones who no longer remember us? Close friends who have been our emotional centers after loss? The caretakers we have come to depend on? Mothers and fathers, still living—or dead? Sisters and brothers?

We invite writers (and would-be writers) to explore through story, essay, memoir, and poetry, what they do think, feel, know in their bones and nerve ends about love—in all its forms—after seventy.

Photographs and artwork that reproduce well in black and white are also invited.

Info: www.universaltable.org

SBW Writers' Forum

Events

Conferences

Contests

Networking

Resources

SBW Author Events
and News

Check it out:

southbaywriters.com

Call for Submissions Cahoots Magazine

Cahoots is a Canadian magazine freshly redesigned for the web for women who want more than the "same old same old" from a women's magazine. Cahoots is a magazine for the creative, engaged, curious, soulful woman in all women. We are seeking submissions of articles, visual art, creative writing, and proposals for regular reviews and columns about things that really matter (and it's not bee-stung lips!). Conspire to inspire. Visit www.cahootsmagazine.com for full submission guidelines.

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

Character Traits

Jeannine Vegh M.A. M.F.T.I.
ladyjatbay@sbcglobal.net

Computer Dingus and Full-Time Nerd

Jeremy Osborne
jeremy_w_osborne@yahoo.com

Doctors' Office Environment, OB-GYN

Dottie Sieve
pdrsieve@yahoo.com

Hospital and Nursing Environment

Maureen Griswold
maureengriswold@sbcglobal.net

Police Procedures

John Howsden
jwhowsden961@yahoo.com

Profile Writing

Susan Mueller
susan_mueller@yahoo.com

Teaching and the Arts

Betty Auchard
Btauchard@aol.com

Television Production

Woody Horn
408-266-7040

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.
berkeleywritersclub.org

San Francisco/Peninsula: Meets on the third Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to noon at the Belmont Library, 1110 Alameda De Las Pulgas, Belmont.
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.
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).
mtdiablowriters.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.
trivalleywriters.com

Sacramento: Meets at 11:00 a.m. the third Saturday of every month, except July and August, at Luau Garden Chinese Buffet, 1890 Arden Way, Sacramento 95815.
acramento-writers.org

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday							
<h1>May 2008</h1>				1	2 7:30P Open Mic Barnes & Noble Almaden Plaza, San Jose	3							
4	5	6	7	8	9 7:30P Open Mic Borders Books Santana Row, San Jose	10 11A Editors' Powwow							
11	12	13 6P Monthly Dinner Meeting Lookout Inn, Sunnyvale Michele Simon	14	15 7:00P Open Mic Barnes & Noble 3900 Mowery, Fremont	16 7:30P Open Mic Barnes & Noble Pruneyard, Campbell WritersTalk deadline Worth 500 Words deadline	17							
18	19	20	21	22	23 7:30P Open Mic Borders Books Sunnyvale	24							
25	26	27	28	29	30	31							
<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 16.6%;">June 1 SBW Anthology Deadline</td> <td style="width: 16.6%;">Future Flashes</td> <td style="width: 16.6%;"></td> <td style="width: 16.6%;"></td> <td style="width: 16.6%;"></td> <td style="width: 16.6%;"></td> <td style="width: 16.6%;"></td> </tr> </table>							June 1 SBW Anthology Deadline	Future Flashes					
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Stay Informed!

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

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

For Fremont Open Mic contact
Jeannine Vegh
ladyjatbay@sbcglobal.net

or

Bob Garfinkle
ragarf@earthlink.net

Calling New Authors: Cheerios® Spoonfuls of Stories® Launches 2nd Children's Book Contest!

Cash Prize, Potential Book Deal for Top Story

Starting April 16, 2008 and going through July 15, 2008, Cheerios is searching for the next great children's book author by inviting previously unpublished adult authors to submit their story for a children's book. The winner will have their story reviewed for a potential book deal with Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, and Cheerios will provide cash prizes to the top three finalists.

The book should be suitable for children who are 4 to 8 years old. Authors must be 18 years or older. Stories must be 500 words or less and in the English language. To obtain a complete list of rules and to submit your original, unpublished story online, go to www.SpoonfulsofStoriesContest.com.

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.

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173 W Santa Clara
Downtown San Jose
www.sanjosepoetryslam.com

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See www.pcsj.org for featured guests and details.



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www.southbaywriters.com

MAIL TO

Address Correction Requested

TUESDAY

May 13, at the Lookout Inn

Michele Simon,

Author of *Appetite for Profit:*

*How the Food Industry Undermines Our
Health and How to Fight Back*

“Persevering as a Truth-Telling Author”

Next Monthly Meeting—TUESDAY, May 13, 6:00 p.m.

Lookout Inn

605 Macara Avenue, Sunnyvale

At the Sunnyvale Golf Course

East of Eden

Writers Conference

September 5, 6, and 7, 2008
in Salinas, California

Mark your calendar now!

Deadlines!

WritersTalk and
Worth 500 Words Contest
May 16

SBW Anthology
June 1

