



# WRITERSTALK

Volume 20  
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November 2012

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

## NOVEMBER SPEAKER

**Peg Alford Pursell**

## A PRESENTER OF FEW WORDS

### WARNING: You may feel a sudden urge to write Flash Fiction shortly

by Rita Beach

We are delighted to have Peg Alford Pursell as our speaker at the November 7 meeting of South Bay Writers. Her presentation will look at flash fiction and explore the lure of these short-short stories. Flash fiction has its roots in classical literature but has recently exploded onto the literary scene. She will explore what it takes to write flash fiction, and why any of us, whether short story writer, novelist, essayist, or memoirist, should care about this form. We will learn invaluable techniques relevant to our own styles.

Peg Pursell is an award-winning writer and teacher. She holds a BA in education and has been honored with several awards and fellowships including a National Endowment for the Humanities Independent Study Fellowship. She is also the fiction editor at *Prick of the Spindle* and was founder and curator of *Why There Are Words*, which is a monthly literary reading series in Sausalito. Peg serves on the advisory board of Litquake and TEDx-Marine and is a director on the board of the California Writers Club, Marin Branch.

Her 94-word flash fiction, "Fragmentation," is part of the title of the Burrow Press Anthology, *Fragmentation and Other Stories* (2011). Her 994-word story "Project" was nominated for a Pushcart Prize.

Flash fiction is a style of fictional literature of extreme brevity. One of the first known usages of the term "flash fiction" in reference to the literary style was the 1992 book, *Flash Fiction: Seventy-Two Very Short Stories*. Editor James Thomas stated that a "flash fiction" was a story that would fit on two facing pages of a typical digest-sized literary magazine. In China the style is frequently called a "smoke long," a story that could be absorbed before the reader finished smoking a cigarette.

Very short fiction has roots going back to *Aesop's Fables*, and practitioners have included Anton Chekhov, O. Henry, Franz Kafka, H.P. Lovecraft, Ernest Hemingway, Julio Cortázar, Arthur C. Clarke, Ray Bradbury, and Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.. Examples of Hemingway's pioneering of the form are the eighteen very short pieces in his first short-story collection, *In Our Time*. He also wrote the flash fiction: "For Sale, Baby Shoes, Never Worn." Great writers say the most with the least words.



**Peg Alford Pursell**

## OCTOBER RECAP

### Media Gatekeepers

by Grace Tam

In a growing age of technology, we have expanded our different media of publication through blogs, e-readers, and online magazines. However, newspapers and other print media still grasp a good number of the populace. The topic of our October 3 meeting was "Capturing the Attention of the Media" and the panel included *San Jose Mercury News* columnist Sal Pizarro, *Santa Clara Weekly* writer and associate editor Carolyn Schuk, and our own member from the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Colin Seymour, who moderated the event.

The speakers highlighted necessary steps to take to get publicity either in a corporate newspaper or a localized news publication. The first thing to consider is what kind of publication to target. The *Mercury News* encompasses news from San Jose and Cupertino to Alameda and San Mateo Counties whereas *Santa Clara Weekly* is more localized. Pizarro explained how the *Mercury News* is big on time-hook news, featuring events in season or upcoming. He said, "Learn how to sell yourself using the news of what's currently going on or what's about to come."

For a weekly newspaper, Schuk emphasized the local aspect of news and its appeal to a reporter's interests. People tend to look for stories featured near their homes as in local football teams or community events. She urged us to research reporters to find their interests. "What kind of stories do they like to write?" she asked.

The best way to contact reporters is through email because that is their main source for receiving information.

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# President's Challenge

by Bill Baldwin  
President, South Bay Writers

## Here's To A Great Year End!

Autumn and winter always coax out my writing self. I'm always drawn to writing during the darker time of the year. I seem more connected to what I want to say.

This is an excellent time of the year for writing. We have multiple events coming up that encourage us to write – and read – or at least assemble material!

I'm writing this in early October; in five days, California Writers Week will begin. The California Writers Club promoted the creation of this week by the California State Assembly in 2003. This is a particularly appropriate time to remember authors associated with California – and that includes a lot of people – first, writers who were born here; second, writers who moved here; third, writers who spent some part of their lives here; and finally, writers who visited here and wrote about it. That adds up to a lot of people influenced by California, including people as diverse as Mark Twain, Eugene O'Neill, Jack Kerouac – and anyone who worked in Hollywood. I anticipate reading something relating to California at our third Friday open mic (of course, you won't have this in your hands until afterwards. However, I mentioned this at the October dinner meeting, so I hope some of you will have found ways to celebrate this week with us).

We're moving into the Holiday Season, always good for a dose of family drama or nostalgia: Halloween; Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving; Hanukah, Christmas; New Year's. Nothing like being around family – or being away from family – to tap those creative juices.

November is National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo). Can you write a 50,000-word novel in 30 days? Lots of people have; and if you want to try, you've got plenty of support in our club. I don't have a count of how many of our members have actually *finished*, but I know quite a few have. If you're up for the challenge, ask at our November dinner meeting, and we'll see if interested folks can meet up. If you prefer nonfiction, join SBW member Nina Amir in her Write Nonfiction in November (WNFIN) event.

Or join *me*, in a quest to simply produce a significant amount of writing of *any* sort in what I've been calling For Heaven's Sake Just Write Something Down Dammit Month (FoHeSaJuWriSoDoDaMo). It may lack the focus of NaNoWriMo and WNFIN, but I'm determined to move forward with my own projects in November – and I hope *you* will too. With everything I've mentioned above to inspire and encourage us, I hope we can all make significant progress towards our writing goals.

Sail on together – we're here to encourage and help each other out! – WT

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— 0 —

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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, Sally Milnor, or sign up online southbaywriters.com.



by Marjorie Bicknell Johnson

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## 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*. Please prepare your work as carefully as you would for an agent. All submissions will be copyedited to uphold our publication standards. The Managing Editor decides which submissions to publish.

