



# WRITERSTALK

Volume 17  
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August 2009

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club

## August Speaker

### Erika Mailman

by Bill Baldwin

"I've always known I wanted to be a writer, and it took quite a while for that dream to be realized. And then I had two novels come out in the same year! Whenever I talk to aspiring writers, I always remember how it felt to not be sure I'd ever see publication. And I also remember that there are a lot of really wonderful books that don't make it into print, and a lot of awful ones that do. It's a combination of luck, talent and whim."

Erika Mailman was one of several talented writers I met last year at the San Jose Book Expo, and she attracted my attention for several reasons. Her novel *The Witch's Trinity* deals with the witch persecutions in Germany in the 1500s. Erika and I are both part German and interested in the witch hysteria—so off I went to a panel discussion of witches and witchcraft in literature, where Erika spoke.

I discovered that Erika has a personal connection to the witchcraft trials, although not the ones in Germany. She is descended from Mary Bliss Parsons, a woman who was put on trial for witchcraft twice in Salem, Massachusetts, in the 1600s. Remarkably, Parsons was acquitted at both trials.

*The Witch's Trinity* was shortlisted for the Stoker Award and was a *San Francisco Chronicle* Notable Book. Erika is also the author of an earlier historical novel, *Woman of Ill Fame*.

Like any harried but happy writer, she has three current projects underway: a young adult novel, a novel about the medical world, and a novel about a haunted house. She also writes a monthly history column for the *Montclairion* newspaper in Oakland, and has written several nonfiction books about that city's history.

When these projects don't keep her totally busy, she also blogs about current and medieval witchcraft at [erikamailman.blogspot.com](http://erikamailman.blogspot.com).

I recommend Erica's website, [erikamailman.com](http://erikamailman.com). She is acutely aware of what it is like to be a not-yet-published writer, and her site offers useful advice on how to achieve the coveted status of "published."

Please join us to meet this interesting and dedicated author at the regular monthly meeting on August 11. WT



Erika Mailman

## June Recap

### Janis Bell

by Victoria M. Johnson

Janis Bell, author of *Clean, Well-Lighted Sentences*, treated us to an upbeat talk about grammar. Bell says she wrote her book because she noticed certain mistakes keep happening, and she thought she could write a little guide-book of common errors for people who write well and speak well (she doesn't like to write!). As a writing teacher of 36 years, she's happy that she can help others with their writing. "People are again interested in grammar and punctuation," says Bell. "You can ruin a sentence not ending it with a preposition."

She briskly continued with several examples of rules we've all learned: never begin a sentence with a conjunction, never end a sentence with a preposition, and never place a comma after a conjunction. Bell says sometimes the rules can, and should, be broken. For example, coordinating words (*so, yet, and, nor, or, but*) can begin a sentence. But she warned us not to confuse conjunctions with adverbs like *therefore, finally, also, and moreover*; do use a comma after these joining words.

Bell discussed punctuation usage. "People think you can use a colon only for a list of items. You can follow a colon with one word, one phrase, or another complete thought. You just need a full sentence before the colon." She enthusiastically took us through the semicolon, hyphen, quotation mark, and dash. My favorite was her example of the hyphen being used for words not found in the dictionary, such as *an I-don't-give-a-damn* smile.

Bell told us we have a disconnect as writers from what we know as readers.

SPECIAL OCTOBER ISSUE: SPOOKY STORIES

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# President's Prowling

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

## Slam Bang, Modernity

I am facing a computer crisis and am in search of repair, a new laptop, or advice regarding both. After days of trial and dismal progression, I have reached the towering wall of frustration. It extends up through the clouds, seems insurmountable, and I am ready to turn south and chuck the whole thing—unresolved. Of course, when I consider this, other questions arise and the first looming curiosity is this: has the promise been fulfilled, have modernity and its automation increased my standard of living, and just what is that standard anyway? Where is it written and by whom?



As with all problems of gravity, I go out on my deck with a cigar and freshly chilled Manhattan, one sporting a wedge of lime 'cause it's summer. I sit back in the dappled shade of an old eucalyptus and ponder the question. I have a pad and ballpoint just in case, and my mind wanders back.

When I came to California in 1956, there were no computers. I didn't envision one and didn't miss the idea. My life seemed substantially enhanced from previous years; it always did in my brief retrospectives. I was content, often excited with my lot and . . . did anything else actually count? My sensual experiences were vivid, my brain worked decently, I had a convertible car (a must in LA), a roof of sorts, and adequate coin in my pocket. Life was good, and not a one or a zero in sight.

My days were filled with exchange and adventure. I knew people and saw most of them often. On Sundays it was jazz at the Drift Inn in Malibu. We surfed at Huntington Beach. We laughed without provocation, fought only over incidentals, and even got drunk occasionally. We did a lot of it outside in the sunshine, picking up the natural "D." I took road trips in my convertible, played chess in coffee houses, and listened to Pyotr Ilyich T.—back when Macintosh was a high fidelity amplifier. "Standard of living" was a vague phrase relegated to a small group of sociologists—most employed by the government.

It may have started with the linotype—this frustration of mine—press a few keys here and, with a clatter and clunk, a slug was ready for ink there; and then came the vacuum tubes in chassis that filled warehouses, and wire to wrap the planet in. Modernity was encroaching, its vexation and angst in accompaniment. Some guy in a white smock at Bell Labs won accolades for his solid-state gating of electrons, and with deposited circuitry and Freon, those warehouses shrank into studio-sized cubes. Teenagers in garages, floating in money from farsighted investors, boosted this phenomenon exponentially. And all along, the "standard," now out from the cover of nearsighted analysts, "was improving"—it was in all the papers.

Today my "friends" are on Facebook. I get my rays from a tube, and my surfing is done in bits and bytes on a web. Chess has morphed into Freecell, Bud Shank and

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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

is the monthly newsletter of the South Bay Branch of the California Writers Club.

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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 Galvac  
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### Creative Works

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

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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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# Editor's Perspective

by Dick Amyx  
Editor

## A Community in Action



It came on me kind of slaunchwise, nothing to do with South Bay Writers, but a question from a conversation-starter on a Yahoo! Group I amuse myself with: "Which author, currently alive, would you most like to meet in person?" My first thought was that I'd already met one of them, Neil Gaiman. That really wasn't much more than a howdy and a handshake, and I thanked Neil for giving me the pleasure of his writing, but still.

Then I did get to thinking about SBW and all the authors I've met or had the chance to meet since I joined in August, 2007: Reese Erlich, Barry Eisler, Jess Wells, Michele Simon, Tim Myers, Dahr Jamail, Steve Bhaerman, Alice Wilson-Fried, Norman Solomon, Esther Erman and Janet Miller, Ellen Sussman, Frances Dinkelspiel, Michelle Richmond, and Janis Bell (she considers herself a teacher rather than a writer, but she did write a book). And that was just at SBW meetings.

