



WRITERSTALK

Volume 20
Number 9
September 2012

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

SEPTEMBER SPEAKERS

Laurie McLean and Linda Lee present **Mini Self-Publishing Bootcamp**

by Rita Beach

The September meeting of South Bay Writers Club will be an exciting event. Literary Agent and ePublisher Laurie McLean has teamed up with Website Guru Linda Lee. Together they will highlight the main things to consider—editing, formatting, marketing, and sales—before you make the decision to publish your writing as an eBook or a pBook.



Laurie McLean puts together digital marketing plans for her authors as “agent savant” at the Larsen-Pomada literary agency. She has been writing professionally since high school—first as a journalist, then as a public relations agent. She earned a bachelor’s degree in Journalism from the State University of New York and a master’s degree at Syracuse University’s prestigious Newhouse School of Journalism. She is co-organizer of the San Francisco Writer’s Conference and founder of the San Francisco Writers University. McLean will give you tips on book publicity, author PR, and a social media plan you can implement today.

Linda Lee is an online expert, writer, speaker, educator, and website designer who demystifies the experience. She specializes in WordPress design, WordPress websites, instruction, and problem solving. Lee is the founder of WordPress Bootcamp, Smart Women Stupid Computers, Askmepe-Webdesign and WordPress Central, a website that offers free WordPress help and videos. She is people savvy and brings technology down to earth. Using simple, everyday language, she empowers people to make the most of this ever-changing technology. She is co-president of the Women’s National Book Association, San Francisco Chapter, and a volunteer director of both the San Francisco Writers Conference and the Midsummer Mozart Festival. *Continued on Page 6*



AUGUST RECAP

Rozell plays well And the show goes on

by Pat Bustamante

Despite a last minute change of venue, the August 14 South Bay Writers show went on as scheduled, and speaker Vickie Rozell played to an appreciative audience.

Rozell opened a window into a part of the literary world that many writers are not familiar with: how to write a play; what kinds of research are necessary; who will take a look—and will it pay?

Our August speaker obviously enjoys her life as a dramaturg researcher/director, a person participating in live theater with all of its excitement. She was very convincing when she said, “And anybody can write a play!”

Employed by TheatreWorks, Rozell gave a good perspective on their August New Works Festival—and how playwrights, new or seasoned, may wish to get involved in this local, annual event. First-timers are valued. All you need is a catchy idea.

“It’s all dialog,” she reminded us, and although TheatreWorks will take no unsolicited submissions, Rozell mentioned several venues that will. The Bay Area has quite a variety of live theaters, easy to locate.

Rozell took questions from the audience right from the very beginning and all through her talk. She gave budding playwrights the chance to process crucial information tailored to their needs.

Adaptations of novels or any interesting story can translate into a play.

Some theater groups are interested in the one-act play; and all theater company managers know that an audience

Continued on Page 6

New meeting dates, new location

First Wednesdays at Harry’s Hofbrau.

See Page 6

President's Challenge

by Bill Baldwin
President, South Bay Writers

Taste and temperament

We all know, I hope, that there are different kinds of writers, different temperaments, different attitudes and interests. This in addition to different types of writing and different genres, and it's all very personal. You may be a poet or a playwright; you may produce fiction or non-fiction. You may stick to facts, invent freely—or dabble in that mysterious realm of memoir, “creative non-fiction,” or “semi-autobiographical novel” where a certain element of the tall tale may sometimes lurk.

Whatever you write, you also have your personal temperament—a little like being a “morning person” or a “night person.” Part of this relates to those well-worn labels like classicist, romanticist, traditionalist, bohemian, and avant-garde. I'm thinking a bit more *personality* though.

Do you have a regular writing routine? We often hear that a writer *must* have one. Do you carefully plot out your novel? Or do you sit and write whatever occurs to you that particular day? Do you have a special writing table, with a special chair, a special computer screen or keyboard (or, if you prefer, a well-loved writing pen and notebook)? Do you need routine and predictability to write? Or do you crave adventure and need to try new things to get your creative juices flowing?