Suggested word limits are not absolute; query the editor. Electronic submissions should be text or attached MS Word file sent to newsletter@southbaywriters.com

**Anything Goes—Almost** (300 words)

**News Items** (400 words)

**Letters to the Editor** (300 words)  
newsletter@southbaywriters.com

### Creative Works

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

### Accolades

accolades@southbaywriters.com

### 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 and is published free of charge.

Advertising is accepted on the basis of its interest and value to writers. Because California Writers Club is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit corporation, *WritersTalk* cannot accept political advertising of any kind. Advertising rates for Club members, \$7 per column inch; non-members, \$10 per column inch. We will assist with layout.

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## Just a teaspoon of sugar



"Just a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down," according to Mary Poppins. But how much is a spoonful, and what's in the sugar?

If you read the ingredients found in bran flakes, a breakfast cereal without sugar coating, one serving (3/4 cup) contains 6 grams of sugar. Is that a spoonful of sugar?

A scientific table of metric conversion factors gives one gram as 0.035274 ounce avoirdupois; so, if there are 8 ounces in a cup and 6 teaspoons in an ounce — Eeyow! Even worse, the ounces in a cup are measures of liquid while the ounce avoirdupois is a measure of weight; i. e., a teaspoon actually measures volume, while grams measure weight.

Google comes to the rescue and shows one level teaspoon of sugar as 4 grams; water, 5 grams. So, our serving of bran flakes contains 1.5 teaspoons of sugar. Probing deeper, one US nickel weighs 5 grams, the same as a teaspoonful of water. But if we melt down the nickel, in liquid form it would fill less than a teaspoon because that metal is heavier than water (and we would probably melt the measuring spoon with it).

What's the fuss, you ask; just read the list of ingredients — they appear in order by quantity. But those labels fool us in many ways. For example, by listing the sugars as naturally milled cane sugar, natural fruit sugar, and barley malt, the manufacturer can split them up so that sugar is not the first ingredient. Also, he can make the product sound "healthy." Or, an item may say sugar free, but contain one gram of carbohydrates in a tablespoon-sized serving and list corn syrup as an ingredient. Almost any processed food item contains sugar — spaghetti sauce, bread, or even canned chili beans.

There seem to be 107 different names for sugar. Anything ending in "ose" is usually a sugar, such as: fructose, fruit sugar; sucrose, table sugar; or dextrose, the major ingredient in corn syrup. The most heavily processed sugar is high fructose corn syrup, popular with manufacturers because it mixes easily with other ingredients.

What about artificial sweeteners? The big three are saccharin, benzosulfimide; aspartame, a synthetic compound formed from phenylalanine and aspartic acid; and sucralose, made from sugar but not recognized as sugar by the body. Saccharine, 200 times sweeter than table sugar, has a bitter or metallic aftertaste and is manufactured from coal tar. Aspartame accounts for 75% of the adverse reactions to food additives reported to the FDA. Sucralose fools the body because it cannot be metabolized, but can we really fool Mother Nature? For many people, the sweet taste makes them want more food.

How does all this pertain to writers, you ask? You could write an article on sugar and slant it toward the misrepresentations appearing on food labels; the side effects of artificial sweeteners; the chemicals used in the manufacture of food; or the effects of food colorings on children.

Or you could take Mary Poppins' sugar as metaphor for relationships with people. As my mother used to say, "You attract more flies with honey than with vinegar."

— WT



## View from the Board

by S. Halloran

Ten of us met in San Jose Tuesday night, September 25: President Bill Baldwin, Vice President Rita Beach, Treasurer Mike Freda, Secretary Sylvia Halloran, Newsletter Editor Marjorie Johnson, Networking Chair Eléna Martina, Members-at-Large Dick Amyx and Andrea Galvacs, Central Board Liaison Dave LaRoche, and Webmaster Rik Scott.

The following motions were made and passed unanimously:

- Moved: (Galvacs) to approve the purchase of four \$20 gift cards from Barnes & Noble for costume prizes.
- Moved: (LaRoche) to approve *Writers Talk* editorial policy as amended.
- Moved: (Freda) to hold meeting in January on second Wednesday, 01/9/13, provided we have a location and not to be announced until location is secured.

We discussed the following:

- Room set-up for dinner meetings at Harry's Hofbrau
- Alternate meeting sites
- Vision/Mission of club. Goals for the future include growing membership; finding a workshop chair and presenting four workshops per year; holding writing contests; improving our social media outreach; publishing an anthology; holding author recognition parties; fostering a mentoring program.

*If you read something of interest here that you'd like to have a say in, please contact any board member for further information. It's YOUR club!* — WT

## New Members

by Sally A. Milnor

It is a pleasure to introduce this month's new South Bay Writers Club members.



**Marilyn Hilton** is an active writer. Among her published works are *The Christian Girl's Guide to Your Mom* (Legacy Press, 2004); "Pass It On" (Essay), *Words to Write by* (Treble Heart Books, 2008); and *It's All About Dad and Me* (Wine Press Publishing, 2006). Her novel, *Found Things*, is scheduled for publication by Atheneum (Simon and Schuster) in 2014.

**Anuja Seith** is a published professional writer whose interest is in journalism. Her articles have appeared in the *Santa Clara Weekly*, *New America Media*, and *Her Circle Ezine*.

**Karen Harley** is now a dual member of South Bay Writers and CWC's Peninsula Branch. Her short story, "Beach House," was recently published in the *Sand Hill Review*, Vol. XIII, 2012 and in the *CWC Literary Review*. In addition to her writing, Karen has had a professional photography business, she has

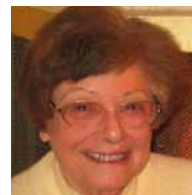
designed and sewn her own garments, and she has done abstract paintings and paper collage. Karen can be contacted by email at [Sew1Machin@aol.com](mailto:Sew1Machin@aol.com).

**Kelley Johnson** is an engineer as well as a writer. She has also played soccer since kindergarten and was part of the Title IX generation for women's sports. Last year, as a Christmas gift for her parents, Kelley began writing a memoir of family stories. Of this labor of love, Kelley writes: "I wanted to write my childhood stories, the funny stories that had been told and retold at the family dinner table for so many years. My mother read the stories out loud to my father and we all laughed as we remembered the funny moments. My mother, a Ph.D. in English linguistics, also couldn't resist correcting a few grammar mistakes, so I had to reprint the pages with her corrections! Sadly, she passed away, somewhat unexpectedly, six weeks after I had given her my gift. I felt so lucky that I had completed the stories with her help that I decided to self-publish them in her memory."

