



# WRITERSTALK

Volume 20  
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May 2012

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

## MAY 8 DINNER SPEAKERS

MARY KOLE, AGENT FOR ANDREA BROWN LITERARY AGENCY  
PRAVEEN MADAN, PROJECT MANAGER FOR KEPLER'S BOOKS  
MICHAEL PANUSH, AUTHOR FOR CURIOSITY QUILLS PRESS



Panush



Kole

## Youth Is Served



Seymour



Madan

## Panel will fill our gray cells with info on what sells in an ageist marketplace

by Colin Seymour

I may seem like Peter Pan to you, but I'm not a boy anymore. I'm 60 years old, and that's difficult to hide when I'm job-hunting. It's difficult to hide when I'm agent-hunting or publisher-hunting, too, not to mention readership-hunting.

Many of you may be having similar problems pursuing employment and publication. This club skews towards seniors, and we need to know what we're up against in a world in which people young enough to be our grandchildren often are deciding our fates.

The May 8 panel—a literary agent, a promising new author, and a bookstore proprietor—will give us a reality check on the world of publishing today and field our questions on such topics as whether or not we need an agent in this environment.

*Continues on Page 10*

## Proprietor Madan's vision for Kepler's reflects industry's evolving outlook

Praveen Madan is revamping Kepler's Books and bringing it up to speed in a project called Kepler's 2020. He will take a brief respite May 8 to join the SBW speakers' panel discussing publishing industry trends.

Kepler's nearly became extinct early in the new millennium, but the Peninsula community banded together to keep the bookstore alive. Now it falls to Madan to improve its health.

Madan is the "literary entrepreneur" who is updating the vision Clark Kepler brought to his beloved Menlo Park bookstore, before he retired recently, and for as long as even SBW's venerable members can remember. He is less concerned with our club members' role in the future than his store's, but we'll get him to address both issues May 8.

"Printed books are going away and being replaced by e-books," Madan told *India-West*, a publication in India.

*Continues on Page 11*

## APRIL RECAP

## '50s memories show us how a seasoned writer thinks back

by Valerie Lee

Fred Setterberg, our April speaker and author of *Lunch Bucket Paradise*, described the slanted podium at Cal Berkeley, where he was to give a talk on this book. A glass of water he placed there tipped over, spilling all over his trousers. He was glad he didn't reach for the mike just then, because he would probably have been electrocuted.

After much laughter, he read from his book to give us an inside look at the Bay Area during the 1950s and '60s. Setterberg, born in 1951 in San Leandro, is not an ordinary baby boomer who lived among blue-collar people; he was keenly aware of changes taking place in America after WWII.

*Continues on Page 6*



Fred Setterberg —Photo by Dick Amyx

# President's Challenge

by Bill Baldwin  
President, South Bay Writers

## Let Yourself Blossom

You probably know that we'll be electing new South Bay officers in June. Thinking about our board, and how the various officers and committees interact, I got to thinking about the club itself, and how we *all* interact.

We've got all kinds of folks here, folks with different backgrounds and interests; people writing in entirely different styles and in all sorts of genres. We've got a huge variety of *material*, if you will.

And here we are: Many of us facing writers' block, or revision block, or submission block. And somehow we have to learn to get past all of these.

But we're not alone; we're here *together*, as I was saying last month. We're in the company of *other writers*. We have one another.

Twice a month, I facilitate our South Bay open mics at local Barnes & Noble bookstores. I get together with other writers, we read to one another, we hear one another's works; we get to know one another's writing. We encourage one another. Those of you now in critique groups, I hope you are sharing similar experiences reading one another's writing.

Some of us are published, some of us aren't. Some of us are familiar with the editing or the submission process, some of us aren't. But we can learn from one another.

We've been trying to refine our dinner meeting structure to allow for more interactions among members. Please do get to know the people sitting at the same table, and surrounding tables. We've got a lot of talent here — take advantage of it!

And take the opportunities this club offers you. You've got a lot of ways here to learn more about the art and business of writing — and more ways are surfacing all the time. The evolving CWC structure offers writing-related opportunities here at branch level, at the regional NorCal level, and at the state level. Opportunities for involvement also abound at all those levels. Our own *WritersTalk* provides writing opportunities, as well as the chance to edit and the chance to gain experience in the production of a local newsletter. The state CWC is now offering similar opportunities, via its magazine. As time goes on, we'll be mounting new projects: Workshops, retreats, conferences, contests. Seize these opportunities to succeed with your writing! We're doing it all for *you*.

And if you're interested in helping all of this to happen within the branch and the state CWC, in making it happen *more* and *better*, do step forward and help us build strong committees and a strong board. We're doing our best to create chances for you — but we always appreciate your input.

Enjoy the springtime; and may your writing blossom! **WT**

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### Join 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 or sign up online southbaywriters.com.



## WritersTalk

is the monthly newsletter of the South Bay  
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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

### Guest Columns

*Almost Anything Goes* (300 words)

### News Items

 (400 words)

### Letters to the Editor

 (300 words)

to Andrea Galvacs  
newsletter@southbaywriters.com

### Creative Works

Short Fiction (1500 words)  
Memoir (1200 words)  
Poetry (300 words)  
Essay (900 words)

### Accolades

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### 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.

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by Marjorie Bicknell Johnson  
Editor



## Composition in Red and Blue

During April, we learned that some of our South Bay poets create as though using an artist's palette or a musician's ear. Certainly, we all want to call upon our senses to breathe life into our writing.

To the usual senses of sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste, add a sense of color to make your words jump off the page. Some people—those with *synesthesia*—see letters or words in Technicolor, making a printed page “almost as colorful as scattered confetti,” as reported by Meredy Amyx; others see colors when they hear music or smell a spice.

We all can add zip to our writing by adding color to another sense. An ice blue odor cut through gray fog and warned my nose; green gentle music soothed my purple bruised soul; I swallowed medicine as bitter as orange-encrusted iron.

How about psychological effects? Carl Jung, psychiatrist and pioneer in art therapy, argued that one's color choices reflect deeper meaning about personality traits; for example, extroverts like red, while introverts prefer blue. Certainly, colors also affect mood; you may visit a calming pale green hospital room or paint your baby's room a delicate pink or blue. In fact, the color pink produces a sedative-like effect and is commonly used in prisons to make prisoners less aggressive and anxious. Baby girls wear pink as a sign of femininity, but pink also works well as the color of the nursery for its calming effect. Of course, a macho man wouldn't be caught dead in that color—unless he is your serial killer, Baby Face Malone, who wears a pink hoodie to rob a convenience store.

Consider these common color associations. Bright red is the color of battle and warns of danger, while scarlet shows the emotion of desire and coral is wild, fiery, and explosive. Yellow can show joy or intuition, but yellow is sharp and anxious and can appear startling. Green symbolizes adventure, fertility, and prosperity; perhaps the dollar is called the greenback for a reason. Blue, the color of depression and despair, also represents loyalty; sky blue is calm, true, and honest, while dark blue is soulful and compassionate and cyan makes the wearer feel and appear analytical. Purple, the color of royalty, meditation, and mystery, is grand and majestic. Lastly, thoughtful and reflective violet is a good color on your screen saver if you suffer from writers' block.

Now, nothing rhymes with orange, but what do you associate with it? Do you mix red and yellow, or make a new category? It seems that orange is simply known as a color for hazards, but amber, a more earthy tone of orange, is the color of very expensive perfumes. As to your writing, what sort of character paints his bedroom black, and will a timid girl wear a large vermilion hat?

Now it's time to put on your imaging cap and try out some new associations. For example, force a change in personality or mood by making a character wear a color out of sync. If you mix color with your other senses, you can make your “purple” prose pop off the page. And don't forget to pop off your prose, poetry, or practical ponderings to *WritersTalk*. **WT**





## Get your feet wet

SBW Member-at-Large: a great way to gain experience in service to the club. See article this page.

## View from the Board

by S. Halloran

Nine of us – President Bill Baldwin, Treasurer Richard Burns, Secretary Sylvia Halloran, Membership Chair and *WritersTalk* Editor Marjorie Johnson, Central Board and NorCal Representative Dave LaRoche, Webmaster Rik Scott, Networking Chair Elena Martina, and Members-at-Large Andrea Galvacs and Dick Amyx met in Sunnyvale Wednesday night, April 4, 2012.