Listening to dramaturg Vickie Rozell at our August dinner meeting, I was reminded of the two clerks who go in search of adventure in Thornton Wilder's play *The Matchmaker*. We're all in an adventure now, willy-nilly!

On Thursday, August 9th, I learned that the Lookout, our meeting venue for some years now, had closed without warning, five days before our meeting. Our SBW Board had met for a pleasant few hours the evening before, aware that some changes might be in the mix after October, but never expecting—

So we scrambled and arranged to meet at the Round Table Pizza at Wolfe and Old San Francisco Road, three miles from the Lookout. We were thrown into a new environment, something we weren't used to. Though some of us may nurture a more predictable temperament, we *all* can use a little shaking up now and then.

And so we've lurched into our new season; wondering, perhaps, where the year will take us! But really: Why be staid and safe all the time?

We're exploring new locations, possibly Wednesdays rather than Tuesdays (we met on Wednesday for years and only moved to Tuesday because a conflict developed at the Lookout). Do share your thoughts and feelings about this. As I've said so many times, this is *your* club. **Let us know what you think.** It's *your* success we're after. Jump on this writing train with us—we'll have a rewarding ride. **WT**



California Writers Club South Bay Branch

— o —

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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.



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WritersTalk

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Submissions

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

Guest Columns

Almost Anything Goes (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

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Announcements and Advertisements

newsletter@southbaywriters.com

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by Marjorie Bicknell Johnson

Editor



Camera obscura made clear

At the Fibonacci conference in Eger, Hungary, 81 participants from 21 countries each made twenty-minute presentations on a high-level mathematical topic; many of them used *PowerPoint* but turned their backs on the audience and read the screen aloud. I thought of South Bay Writers and how we need to give book talks if we are fortunate enough to have a published book. Although attending Bill Baldwin's Open Mics certainly helps, perhaps we need a workshop on how to deliver a presentation.

The room we used in Eger was in a historic building with high ceilings and marble staircases. In the adjoining building and high above the street was an astronomical museum and higher yet, a *camera obscura*. The "Eye of Eger" was up several flights of stairs, up more than 89 steps to the top of the tower on the Lyceum Building. A periscope focused a beam of light onto a circular stone table in a dark room, making a full-color moving image of the town below, like a postcard from Harry Potter. I thought, what if, at midnight, it projected a street scene from 1880?



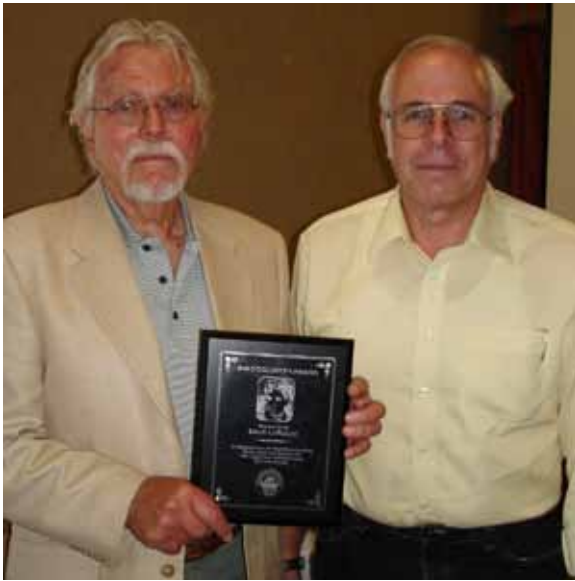
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF FIBONACCI NUMBERS
AND THEIR APPLICATIONS
June 25-30, 2012
Institute of Mathematics and Informatics
Eszterházy Károly College, EGER, Hungary

A *camera obscura* follows the same principle as a pinhole camera. When the reflection of a bright object passes through a small hole, the light rays reform as an upside-down image on a flat surface parallel to the hole. If you go into a dark room on a bright day and make a small hole in a window cover, on the opposite wall the world outside will appear in full color but upside down.