To our new members: We wish a warm welcome to each and every one of you, and we hope your membership brings you inspiration and enjoyment. See you at our next meeting! — WT

## November Accolades

by Andrea Galvacs



Thank you for complying with my request to let me have the Good News forms before this item on the agenda is called. Remember, if I don't have the

form in time, you won't be able to brag to the audience! However, your success will appear in *WritersTalk*. Alternately, you can send your good news by email to [accolades@southbaywriters.com](mailto:accolades@southbaywriters.com)

**Pat Bustamante's** poem "Migration Partners" will be published in the *Song of the San Joaquin*, Fall 2012 issue.

**Marjorie Johnson's** "The Royal Funeral" was a finalist in the Fault Zone Short Story Contest.

**Sherrie Johnson** has received royalty payments from Amazon.com.uk.

**Victoria M. Johnson's** *The Doctor's Dilemma* was released in paperback by Montlake Romance. Victoria was on a panel of Los Gatos' authors as part of the town's 125th jubilee.

**Eléna Martina** was interviewed by *Silicon Valley Latino*, and an article about her book, *Clinging to Deceit*, appeared in the magazine *Experimenta*. — WT

## Write a novel this month

November is here, National Novel Writing Month. *NaNoWriMo* began in 1992 when 21 San Francisco Bay Area writers got fired up and embarked on a crazy idea to become novelists in a month. Last year 256,618 people participated with 36,843 making it to the finish line—50,000 words written during the month of November.

So why write just for the sake of getting words on a page? You can revise a bad draft of a book, but you can't revise a blank page into anything. The emphasis is not on each word, but on the accumulative power of the words. There is no time to second-guess every word.

*NaNoWriMo* creates a community of writers. Cheerleaders send out inspirational pep talks and online forums offer expertise in a wide variety of disciplines that could be relevant to your story line. Learn more at [nanowrimo.org](http://nanowrimo.org) — WT

# Networking Log

by ElénaMartina

## Facebook Presence

In August 2012, the decision was made to include Facebook in our web presence as



an official page. The phenomenon of world social communication is too large to miss; and, in less than two months, our page grew to 63 fans, proving it was a much-needed action by our club. Since most people have a Facebook page nowadays, they will be able to find us and see updates with ease – and if you click “Like” you will be allowed to interact. On our page, you will find our club’s mission and address, books published by members, photo galleries, upcoming workshop information, meeting dates, and more.

SBW is one of several California Writer Club branches participating in Facebook, another point of contact for members and non-members. Dave LaRoche and I currently administer the SBW page, so if you have suggestions or new information that should be included, let us know. Photos of events to share? You are welcome to add them. Has your book been published? Let us know and we will include it in our albums. The page is interactive and allows you to engage in our social network.

Look for us by typing California Writers Club - South Bay on Facebook and “Like,” or type this link: [www.facebook.com/CaliforniaWritersClub-SouthBay](http://www.facebook.com/CaliforniaWritersClub-SouthBay). We are also connected to writer pages and other writer clubs in the area. Come to see what we plan and offer – see you there!

Update on writer’s critique group: A new group is looking for a few fiction writers to join them. Contact Joe Eyre at [joe.eyre@gmail.com](mailto:joe.eyre@gmail.com) for more information. You can contact Eléna Martina at [networking@southbaywriters.com](mailto:networking@southbaywriters.com) – WT

## Perhaps PR means Persevere Routinely

By Donna McCrohan Rosenthal, PR director, CWC  
[pr@calwriters.org](mailto:pr@calwriters.org)

I hear from some branches that the media in their communities essentially shun press releases from local organizations. Or favor some groups over others. Or require acrobatics worthy of Cirque du Soleil to reach newspaper editors and radio programmers through designated channels.

Yet hope springs eternal. If you cannot attract traditional media with your club PR, consider other outlets such as organizational newsletters. Try having projects with – or items of interest to – libraries, museums and hospitals. Or maybe you can do some sort of exhibit for their display cases or halls.

Another strategy: In the administrator’s office in a small nursing school, I saw corkboards covered with clippings about every aspect of her institution. I said, “Wow. I had no idea this place was so prominent.” She replied, “We’re not, but I’ve made it a point every week, no matter what, to put out at least two press releases. Sometimes papers run stories because it’s a slow news day. After a while, they got used to seeing my write-ups, had my name in mind, and called me when they had space to fill.”

The woman taught me a valuable lesson: Keep at it. Sometimes the answer lies in finding creative solutions. But sometimes, it’s as simple as just not giving up. – WT

**Blockbuster Plots  
Workshop**  
Sunday, January 27, 2013  
See Page 9

### Scenes from SBW October 3

Carolyn Donnell has posted pictures on our website, [southbaywriters.com](http://southbaywriters.com). Go to the home page, click on events, then event photo gallery.

## Letter to the Editor:

### Response re CreateSpace

by Jill Pipkin

Herein I am responding to the remarks from David Breithaupt on page 9 of October *WritersTalk*.

I can say that using Create Space to publish my book cost me \$750, plus \$100 for my ISBN, to set up the interior formatting and the cover; they provided good choices for me. I could have saved the \$100 for the ISBN if I had used the free one they provided, and that could have been a better choice.

I will say that they do not hold your hand and you must be on top of what you want, precisely.

CreateSpace is owned by Amazon. All books ordered on Amazon are printed by CreateSpace – publish on demand. I can buy as many books as I want from CreateSpace at about \$5 ea. I continue to order books; there is no minimum amount and no requirement to order books.

So, what David Breithaupt wrote about spending \$10K (to publish a book) is way, way off the mark.

I won’t say that using CreateSpace is slamdunk. One must be very, very careful with the proofs. But they acknowledge when they make mistakes. The people at CreateSpace are very nice.