The Board welcomes new committee chairpersons ArLyne Diamond, workshops, and Elena Martina, networking. We look forward to the energy and enthusiasm these two will bring to the workings of the club.

Election of officers will take place in June. Nominations are open – all members are welcome to become more familiar with the club by participating in its governing board.

Just a reminder: California Writers Club is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit corporation. As such, we cannot promote any candidates for political office or any fundraising for anyone's campaign.

In light of some expressed dissatisfaction with the cost and quality of dinner at The Lookout, possibilities for venue and/or menu changes to our general meetings were considered.

Board members view the coming elections with mixed emotions. It has been our pleasure to serve you, and being in on the inner workings of a club like ours is both exciting and edifying. But some of us have held office longer than is healthy for the club, and it would be wonderful to introduce more members to service on the board. Please consider becoming a serious part of the organization you enjoy as a member! **WT**

## Candidates Sought for SBW Office

by Meredy Amyx, 2012 Election Committee Chair

In accordance with SBW bylaws, the 2012 election of officers for South Bay Writers will take place at the general meeting on Tuesday, June 12th. Members will cast their votes for the six elective officers of the club: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and two members-at-large. As your appointed election committee chair, I am now accepting nominations for all positions. Names of known candidates will be announced at the May general meeting, and election statements will be published in the June *WritersTalk*.

### Board Service

Through service as officers of SBW and participation on the Board of Directors, members support the club and help guide its activities and events. Work on behalf of the club provides opportunities for learning and exposure in a friendly, collaborative setting. You can gain valuable experience while offering your talents in service to the club for the benefit of all members.

See the summary of officers' duties for descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of elected officers.

### Nominations

You can nominate any member of SBW, including yourself. The nominee must consent to run. If you have someone in mind whom you think would make a good officer and Board member, I will welcome your suggestions for possible recruits.

Nominations may also be made from the floor at the June meeting. Nominations close just prior to voting, which takes place in person at the meeting.

To place your name or that of another consenting member in nomination for office, send the candidate's name, position for which nominated, statement of consent to nomination, and candidate's contact information to Meredy Amyx by e-mail at [meredy@amyx.org](mailto:meredy@amyx.org), or by phone afternoons and evenings at 408-297-4438.

I will seek one or two SBW members to serve with me as members of the nominating committee and announce their names at the May meeting. Feel free to speak to them as well as to me about possible candidates.

### Duties of Office

The following unofficial summary of officers' duties is based on descriptions provided by former SBW President Dave LaRoche. Full details are available upon request.

#### President – Leadership, Vision, Policy and Precedence

- Leads the Branch productively and collaboratively.
- Envisions and fosters goals and direction in keeping with governing documents.
- Sets agendas and presides over meetings.
- Makes appointments as needed, with consent of Board.

#### Vice President – Advice, Programs, Presidential Stand-In

- Advises president and Board in club matters.
- Plans and produces monthly programs, including writeups.
- Assumes the president's duties in his or her absence.

#### Secretary – Branch Business Records and Activity Prompting

- Records and publishes minutes of official business and tracks progress of action items.
- Archives minutes and official Branch correspondence and transfers archives to successor.
- Ensures Robert's Rules as the guide for conduct of Board meetings.
- Updates calendar of events.

*Continues on Page 8*

## May Accolades

By Andrea Galvacs

**Dennis Amoroso** has published a Sci-Fi/Romance novel series, *Crystal City*, now available in stores and on Amazon.com. California Writers Club helped keep him going through reading at Bill Baldwin's open mics.

**Bill Baldwin** has had a poem accepted for the *Los Gatos Anthology*.

**Robert Balmanno** is giving a book talk, "Futuristic Dystopian Fiction," at the University of California, Santa Cruz, Creative Writing Department, on May 2. "My first gig, at a university creative writing department!"

**Richard Burns's** poem, "Cold Temptation," which had won an award from *WritersTalk*, was published in the inaugural edition of the *CWC Literary Review*.

**Marjorie Johnson's** novel *Jaguar Princess* is one of fifty entries continuing to the semifinal round of the Amazon Breakthrough Novel Award Contest; three finalists to be announced May 22.

**Sherrie Johnson** will be featured this month in "Author profile: Made it Moment" on Jenny Milchman's blog, [www.suspenseyourdisbelief.com](http://www.suspenseyourdisbelief.com).

**Victoria M. Johnson** participated in a group novel where each participating author wrote one chapter. Details are on her website: [VictoriaMJohnson.com](http://VictoriaMJohnson.com). She also read her poems in two National Poetry Month events in Los Gatos.

**Dave La Roche** edited the *CWC Literary Review*, which made its debut in March.



SBW members whose stories, essays, or poems appeared are: **Betty Auchard, Richard Burns, Tina Glasner, Marjorie Johnson, Jackie Mutz and Luanne Oleas.** **Andrea Galvacs** also had a small role in editing the new *CWC Literary Review*.

**Audry L. Lynch's** new book (number 7) *Garth Jeffers Remembers His Father, Robinson Jeffers: Recollections of a Poet's Son* is in production with Mellen Press, Lewiston, NY.

**Suzy Paluzzi's** poem, "My Writing Rock," appeared on Sally Ashton's County Poet Laureate Blog during April, National Poetry month. **Suzy** was also invited to read poetry pertinent to Earth Day on April 21, along with the other guest poets who participated in Cupertino Poet Laureate Dave Denny's Winter Light series. The reading was part of the Earth Day Festival at the Cupertino Center.

**Jane Parks-McKay's** story "Time" was accepted by WorldWeDream.org, a non-profit that advocates for disabled people.

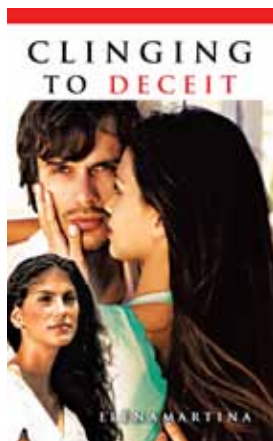
**Anna Thumann** writes that 200 copies of her memoir *Alcatraz Schoolgirl* were sold in the Alcatraz museum store. **WT**

## Clinging to Deceit

by Elena Martina

Elena Martina announces that Author House has published her novel, *Clinging to Deceit*, available online.

Aqqla has been raised her entire life with the idea of an arranged marriage that she freely accepts. However, the future groom, Hassan, needs to be enticed into the engagement with a hefty dowry at a time when his young romantic heart is passionately attached to another. The powerful appeal of funds turns tragic for everyone involved, and his family realizes that happiness is not something money can buy. They soon struggle with the murder of a family member that further crushes Hassan's dreams for a happy ending. Not able to emotionally recover from it, a final blow imprisons him for life.



## New Members

by Rita Beach

South Bay Writers Club would like to welcome **Mimi Vaillancourt** of Santa Clara as an associate member. After leaving her career as a software engineer, Mimi is now pursuing her interest and lifelong dream in playwriting. She believes that all art is a powerful way to communicate profound human ideas. None of our members will disagree with you on that, Mimi.

**Liana Bekakos** from San Jose is a new active member. She does freelance writing for online magazines, has a blog, and is currently writing a novel. She is also interested in screenplay/script writing.

**Rich Amooi**, also from San Jose, lists short stories, poems, song lyrics, and screenplays as his writing interests. His email is [rich@heyemrdj.com](mailto:rich@heyemrdj.com) and he signs it, "Hey Mr. DJ Entertainment." We'll have to find out what that's all about.

We welcome each and every one of you! All our members look forward to meeting you and finding out more about you as writers and individuals. Making you feel your contributions and questions are always welcome is what we strive to do at every meeting.

Pass the word – exciting things are happening at South Bay Writers Club. **WT**

## Special Membership Renewal Raffle

South Bay Writers who renew for 2012-2013 on or before the June 12 dinner meeting are eligible for a special raffle. No, we won't tell you what the prizes are, but you'll like them.

The CWC fiscal year ends June 30. Don't let your membership lapse! Please renew online or by sending a check for \$45 to CWC South Bay, P. O. Box 3254, Santa Clara, CA 95055, Attn: Marjorie.