At the East of Eden Writers Conference last year, Hallie Ephron, Carolyn See, Brian Copeland, Jane Smiley, Karen Joy Fowler, David Corbett, and Scott Rice either spoke to the attendees or led workshops.

Really, it was more than just the opportunity to meet all these writers. I was able to sit and listen to them tell me for an hour or more how they wrote, what worked for them, and how they got published. Solid information and advice from people who had achieved the goal so many of us strive for.

In addition to the authors who offered their hints and tips for successful writing were the SBW-sponsored workshops: James Dalessandro, on screenwriting; Martha Alderson, on blockbuster plots; Roseanne Davis and Pitchcraft: Taking the Mystery out of Writers' Conferences; David Corbett, on how to develop vivid characters; and Lisa Alpine and Karla King, on self-publishing; not to mention the dedicated effort that Jamie Miller and Marilyn Fahey put into creating a workshop for youth.

On top of all that is the socializing at the meetings, sharing meals, getting introduced to new members, and hearing about people's successes in writing. And, just for fun, food, frolic, fellowship, and networking, the annual barbecues and holiday bashes.

What brought all this together was some recent research I did on community—a group sharing common characteristics or interests and perceived or perceiving itself as distinct in some respect from the larger society within which it exists. "Writing community" immediately popped to mind, which of course led to SBW and the benefits I've enjoyed because of my association with this particular group.

A community is made up of individuals, and the speakers and workshops and conferences didn't just happen—it was action on the part of individuals in the community that made the events possible. Someone had to be sure that we had a place to meet, that meals were arranged, that speakers were invited, and that workshop presenters were engaged. Through the action of individuals, the community benefits. Through the action of individuals, the community exists.

SBW's board of directors has decided to host East of Eden again in 2010, and the planning is already under way. It takes a village to raise a child, they say, and it takes a writing community—the one of which we're all members—to make East of Eden a reality. There's plenty of work to be done in securing lodging, contracting for meals and catering, and defining and populating a multitrack presentation of workshops and speakers—our opportunity to enrich our community by our individual action. Drop Dave LaRoche a line at pres@southbaywriters.com. WT

# Inspiration in Your Ears

by Lisa Eckstein

In my ideal writing life, I'd spend all my time either working on my own novels or reading others', with occasional breaks to interact with loved ones. Alas, in real life, I must devote a portion of my days to



Lisa Eckstein  
Contributing Editor

driving from place to place, exercising, folding laundry, and other mundane tasks. I used to listen to music to liven up these chores, but then I discovered podcasts. Now I load my iPod with author interviews, story readings, and book discussions, so while I'm taking out the recyclables, I'm also getting inspired and dreaming that someday I'll be the one answering questions about my latest bestseller.

Podcasts are audio programs (sometimes video, too) that are broadcast on the Internet and can be downloaded to any computer or MP3 player at no cost. They're like radio shows, except you tune in with a web browser or a software application called a podcatcher and—here's the most important difference—you can collect new episodes as they become available and then listen whenever you choose. Once you start subscribing to podcasts, you'll always have a program handy when you need that burst of inspiration. To learn more about podcasts, watch the short video explanation at [commoncraft.com/podcasting](http://commoncraft.com/podcasting) or read the tutorial at [oid.ucla.edu/units/tec/tectutorials/casting](http://oid.ucla.edu/units/tec/tectutorials/casting).

There are podcasts on every topic, and in the area of books and writing alone, hundreds exist. Here are some of my favorites:

**NPR: Books Podcast** is a twice-weekly compilation of book-related segments from NPR programs. This podcast gathers the latest author interviews, book reviews, and news stories from the world of books. Visit [npr.org/podcasts](http://npr.org/podcasts) to subscribe (and find other literary podcasts from affiliate stations), or hear individual stories at [npr.org/books](http://npr.org/books).

**Inside The New York Times Book**

**Review** ([nytimes.com/ref/books/books-podcast-archive.html](http://nytimes.com/ref/books/books-podcast-archive.html)) offers an audio peek into the revered Sunday book section. Each episode contains a conversation with a writer, a capsule review, publishing news, and an update on the bestseller lists.

**Book Lust with Nancy Pearl** is a Seattle cable TV show hosted by "America's favorite librarian," who interviews authors of popular books for adults and teens. You can watch videos of the program at [seattlechannel.org/BookLust](http://seattlechannel.org/BookLust) or download audio podcasts.

**Meet the Writers** from the Barnes & Noble Studio is one of several audio and video programs available from the bookseller at [media.barnesandnoble.com](http://media.barnesandnoble.com). In this interview series, Steve Bertrand asks fiction and nonfiction authors to talk about their books, their lives, and the writing process.

**Bookworm** from KCRW in Santa Monica ([kcrw.com/etc/programs/bw](http://kcrw.com/etc/programs/bw)) is an author-interview program that takes literature seriously. Michael Silverblatt talks to fiction writers and poets about choices and themes in their work with a level of attention that would impress any English professor.

**The Writing Show** ([writingshow.com](http://writingshow.com)) addresses the realities of the writing life, offering guidance on working in different genres and seeking publication. Host Paula B. interviews authors and shares wisdom of her own.

**I Should Be Writing** is the creation of Mur Lafferty, a writer who produces an audio podcast, videos, and a blog to share what she's learned about writing and publishing (and to avoid writing, of course). Find Mur's multimedia advice at [isbw.murlafferty.com](http://isbw.murlafferty.com).

**The Writer's Block** from local station KQED presents authors reading excerpts from their own books and stories. Subscribe to the podcast or explore the archives at [kqed.org/arts/programs/writersblock](http://kqed.org/arts/programs/writersblock).

**BookExpoCast** ([bookexpocast.com](http://bookexpocast.com)) distributes presentations and panels recorded at BookExpo America, the annual May trade show for the publishing industry. The sessions are a mix of talks by authors and editors about upcoming book releases and lectures on topics such as promotion.

This list is intended to be generally relevant to writers, but it is skewed toward my own tastes. There's probably a podcast for your particular genre or interest, or maybe even by your favorite author. To find many more podcasts to fill your ears with writing inspiration, consult [books.podcast.com](http://books.podcast.com) or [odeo.com/categories/14-Literature](http://odeo.com/categories/14-Literature). Or download iTunes ([itunes.com](http://itunes.com)) and look in the iTunes Store under Podcasts -> Arts -> Literature.

Happy listening! WT

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## We Were Fine

I have unfinished business  
I'm not sure what it could be  
If I could name it I would finish it  
and get it behind me.  
If he were here, I would ask him  
"What is it we never finished?"  
I know his reply would be  
"Nothing. We were fine."