Here in Santa Clara, on May 20 during the annular solar eclipse, light passing through tiny gaps between leaves in a tree projected many small partial suns onto our garage door. There is a *camera obscura* at the beach at Santa Monica and in the Seal Rock Area in San Francisco; you could use one in a story as a plot element.

After the conference, Frank and I went to Budapest in time for a heat wave, 40°C or 104°F. However, we found something cool, in both senses of the word; we visited an underground cave system used as a place to hide from the Turks and as an air-raid shelter and underground hospital in more recent times. We met our bus tour group there, expecting a trip through Eastern Germany and ending in Vienna, but we hadn't received any paperwork from the tour company. Because I had to finish this newsletter and because I knew quite a lot about Germany, I didn't do my usual pre-travel research. The bus was going to *Poland*!

In Krakow, we visited the Wieliczka Salt Mine, in operation since the 13th century and now a UNESCO world heritage site. And, yes, we visited the infamous Nazi death-camp, Auschwitz, the most streamlined mass killing center ever created. Then we flashed through Berlin, Dresden, and Prague and finished in Vienna, where we visited *Schloss Schönbrunn*, the small summer palace of the Habsburgs with its 1441 rooms. We learned that Maria Theresa was the "mother-in-law" of Europe because her *sixteen* children married into other royal families to form alliances – and the birth of each of those sixteen children had been witnessed by droves of royal personages. What one will do as duty to the state! **WT**



Dave LaRoche presented with Ina Coolbrith Award by CWC President, Robert Garfinkle.

— Photo by Margie Yee Webb

News from CWC Central Board

by Dave LaRoche

Your Central Board, the governing body of California Writers Club, met on July 22 in Oakland. This year's annual election brings Bob Garfinkle (Fremont Area Writers) as president; Margie Yee Webb (Sacramento) as VP; Sharon Svitak (TriValley) as treasurer; and Joyce Kreig (Central Coast) as secretary to serve in 2012-13. All but Margie were incumbents before the vote.

During our recent meeting the following came to the Central Board's attention:

- A new branch is forming in Napa.
- A 2012-13 Central Board budget of \$35K was approved.
- Current membership of 1600 members was reported, Redwood Writers the largest branch with 250, South Bay second with 185.
- A preview of a new Jack London documentary, available to branches on DVD.
- A motion to support a CWC table at next February's San Francisco Writers Conference in the amount of \$250 was approved. (Member branches of the NorCal Group will supply the balance of about \$350, \$250 already pledged.)
- The Scholarship fund now exceeds \$15K and the board discussed the process for applying for an award. Briefly, branches advance candidates with resumes and goals to a Central Board Committee whose evaluations and recommendations will be placed in front of the board and a selection made by a vote.
- A budget of \$5400 for the Autumn Literary Review was approved.
- MRMS, an automated members record system, saving hours of tedious and repetitive work for branch chairs, was adopted for use beginning July 1 this year.
- And a service award, the Ina Coolbrith, was presented to yours truly.

I have represented South Bay Writers at these meetings for five years and, on their behalf, achieved approval of the following policies and procedures: reduction in Central Board meetings from four to the one mandatory and no more than two; a 20% reduction in dues paid annually by branches to CWC; an electronic procedure for conducting official board business; publication of a magazine, *The CWC Literary Review*, and official recognition and budget for the regional organizations.

In a subsequent article, I will introduce and update us on the NorCal Group, our regional organization dedicated to furthering event support among local branches.
WT

LaRoche Honored Ina Coolbrith Award, CWC

Dave LaRoche received the prestigious Ina Coolbrith Award for Service from California Writers Club at the July 22 meeting of the CWC Central Board.