**RENEW TODAY!**

# South Bay Writers: value proposition

by Richard A. Burns

A useful way of looking at how you participate in the South Bay Writers Club is to look at what value you receive any time you part with money to get into a club function. There is a value or you wouldn't be there.

Sure, it's reasonable to expect that when you buy something, you will get something in return for it. If that return proves not to be of value to you, you look for other ways to spend your money in the hope that it will open opportunities for capitalizing on your writing interests and hunger for learning while honing writing and organizing skills. I think the value proposition offered by SBW is what makes us members of one of the largest branches of California Writers Club.

This is the same process that happens when you shop for a loaf of bread or a dozen eggs. The value you perceive has to equal or be greater than the money you spend. The value is situational and depends upon the person and upon what other interesting things compete with it. The club officers have a goal and that is to maximize what members receive in the SBW value proposition.

No doubt, what a person wants from our club changes over time as his writing experiences grow. Each of us has a different set of things we want from the club and a unique amount of money we would pay for each. Every month, the value proposition of SBW is reconsidered by all 180 of us, in our heads.

What are the values *you* like in our club? Is it the workshops on craft? Is it helping out the newsletter editor? I was pleasantly surprised by getting to know an excellent copy editor. We do need more critique groups to inch the quality of our work upward. The sheer number of writers in the pool is a value.

What valuable activities would *you* like to have the club do, activities that it isn't doing now? *You* are just the person to champion your idea.

Please recognize that *somebody* has to invent and push SBW events forward in an organized, continuous way, and it might as well be *you*.

*Continues on Page 8*

## SBW VP blazes trail for May 8 panel

by Colin Seymour

I hope this history of the May 8 panel discussion will persuade someone it would be a gas to take over the vice presidency of the South Bay Writers Club. The following account of how the sausage is made should provide, on the eve of SBW's 2012-2013 elections, an idea of what the vice president is up against.

I'm trying to convince you that it's the best job in the club.

I wanted to bring agents to the club, and I thought a Pitchfest format would be attractive. I felt we could stage a one-hour version of "Pitchapalooza" at a SBW dinner meeting, after seeing former SBW speaker David Henry Sterry run an *American Idol*-style *Pitchapalooza* at Bookshop Santa Cruz last summer.

We could let four or five members pitch and I could recruit a panel to field the pitches and do the critiquing. I envisioned such good friends of SBW as publishing industry experts Alan Rinzler and Charlotte Cook in the Sterry role of moderator. Then Rinzler told me it was a lousy idea and Charlotte did the same.

By then I had lined up a young agent from the Kimberly Cameron literary agency (formerly called Reece-Halsey) for the mini-pitchapalooza. Keep in mind that nearly everyone named in this article had heard from me before because of my 2009-2010 East of Eden role lining up presenters. But my Kimberly Cameron prospect is vacationing abroad in early May, so we are short an agent.

*Continues on Page 8*

APRIL RECAP

## '50s concrete island

*Continued from page 1*

In 1951, the East Bay wasn't a suburban area; the Setterberg family, surrounded by farmland, lived on a concrete island on a sea of green.

Setterberg's story chronicles a time when many blue-collar workers were able to purchase small tract-homes and the community was close-knit. He remembers growing up while many men were returning from World War II. They tried to blot out what they had seen in the combat zone, the loss of fellow soldiers and their tragedies; many veterans suffered nightmares, hiding their pain. To relieve stress and tension, films popular with those vets were *South Pacific* and *Teahouse of the August Moon*; while they were about WWII, they omitted the atrocities of the war.

Although Setterberg was writing in three different forms: nonfiction, novel, and short story, nothing seemed to work. He wanted the history of those times to emerge like a novel from the chapters in his book. Instead, he achieved a narrative that came out much like a memoir.

He started doing interviews and by talking to people face-to-face, Setterberg had a greater grasp on his own father's rivalry with his Uncle Win. Now the idea took off immediately, setting a path for a memoir because the inclusion of his Uncle Win brought the book to life.

Setterberg's father was from a small farming community near Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada. Not highly educated and unsure of himself, he liked to read and always thought about the future, hoping that life would get better. He had read *Star Rover*, Jack London's book about a prisoner, locked up with no way out. When he got tuberculosis and was confined for four years with the rest cure, he imagined himself in Jack London's prisoner's situation.

Throughout the book I would have preferred to hear some real life dialogue but there wasn't any. But I do believe I do understand what a memoir is now, as well as the distinction between fiction based upon actual lives and that upon memoir.

WT



## Scenes from April 8 SBW meeting

– Photos by Carolyn Donnell



April speaker Fred Setterberg and VP Colin Seymour



Marjorie Johnson introduces Dennis Amoroso



Richard Burns shares good news



Sherrie Johnson makes announcement to ArLyne Diamond



Members networking: Michael Murray, Steve Wetlesen, Gisela Zebroski, Valerie Whong



Terry Denevan came to hear speaker

## SBW Value Proposition

*Continued from Page 6*

Many people will get value out of volunteering, even from jobs they didn't know they could do. I was very nervous on my first day as the treasurer, taking money and giving out receipts. Now, after four years, I have a good time doing it. Furthermore, it continues to be an excellent leading sentence in any discussion with an agent or publisher to mention that I am on the SBW Board of Directors. But the post will open come July, and it's time for someone else to help share the load.

As you've guessed by now, South Bay Writers does not run itself on autopilot. Its engine is the thoughtful, dedicated people taking advantage of the chance to give back to their community of writers, to keep the Jack London Spirit alive here at SBW.

Yes, we are looking for new, fresh ideas—increasingly rare and increasingly wanted. And the great thing about volunteering is that learning these jobs benefits *you*—building your platform, discovering the inner workings and resources of the club, and becoming a mover and shaker in the South Bay writing community, thus filling out your own resumé and character arc.

We are looking for candidates for the next generation of SBW leaders: president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and board-members-at-large. A healthy club has a full slate of candidates' names on the election ballot: let one of them be yours. The SBW annual vote is coming soon; candidates will be introduced at the June meeting.

Rik Scott, President of the Fremont Branch, said, "It's not so much the benefit the club gets from the new volunteer officer, but the tangible and intangible benefits the volunteer will acquire on the job volunteered for." **WT**

**Ask not what your Club can do for you.  
Ask what you can do for your Club.**

## SBW Duties of Office

*Continued from Page 4*

### Treasurer—Finance Management

- Plans club budgets and controls flow of money consistent with plan.
- Establishes and maintains bank and/or investment accounts; receives and deposits revenues.
- Authorizes expenditures and signs checks.
- Performs bookkeeping and financial reporting as required.

### Member-at-Large (Two)

- Serves as Board observer and contributor without portfolio.
- Acts as ad hoc members' representative.
- May be a prospective substitute or temporary replacement for a Board appointee.

## Responsibilities of All Officers and Chairs

- Attend regular and specially called Board meetings.
- Participate in guiding Branch business.
- Represent the club well among members and in the community.
- Aspire, in all club interests and direction, to fulfill the mission statement:  
*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.* **WT**

### 3 X 3

Go to bed  
Or don't go  
Stay awake  
Write a line  
Back it out  
Try again  
Writers block  
Go away  
Not today

—Carolyn Donnell

## SBW VP blazes trails

*Continued from Page 6*

We do have one agent. During the winter, I asked Andrea Brown of the eponymous and well-known agency that specializes in Kid-Lit to participate, and Andrea referred her Palo Alto-based associate, Mary Kole, to me. I knew I could find someone from a bookstore once other elements came together.

Then in early March, I heard from Curiosity Quills. The Los Angeles-area publisher was hoping SBW could be a stop for one of Michael Panush's book signings, at which he also would field pitches from our members.

Panush's precociousness was a selling point. Research indicated Kole is also a spring chicken. Therefore, I realized we have a much younger panel than Sterry's (David is 54), not to mention a membership that makes Sterry's group seem pretty young by comparison. Thus I asked Sterry's connection at Kepler's Book Store to recommend a young manager, and she quickly commended Praveen Madan to our attention.

In my role as moderator, I'll steer the May 8 conversation toward ageism, although it will be a far wider-ranging discussion than that.