I can recommend CreateSpace, but again, the author must know just what he wants. I am happy with my finished product, but I am saddened that there is so little interest from the South Bay Writers Club in my book – nor in my experience in publishing my book – and so very few purchases by members of the club! And that’s the way it is – the Club doesn’t do much to support us when we have actually produced a book! – WT

## Write a Book in a Month

by Nina Amir

If you are a nonfiction writer and looking for something to do while everyone is busy with NaNoWriMo, try NaNonFiWriMo--National Nonfiction Writing Month--or Write Nonfiction in November, a challenge to start and finish a work of nonfiction in 30 days. See [writenonfictioninnovember.com](http://writenonfictioninnovember.com) – WT

## Flash Fiction

*Continued from Page 1*

Ms. Pursell teaches fiction writing at the College of Marin and does private workshops. She once produced *Drive-by Shorts*, a weekly radio show of ultra-short fiction, and was the fiction editor of *Identity Theory*.

You can read more about our speaker by visiting [www.pegalfordpursell.com](http://www.pegalfordpursell.com).

Make sure to support your club by attending this meeting on the first Wednesday in November to hear Peg Alford Pursell. Speakers of this quality can enrich our lives as writers and enlighten us on our craft. — WT



**Carolyn Schuk**  
— Photo by Carolyn Donnell



**Sal Pizarro**  
— Photo by Carolyn Donnell

## Gatekeepers

*Continued from Page 1*

The email consists of two items: the subject line and a press release. Reporters receive stacks of email every day and have time only to scan the subject line. In writing the subject line, Schuk advised us to use the five W's of journalism: who, what, where, when, and why. She explained that a key phrase such as "Santa Clara" captures a reporter's attention, especially one writing for a newspaper in that city.

The press release is the email content—a one paragraph summary of the story written with the five W's of journalism in mind—in the body of the email, not attached. The idea is to "write tight" and capture the reporter's attention using key messages clearly outlined with impact. After the press release, a short biographical sketch of the author can follow, along with a photo.

After hearing Pizarro and Schuk detail the importance of catchy subject lines and pithy press releases, Colin Seymour asked if they had received any appealing emails in terms of interest or publication.

"I'm impressed by people who have made an effort to sound authentic and genuine," Pizarro said. He elaborated on several memorable emails that made a personal connection and explained that he was hard pressed to let those emails go without a response.

Schuk described an email from the Santa Clara County Librarian who sent a news clipping from a 1952 newspaper titled "Dress Cool in Santa Clara," depicting how men wore short sleeve shirts and no ties on hot days. She said the clipping's timing was perfect due to a Bay Area heat wave happening at the time.

As the meeting wrapped up, many members asked questions and expressed strong opinions. Sherrie Johnson asked how to encourage media interest in her gay romance novel. Schuk began asking questions that focused on Sherrie as an individual, not on the book. Since Sherrie graduated from a Santa Clara County school, Schuk was immediately interested and handed her a business card for further information. As parting advice to encourage and inspire writers, Pizarro reminded us to "Sell yourself as an author!" — WT

## Resident expert speaks

*by Rita Beach*

For ten minutes during each meeting, a resident expert speaks about a topic relevant to writers.

In October, Edie Matthews, dressed as a witch from MacBeth for the literary costume contest, made a presentation on the use of humor in writing. Two of her examples came from classic literature: the scene in which Ishmael meets Queequeg in *Moby Dick* and the graveyard scene in *Hamlet*.

Edie's advice: "Make them laugh. Make them cry. Take them on that emotional rollercoaster and you'll have a best-seller."

In November, Sylvia Halloran, who also happens to be our club secretary, will tell club members about the benefits of enrolling in memoir classes.

Not everyone is writing a memoir or autobiography, but most of our writings, both fiction and non-fiction, are influenced by our life experiences. Capturing those memories can enhance our writings.

Remember to arrive early and enjoy your meal while listening to our resident expert. During the break, Sylvia will answer your questions. — WT



**Resident Expert Edie Matthews**  
in costume October 3

— Photo by Dick Amyx



# Literary Costume Contest, October 3(1), 2012



**Winners: Jamie Miller, Edie Matthews, Victoria M. Johnson, and Audry Lynch.**

**Jamie Miller as Sam Hamilton; Bill Baldwin; Marjorie Johnson; Edie Matthews as a witch from *MacBeth*; Elena Martina; Victoria M. Johnson as *Fifty Shades of Grey*; and Audry Lynch as Mitchener's *Hawaii*.**

*—Photo by Dick Amyx*

## Over a Sandwich

*by Dave LaRoche*

We sat in a booth, a small café in a neighborhood off Hunters Point located in Bay View — my daughter with salad and wine, I with a Rueben and beer. It sounds idyllic, like an upscale resort on a lake in Michigan, but it's not. It's a broken-down shipyard south of the South of Market — much of it abandoned, the surrounding residual community in a state of slow-moving repair.

This café, Just For You, hummed with conversation from an eclectic group of locals for lunch during breaks in their activity — social workers, warehousing folks, coin-washer attendants and clerks from markets on corners — some from a clinic or two. The prices were not as low as one might have imagined in this locale, but this diner offered interesting fare: Cajun, some old San Francisco, un poco Mexicana, and classics like Hang-town Fries. People lined up at the counter.

She's a talker, this daughter of mine — sophisticated, enthusiastic and complex. I'm catching her drift, though occasionally slipping away — a rudderless boat in a persistent southerly breeze. I'm not as attentive as I might once have been and can seldom hold interest in news-laden narrative that goes on. With listening, I usually prefer jazz, but nothing

at all, though rare in my life, is as acceptable.

As I'm turning an ear — her report's significant — a woman in line caught my eye and that slipping I referred to began. She wore a red dress, that woman, that clung rather nicely, and I had a glimpse of her profile before she turned again to the counter — reading the menu I thought — the one chalked on a board on the wall. I could see she was slender as you would expect of an athlete, if softened some with time out of training. She shifted her weight in a comely way, as she waited to order — a gentle movement, smooth and deliberate with a certain appeal.

And then she turned completely around — seemed searching for one that she might have been meeting, until her eyes met mine and lingered I thought for a moment. She was ... well, she was surprisingly beautiful and more woman than I had earlier informed. She wore no makeup that I could discern, and she radiated that sparkle you attribute to someone much younger. She may have been forty.