—Betty Auchard

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## Thursday Gig: Another Open Mic Opportunity

by Carolyn Donnell

Every third Thursday, poets and artists gather at the Stone Griffin Gallery at 411 E. Campbell Avenue in Campbell for Thursday Gig: Art & The Spoken Word. Thursday Gig, which meets from 6:30 p.m. until 9:30 p.m., features presentations by one artist and one poet, after which other poets and authors are invited to sign up to read short selections. Steve Wetlesen and I have read there on several occasions.

They have a BYOB potluck but will accept a \$1 donation if you can't bring food. It's a small gallery and a nice group.

If you are interested in more information you can contact Elizabeth Parashis at 408.410.2313, [artpages@earthlink.net](mailto:artpages@earthlink.net), or [www.artpagesonline.com](http://www.artpagesonline.com).

You can see more about some of the regular group members in Bea Garth's blog at [eosthecreativecontext.wordpress.com](http://eosthecreativecontext.wordpress.com) (where both Kent Werges and I have published poems). Submissions are actively invited and queries can go to [info@beagarth.com](mailto:info@beagarth.com). WT

# NorCal Group Formed

by *Dave LaRoche*

Within easy driving distance from the center, there are ten CWC branches and their various activities, all available to us as members of CWC. However, up until now, there has been little connective arrangement other than incidental word of mouth among acquaintances.

This seemed an embarrassment to some of us; so many interesting events going unnoticed. Branch presidents and representatives talked about it in snippets, and out of those evolved the notion of collaboration, and from that a tangible group. Born on June 24 of this year, the CWCNorCal Group will have its third meeting on August 22 in Oakland, with attending member branches of Redwood, Marin, Berkeley, Sacramento, Mt Diablo, Tri-Valley, SF/Peninsula, South Bay, Central Coast, and the newly formed and recently chartered Fremont.

Synergy and exchange are the bywords. Ideas are cultivated; they mature and, most critically, are shared. I have noticed club energy that I have not seen before and a willingness to dig in and do. It's rejuvenating and exciting, and promises to make all that we attempt and achieve in CWC much better.

The group has adopted a statement of purpose:

Through exchange, the synergy of collaboration, and the communal execution of ideas, the intent of this group is to further the opportunities for writing and publication to the betterment of all branches.

Coming out of our group thus far are the following:

- Program synopses and evaluations from all member branches.
- Workshop summaries and methods of producing—what worked and what didn't.
- Event promotion sharing.
- Plans for a local "intensive."
- An investigation into publishing avenues and the possibility of an imprint.
- Member qualification procedures.

- A Group Internet Forum, a website in the making.

We have adopted a statement of operation, and have elected officers, who are

Chairman—Dave LaRoche, South Bay

Vice Chair and Treasurer—Tory Hartman, SF/Peninsula

Secretary—Kate Farrell/Karen Batchelor, Redwood (rotating)

As progress ensues, we all will hear more. This is an exhilarating turn, promising increasing value and opportunity not before available. It's important that all members be aware of the new possibilities, and I will report our advances occasionally. You will also see promotion of other branch activities at our branch meetings and here in *WritersTalk*. Stay tuned. WT

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## New Members

by *Lita Kurth*

Besides fishing from her boat on a quiet lake, new member **Christina Donovan** loves to do research on her historical novel set in Italy and Ireland during the late eighteenth century. Like so many, she joined South Bay Writers to connect with other writers and might be interested in a critique group that doesn't meet weekends. [donovanchr2@hotmail.com](mailto:donovanchr2@hotmail.com)

**Terry DeHart** claims to have sat in his writing corner so long that he's covered with cobwebs and would "like to meet some other cobwebby writers" (we can all relate). He has published some thirty short stories and has a book contract for a sci-fi novel about an ordinary family seeking to survive in the aftermath of a nuclear attack. The due date for that is May of next year. A former Marine and tech writer at NASA/AMES, he's interested in finding a critique group and has enjoyed the listserv emails. [tdehart@earthlink.net](mailto:tdehart@earthlink.net)

A nurse by trade and marathon-runner by avocation, **Alma Gobaleza** of San Jose also makes killer walnut tarts and is writing the first in a young adult trio she assures us will be filled with drama, fantasy and action. She is looking for a critique group; her email is [brightheart@yahoo.com](mailto:brightheart@yahoo.com). WT

## CWC Seeks New Bulletin Editor

Joyce Krieg has resigned after giving three years of service to CWC as editor of the State *Bulletin*, and a new editor is being sought.

The work of the new editor would continue the tradition of covering the activities of our prestigious writers' club—the oldest professional writers' club in the West—in bimonthly or quarterly newsletters.

Even though CWC newsletter delivery will shift to email (for the most part) and its content will be produced in digital format, paper copies of many issues will become part of the CWC archival collection at UC Berkeley's Bancroft Library.

Especially important is the next *Bulletin*, the September-October issue, our Centennial California Writers Week edition, and also the issue in which we feature the Jack London Award honorees.

We will accept responses from one editor or a team of editors.

Requirements:

- Knowledge of newsletter layout and design to be formatted as PDF file
- Willingness to work with Joyce Krieg in a transition period
- Willingness to communicate and network with all branches for information and articles
- Willingness to work with branch membership chairs in new delivery system, both email and print
- Willingness to ramp up quickly to cover CWC fall centennial activities

If you are interested in volunteering to be editor of the CWC *Bulletin*, please contact Kate Farrell as soon as possible. [catharine.farrell@comcast.net](mailto:catharine.farrell@comcast.net) WT

### Erratum

Credit for the photographs accompanying the story about the Youth Workshop in the July issue was not attributed as it should have been to Richard A. Burns.

# Journey of a Thousand Miles: Talking with a Publisher—And an Upcoming Hiatus

by Lita Kurth

As so often happens in the writing life, one pursuit unexpectedly intersects with another, and thus it was that at the Working Class Studies Association Conference in Pittsburgh this June, I made the acquaintance of Larry Smith, a publisher who for twenty-some years has been at the helm of Bottom Dog Press ([smithdocs.net](http://smithdocs.net)).

After checking out the website, I was intrigued by the enterprise. “How does one become a publisher?” I wondered. “What’s it like on the other side of the table?” I also thought the SBW membership would find it interesting to get an insider perspective on that much-fantasized “P-word.”

I interviewed Smith via email and discovered that the birth of Bottom Dog Press occurred after the death of his father (a transitional time, as I’m sure Evie Preston would note). As Smith says, “He built houses; I built a publishing house, though a small one. After a year or so, we incorporated as a non-profit with a board of editors and directors.” In the beginning, their output consisted of hand-stitched chapbooks. Now they publish about six perfect-bound books a year (perfect-bound meaning a paperback held together with adhesive), many of them anthologies such as *O Taste and See: Food Poems*.