Those issues will affect my renewed efforts to get my own two books published this spring as I prepare to shed a vice presidency that has greatly enhanced my industry contacts. I am not getting any younger and it's time to become more frantic. I'll bet many of you know that feeling. **WT**





**Fremont Area Writers: Agents and Producers Day**  
**June 30, 2012**

**10:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Hyatt Place, 3101 West Warren Avenue, Fremont**  
**\$55 for Members, \$65 for Non-Members includes lunch**  
**Deadline: May 15, 2012**

**Please contact Geraldine Solon at [gsolon082007@gmail.com](mailto:gsolon082007@gmail.com)**



**Michael Larsen**  
**Literary Agent**



**Elizabeth Pomada**  
**Literary Agent**



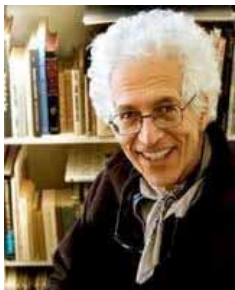
**Mary Kole**  
**Literary Agent**



**Debbie Brubaker**  
**Film Producer**



**Lloyd Silverman**  
**Film Producer**



**Alan Rinzler**  
**Editor**



**Charlotte Cook**  
**Editor**



**Jon James Miller**  
**Screenplays**



**Barbara Brooker**  
**Writer's Coach**



**Susanne Lakin**  
**Writer's Coach**

**10:30-11:00- Registration**

**Welcome Message-FAW President Richard Scott**

**Keynote Speaker- Barbara Brooker**

**12:30-2:00 Speakers: Alan Rinzler, Michael Larsen, Elizabeth Pomada**

**2:00-3:30- Speed Dating with agents, editors, and producers**

**Love Poem**

Besides our harmony of touching,  
we have another source of pleasure.  
It's inside our hearts  
when we listen to the music of others,  
who, like us, respond to life  
with words so elegantly arranged that we  
set the book aside to laugh,  
sigh, and weep.  
So, when next we meet,  
may we do it again; read poetry aloud,  
allowing our souls to touch  
as well as our hands?

*– Betty Auchard*

**Join the SBW Team**

Want to see South Bay Writers sponsor a conference  
or an event like the Fremont Area Writers' Agents  
and Producers Day?

Then make it happen!

Join the South Bay Writers' Team.

Nominations for officers are now open for 2012-13.

# Kid-Lit agent Mary Kole says E-books enhance her role



Literary agent Mary Kole doesn't agree that her profession will become extinct as writers turn to online publishing and take every aspect into their own hands.

"It's a great time to be a content creator," Kole conceded by email to *WritersTalk*. "Writers have more opportunities to have their work reach audiences than ever, though a lot who have experimented with self-publishing and e-publishing will tell you – the hardest part is winning those readers in a market that's being flooded with other self-published fiction."

So we still will want an agent.

"I still sell all of my books into traditional publishing," said Kole, who will field pitches after taking part in our May 8 panel discussion. "I still believe that print publishers have a role in the future. I think that the next wave of publishing successes will take the entrepreneurial spirit and nimbleness of self-publishing and combine it with the quality control, packaging savvy, and marketing prowess of big houses.

"Publishing is changing very rapidly right now as the consumer market moves toward e-readers and enhanced book apps. While e-books only make up about 16 percent of sales today, that's where books and reading are going in the not-so-distant future, and so publishers are gearing up for the shift.

"It's changing every day, and that's why I stay on top of it as an agent, so I can navigate it for my clients. . . . It's becoming more and more important to have someone in your corner who knows the landscape, like an agent."

So how do you get Kole in your corner? "The job of the writer is to sit down and do the work," she said. "The market will come once your writing craft becomes impeccable; that's still the most important thing."

Although Kole is representing Andrea Brown's children's lit agency on our May 8 panel, her focus is broader than that may suggest.

Kole says she is looking for "young adult and middle grade novels and truly exceptional character-driven picture books (especially working with author/illustrators)." She says the main thing she looks for is "fresh, unique voices and idiosyncratic characters who, by book's end, are more flesh than fiction, and says her "favorite stories are up-market, high-concept, character-driven and well-plotted. In essence: literary spark with commercial appeal."

Those parameters don't seem to rule out our writers, other than possible concern about age differences between writer and reader. Kole seems to value your life experience, especially if you can apply it to the romance angle for her core constituency.

"Romance is ridiculously popular with YA audiences," she writes. "I think teens lack the real-life experience of true romance (the daring, self-sacrificing, all-consuming kind), and so they strive to live vicariously. Fiction and movies often provide teens with much bigger love fantasies than their daily prospects do . . . so a big, romantic read is incredibly attractive."

-- Colin Seymour

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## May 8 Panel

*Continued from page 1*

After seeing former SBW dinner speaker David Henry Sterry run an *American Idol*-style *Pitchapalooza* at Bookshop Santa Cruz last summer, along with his agent-partner and two spokeswomen for the Bookshop, I wanted us to do that for our club but on a smaller scale.

That is not, however, quite what we're staging May 8 at our dinner meeting, although our pitches will be fielded.

Agent Mary Kole of the Andrea Brown Literary Agency, 22-year-old Santa Cruz author Michael Panush of publisher Curiosity Quills, and Praveen Madan of Kepler's Books and the Booksmith in the Haight in San Francisco, will talk about the state of the publishing industry, whether we still even need people like them to fulfill our literary goals, and just how these whippersnappers perceive our membership's gray cells. (I'll be moderator.)

We have the benefit of hearing from young people at the beginning of their careers.

Our panel is much younger than Sterry's, and our members tend to be older than Sterry's audience. It is for those reasons that I've steered the May 8 conversation toward ageism, although it will be a far wider-ranging discussion than that.

WT

# Author Michael Panush grateful for his success at an early age

by Michael Panush

I'm extremely grateful for my current relationship with Curiosity Quills and I can hardly believe my success with *Stein and Candle Detective Agency* and my other projects—but I have to say that I was not expecting anything like this to happen.

Like most authors, I assumed that I'd work on my craft, send out queries to agents and publishers and—after a great deal of rejection and effort—perhaps finally be selected. But that's not how the process with Curiosity Quills went.

My writing career before Curiosity Quills contacted me was pretty minor. I had always been interested in stories and storytelling and started writing in my freshman year of high school. For my high school senior project, I wrote and self-published my first book, *Clark Reeper Tales*.

It was a big thrill to see a finished book with my name on it and I had a lot of fun arranging readings at bookstores and schools, selling the book wherever I could and generally promoting it. But as time passed, I decided that self-publishing more books just wasn't the way to go, and traditional publishing was.

I continued writing and working, occasionally sending out query letters and getting rejections. While this was going on, I kept writing and posting my stories on an amateur author's website called Fictionpress. It was a good way to get feedback and find some fans.

Then, a few months ago, I received a Facebook message from Lisa Gus of Curiosity Quills explaining that she had read my work on Fictionpress, loved it and wanted to work with me. I checked them out and talked to my parents and some of my teachers, and we all agreed it looked legitimate. After that, I signed contracts for three projects with them and we've been working ever since.

Curiosity Quills might not have the resources of a major publisher, but they're extremely skilled at using promotions, social marketing and publicity to get their authors attention. I've loved working with them and I'm always looking forward to our next project. **WT**

## Madan's vision for Kepler's

*Continued from page 1*

"The purpose of a bookstore needs to be reimagined and developed."

A *San Jose Mercury News/Bay Area News Group* story by Bonnie Eslinger described Madan, who has been a corporate business consultant most of his career, as "the new owner." But he told Eslinger he considers himself Kepler's temporary "steward," whose role is to make Kepler's viable financially.

"It's not for me to own it," said Madan, whose consultants at Kepler's include civic leaders aligned with those who kept the bookstore going. The hope, he said, is that the ownership will become a civic consortium, publically owned

like the Green Bay Packers.

The *India-West* article illustrated Madan's vision for Kepler's by describing how he transformed his store in the Haight during the past five years, "finding new ways to keep customers coming back by transforming the Booksmith into an interactive and social setting where customers can meet other book enthusiasts and speakers from the community."

Madan's affection for Kepler's dates to the 1980s, so it will be interesting to see how his sense of history relates to our club membership and our own efforts to update our personal objectives.