Dave was commended for his years of service to CWC and South Bay Writers. His impressive resumé includes

- Editor, *WritersTalk*, 2004 – 2007
- President, SBW, 2007 – 2010
- Recipient, Jack London Award, 2009
- SBW Representative to CWC Central Board, 2007 to date
- Editor, *CWC Literary Review*, and
- Founder, NorCal Group and Publishing Pathways Program.

As a writer, Dave has three novels in progress and has written and published many short stories. WT

SBW's Online Presence

by Dick Amyx

A topic of discussion at the SBW Board meeting of August 8 was South Bay Writers' uneven presence on the Web. What web exposure we have has been the work of individual members and has never been coordinated in any way.

To address this issue, I volunteered to assemble a committee, which I hope will include members who are familiar with and comfortable with social networking sites. The purpose of this committee will be to develop a plan and policy for SBW's appearance in the virtual world. Topics this committee would discuss might include

- Benefits and drawbacks of an online presence,
- Which social networking sites might be appropriate for SBW,
- How material on social networking sites would be coordinated with SBW's own website and *WritersTalk*, and kept in conformance with SBW bylaws, policies and procedures,
- Who would be responsible for SBW's online presence, and
- How continuity and consistency of SBW's online presence could be maintained.

If you're interested in being a member of this committee, please let me know by sending an email to dick@amyx.org.
WT

September Accolades

By Andrea Galvacs

Nina Amir's book *How to Blog a Book* has been on Amazon's bestseller list for 13 weeks since its release, and has had over 2,500 ordered from bookstores.

Valerie Estelle Frankel just published *Harry Potter, Still Recruiting: An Inner Look at Harry Potter Fandom* with Zosima Press. It and *Free Guide to Self-Publishing and Book Promotion: Inside Secrets* from an author whose self-published books sold in thousands are available at www.HarryPotterParody.com.

Hi-Dong Chai's article "My Truest Hope" was published in the August issue of *Guideposts* magazine. Read more at www.hidongchai.com.

Marjorie Johnson is a finalist for a 2012 Global eBook Award for her novel, *Jaguar Princess: The Last Maya Shaman*.

Dave LaRoche was given the Ina Coolbrith Service Award at the July meeting of the CWC Central Board.

Dr. Audry Lynch's new book (number 7) *Garth Jeffers Remembers His Father, Robinson Jeffers: Recollections of a Poet's Son* is now available on amazon.com.

Vanita Pande obtained a publisher's contract for her first book, *Who Said I'm Perfect?*

Please email your successes to me at newsletter@southbaywriterscom or present them at a meeting. WT



Left to right: Sally Milnor, Edie Matthews, Andrea Galvacs, Steve Wetlesen, and Carolyn Donnell.
—Photo by Dick Amyx

And the winners of the Challenge are . . .

At the August 14 meeting of South Bay Writers, Andrea Galvacs announced the winners of the *WritersTalk* Challenge and presented each one with a \$40 check and a framed certificate.

- Fiction: For you, Franz, by Carolyn Donnell
- Essay: On my Poetic Art Process, by Stephen Wetlesen
- Memoir: Pounding it Out in the Newsroom, by Edie Matthews
- Poetry: Sparrow's Song, by Sally Milnor

Submissions to *WritersTalk* are automatically entered in the Challenge Contest. The winners from the current period will be announced in February. See details on page 14. WT

New Members

by Rita Beach

The Alice LaPlante workshop brought several new members to our club, **Kris Saba, Martha Sessums, Vinita Pande,** and **Marta Hiatt**. Kris writes memoir, while Martha writes novels. Vinita writes nonfiction books and wants more information about writing. Marta has published the nonfiction book, *Mind Magic: Techniques for Transforming Your Life*. We are pleased to welcome you to South Bay Writers.

Amrita Dhar found us online; her blog is <http://a-gadabout.blogspot.com/> and her email is a27dhar@yahoo.com. She writes fiction and is working on a novel based in India. She moved to the U.S. eleven years ago, is a product man-

ager for AAA, and is working hard to complete her book before a new baby arrives. She loves independent cinema, reading fiction, dance, social media, and food. Amrita joined because she wants to find a critique group and to learn about all aspects of writing.