She had a straight narrow nose that smacked of aristocrat and her shapely mouth smiled with frugality as she released my eyes and slowly turned back to the counter. She had coal-black hair hanging loosely over her shoulders that glimmered as it caught the after-

noon light. She was my kind of woman and I saw us vacationing in Madrid, and wondered what we might name our kids when they were born — or adopted from an orphanage there.

As I watched unabashedly, my daughter talked on about the importance of things in her life. I hadn't seen Stephanie for over a year — things had changed and I understood completely. Things always happen to daughters, and they happen to fathers and they were happening now.

The woman in red was ordering. She was pointing this way, then that, at the menu on the wall — slender, well-shaped fingers and not a diamond in sight. She had a bit of a tan, seasoned like the kind you see on a golfer in Florida or a life guard on an Ensenada beach. I liked the way she gestured and smiled as she pointed out her order with what I thought was desirable aplomb. She knew what she wanted and I like that in a woman — confident, direct, and approachable — friendly and absent the gush of the young.

As we boarded the plane out of Madrid, she finished with the guy at the counter and left — first to the back of the café to be seated and half an hour later, as the stewardess was asking if we wanted a drink, she was gone.

And the tragedy ... absorbed as I became in the updates from Stephanie, I hadn't noticed her leaving. — WT

## Monte Rio

by Michael W. Murray

*Pat-pat, pat-pat, pat-pat, pat-pat.* Four pairs of bare feet scamper down the stairs to the basement rec room. There's my sister, Dominique, who's older than me by more than a year and a half. Then there's my cousin, Bridget, who's about my age, nine, and her sister Saschetta, who's seven. Mom and Aunt Eloise are letting us stay up late, and watch TV. My sister and our cousins insist on calling it a slumber party.

"Slumber parties are for girls," I complain.

"We're girls," says Bridget, "and you're the only boy, so you're outvoted. If you don't like it, *you* don't have to be included."

Dominique's carrying a pitcher of grape Kool-Aid, Bridget has a big bowl of fresh popcorn, and I'm stuck with a stack of plastic bowls.

"How come you get to decide who carries what?" I demand.

"Because I'm the oldest," Dominique says. "And it's a scientific fact that girls are more responsible than boys."

We're staying in an old bungalow-style house jointly owned by our parents and Uncle Hank and Aunt Eloise at the end of Russian Avenue in Monte Rio, a small town in Sonoma County north of San Francisco.

It's a warm night in June 1976, so we're all wearing shorts. My sister and cousins have on cropped tank tops, while I have no shirt on at all. Aunt Eloise has unfolded the sofa so it makes a bed big enough for the four of us. Saschetta climbs on.

"Quit bouncing," Dominique orders. "Bridget can't set the popcorn down with you bouncing like that."

Saschetta bounces a couple more times to show my sister she can't tell her what to do. Bridget turns on the TV, and I turn out the lights. I climb on the bed between Dominique and Bridget. We stuff our faces with popcorn and watch *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*. We drink the Kool-Aid, pretending it's wine.

After the movie, Dominique shuts off the TV. We draw back the single sheet that covers the bed and pull it over us.



Bridget screeches in the dark.

"What's going on?" Dominique says.

Bridget snaps, "You keep your cold feet to yourself!"

"Then *you* quit hogging the sheet!" Saschetta answers back.

"I was *not* hogging the sheet!"

Dominique has had enough. "Either settle down and shut up, or go fight in your own bedroom."

Even in the dark, I know both cousins are staring at my sister open-mouthed, their looks saying, *Well! Who does she think she is?* They quiet down though.

I snuggle close to Dominique. She tucks my head in under her chin and puts her arm over me, just like she's done since we were little. I close my eyes again.

By eleven the next day, I'm curled up on the sofa in the rec room with a book. Even with only thin running shorts on, I feel too warm. I hear footsteps on the stairs and Dominique appears, wearing a beach towel, flip-flops and nothing else.

"Come on," she says, "Everyone's going swimming."

I put the book aside and get up.

"How come you're wearing shorts?" my sister teases. "You're not *modest* all of a sudden, *are you?*"

During Monte Rio's hot summers at the bungalow, our parents let us kids run around in as little clothing as we want, even none at all, indoors and out. But it's less hassle to wear shorts than wear nothing and have to carry a towel to sit on — and remember where you put it.

I duck behind the couch, slide my shorts off, and stuff them into my duffel bag. "There." I parade naked in front of my sister. "Happy now?"

I always feel more self-conscious removing my clothes in front my sister or cousins than I do appearing with everything off already. I grab my beach towel and slip my feet into sandals. By this time, Bridget and Saschetta come downstairs. They've ditched their clothes too, and each carries a towel draped over one shoulder instead of wrapping up in it. That doesn't faze either of my cousins a bit — we've all seen one another without clothes enough times.

Mom's joining us. She's in a bikini bottom and an oversized T-shirt. She has part of the basement set up as a dark-room where she keeps her camera, film, and other photographic equipment.

"Carry the tripod for me, okay?" she asks me, while Dominique picks up a cooler that contains film.

*Continued on Page 10*





## CWC South Bay Writers Presents

Martha Alderson, The Plot Guru

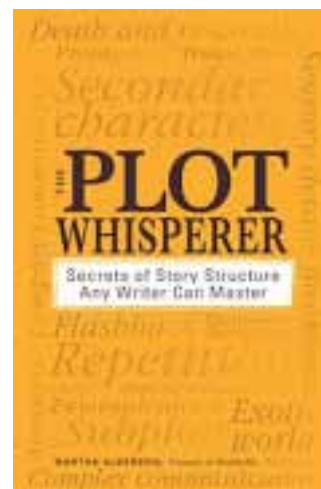
Author of *Blockbuster Plots* and *The Plot Whisperer*

Blockbuster Plots Workshop

Sunday, January 27, 2013

9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.

A great plot can turn your stories into reality.



What does it take to go from a story to a novel?  
From a computer screen to a movie?