— Colin Seymour



Praveen Madan



# A Gun Shot in the Night

by Rita M. Beach

Black clouds have been hanging over my head all day long. The heavy rain has finally let up. Now at least the lines on the interstate are visible. I should have stopped a couple of hours back before I lost the light of day, but I wanted to make it down the road as far as possible. I'm headed to some town in Arkansas called Pine Bluff. The van is loaded with my music equipment and enough clothes for the six-week gig. My agent called last week offering me the job. The money's good, so here I go heading to another town I've never laid eyes on before.

*I think, if I can drive another hour or two, I can roll in tomorrow before noon. That will leave enough time to unpack, unload the equipment, and set it up in the lounge a good while before it's time to play. If I'm lucky, I might have time to check out the town—even grab a bite of dinner before the gig. The storm is slowing me down, but once I make it through the big city, I should be able to pick up my speed.*

The bright lights of Memphis are shining in the sky off to my left. My first inclination is to pull off the next exit and head straight down to Beale Street for some blues and a few bourbons.

Maybe I'll have an Elvis sighting if I indulge enough. Last time through here I stopped to visit Beale. I was on my way to Birmingham to perform on a morning talk show, or was it on my way to Tallahassee? Anyway, the city blocks off Beale to all vehicles, so hundreds of people meander up and down the pavement with drinks-in hand.

Bars have windows that open right onto the street. Order a drink and never walk in. Sooner or later though, some blues band always draws me in, like a moth to flame. I'd love to stop this time too, but there is no time to spare.

Man, this weather is rugged—better keep going. It's a pitch-black night out here, and the wind is picking up speed. I'm traveling about 65, watching the white lines fly by on each side of the center lane where I'm driving. The wet pavement shines like black ice.

As I start across the interstate bridge heading south away from Memphis, I hear a gunshot.

Suddenly, the van is swerving side to side, all over the three lanes of that bridge. I'm fighting hard to hold on to the steering wheel, trying to slow down without hitting the brakes, which I know will surely send me into

a spin. Cars are dodging and darting all around the van, trying to avoid an unwelcome embrace from a stranger. That old Mississippi River is welcoming me to come on down, but I don't want to go.

I turn on my emergency blinkers as soon as I manage to bring the van to a stop. There is no shoulder. Here I sit—stopped in the middle of this mile-high bridge with hundreds of cars whizzing by me.

It's as black as a Halloween night without a moon. Only the flashing strobes of the traffic's headlights break the darkness. I leave my flashers on, pull the gearshift into low, and ease the van over to the right-hand lane. I slide over and climb out the passenger door.

Far below, the flooded river rushes wildly under the bridge. I look at the front tire. It's a blowout, not a gunshot. I scramble back into the driver's seat.

My basic instincts of survival kick in. No way am I sitting here waiting for somebody to plow into my vehicle and send me and my van into the river below. I don't care what a new rim will cost. I start the van, and with hazard lights still flashing, I drive on the crippled tire to the other side of the bridge. Off the first exit a single light bulb illuminates the sign of a lone gas station—*OPEN*. **RB**

## Is Indie Publishing For You?

by Victoria M. Johnson

With the explosion of ebook sales, we can no longer deny the benefits of submitting our work for e-publication. And after a little online research you'll discover that there are many e-publishers. Some may focus on specific genres. Others may focus on the type of writing such as essay, poetry, or short stories. Some offer payment; others do not.

But have you considered becoming an indie-published author? That is, authors who independently publish their work. I recently decided I wanted to join the ranks of the rogues who were blazing past the obstacles of traditional publishing. After all, I had written something that I had frequently heard would be extremely difficult to sell—a short story collection. I didn't even know what publishers might be interested in such a

work. I knew the research alone would take several weeks. Add to that the months of waiting for a response from each editor, and I knew I was two years away from seeing my work in print. I'll admit that about the same time several of my writer friends were experiencing much success with their ebook offerings. So I took the plunge.

The first thing I did was to hire a professional book cover designer and a professional editor. I looked at their sample work, credentials, and references—just as I would for anyone I considered hiring for any job.

As an indie publisher, you are completely responsible for the quality of the end product. The content of your work is only one aspect. You are in control

*Continues on page 13*



# A Bad Night in Monterey

(An excerpt from the novel *McManus*)

by Frank Slane

That Sunday I got leave, put on my civvies, and went to town. I did my drinking at a dive in Monterey called the Old Peso. It had old Mexican and Cuban silver pesos embedded in the top of the bar and covered with transparent plastic. I liked it there because a lot of girls hung out at the bar. It had pool tables, shuffleboard, and a jukebox that played country and western. There was an opening in the wall where you could order Chinese from the restaurant next door. You could count on watching a good fight late at night at the Peso, as the crowd there was an uneasy mix of soldiers and aging bikers.

I was sitting at the bar and talking bull to a girl I knew, Gloria, when I saw Mercer and two of his buddies come in. In the bar mirror, I watched him grab a pool cue from the rack. Mercer came right at me, swinging the butt end of the cue at my head. I ducked and pushed him away.

The bartender brought out a baseball bat. He said, "You two sons-of-bitches fight inside my bar, you fight with me, too. Get the hell out to the alley."

The alley was narrow and lined with garbage cans and cardboard boxes.

I was ready for a fistfight, but when we got out there, Mercer pulled out a blade. It was a push knife. It had a razor sharp, thin, triangular blade backed with a bar handle shaped to fit the palm. Held in his fist, a thin shaft protruded between his index and second finger.

Running at that point wasn't an option. His two friends blocked my escape, one at each end of the alley. They would slow me down and he would cut me up from behind. I pulled off my jacket and wrapped it around my left hand. It was better than nothing. I danced around, jabbing at Mercer's face with my right hand while blocking the blade as best I could with the wadded jacket in my left. I could tell he was surprised that I held my ground and didn't run when I saw the knife. I had the reach on him and he couldn't close in that narrow space without getting jabbed in the face.

He kept swinging and I kept bobbing and weaving. I was able to parry his blade with the jacket in my fist. I had an onyx class ring on my right hand, and it cut his lip with one of my jabs and his eye with another.

Finally, after taking six right-hand jabs to the face, blood dripping onto his shirt, Mercer lost his temper and made a move straight at me, swinging the blade. When he closed, I jabbed him hard on his sore eye with my right and kicked him on the inside of his left kneecap. He lost his balance and staggered.

I was ready to punch him out and end the fight, when Mercer's friend smashed the edge of a garbage can lid into my head and knocked me off balance. This gave Mercer time to get his footing, and he sliced my ribs with the blade. I was able to slug Mercer in the stomach with my right. He grunted but kept on coming at me, now jabbing the blade at me. He cut through the jacket and my shirt and sliced my left hand and ribs. I ignored the knife, moved in and punched him hard in the Adam's apple. He went down like a sack of rocks, gasping for air.

His friends closed in on me again but I stomped down on Mercer's hand, picked up his knife, and faced them. They stopped and got out of my way; it wasn't that much their fight. I backed down the alley. One of his friends shouted after me: "I hope you learned your lesson, asshole."

I had learned a lesson all right. I learned never to show all you've got until you really have to. It pays to let people think you are a little dumber and a little slower than you are. Let them show you what they have first. I also dropped the attitude.

The bar girl I knew, Gloria, came out to see the fight. She ran after me and took me down the street to a local veterinarian. He gave me sixteen stitches, all told, between cuts on my ribs and hand. I also had a deep gash on my leg that I didn't know how I got.

The vet didn't ask me anything; he probably got a lot of business from the Peso. He sewed me and said, "How much money do you have on you, boy?"

I said, "Twenty dollars."

He took it from me and told me to get lost.

After I left the vet's, I phoned a buddy at my barracks and he came out with a change of civvies for me. I knew I wouldn't get through the camp's gate and past the MPs with a bloody shirt and torn pants. After that incident, I stayed on base until we transferred out. Everybody in my barracks knew about the fight, but to my relief and surprise, none of the brass called me out.

I found out that Mercer went to the hospital with a bruised trachea and a cut eye. His friends said he was in a car accident. I liked hearing that. **FS**

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## Indie Publishing

*Continued from Page 12*

of everything, including the formats to offer your ebook and the channels of distribution. When you're the boss, marketing is your job, too.

The next thing I did was research the requirements for uploading (publishing) my ebook on various popular sites. I selected Smashwords and Amazon as the publication vehicles. I *thoroughly* read all the guidelines for formatting and did all the formatting myself on both sites — although you can hire someone to do it for you.