It has been my pleasure over the last several months to introduce the newest members to our club. Since I have accepted the position of vice-president, this column will be turned over to another member. I have enjoyed my time writing this column and will do my best as your vice-president to present the best speakers I can find to address the specific areas that interest you.

Please, feel free to email me at ritabeachmusic1@aol.com with your ideas and thoughts. WT

Short story rules

by Luanne Oleas

In the book *Bagombo Snuff Box*, an assortment of his short stories published in 1999, Kurt Vonnegut listed a few rules for writing a short story.

- Give the reader at least one character he or she can root for.
- Every character should want something, even if it is only a glass of water.
- Every sentence must do one of two things: reveal character or advance the action.

And, most important, keep writing.

WT

EXTRA

South Bay Writers changes location and meeting date

South Bay Writers will hold its regular dinner meetings at Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose, at 6:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of every month. Meeting schedule:

Wednesday, September 5

Wednesday, October 3

Wednesday, November 7

There will be no regular dinner meeting in December. Instead, we will hold our Holiday Party. **WT**

Mini Bootcamp

Continued from Page 1

McLean and Lee will help you understand differing options of self-publishing and what's worth paying for and what's not. You can decide which path to take, but this information will lay the foundation for what you need to know. They offer presentations on self-publishing and blogging throughout the year on selfpubbootcamp.com.

How many of us have written a book, given years of time and devotion to it, and finally said, "I think it's finished?" Then asked, "Now what do I do, where do I go from here?" This is the one presentation this year that can answer so many questions of this type.

Attending this meeting will be your best opportunity to learn about self-publishing from knowledgeable presenters Linda Lee and Laurie McLean, so don't miss it. And remember to invite your friends!

Self-Publishing Bootcamps are scheduled on:

- Saturday, September 8, San Domenico School, San Rafael
- Friday, September 21, Central Coast Writers Conference, San Luis Obispo
- Saturday, October 13, Stanford Tresidder Union, Palo Alto
- Saturday, November 10, Mills College, Oakland **WT**

Rozell plays well

Continued from Page 1

will sit only for so long, say, two to three hours. She explained primary considerations, "It's dialog . . . short lines go quickly so it's essential to read your play out loud and time it."

Rozell listed a variety of resources for either beginning or market-hungry playwrights, such as San Jose State University, local community theaters, libraries where you can check out popular plays, San Jose City Lights and, of course, websites. Getting to know professional theater people is a must.

Questions arose about copyrights (automatic when written); length of time to hear back after submission (could be six months), traditional themes vs. non-traditional (both are good – family dramas are big now). Multiple submissions? Sure!

Some points did sound familiar to the non-playwrights. Rewrite according to feedback--any audience knows what keeps it awake. Research. Enlist the interest of an agent who specializes.

A script has a fluid life with many, many changes. Practice with your favorite novel, turning it into dialog, possibly even into a musical. Get your words out there. Sparkle!

Her enthusiasm was contagious. I felt like shouting, "I'm writing my play tomorrow!" **WT**



Vickie Rozell
— Photo by Dick Amyx



SBW August 14 Pizza Party Meeting

Left: Vickie Rozell and Colin Seymour

Below: Scene at Round Table Pizza

— Photos by Carolyn Donnell



Seven thousand words in pictures



Photo below by Carolyn Donnell.
Other photos this page by Dick Amyx.

SBW Annual BBQ

Our annual July barbecue, hosted by Edie and Jim Matthews in their park-like backyard, provided fun, food, and frolic as evidenced by the photos here and on <http://southbaywritersgallery.shutterfly.com/>

A big THANK YOU to Edie and Jim.