Martha Alderson, M.A., is a writer of historical fiction, a writers' coach, and a plot consultant. Learn plot-planning intensives: techniques of story structure including character development and dramatic action.

Workshop includes lunch and morning snack

Location: Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose

Registration: Member \$55; Nonmember \$65

Early bird registration Member \$50, Nonmember \$60 thru December 31

Register and pay by credit card (PayPal) at [www.southbaywriters.com](http://www.southbaywriters.com)

If you want to pay by check, please use the form below.

\*\*\*\*\*

Mail this portion to: SBW Workshops, P O Box 3254, Santa Clara, CA 95055.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ CWC Branch \_\_\_\_\_

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## Monte Rio

*Continued from page 8*

We head outside through a set of French doors, behind the bungalow, across our back yard, and through a gate. There are no other houses near ours. A wrought iron fence surrounding the property keeps out intruders. Outside the gate, a switchback path cut into the steep ravine leads down to the Russian River. We hike down until we reach a narrow stretch of sand, mud, and pebbles. Dominique sets down the cooler. We strip off our towels and kick off our sandals.

Dominique calls over her shoulder, "Last one in's a pig in the mud!"

We run naked into the river. Our feet churn up clouds of silt and mud. Dominique bends at her waist, dives in headfirst, and glides under the water. She surfaces some distance away with only her head and milky bare shoulders visible and whips her streaming hair out of her eyes.

"It's great!" she squeals, treading water. "C'mon, what are you waiting for?"

The river feels awfully cold at first, but it's not so bad after a few seconds. My sister's and my pasty complexions contrast with our cousins' golden tans. Their bottoms are lighter than the rest of them, like the girl in the Coppertone ads. During the summer, they practically live in shorts and tank tops at their home in Calistoga, and in Monte Rio, they often choose not to wear any clothes. In San Francisco where I live, it's cold and foggy a lot of the time, even in summer; we almost always keep our arms and legs covered.

We float on our backs and let the current carry us down river a ways, and then we stroke and kick wildly back to where we started. It feels absolutely delightful, splashing and paddling around in the river, wearing nothing but the cool water.

Mom has just finished setting up her camera. "Come on over here. I want to get a picture." She's always taking pictures of us, whether we have clothes on or not. She's taken a whole bunch of pictures of Monte Rio and the landscape around the Russian River and had them published in a book.

I ask her if she's going to publish the pictures she takes of us.

## Ellie Has a Car

Ellie has a home, though it's kind of small,  
She has a roof over her head, surrounded by four walls,  
Carpeting on the floor, windows with a view,  
A reclining chair to sit in, but not much room to move,  
Ellie has a car

Ellie has a family or so the story's told,  
But when her world fell apart, everything she had was sold  
She stares at their pictures, propped up on the ash tray,  
She cries no matter where I go, I know, I'll see you again someday,  
Ellie has a car

Ellie has a problem that started back in high school,  
Everybody was doing it, so she tried it, too.  
She quit time after time, but it had too strong a hold,  
Ellie kept her secret safe until she sold her soul,  
Ellie has a car

Better head down to the mission, be there by lunchtime,  
Maybe take a walk by the river, might feel good to be outside  
Look for jobs while it's still light, and before dark try to make it home,  
She thanks God for a place to sleep, but she hates being alone,  
Ellie wraps up in a warm blanket and locks the doors at night,  
Wrestles with her demons while longing for sleep and peace of mind,  
Ellie has hope she can overcome the past and erase this scar,  
She's come oh so close before, she knows the road ahead is hard,  
Ellie has a car

— Rita Beach

"Perhaps," she says, "but not until all four of you are grown up."

We stand in the river, almost chest-deep. The gentle current tugs at us.

"Spread out a little," Mom directs.  
"Spread your arms out in front of you. Keep your hands just under the water. That's perfect."

"I wanna be in the picture too," Saschetta whines.

Next time, Mom promises. She tells us to hold still. The camera clicks.

"I want to take a couple more," she says. Just keep the pose." The camera clicks once more, and then again.

"Okay, that's it. You can go back to having fun." Mom turns and gasps. "Saschetta, what are you *doing*?"

While Mom was focused on snapping pictures, Saschetta's been playing in the mud on the riverbank. Kneeling, she smears huge gobs of the stuff all over her front, from her shoulders down. "I'm taking a mud bath. Just like at Mommy's spa."

Head shaking in exasperation, my mother explains that Aunt Eloise uses a different kind of mud at the spa, but Saschetta's not having any. To her, mud

is mud. Then Mom gets that look on her face she always gets when a new idea pops into her head.

"Want to do a few pictures?" she asks Saschetta. "Okay, now stand up in the mud. Take your right hand — that's this one — and put it on your tummy. Now put your other hand on your right shoulder. Perfect. Hold still for me."

The camera clicks, one, two, three times.

We swim, play, and goof around in the water until our fingers wrinkle. Mom tells us it's time to come out of the river and head back for lunch. — WT



Audry Lynch as Michener's Hawaii  
— Photo by Dick Amyx

# Terse on Verse for November

by Pat Bustamante



## Nov. Veer 'Em!

Plodding along, somewhat weary  
It's winter. You wish to switch plot to "cheery."  
The scolding, the morals, the grim reaper peering:  
You'd rather be laughing than fussing and fearing.  
OK, try a satire.  
Your ya-yas catch fire,  
Aha! Something totally "un-you" is appearing!

— Pat Bustamante

CHANGING THE PACE is good. Look for what you may have overlooked in whatever or whomever you like to write about. A serious person may have a hidden sense of humor to uncover; a poem about a beautiful view may also suggest something mysterious or unexpected emotions or comparisons.

Humor is a great relief sometimes when you are "blocked" or just too weary of whatever is in front of you. Do you like awful puns? Do you know a neighbor or have a relative who deserves to be (secretly) made fun of? Or, did you do an "Oops?" I have an "alternate personality" who can be blamed for all my stupidities, and they are funny when somebody else commits them. Very handy! Try it.

Humorous poems seem to be in the minority; I don't know why. I keep close watch on the magazines that buy poems. Is a laugh-out-loud poem that difficult to write?