One of the benefits of choosing Smashwords is that they convert your uploaded file into many of the popular formats for you — if you followed their instructions to a tee! Also, I recently learned that my ebook was approved by Smashwords for distribution to Barnes & Noble, Sony Kobo, Diesel, iBookstore, and others.

My first indie project is titled *The Substitute Bride*. I'm very excited about the ebook itself and the whole process. I've earned my wings and I'm pleased to call myself an indie-published author. You can become one, too. **WT**

## Just Enough of a Reminder

The road ends just behind  
long rows of upper yuppie houses  
cattle graze on hills so verdant green you'd swear  
you were in Erin's land instead of south San Jose  
where still some fields grow ruby red fruit shocking  
pink flowered cherries can be picked from the trees  
mist like dragon's breath from long lost Avalon  
coats the mountainside sliding to valleys below  
apricots then follow  
popcorn blossoms  
a few acres left  
here and there  
just enough  
reminder of  
what the valley  
must have been  
when it was full  
orchards instead of  
sprawling shoeboxes

– Carolyn Donnell

## Mosaics

I hear your sweet tales of family life  
and think of ours with all of its strife.  
Does everyone else have a rosy past?  
Or is it seen through a cloud or behind a mask?

Well, I'm sorry if my stories are sad.  
If good guys don't win or some outcomes are bad.  
But that's the truth, so what should I do  
with our broken lives, the pieces askew?

I could sweep them all under a rug,  
pretend they don't exist or take a drug.  
Or grovel on them 'til I'm black and blue.  
I know a lot of people who do.

Or I can gather the bits of glass  
and make a mosaic of our pasts.  
Find beauty somewhere in each cracked old chest.  
And value. I think those choices are best.

Ruby reds for those valiant hearts,  
who deflect harm with fiery darts.  
Rich emerald green for all of those  
whose souls held on through nights of woes.

Brown like the earth for all who stayed true.  
Add shimmering shards of topaz blue.  
The color of sky over our head  
gives hope for life we won't have to dread.

Please don't forget yellow, not by half.  
This light-hearted color reminds us to laugh.  
To bind it together we use even black,  
dark side, the color of tar or thatch.

With these pieces both broken and torn,  
we come together and cause to form  
a stained glass window so all might find  
beauty in even the least of light.

– Carolyn Donnell

## A Good Year

I have a condition  
that strikes about bedtime.  
The symptoms are subtle;  
not easy to detect.

I'm not a whole person,  
as it might appear.

Part of me is detached  
and way over there longing  
to connect with him,  
whoever he might be;  
a kindred spirit who  
must find me

FAST

'cuz I've just  
poured Red wine  
to the top of my glass  
Wine is SAD nectar  
masquerading as JOY  
in a glass of red bliss  
with a bouquet of the blues  
that I share with you  
as we're ending this year.

But sadness and joy,  
are sister and brother,  
If you've met one,  
You, no doubt,  
know the other.

I know them too well,  
so I stopped sipping Merlot  
and practiced line-dancing,  
lending my ear

to country western ballads  
which, of course, made me cry.

So I summoned my Spirit,  
AKA God, and she helped --  
immensely.

So I drank to that!

– Betty Auchard

## A Shakespearian Sonnet

### Say It Again

Say it again, repeated, by and to someone everyday  
Believe it or not, many people can't understand. No  
Many people do not speak clearly enough, any way  
That I get it from everybody, say it again. I know

Say it again, if the recipient has difficulty, to hear  
Often I hear this, didn't you hear what I just said?  
Yes I heard what you said, however, it wasn't clear  
The answer to that: I'll say it again. I'm not afraid

There are some people using, say it again, for show  
Saying, say it again, make others important, right?  
It is a habit, of some people; they just do not know  
Don't make that mistake; stop, learn to shed light

– Clarence L. Hammonds





# Terse On Verse

by Pat Bustamante

## May-Yo!

Hi there, May Day!  
Spring is springing--  
Creative juices sure are flinging  
Around what we have to say:  
For me it's "I've finished! Hip Hooray!"

— Pat Bustamante

## Deafness

(Written to be performed in  
American Sign Language)

Why  
do we consider  
a  
world  
without  
sound  
so strange  
when  
silence  
is  
the condition  
of  
most  
of  
the  
Universe?

— Stephen C. Wetlesen

## FEELING GROOVY--

About finishing something, even if it's only a first draft. I refer to my once-online first novel now in revision. My poetry I have already sent out for publication. The March speaker really inspired me. Three novellas? I can do that!

I assume whoever reads this column has his/her own fund of ideas, which would fit into a novel, a poem, or perhaps flash-fiction. I understand from biographies of well-known novelists that the command "Revise this!" (to oneself) never goes away. After publication, there is still a temptation to improve the message. Happily, this could lead you into a sequel.

Reading aloud at an open-mic or a critique group or even at home if your family is a willing audience creates a wonderful stimulus for revision. You hear your words out loud instead of hidden in the machinations of the brain. My stories become REAL when I tell them or read them to an audience.

Remember that puppet Pinocchio became REAL when he believed he was? So my suggestion is not just to talk about your idea--read it to somebody. Writing "the end" at your finale gives such satisfaction, even if tomorrow you start all over again. Perhaps so far you only have a one-page summary. Congratulations, you can add "the end" at the bottom of that page. We don't say it in poetry but the last line is usually recognized as "the final zinger."

Finished? Now pat yourself on the back.

WT

## The Writer's Palette: Colors from A to Z

by Marjorie Johnson

Want to write with color? Need a bit of "pen ochre" or verbal panache?

Here are some pigments and colors selected from *The Artist's Handbook of Materials and Techniques* by Ralph Mayer, as listed on pages 30 to 117 and as written on tubes of paint.

Colors A to M: Alizarin crimson, Arsenic orange; Bismuth white, Burnt sienna; Carmine red, Cerulean blue; Dingler's green, Dragon's blood; Emerald green, English vermilion; Flake white, French ultramarine; Geranium lake, Golden ochre; Harrison red, Hungarian green; Indian yellow, Iodine scarlet; Jaune d'antimoine (Naples yellow); King's blue, Krems white; Lapis lazuli, Lemon yellow; and Manganese green, Madder lake, Massicot yellow.

As you can see, many of those paints bear either the name of the person who first used the color or the source of the pigment. Many are poisonous, possibly adding zest to your fiction. Some have amazing histories, such as "mummy," a pigment from bone ash and asphaltum—made by grinding up Egyptian mummies.

More pigments, N to Z: Nacarat carmine, Naples yellow; Ochre yellow, Olive green, Orange vermilion; Payne's gray, Pine soot black, Plumbago graphite, Prussian blue; Quinacridone red (Acra red); Risalgallo red-orange (arsenic disulphide), Red ochre (native clay containing iron oxide, used since prehistoric times); Saturnine red (Red lead, used by Greeks and Romans), Smaragd green (viridian), Strontium yellow; Thalo blue, Turpeth yellow (a mercury sulphate), Tyrian purple (Roman imperial color); Ultramarine blue,

Uranium yellow; Vermilion red (mercuric sulphide), Viridian green (hydrated chromium hydroxide); Weld yellow, Winsor blue (thalo); Xanthous yellow; Yellow ochre; and Zinc white, Zinnober (vermilion).

How about a mystery, Z for Zinnober?

You now are positioned to be a formidable opponent in *Trivial Pursuit* or *Scrabble*. If crossword puzzles are your game, the *New American Crossword Puzzle Dictionary*, edited by Albert and Loy Morehead, lists more than 360 color names, sorted alphabetically and by number of letters. Some colors on their lists have interesting names: puce, bice, bole, acier, baphe, ching, mummy, smalt, pongee, anemone, ardoise, firefly, tilleul, fuchsine, mauvette, and terrapin. However, their spelling is not guaranteed; the spell checker colored most of them red.

WT

# My Fishing Dad

by Chuck Peradotto

My dad never ate fish but he loved to try to catch them. I think part of it was using his mind to figure out a way to outfox the fish. Where to drop the hook and line in the water, what bait or lure to use, when was the best time to try?

But another whole part of it was the peace and solitude. He mostly fished alone. I remember him on our vacations at Clear Lake during the long hot days and nights of late August.