As a small, nonprofit publishing company, Bottom Dog articulates a clear mission: “We believe in a sense of place and person, in writing that reveals through its directness an essential human story. We also support the history and development of Working Class Literature, and we work to provide outlets for that writing and information on that vital art.” Anchored as they are near Bowling Green State University, where Smith was formerly a professor, the press has a further interest in writing of and about the Midwest (loosely defined). A related sector is their Laughing Buddha series, which publishes books such as *Come Together: Imagine Peace* and *America Zen: A Gathering of Poets*. A sidebar on their website highlights Appalachian litera-

ture as well. As Smith wrote in an email, “We seek to publish books for the underserved, who deserve to have their culture written about and respected. As a small press we can do what the big presses don’t.”

One of the things they do is what Smith refers to as “publish on demand” through a secondary imprint, Bird Dog Publishing (also accessed through the website mentioned above). Smith says that Bird Dog came along “as a way to co-op publish deserving books by using print-on-demand technology . . . We do more than have the book printed; we publicize and promote the books along with our regular Bottom Dog Press books . . . It saves cost, reduces risk, and cuts down on storage. It’s smart and has allowed us to do books we couldn’t have otherwise . . . We pay our artists and writers and connect them with audiences. Somebody needs to be doing just that.”

During its life, Bottom Dog has shepherded 110 books into print including the works of well-known poet, novelist, painter, and pacifist Kenneth Patchen. (Patchen’s works, along with some of the anthologies Bottom Dog has published, have been the biggest sellers.) Asked what qualities especially appeal to Bottom Dog Press, Smith wrote, “We look for writing that is direct and real, engaged in life and sharing its struggles and joys. We search for the human voice telling a life story, whether in prose or poetry. There is a song of this life and we want to hear it.”

Once a writer’s work is accepted, Bottom Dog works with the author “the whole way.” That means editing, suggesting revisions, and establishing a plan for production and promotion. Unlike at some publishing houses, at Bottom Dog the author often selects the cover art. Then it’s on to their layout artist, after which everyone copyedits. During printing, Bottom Dog “works out promotions through ads, mailers, web pages, etc. We try to sell our books as any good publisher should.” Check out their website for contests, the

annual Island Retreat, and good reads. Now, a personal note: I’ve been thinking about niches lately, about narrowing my scope as opposed to broadening it, and how I can possibly add something more to my life. I originally began working with *WritersTalk* as a component of my MFA program, but because I enjoyed it, I continued long after my program obligations were met. Now I need a little room in my life for something new and, like Bottom Dog Press, more focused, probably more activist than the work I do with *WritersTalk*. I hope to return, bringing what I’ve learned from my new focus with me, but in the meantime, I’m taking a year off. Please know that I appreciate being part of this lively community and wish you all the very best both on the page and off. WT

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## Haiku-ish

The crackling of a candy wrapper rises to cacophony  
in the room of quiet of scholars.

—Carolyn Donnell

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## Emily (after WW2)

How did I talk to 22-year-olds,  
using the radio to bring  
them back from night raids?  
Those who flew the ghost ships

from England to Germany  
and almost back to base—  
the gray metal allowed bullets  
to pass right through.

The Army used women to coach  
the young sailors of the sky home.  
Sort of a siren’s call—  
many died on the rocks or in the sea.

The last boy was no easier than the first.  
I cried for silenced voices, not people I  
knew.

The pain hung from the airwaves  
the stillness whispered another was  
gone.

Who helped me through the tears—  
the laughter, prayers and screams?  
Glenn Miller stroked my temple  
with his wax trombone.

—Kent Werges

## Meet a Member:

### Lita Kurth

by Dick Amyx with Lita Kurth

*WritersTalk* contributing editor Lita Kurth has decided to take a break from her activities with South Bay Writers so that she can focus her energy elsewhere. Lita signed on as a contributing



Lita Kurth  
Contributing Editor

editor about two years ago and has been a stalwart contributor from day one, keeping tabs on new members and writing her regular “Journey of a Thousand Miles” column about the craft of writing. I am more than appreciative of Lita’s work and grateful for her service to SBW.

It therefore seemed fitting to me to present a profile of Lita in both thanks for and recognition of a job well done. Continuing her service up to the last minute, Lita helpfully interviewed herself.

**What prompted you to join?** Like so many lucky others, I was pulled in by the long arm of Edie Matthews via a creative writing class we were in together at San Jose State quite some

time ago. That put me on her barbecue list, and I had a wonderful time there. Later, when my MFA program required that I do an “Outside Experience” involving work with a larger community of writers, South Bay Writers came to mind, and indeed it fit so well that I continued working with the newsletter long after meeting my required commitment.

**Have you had any interesting experiences with the group so far?** I’ve had nothing but interesting experiences with the group! I enjoyed participating in the Open Mics last summer, especially the time Betty Auchard read with us (though I’d love us to try a snappy, 5-minutes-a-piece version sometime). Our editors’ powwows are always sociable and often involve delicious treats, as did a Fremont critique group I participated in for a while.

**What kind of writing do you do?** I began as a poet and still love poetry, but later expanded into fiction of every length: short-short stories, regular short stories, and my still-in-progress novel, *The Rosa Luxemburg Exotic Dance Collective*. I also love creative nonfiction.

**Any interesting personal background or hobbies you’d like others to know about?** The Dairy State (Wisconsin) is my homeland. I grew up in a county

with more cows and snowmobiles than people, but I have worked to overcome the effects of this background. On a serious level, I grew up poor, and class is an issue of enduring interest to me in literature. Books (imperfectly) helped me bridge the gap between my limited experience and the bigger world, providing solace, understanding, and inspiration. To be able to contribute such aids myself has always seemed to me an enormous privilege. At the same time, I find teaching equally honorable, important, and enjoyable. Once I had more time to write, I discovered that I can’t write all day. I need the balance and ideas that contact with others provides.

#### **How did you get interested in the Working Class Studies Association?**

As so often happens, taking one path leads to related tributaries. A guy in my MFA program told me about the organization last summer, and it seemed completely up my alley, so I checked out their conference this year, and it was, indeed, a perfect fit.

**Final Remarks.** I perceive the club as growing ever more interesting and committed and wish all of you joy in both the journey and the destination.  
WT

## Accolades

by Jackie Mutz

I missed the SBW BBQ, but I heard it was a smash. Good food, drink, and writers galore, what more can a person ask for? When a group of like-minded people gather together, anything can happen.