There are always the bloopers that some writers consider their genius work, or inadvertent "funnies" — a typo/fault caused by your publisher, of course, never you! I always feel better after a good laugh, even if it is aimed at me. Send some funny stuff to *WritersTalk*, please! Limericks if you are up for it, or just plain weirdness in words with a punch line. Warm up November or December; help us laugh until we get red in the face.

— WT

## More from October 3(1)

—Photos from Carolyn Donnell



Above:

Pat Bustamante's costume  
Pat went home before judging and left her literary costume behind. The cat says, "I don't like tricks. I don't do costumes. I don't beg." So now it's up to you to guess its meaning.

Right:

Edie Matthews, dressed as a witch from *Macbeth*, ignores Carolyn Donnell, a red-horned devil.



## Square Root of Infinity

There was a young man from Trinity  
Who solved the square root of infinity  
While counting the digits  
Was seized by the fidgets  
Dropped science and took up divinity.

— Anonymous

## Thoughts Shuffling Up My Street

Thoughts Shuffling Up My Street  
On an Unseasonably Cool Breezy  
Friday Afternoon,  
Awaiting Impending Left Foot  
Surgery and  
Musing On Long Lost Love

Maybe  
there is a place  
where  
you can create  
an  
infinite  
number of  
haiku  
about fir trees  
with wind singing in  
their bluish branches,  
and  
each one  
will always be  
different.

— Stephen C. Wetlesen

## Ode to the Writing Process...



I shot a pitch into the air,  
It fell to Earth, and I know where,  
The agents gasped,  
They loved it, true,  
But I was left with much to do.  
For a pitch is not, you see,  
A manuscript done properly.  
Logic, grammar, punctuation,  
(and learn to live despite inflation),  
All lined up to vex my day;  
To make me labor short of pay.  
Pace and flow and turns of phrase,  
Needed there to garner praise.  
Format, spelling, sense of humor,  
(All this work is not a rumor!)  
So now I'm left with much to do,  
To keep my novel's promise true!

— Richard Scott



# My Date with Basil

by Betty Auchard

Basil is my writing buddy and lives only a mile from me. We spend time together, talking, eating, sharing stories, and attending meetings. Most people in our writing club assume we're an "item." But Basil has many health problems and is not inclined to get cozy with me. To do so would compromise our friendship as well as his health. We both know that's the truth, but we keep it to ourselves, letting people think what they want. It's nice to have a male friend to meet for breakfast at The Live Oak Kitchen with no strings attached. And it's great to have another writer I trust to give honest feedback and to share rides to our club meetings.

The evening before Valentine's Day, I had taken a break from my computer to watch TV when the phone rang.

"Hi. This is Basil." His voice sounded tired.

"Hi, Basil," I was not tired.

He said, "Are you busy tonight?"

"Nope, what's up?" I assumed he was asking me out for a Valentine dinner.

"I need you to take me to the hospital." *The hospital? Was he toying with me?* No, he wasn't. He had tried reaching his daughter and after several hours, called me. He was having trouble breathing and had pain in his left lung. I pushed my "stay calm" button and got instructions for letting myself into his house, but I was a wreck.

As I drove the mile between us, I imagined all kinds of scenarios because this sounded serious. As soon as I opened the front door, I called his name and he answered from the living room. I got in there real quick and found him in his pajamas and robe, barely upright on the sofa. He wasted no time telling me what to assemble in case he had to stay in the hospital. I appeared composed as I packed the necessary items.

But my phony control cracked a little when I asked for the third time, "Are you sure we shouldn't call 911?" He brushed off that idea with a wave of his hand and assured me it wasn't that serious. I prayed he was right. Getting him into my car was really hard because he was so weak that it caused him to stumble.

Luckily, I had a death grip on his arm. Once he was settled in the seat, I said, "Fasten your seat belt, Basil. I'll try not to make this a bumpy ride." He didn't acknowledge that I was trying to lighten things up a bit with my imitation of Bette Davis in the movie, *All about Eve*.

After the endless times I'd driven Basil to club meetings, I was aware of his back seat driving skills. They were as fine-tuned as my deceased husband's, and this emergency night was no exception. Basil slumped in the passenger's seat with his chin on his chest and eyes closed as he struggled for breath. He couldn't even see when he said, "No, don't go this way." I hushed him up by saying this was always the way I went to Kaiser.

When we reached the emergency entrance, I left Basil in the car while I went inside to get help transferring him to a wheelchair. With that done, I felt less tense and tried again to reach his daughter with no luck. Several nurses and a doctor had gathered around him asking questions. Then they shot him up with something that made him relax so he could breathe. I almost asked them for a hit but it seemed inappropriate to make any more jokes. Now, they were in charge of Basil, so I plopped myself in a chair and closed my eyes. The sounds of a nighttime emergency ward barely registered. Just as the tension was leaving my bones, someone interrupted my peace.

"Mrs. Stevens?" A nurse with a clipboard was addressing me. I sat up like a pole.

"I'm not married to Mr. Stevens. He's my neighbor and friend."

"All *righty*, then." She couldn't hide her devilish grin. "I have a few questions."

Basil was transferred to a larger room filled with equipment where three doctors attempted to diagnose my friend's problem. They asked me to come, too. I kept one eye on the monitor that showed Basil's unstable heartbeat while the nurse fussed with dials, vials, and machines. I was seriously concerned about my buddy's well-being.

Four hours passed and the place was never quiet. Now that Basil could breathe more easily, he became the life of the party. I was a used dish rag. He told stories about his writing career,

his grandchildren, his lifelong health problems, and the fact that he was supposed to have his weekly chemotherapy treatment the next day. To anyone who passed by, he introduced me as his friend, the author. This prompted nurses to ask what I wrote about.

"Memoirs," I said. "I write about the events of my life and the people who cause them." Naturally, they wanted to know if I was going to write about that evening. I said, "I'm not sure. I don't know how this story is going to end yet."

Several hours later, Basil's daughter finally arrived from an out of town trip. We talked for an hour. It was midnight and I wasn't tired anymore. But I knew that once I got home, I would need to unwind with a cup of hot milk and a shot of brandy.