I could see him from our rented cabin long after midnight when the moon was low and everyone else was asleep. He would be out on the wooden pier patiently baiting and waiting. The occasional faint glow from his cigarette or the movement of his silhouette against the water was the only sign of life.

Sometimes I would walk out in the darkness to see what he saw and feel what he felt.

"It's late, son."

Without another word I knew I had been given permission to stay awhile and share the experience.

The placid lake was motionless and resting. Mount Konocti, a hulking shadow to the west, was asleep. The shoreline behind us was a black silhouette showing just a hint of mystery. The constant low mummer of crickets was punctuated by the occasional croaking of a frog.

But the real night was above. Stars. Thousands of distant glowing suns were putting on a show just for the two of us. Every once in a while a shooting star would remind us that all was in motion above us.

We didn't need to say anything. Each of us was absorbing the stillness and beauty. An occasional soft splash would signal that there really were fish be-

neath the lake's surface seeking a meal while craftily avoiding being one.

Occasionally the flair of a wooden match was accompanied by the smell of sulfur. Then the match would arc out to be snuffed by the water with a hiss.

We sat slightly apart, each silently within our own thoughts.

The moon had set behind that distant magical mountain and in the deeper darkness the number of visible stars increased as their glow intensified.

Soon my head would nod after long days under the sun and many hours on and in the water. With a final look I would turn and walk the isolated pier back to shore and sleep and leave my father in his tranquil setting.

In the morning there would always be a few fresh catfish cleaned and wrapped in butcher paper in the refrigerator.

—CP

## Take Heart Fellow Writers

by Gisela Zebroski

An article in the German newspaper had my heart going pit-a-pat.

"Interest in Books Greater than Ever."

Wow. That got my attention. I read on.

"At the book fair in Leipzig a record number of 163,000 booklovers showed up." And this is not Frankfurt where you expect numbers like that or better. The next line really had me going.

"The public interest in books and book-related digital media is greater than ever. People crowded around the booths eager to see and touch books. The book fair tests the mood and inclination of readers."

Since Germany is not unique when it comes to readers, this means that the world loves books. No need to wring our hands in despair because we are told that the world has surrendered to computer games and e-entertainment. Just hang out at airports and sit in planes where you can see what people are reading—all categories—not just bestsellers.

That brings me to another article I read the other day, saying that many submit-

ted manuscripts are rejected simply because they are not professional and fall short of the standard publishers need; writers need to knock their work into shape. That confirmed my decision to have my books re-edited and proofread, rather than give up on them. (I had put some twenty years of effort into them.) I now plan to re-publish them. Even after I thought they were perfect and re-read them, I found a number of errors. Let's hope I got them all before *The Baroness* hits the road again—this time a first-class book—not the first novel of a bungler.

For those of us who love to write but are not English majors, face facts. Since it's too late to spend the rest of our lives studying English, we have no choice but go to the pros. Fortunately; I can go to my grandson, who is a creative writer and teacher. He helps a lot, but I can't just leave well enough alone and I mess up again.

Reading the editor's version of my sentence is a learning experience. For me, I say, "Yes, of course. So much better."

Just wanted to share this with you. We can do it, get our books to the book fair that is!

—GZ

**Interested in SBW  
office?  
Nominate yourself!  
See page 4.**

## Writing is an Adventure

**Writing a book is an adventure.**

To begin with, it is a toy and an amusement; then it becomes a mistress, and then it becomes a master, and then a tyrant. The last phase is that just before you are about to become reconciled to your servitude, you kill the monster and fling him out on the public.

**Continue your writing  
adventure.  
Renew your membership  
in SBW  
today!**

# A New Contest and More

By Carolyn Donnell

**The Dream Quest One Poetry & Writing Contest**—Summer 2012. Poetry or short story. Postmark deadline: July 31, 2012. Prizes: Writing Contest: \$500, \$250, \$100. Poetry Contest: \$250, \$125, \$50.

Entry fees: \$10 per short story. \$5 per poem. To send entries: Include title(s) with your story(ies) or poem(s), along with your name, address, phone number, email, brief biographical info on the coversheet. Fees payable to "DREAMQUESTONE.COM" and mailed to Dream Quest One, Poetry & Writing Contest, P.O. Box 3141, Chicago, IL 60654. Visit <http://www.dreamquestone.com> for further details.

**The Keel Short Short Fiction Contest:** 500 words or less. See <http://bateaupress.org/chapbooks/keel/contest-submission-guidelines> to learn more.

**Fault Zone: Over the Edge: May 15 deadline.** Prizes are \$300, \$100 and \$50, with publication of the winning entry in *Fault Zone*. Entry must not exceed 2,500 words and must relate in some way to the theme of Fault Zone. New and previously published work will be considered. The reading fee is \$15.

See [www.cwc-peninsula.org/fault.html](http://www.cwc-peninsula.org/fault.html) for more info.

**Writers Digest** sponsors many different writing contests during the year. See the list at <http://www.writersdigest.com/competitions/writing-competitions>. Currently open contests include: *Writer's Digest* 81st Annual Writing Competition; *Writer's Digest* Self-Published Book Awards; "Your Story" Competition, every other month, 750 or fewer words based upon a short, open-ended prompt; winners are published in *Writer's Digest*.

**The Writer Magazine** sponsors or gives referrals to the following types of contests: Children's, Fiction, Horror, Journalism, Mystery, Nonfiction, Plays, Poetry, Romance, Science Fiction, and Screenwriting. Visit their website [writermag.com/](http://writermag.com/) events.

**Winning Writers** has a free poetry contest database, sponsors the Wergle Flomp Humor Poetry Contest and the Sports Poetry & Prose Contest, and assists with other contests. Visit [www.winningwriters.com](http://www.winningwriters.com)

WT

## Writers Resource Corner: Poets & Writers

by Carolyn Donnell

*Poets & Writers*. That's a magazine for writers, right? Yes it is. But it is also a website that contains a plethora of information for writers, and not just poets. Are you interested in contests? Or how about grants? Publishers and agents? MFA and residency programs? Conferences? Writers' jobs? PW.org is a good place to start researching any of the above, and <http://www.pw.org/toolsforwriters> will guide you to a number of resources.

"Top Ten Topics for Writers" listed on the web page include links to: Literary Journals & Magazines; Publishing Your Book; Literary Agents; Creative Writing Contests & Competitions; Vanity Publishers; Copyright Information for Writers; Book Promotion & Publicity; Writers Conferences, Colonies, and Workshops; MFA Programs; and Literary Organizations.

The "Small Presses" link on the webpage targets independent presses that publish and consider work from new and emerging writers, and their "Grants & Awards" database contains information on literary awards, grants for writers, and writing contests and competitions.

*Poets & Writers* claim that their Literary Agents database "includes the best literary agents who represent poets, fiction writers, and creative nonfiction writers, plus details about the kind of books they're interested in representing, their clients, and the best way to contact them."

"The Time Is Now" provides weekly poetry prompts, fiction and creative nonfiction exercises, and recommends books for writers, while "Jobs for Writers" allows you to search for writing-related opportunities.

WT

## Fiction500 contest

from Mark Dzoda, Director  
(via e-mail to WritersTalk)

We cordially invite your members to enter our Fiction500 contest for May. Here's the contest in a nutshell:

Writers submit an original work of fiction no longer than 500 words, based on our prompt. We accept only 500 entries. Faculty from the country's top MFA Creative Writing Programs judge the contest. The winning author receives \$500 cash; second-place, \$200; and third-place, \$100.

We publish winning stories and honorable mentions on our website and e-publish an anthology of the year's winners for the Kindle, Nook and iPad. Details are at [www.Fiction500.com](http://www.Fiction500.com)

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## WRITERSTALK Challenge

### What is it?

Twice a year, in February and August, awards are given to contributors to *WritersTalk*. You need take no special steps to enter this competition; if your piece in one of the designated genres is published in *WritersTalk*, you are a contestant in the Challenge.\*

### Genres

Fiction, 500 – 1500 words  
Memoir, 500 – 1200 words  
Essay/Nonfiction, 500 – 1200 words  
Poetry

### Judging Periods

January 16 through July 15  
July 16 through January 15

### Prizes

One winner will be selected from each of the eligible genres. Each winner will be awarded a cash prize of \$40.