Jackie Mutz  
Contributing Editor

Results happen when we writers support one another. Recent accolades:

- **Betty Auchard**, author of *Dancing in My Nightgown*, gave one of her hilarious talks at the Almaden Barnes & Noble on July 18.
- **Bill Belew**’s blogs have reached 10.5 million viewers with 830 views last month. Google Bill’s name and you will find blogs.

- **Pat Bustamante** will have three poems published in the quarterly poetry review *Song of San Joaquin*, published by California Federation of Chaparral Poets. Look for copies of the summer edition at the August CWC meeting.
- **Carolyn Donnell** recently had her poem “Holy Ground” published online at Eos: The Creative Context ([eosthecreativecontext.wordpress.com](http://eosthecreativecontext.wordpress.com)). Carolyn—and **Steve Wetlesen**—also recently read some of their poems at the Thursday Gig—Art & the Spoken Word, which features artist/poet presentations with an open mic following. The Thursday Gig meets every third Thursday at the Stone Griffin Gallery in Campbell.
- **Audry Lynch**’s recent freelancing has taken her into the realm of Hollywood. Her interview with famed Hollywood director Peter Bogdanovich (*The Last Picture Show*)

appeared in the *Campbell Times* and the *Almaden Times*, whose editor is SBW member **Jeanne Carbone**. And at the request of the Saratoga Historical Foundation, she also interviewed Oscar winner Joan Fontaine. Look for the two part interview in the July and September issues of the aforementioned local papers.

Please email me at [accolades@southbaywriters.com](mailto:accolades@southbaywriters.com) whenever you have met a milestone, published a piece, read your work, or just written consistently for a whole week. And, of course, most definitely if you have published that great American novel. This column is a way to connect and crow about your writing success stories. To borrow from our president, remember, *Yes, we can!* And so can you.  
WT



# SBW's Annual Barbecue—July 19



The upper tier (the table on the deck): Judy Mulenburg, Jerry Mulenburg, Esmarelda Alderete, Clarence Hammonds, Pat Bustamante, Helen Vanderberg, Molly Westmoreland



A couple of loaves of bread, a dozen jugs of wine . . .



Jim Matthews tends the grill.



The table is filled to overflowing, as usual. Valerie Whong and Jill Pipkin sample the wares. *Photo: Carolyn Donnell*



Suzy Paluzzi chats with Emma Hooker; in the background on the left, Cassandra Andre.





Reed Stevens is **READY** to take her show on the road.



**Jamie Miller presents Colin Seymour with a token of thanks for his help with the Youth Workshop.**  
*Photo: Carolyn Donnell*

Thanks once again to the generous hospitality of Jim and Edie Matthews, the South Bay Writers Club had a place for its annual potluck barbecue on July 19th. This year, the weather treated us with not just clear and sunny skies but a free sauna. The food was generous and varied, with enough main dishes, side dishes, sweets, and chicken from the grill to satisfy the most demanding appetite. With paper plates, beer, wine, or soft drinks in hand, members gathered in groups to eat and socialize both inside and out.



**The lower tier (down in the yard): too many people too spread out to identify. If you're in this picture, raise your hand.** *Photo: Carolyn Donnell*

# Foothill College Writers Conference: Advice and Inspiration

by Carolyn Donnell

The 33rd annual Foothill Writers Conference, presented by the Language Arts Division, convened on Thursday, July 9, at 10:30 a.m., and ended Sunday, July 12, at 7:00 p.m., with nineteen speakers involved in readings, workshops, and manuscript critiques.

I saw only three other South Bay members there, although I heard there might have been a couple more. I think you are missing something if you don't go. Where else

can you get four afternoons with faculty and other experienced writers for only \$53.00? Rumor has it, though, that this may be the last conference, as funding woes hit the conference hard in 2009. There

was talk of a fund to try to help next year's conference. If you are interested in helping, you can try contacting [svetchkella@foothill.edu](mailto:svetchkella@foothill.edu).

Thanks to the parking machine, I was late and missed most of the opening readings. I love Foothill College, but the parking situation is a different story. When you go, take both bills (ones) and coins, because you never know which the ticket machines are going to take or reject.

After huffing and puffing up the flights of stairs (once on these stairs and you know why they call the place *Foothill*), I found the square where the tables are usually set up to be empty. I asked people sitting on a bench if they knew where the writers conference was and they all said "Huh?" Not an auspicious beginning. I began to wonder if I had my days wrong when I saw some people I knew heading toward the campus center. I followed them down to the bookstore and the conference room across the hall.



Al Young Photo: Carolyn Donnell

My first workshop—"The Art of Scene-Making," with Alan Cheuse—presented the Oedipus legend as an example of how a story needs to start at a critical moment, as close to the end as possible. His general advice? The way to learn to write is to read great writing.

Thursday session #2 was with Jane Ciabattari—a fiction manuscript critique session. Her advice: avoid generalities or vagueness and replace it with imagery and idiosyncratic terms. Excite the reader. What works? Choose the best words—her term was *sparkle*. You want the story to erupt on the floor around the reader.

Friday found me fussing with the [expletive] parking machines again, but I made it to Al Young's workshop—"Your Own Fake Book: Composing and Writing to Music" (Al was California's poet laureate from 2005 through 2008). What's a fake book? A fake book is a collection of musical lead sheets intended to help a performer quickly learn new songs. Each song in a fake book contains the melody line, basic chords, and lyrics—the minimum information needed by a musician to make an impromptu arrangement of a song, or "fake it." We listened to a tango played by Yo-Yo Ma and almost everyone wrote about hot sultry nights, and swaying bodies—and, in one case, red stilettos. A piece with staccato Latin trumpets elicited visions of blazing, sun-scorched deserts. We ended with a Chopin nocturne that softened the mood to gently flowing brooks and falling autumn leaves. I went to his "Write to Music" workshop last year and promised myself to use this source of inspiration. I must have forgotten because my CD player is dusty. This year I am not going to forget.

My second Friday workshop was with Michelle Richmond. I was not able to attend the SBW meeting when she spoke this year, so I was glad to be able to attend two of her workshops. I even remembered to bring my copy of *The Year of Fog* for her autograph. And talk about an example of an opening that will get you hooked!

Saturday morning found me back with Michelle in "Where Stories Begin: A Crash Course in Inspiration." Her advice: conflict or the main problem is where you should start the story. The reader must have a reason to read on within the first three sentences. The story must also have a satisfying ending—not necessarily a happy one, but the problems must be resolved. Michelle led us through several exercises using prompts and ended with an assignment to write 750 words or fewer incorporating the ABCDE that should be the building blocks for every story and every scene within the story.

- A Action and Conflict
- B Background
- C Conflict
- D Development (character and plot)
- E End of story (resolution)

I have posted a number of her prompts in the Files section of the SouthBay\_Writers\_Exchange Yahoo Group.