Before I left, Basil beckoned me closer to his bedside and said, "Thank you for all you've done for me, Betty." He was so sincere that I wondered if he was saying goodbye *forever*. Then he said, "I hope you're taking notes about tonight because I'm DYING for you to write a story about me."

"Basil, you don't have to DIE for me to write a story about you. I'll start it tonight. But when you get home from the hospital, you owe me dinner at the diner." —WT

*Basil Stevens was a charter member of CWC. Upon his death in 2004, South Bay Branch set up a memorial writing contest in his honor to encourage attendance at our East of Eden conference.*



## Divine Paintbrush Haiku

God made bright rainbows —  
gifts for Noahs with deep faith.  
Why not love colors?

— Stephen C. Wetlesen

# Conferences, Workshops and Contests

## Dream Quest One Poetry and Writing Contest

Deadline, January 13; entry fee, \$10 short story, \$5 poem. First, second, and third prizes for a short story in the amounts of \$500, \$250, and \$100; prizes for poetry in the amounts of \$250, \$125, and \$50. Website: [dreamquestone.com](http://dreamquestone.com)

"And remember, in whatever you do, it's okay to dream, for dreams do come true." — Dream Quest One

## More Contests on next page

Some websites with ongoing lists of writing competitions include *Poets and Writers* at [pw.org/grants](http://pw.org/grants); and *Writers Digest* at [writersdigest.com/competitions/writing-competitions](http://writersdigest.com/competitions/writing-competitions) — WT

## WOW! Women on Writing Fall Flash Fiction Contest

Deadline, November 30; entry fee, \$10. First, second, and third prizes, \$350, \$250 and \$150; runners-up, \$25 and \$20. Website: [wow-womenonwriting.com](http://wow-womenonwriting.com)

## San Francisco Writers Conference February 2013

Major names in publishing attend the SFWC and take personal interest in projects discovered there. Featured speakers include R.L. Stine, Barbara Taylor Bradford, Robert Dugoni, Meg Waite Clayton, David Corbett, Ellen Sussman and many other notable authors, literary agents, self-publishing leaders, and editors from major publishing houses.

It all happens February 14-17, 2013 at the Mark Hopkins Hotel, San Francisco. Visit [www.SFWriters.org](http://www.SFWriters.org) — WT

## CWC Fremont Area Writers Self-Publishing Conference

December 8, 2012

9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Hyatt Place

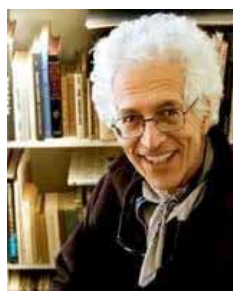
3101 West Warren Ave.

Fremont, CA 94538

\$55 for CWC Members, \$65 for Non-Members, includes lunch

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

Speakers, below: Mark Coker, Founder, Smashwords; Alan Rinzler, Editor; Joel Frielander, Book Designer; Jennifer Basye Sander, *Idiot's Guide to Self-Publishing*; Susanne Lakin, Editor.



More speakers: Nina Amir, *From Blog to Book*; Carla King, *Self-Publishing Bootcamp*; Laurie McLean, *Self-Publishing Bootcamp*; Marcus Araiza, Author; Diana Silva, Social Media Strategist.



## 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 [martha@engber.com](mailto:martha@engber.com)

### 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)

### 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)

## Contests and Conferences

Please send announcements of contests and conferences to [newsletter@southbaywriters.com](mailto:newsletter@southbaywriters.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, Tokyo Buffet, 7217 Greenback Lane, Citrus Heights. [cwcsacramentowriters.org](http://cwcsacramentowriters.org)

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

## Contest and Call for Submissions

*Editors: Kate Farrell, Linda Joy  
Myers, Amber Lea Starfire*

Where were you in the 60s and 70s? We are seeking women with telltale stories of that extraordinary era for a unique anthology: *Times They Were A-Changing: Women Remember the 60s and 70s*. Prizes will be awarded to the top three works, though all entries are eligible for publication. First: \$300, publication, and 5 copies of the anthology; Second: \$150, publication, and 3 copies of the anthology; Third: \$75, publication, and 2 copies of the anthology. **Deadline: January 15, 2013.** Entry fees: \$20 for prose, \$15 for poetry. For complete guidelines and to enter, go to [www.timestheywerechanging.com](http://www.timestheywerechanging.com) — WT



## 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



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
November 2012				1	2 7:30P Open mic Barnes & Noble Almaden, San Jose	3
4	5	6	7 6:00P Regular Dinner Meeting, Harry's Hofbrau	8	9	10 Submission Deadline <i>WritersTalk</i>
11	12	13	14	15	16 7:30P Open mic Barnes & Noble Pruneyard, Campbell	17
18	19	22	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 7:30P SBW Board Meeting	29	30		
Future Flashes						
Holiday Bash Wednesday, December 5 2012	January Regular Dinner Meeting Wednesday, January 9, 2013	Blockbuster Plots Workshop, Martha Alderson Sunday, January 27 2013				

### Your ad could go here

\$7 per column inch for SBW  
members

\$10 per inch for nonmembers

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Read the Constant Contact notices  
in your email to receive meeting and  
event announcements. If you are not  
receiving those announcements, send  
your name and email address to  
[webmaster@southbaywriters.com](mailto:webmaster@southbaywriters.com)

### 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 or on the website.  
[southbaywriters.com](http://southbaywriters.com)  
[amazon.com](http://amazon.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) or go to  
[www.poetrycentersanjose.org/calendar.html](http://www.poetrycentersanjose.org/calendar.html)



### 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)

## Ongoing 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.

**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

**November Regular Monthly Meeting****6 p.m. Wednesday, November 7**

Harry's Hofbrau

390 Saratoga Avenue

San Jose

Dinner and program \$15

**SPEAKER:****Peg Alford Pursell****A presenter of few words****You may be feeling a sudden urge****to write Flash Fiction shortly****— It's a genre catching fire**

*WritersTalk* deadline is always  
the 10th of the month.

**New Location****New Date****First Wednesday****Harry's Hofbrau**

From Highway 280, take Saratoga Avenue North.  
Harry's is on your right near Stevens Creek Blvd.