### Judging

Judging will be done by *WritersTalk* contributing editors and other Club members whom the contributing editors may ask to assist.

\* Eligibility for the *WritersTalk* Challenge is limited to members of the South Bay Branch of the California Writers Club; judges may not judge in any category in which they have an entry. WT



## Directory of Experts

*Do you have specialized knowledge that might help a writer bring authentic detail to a scene? Send a message to [newsletter@southbaywriters.com](mailto:newsletter@southbaywriters.com) and we will add your listing to our directory of experts.*

### **Astronomy, History of Astronomy**

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

### **Banking**

Pam Oliver-Lyons [polpap@prodigy.net](mailto:polpap@prodigy.net)

### **Character Development**

ArLyne Diamond, Ph.D.

[ArLyne@DiamondAssociates.net](mailto:ArLyne@DiamondAssociates.net)

### **Counseling/John Steinbeck**

Dr. Audry L. Lynch

[glynch0001@comcast.net](mailto:glynch0001@comcast.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](mailto:marthaengber.com)

### **Hiking, Backpacking, Scuba, Bicycling, Classic Cars, Running**

Rick Deutsch

[MrHalfDome@gmail.com](mailto:MrHalfDome@gmail.com); 408-888-4752

## Ongoing Open Critique Groups

### **Our Voices**

Meets in Santa Clara, every other Thursday 7:15 p.m. Genres: Fiction, nontechnical non-fiction, memoir. Contact: Dave LaRoche – [dalaroche@comcast.net](mailto:dalaroche@comcast.net)

### **Valley Writers**

Meets at Valley Village Retirement Center in Santa Clara, Mondays 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Contact: Marjorie Johnson – [marjohnson89@earthlink.net](mailto:marjohnson89@earthlink.net)

### **Note:**

Come to a South Bay Writers dinner meeting to look for others who may want to form a critique group in your genre.

## Stay Informed

Sign up for the SBW email list to receive meeting and event announcements. [southbaywriters.com](http://southbaywriters.com)

### **Hospital and Nursing Environment**

Maureen Griswold

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

### **Internal Medicine/Addiction Disorder/ Psychology**

Dave Breithaupt [dlbmlb@comcast.net](mailto:dlbmlb@comcast.net)

### **Marketing and Management**

Suzy Paluzzi, MBA [jomarch06@yahoo.com](mailto:jomarch06@yahoo.com)

### **Mathematics: Teaching and History/Fibonacci Sequence**

Marjorie Johnson

[marjohnson89@earthlink.net](mailto:marjohnson89@earthlink.net)

### **Real Estate, Horses, Remodeling,**

### **Southwest History**

Reed Stevens

[reedstevens@earthlink.net](mailto:reedstevens@earthlink.net); 408-374-1591

### **Profile Writing**

Susan Mueller [susan\\_mueller@yahoo.com](mailto:susan_mueller@yahoo.com)

### **Teaching and the Arts**

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

### **Telecommunications Technology**

Allan Cobb [allancobb@computer.org](mailto:allancobb@computer.org)

### **Television Production**

Woody Horn 408-266-7040

### **Thanatologist: Counseling for Death, Dying, and Bereavement**

Susan Salluce [susansalluce@yahoo.com](mailto:susansalluce@yahoo.com)

## CWC Around the Bay

These are published meeting locations and times for 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:** 1:30 third Sundays, Oakland Public Library Main Branch. [cwc-berkeley.com](http://cwc-berkeley.com)

**Central Coast:** 5:30 third Tuesdays, Bay Park Hotel, 1425 Munras Avenue, Monterey. [centralcoastwriters.org](http://centralcoastwriters.org)

**Fremont:** 2:00 fourth Saturdays at DeVry University, 6600 Dumbarton Circle, Room 204, Fremont. [cwc-fremontareawriters.org](http://cwc-fremontareawriters.org)

**Marin:** 2:00 fourth Sundays, Book Passage in Corte Madera. [cwcmarinwriters.com](http://cwcmarinwriters.com)

**Mount Diablo:** 11:30 second Saturdays, Hungry Hunter, 3201 Mount Diablo Boulevard, Lafayette. [mtdiablowriters.org](http://mtdiablowriters.org)

**Redwood:** 3:00 first Sundays at Copperfield's Books, 2316 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa. [redwoodwriters.org](http://redwoodwriters.org)

**Tri-Valley:** 11:30 third Saturdays, Oasis Grille, 780 Main Street, Pleasanton. [trivalleywriters.com](http://trivalleywriters.com)

**Sacramento:** 11:00 third Saturdays, Luau Garden Chinese Buffet, 1890 Arden Way, Sacramento. [sacramento-writers.org](http://sacramento-writers.org)

**San Francisco/Peninsula:** 10:00 third Saturdays, Belmont Library, 1110 Alameda De Las Pulgas, Belmont. [sfpeninsulawriters.com](http://sfpeninsulawriters.com)

## Conferences and Workshops

### **Fremont Area Writers Agents and Producers Day**

Meet with Literary Agents Michael Larsen, Elizabeth Pomada, and Mary Kole; Film Producers Debbie Brubaker and Lloyd Silverman; Developmental Editors Alan Rinzler and Charlotte Cook; Screenplay Consultant, Jon James Miller; and Writer's Coaches Barbara Brooker and Susanne Lakin.

Agents and Producers Day is June 30, 2012, 10:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., at Hyatt Place, 3101 West Warren Avenue, Fremont. \$55 for Members, \$65 for Non-Members. Please contact Geraldine Solon at [gsolon082007@gmail.com](mailto:gsolon082007@gmail.com)

Deadline: May 15, 2012.

### **Children's Book Writers Workshop**

This summer, July 9 – 13, we will present the tenth Oregon Coast Children's Book Writers Workshop in the exquisite Oregon coast town of Oceanside.

Summer Workshop 2012 promises to be our best yet. The instructors for the workshop include five established children's book authors specializing in YA and middle school novels, picture books, non-fiction, magazine pieces, and poetry; two children's book editors; and one children's book agent.

More and more of our students are publishing and signing with agents. If you are ambitious to publish a children's book (or simply adore children's books) this is the workshop for you. It will allow you to connect directly with authors, editors, and agents who are active in the children's book business. The course is available for graduate credit. For more information, visit our website at [www.occbww.com](http://www.occbww.com)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday		
May		1	2 SBW Board meeting 7:30p	3	4 7:30p Open mic Barnes & Noble Almaden, San Jose	5		
		6	7	8 6:00p Regular Dinner Meeting, Outlook Inn Sunnyvale	9	10	11	12
		13	14	15 Deadline WritersTalk	16	17	18 7:30p Open mic Barnes & Noble Pruneyard, Campbell	19
		20	21	22	23	24	25	26
		27	28	29	30	31	2012	
Future Flashes								
June 8 regular meeting	June: ELECTIONS	June 30 Agents and Producers Day, Fremont						

### Join me online!

Follow me on Twitter: @ByVictoriaJ

Like me on Facebook:

Facebook.com/AuthorVictoriaMJohnson

### Platform Building

Expert Platform Building 101: an all-day workshop on May 19. Learn how to build platform online with a blog/website, a publishing platform and a speaking platform. Learn how to become an expert author and a good businessperson.

<http://www.copyrightcommunications.com/Workshops.html>  
or call Nina 408-353-1943

### Your ad could go here

\$7 per column inch for SBW members

\$10 per inch for nonmembers

### Members Books

Go to [southbaywriters.com](http://southbaywriters.com) to see the members' gallery and members books. Add your book to our website.

### South Bay Writers Anthology



\$10

At the meeting.

On the website.

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

### Poetry Readings

#### Poets@Play

Second Sundays: Check for times  
Markham House History Park  
1650 Senter Rd., San Jose

#### Poetry Center San Jose

Willow Glen Library  
3rd Thursdays, 7:00 p.m.  
1157 Minnesota Ave., San Jose

Free and open to the public. For more information, contact Dennis Noren at [norcamp@sbcglobal.net](mailto:norcamp@sbcglobal.net)



### 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)



## 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, May 8, 6:00 p.m.**

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

### Panelists:

Praveen Madan, Kepler's Books

Mary Kole, Literary Agent

Michael Panush, Curiosity Quills Press

**Buying into age of change**

*WritersTalk* deadline is always  
the 15th of the month.