I ended Saturday back with Al Young, in his poetry manuscript workshop. He has another person read your poem first and then the poet. He tries not to let the poet talk much about his poem until the end, just listen. He didn't have a lot of



R.J. Ward Photo: Carolyn Donnell

luck with me. Sunday, the last day of the conference, I stayed with R.J. Ward, a screenwriter and filmmaker, for both sessions. He swept into the room with long white hair flying past his shoulders. Better live in LA if you want to be a scriptwriter, he says. (He teaches at Foothill, so I assume he lives here.) He talked about a number of topics, but the first on the list was getting the format correct. Requirements included single sided, Courier

*Continued on page 13*

# The Winchester Workbench

by Jamie Miller

“Hey, would you do something for me?” my wife asked innocently.

“Sure. What would you like?” This is how our small projects begin.

“Could you cut a little shelf for my workbench?”

Her workbench is a piece with a history. It had served Homestead High School’s art department for years, but had been headed for a landfill somewhere until the teacher offered the old benches to her evening adult-ed class for a suitable contribution to the art-supplies fund. She gave the teacher \$50 and took two, one for each of us. It was an impressive piece. At least it once must have been, with its two-inch-thick butcher-block top, nearly three feet wide. But it had sat out on the patio through a couple of winter storms, and some of the glue joints between blocks had come apart. Well, all she wanted was a suitable shelf to fit the brackets built into the top supports. I measured. Twenty-seven and a half inches wide and fifteen deep.

“I think I have a piece of plywood in the garage that would be good.” My first problem is that I’m ethically averse to taking great, majestic fir trees and reducing them to bitsy pieces that I then discard. So I have more assorted pieces of ply in the garage than any sane man would allow. My problem of the moment was that plywood tends to come in 24-inch modules, and this was a bit bigger than that.

“OK, but make sure it won’t sag. I want to put a lot of heavy tools there.”

I found a piece of 3/4-inch ply, a retired drawing board I think, that could be cut down very nicely. Sag? Given that span, I could have parked our car on it. I cut it down, put a coat of leftover semigloss white on the bottom, and slipped it into her bench.

There. That was easy.

“You didn’t have to paint it.”

“I wanted to lay the grain. It was a little rough on one side, and I didn’t want you to get slivers if you slid your hand over it wrong.”

“Could you varnish the top, then, so it

would match the bench? Or the way the bench was when it was new.”

You can probably sense where this story is going.

I sanded the top, found some good varnish left over from another job, and coated the top. After adequate drying time, I slipped the shelf into place and proudly presented my handiwork.

“Uh-oh,” she mused. “It’s a little bit too thick. I can’t get my Dremel case into there.”

“Well, dang.” (Not a direct quote, but that’ll do.) I measured. This called for 5/16-inch ply. I didn’t have any. “I’m going to Orchard Supply and see if they have anything suitable.” They didn’t, of course. But my wife found some colorful little annuals to fill a dull stretch in the front-lawn border. It was just a small digression.

“I think I’ll try Southern Lumber for that plywood now.”

“Oh, while you’re there, would you look for a bracket for the stair railing? The top one is cracking.”

The good thing about Southern Lumber is that they have, besides a selection of mundane things like stair-railing brackets, a rack of random-size cutoffs from various jobs. Southern is like 14 miles away; there is a Home Depot about two miles away, but they only sell 4 by 8 sheets of plywood. I did *not* want to add another near-full sheet of plywood to the garage.

“And, by the way,” my wife the silver-jewelry craftsgirl said. “While you’re at it, could you make a second shelf to fit those lower brackets?”

“Sure. That’s easy. I’ll get the dimensions now.” Off we went to Southern Lumber, where we found the perfect piece among the lonely, unwanted cutoffs. Southern Lumber is an endlessly fascinating place to wander. I resisted the temptation to bring home a lovely piece of African bongo-wood burl and the plans for building a balalaika. I didn’t want to get too many projects going at once.

I set up shop on the patio. Many less-

creative guys work in their garages, at their workbenches, but my workbench is kind of inaccessible because of sheets of plywood standing around from earlier projects. In a short while, our patio held an ex-Homestead High School bench, four electric saws, three electric sanders, two electric drills and a partridge in a—no, wait, that was in a different story. I finished the shelves, shaping the lower one artistically to clear her knees when she sat down to practice her craft. The shelves were elegant.

Now the bench top looked shoddy. We turned the top over and scraped off lumps of chewing gum that must have been placed there when Steve Wozniak and Steve Jobs spent lunch times next door in computer club. Off to Orchard



Supply again to pick up another bar clamp. This job was going to require more than the two I had. We cleaned out the gaps where the wood had separated in the winter storm, worked glue into the gaps, and clamped the top. Back to Orchard, where I picked up a 50-grit sanding belt and some sheets for the orbital sander to get

from 80 down to 220 grit.

“You don’t have to do this, you know,” she reminded me. “It’s a workbench, not a piece of fine furniture.”

“I know. Did you say something once about a back panel that you could hang your tools on? I think I have a really nice piece of oak ply out there.”

Remember the story about how the artist Vincent van Gogh cut off his ear, in a manic episode of some sort? That episode didn’t involve a mitre saw, did it?

“Do you mind if I help, sometime?” she asked. “After all, this is supposed to be my bench.”

“Oh, of course. Want to varnish the top?”

“Do you mind terribly?” she asked innocently.

A little sanding revealed the elegant grain of the top. The end fences really needed to be replaced now, after all

those generations of art students had done their worst to them. The garage stash yielded up another leftover piece, to be shaped artistically to fit. Three coats of varnish (sanding between), and the top looked beautiful. Now the supporting assemblage and shelf brackets looked shoddy. More sanding. More varnishing. More sanding. More varnishing.

“Seriously,” she said, “This is *not* supposed to be a piece of fine furniture. OK?”

“I know. It’s almost done. We just have to put it together. Just have to clean up the legs a bit.” On closer look, the grey metal legs did look pretty grim, scratched and rusted, and with more wads of chewing gum tucked in secret recesses. “I think we should re-paint them. Let’s see if Orchard Supply has a matching color.” We took a piece of leg brace to match.

I hadn’t been aware of the proliferation of colors and styles that spray cans of paint had assumed in recent years. “I really am not that crazy about that color of grey,” she said. “Let’s get something that fits the room colors better.” We picked a warm hammertone brown that could be applied right over the rust, according to the can.

Maybe it could be applied right over the rust, but I couldn’t do it. I had to wire brush and sand the legs, after coming this far. “It’ll just take a minute, then we can spray it.” When an obsessive-compulsive tells you it’ll just take a minute, you may want to consider going on to another brief task. Like painting the bathrooms, perhaps.

Another trip to Orchard to pick up some feet to replace the clumsy wood pads that had been protecting the floor from the rough metal (well, two trips, because I picked the wrong size screws the first time), and it was done. (I wish I had been logging our trips to the store. We probably exceeded a hundred miles worth of two-mile trips.) But it was done. We moved it into place. It did look a little like a piece of fine furniture. But not much, really.

My wife set out to inventory and organize all the pieces that go into a jewelry-crafter’s hobby: silver wire and stones, Dremel tools and flex shafts,

## That Haunting Clank in the Clink

by Anna E. Thumann (a resident on Alcatraz Island 1934-1944)

Oh, how I looked forward to all the holidays. Not for the reasons you might imagine, but because on holidays we got to go see the movies in the prison. The only theater on the island was the chapel in the prison where the inmates attended church services for the various denominations. But on holidays, the prisoners were able to attend a movie in the afternoon and then the island personnel could attend in the evening.

We all knew in advance which movie would be playing that evening. Our families had to plan for an early dinner, what snack to take, and all of us kids would decide with whom we would sit at the show. I can remember when I was in my preteens wishing and hoping and dreaming about which one of the island “hunks” would accidentally sit next to me. All the girls at one time or another had crushes on all the boys who lived there, but no big romances or marriages ever resulted. Since the island was so small, and the families were so close, we really felt more like brothers and sisters in a large extended family.

The movie was scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m. for the island personnel, so there were usually about 30 or 35 adults and children gathered outside the main gate to the prison well before the designated time. Precisely at 6:30 p.m. the guards would usher us into the main office, count each and every one of us, and then move us into a holding cell. Then we heard that awful, dreaded, resounding clank of the cell doors closing behind us. We were counted again, moved into the next holding cell, and then that clank one more time. The next move was into the chapel, where we quickly took our seats on the benches and got ready for an evening of fun. Obviously, the movies were carefully selected because they never showed any violence or weapons or anything like that to the prisoners. So we saw every Shirley Temple movie ever made, and movies like *Test Pilot* with Spencer Tracy, who put his gum on the side of the plane for good luck and wore a long flowing white scarf

around his neck. And then there were all those wonderful Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers musicals. As an added attraction, if we were lucky, we would see an adventure film made by Father Bernard Hubbard about his expeditions in the Alaska wilderness.

I enjoyed all the movies, but really got hooked on Father Hubbard’s movies. He was a frequent visitor to the prison chapel, and his adventures became very personal for all of us. Father Hubbard was a Jesuit priest who flew to a remote Alaskan crater to study and map its interior. I vividly remember one of his movies about a time when his plane was dangerously short on fuel, so in desperation the pilot took off and headed straight for the plume of steam, riding the thermal well clear of the crater. They floated down next to a fishing boat and borrowed enough fuel to continue on. Frequently, the crater erupted sending plumes of ash into the air. Father Hubbard continued to return to the area he loved so well and described it as being like a prelude to hell. I remember telling my mother and dad that particular comment, but I got holy heck for saying he--. It was ok for Father Hubbard to say it, but apparently not ok for me.

When the movie was finished, we were escorted back outside the gates through the same process we entered. As I look back on those holiday trips to the prison, I realize that I learned a few valuable lessons that have remained deep in the recessed corners of my mind. First of all, I shall never forget the sound of the closing of those prison cell gates. There was such a finality to the sound. At least we knew we were going to be able to leave after a couple of hours. The other lessons learned were if you didn’t show up on time, you would be left behind. And be sure to go to the bathroom before you went to the movie. If you had to be escorted out any time during the show, you were not allowed back in. To this day, I have a reputation of always being on time, and my bladder is trained to restrain any urges during any performance, waiting urgently for the intermission or “The End.”

Over the years, it is amazing the lessons we learned, where and how we learned them, and the lasting impressions they made on our everyday existence. WT

*Continued on page 13*

Janis Bell

Continued from page 1

"You have to remember, when you type, what you've already written. It has to do with how much you've already said about a thing." The



Janis Bell brings clean, well-lighted sentences to SBW.

punctuation and word choice sometimes change if you are being specific about a noun, rather than general. For example, below is a general sentence about a chair, followed by a specific sentence.

*The chair that I sit in every day is comfortable.*

*My dining room chair, which I sit in every day, is comfortable.*

She led us through when to use *that* or *which*, and she talked about other word choices that give us problems, like those sticky words *lie* (*lay*, *lain*) and *lay* (*laid*, *laid*). Other mistakes occur over words that have unusual plural forms. "*Data* is plural. These phenomena. These media."

"If in doubt about a comma, leave it out." The use of commas has evolved. If you list three or more items in a series, use a comma before *and*. Bell is all for using the comma to give equal weight to all three items.

"Who makes the rules?" someone in the audience asked. "*Language is*. Only one thing has changed."

Bell answered interesting questions and left us with one last bit of wisdom: Remember that dialogue is looser than formal writing. You want to write it the way people talk. WT



Foothill College

Continued from page 10

font, 110-125 pages (150 will get your script thrown in the trash), definite margins, even how to brad the (three-hole-punched) paper, and more.

The website [simplyscripts.com](http://simplyscripts.com) has links to hundreds of free, downloadable sample scripts. When asked about software, R.J. said that Final Draft was used, but he also recommended Celtx, which is free ([celtx.com](http://celtx.com)).

Avotcja Jiltonilro ended the conference with her poem "Oceans of Sand" and music played by Modupue—Sandy Poindexter on violin and Eugene Warren on bass

Avotcja is a poet, composer, musician and published author. Her advice: don't underestimate yourself, love what you do, and continue doing what you love at every opportunity.

You can read more about the speakers at [foothill.edu/la/conference/speakers.php](http://foothill.edu/la/conference/speakers.php). WT

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Winchester Workbench

Continued from page 12

hand tools and torches. She tried to fit them to the shelves, then went off to the store to find some trays that would help keep things organized. She returned them and tried again. "Nothing quite fits and uses the space efficiently. And there's nothing that looks nice."

"You know, Southern Lumber has quarter-inch red-oak panels about the right size. I could make you a nice set of matched trays that would use the space very efficiently. Want to go look? It shouldn't take long. . . ." WT

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August Ah, Go

Go away!

You gooey steets of melted tar:  
The heat of streets so very far  
From being most create-conductive . . .  
August's hot: ideas elusive.

—Pat Bustamante

## Call for Submissions

### CWC Berkeley Branch

### The 2009

### WestSide Story Contest

Grand prize . . . . . \$250

2nd prize . . . . . \$100

3rd prize . . . . . \$50

Winning stories, semifinalists, and honorable mentions will be published in a chapbook in December 2009. All entrants will receive a chapbook. Winning stories and honorable mentions will be published at [westsidestorycontest.com](http://westsidestorycontest.com).

Stories will be read at the December luncheon meeting of the Berkeley Branch of the California Writers Club.

**Contest Guidelines:**

The WestSide Story Contest is open to writers of all genres of literary fiction. All submissions must be in English, previously unpublished, 2200 words or fewer, submitted between June 1, 2009, and September 1, 2009.

Winners will be notified by Nov. 1.

**Submission Guidelines:**

Electronic and paper submissions welcome. Professional format: double-space, 1 1/4" margins, 12pt serif type (Times or similar). On the cover page, write your name and address, e-mail address, story title and word count. In the manuscript write the story title and page number only. Do not include your name on the manuscript pages.

Entrants retain rights to their stories and are responsible for all copyright issues related to their work. Multiple entries and entries from outside the U.S. are welcome.

**Entry Fee:** \$11 per story, U.S. dollars only, payable to CWC Berkeley. Send to The WestSide Story Contest 2009, PO Box 15939, San Francisco, CA 94115.

**Questions?** [wordshop@mac.com](mailto:wordshop@mac.com). Put WestSide Story Contest Question in the subject line. More information and past years' winning entries at [westsidestorycontest.com](http://westsidestorycontest.com). WT

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Gates raised forever,  
rails rusting, red lights now dark:  
The last train has gone.

—Jamie Miller

# 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, send a message to [networking@southbaywriters.com](mailto:networking@southbaywriters.com) or to the club post office box. We will add your listing to our directory of experts.*

## Asia, Japan, China, Russia

Bill Belew  
[belew@panasianbiz.com](mailto:belew@panasianbiz.com)

## Astrology, Singing

Sara Aurich  
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## Astronomy, History of Astronomy

Bob Garfinkle  
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## Character Development

ArLyne Diamond, Ph.D.  
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Jeannine Vegh, M.A. M.F.T.I.  
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## Computer Dingus and

## Full-Time Nerd

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## Counseling

Dr. Audry L. Lynch  
[GLYNCH7003@sbcglobal.net](mailto:GLYNCH7003@sbcglobal.net)

## Engineering: Mechanical,

## Aero, Aerospace

Jerry Mulenburg  
[geraldmulenburg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:geraldmulenburg@sbcglobal.net)

## Growing Great Characters

## from the Ground Up

Martha Engber  
[marthaengber.com](http://marthaengber.com)  
[marthaengber.blogspot.com](http://marthaengber.blogspot.com)

## Hiking, Backpacking, Scuba,

## Bicycling, Classic Cars, Running

Rick Deutsch  
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## Hospital and Nursing Environment

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## Internal Medicine/Addiction Disorder/

## Psychology

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## Library Science

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## Mathematics: Teaching and History; Fibonacci Sequence

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## Real Estate, Horses, Remodeling,

## Southwest History

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## Teaching and the Arts

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## Television Production

Woody Horn  
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## USMC and NASA/Ames

Terry DeHart  
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## Prowling

### *Continued from page 2*

his pals are now only on Napster, and I can't remember the last time I laughed—laughing is a social thing. Modernity has arrived and brought its big leap in the “standard.” They all say it.

So what about my life, I ask my Manhattan—now needing freshening. Is it better? Am I more content? Is there excitement, and are my experiences as vivid? And my answers blow in on the winds off the bay through the fragrant eucalyptus. Not today, baby, this is Silicon Valley, and you are just really pissed 'cause your @%#\*^% computer isn't working and you can't get to YouTube or Twitter. WT

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## To Rumi

Birdsong's magic holds  
Secrets in the morning breeze  
Whirling rose unfolds.

—Sally A. Milnor

# CWC

## Around the Bay

These are the published meeting times and locations for the other 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](http://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](http://sfpeninsulawriters.com)

**Central Coast:** Meets on the third Tuesday of each month except December at the Casa Munras Hotel, 700 Munras Avenue, Monterey. The dinner hour begins at 5:30 p.m. and the program begins at 7 p.m. [centralcoastwriters.org](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). [mtdiablowriters.org](http://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](http://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. [sacramento-writers.org](http://sacramento-writers.org)

**Marin:** Meets on the fourth Sunday of every month at 2 p.m. at Book Passage in Corte Madera. [cwcmarinwriters.com](http://cwcmarinwriters.com)

**Redwood:** Meetings are held on the first Sunday of the month (except for holiday weekends), from 3-5 p.m. at Copperfield's Books, 2316 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa. [redwoodwriters.org](http://redwoodwriters.org)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>August 2009</h1>						1
2	3	4	5 7P Board Meeting LaRoche residence	6	7 7:30P Open Mic Barnes & Noble Almaden Plaza, San Jose	8 10:30A Editors' Powwow
9	10	11 6p Monthly Dinner Meeting Lookout Inn, Sunnyvale Erika Mailman	12	13	14 7:30P Open Mic Borders Books Santana Row, San Jose	15
16 <i>WritersTalk</i> deadline	17	18	19	20 7P Open Mic Barnes & Noble 3900 Mowry, Fremont	21 7:30P Open Mic Barnes & Noble Pruneyard, Campbell	22
23/30	24/31	25	26	27	28 7:30P Open Mic Borders Books Sunnyvale	29
		September 8 6P Monthly Meeting			<b>Future Flashes</b>	

## Stay Informed!

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

## SBW Poets

The San Jose Poetry Center is turning its eyes toward SBW with an interest in showcasing our poets at its monthly readings. PCSJ's host and member of South Bay Writers Linda Lappin is making a personal request. Are you a poet? Would you like to read your work? If your answer is yes, contact Linda by email at [captainlappin@netzero.net](mailto:captainlappin@netzero.net) and have a look at PCSJ's website, [www.pcsj.org](http://www.pcsj.org)

## South Bay Writers Anthology



\$12.50 + 9.25% sales tax  
At the meeting.  
On the website.  
[southbaywriters.com](http://southbaywriters.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.

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

## Poetry Center San Jose Readings

First Gallery downtown  
Willow Glen Books

Cosponsored by the  
Creative Writing Department at  
San José State University

Free admission.

See [www.pcsj.org](http://www.pcsj.org) for featured guests and details.



**California Writers Club**  
South Bay Branch  
P.O. Box 3254  
Santa Clara, CA 95055  
[www.southbaywriters.com](http://www.southbaywriters.com)

## MAIL TO

Address Correction Requested

**Next Monthly Meeting**  
**Tuesday, August 11, 6:00 p.m.**

Lookout Inn  
605 Macara Avenue, Sunnyvale  
At the Sunnyvale Golf Course

**Erika Mailman**  
author of  
*The Witch's Trinity*

**The October issue will**  
**feature spooky stories and**  
**poems.**

**Deadline: September 16**