View from the Board

by S. Halloran

Nine of us – President Bill Baldwin, Vice President Rita Beach, Treasurer Mike Freda, Secretary Sylvia Halloran, Membership Chairman and Newsletter Editor Marjorie Johnson, Networking Chair Elena Martina, Members-at-Large Dick Amyx and Andrea Galvacs, and former Treasurer Richard Burns met in Sunnyvale Wednesday night, August 8, 2012.

The following motions were made and passed:

- (Johnson/Galvacs) to pay the three speakers for the September meeting up to \$100 each. 6 for, 1 abstain.
- (Freda/Galvacs) to purchase name badges for seven (7) additional people at a cost not to exceed \$140: two members-at-large, one membership chair, one newsletter editor, one networking chair, one publicity chair and one Central Board representative. Unanimous.

New officers Rita Beach and Mike Freda were welcomed. Returning officers were recognized for their continued dedication to the club. It was especially nice to have the former treasurer present to insure a smooth transfer of duties. Richard received our appreciation and thanks.

Treasurer Mike Freda volunteered to put together an operating budget for the year. Congratulations are in order to our liaison to the Central Board Dave LaRoche for his receipt of the Ina Coolbrith Award for Service to California Writers Club.

The board discussed location, content and pacing of the meetings. A canny survey of members by Marjorie Johnson, membership chairman, revealed that those not attending meetings have very specific reasons they do not come, some of which might be addressed to increase attendance.

A study group headed up by Dick Amyx will explore developing a coordinated Internet presence for the club. This meeting will be open to the membership – anyone with skills in social media or ideas concerning publicity is encouraged to attend.

New writing critique groups need to form. Mike Freda will extend an invitation at the next general meeting for members to join one.

The new board looks forward to this 2012–13 term with optimism and a sense of adventure. WT

News Flash!

by Rita Beach

We are pleased to announce that, starting in September, a new feature will be added to our meetings: “Resident Experts Speak.” We have many members who hold valuable knowledge that we all need as writers. Each month I will ask one of our experts to speak about their expertise. For September I have asked Meredy Amyx to tell us what editors do, why we should seek their services before we publish, and what this will cost us. She will speak for ten minutes about the role of editors.

If you have specialized knowledge and want to speak as a resident expert, email me at ritabeachmusic1@aol.com.

WT



Rita Beach, our new SBW VP
—photo by Dick Amyx

Class assignment

A college class was told to write the shortest possible story containing the elements of religion, sex, and mystery. This one received an A+:

My God. I’m pregnant.
I wonder who did it?



Networking Log

By Elena Martina

Our membership is comprised of all sorts of people from different literary backgrounds. They are writing students, poets, columnists, and radio personalities, but only a few have actually published books. If you are a published author, an obvious opportunity you may not have considered but have at hand is to swap your book with another member. This will expand your readership and might get you a nice book review. I have exchanged my own book *Clinging To Deceit* on three different occasions and cannot tell you how happy I am with the swaps. I would like for this idea to be a trend in our club.

If you swap publications, just think of the wonderful reading material you may encounter. Books vary in size, genre, and price, but don’t let those differences stop you. Even if you do not like a thriller, a romance, a memoir, or a poetry book, you can always give it away as a present.

I encourage everyone to be bold and ask other authors to swap books. You’ll get your book read with perhaps a nice review of your work.

You can reach me at networking@southbaywriters.com.

WT

The Thing in a Cave

By Emma Hooker

In a cave on a hill, that's where THE THING lives, and if you ever saw it the first thing you would notice would be that his eyes were blood red, his nose was bright purple and his ears were too green. His neck was too fat and had bright stripes, so bright that you almost forget to see the dirty looking brown spots on the rest of him. He isn't too big and he isn't too small and he isn't too short and he isn't too tall. Nobody comes to visit him and he forgot how to smile so he lives all alone, all alone in that place.

You might guess that he sleeps most all the time but one day he woke up 'cuz he heard a strange noise and he knew something had almost found his cave so he slid on his fat belly to the place in his cave where his blood red eyes could see whatever it was that woke him up. Usually the only things that he had ever seen were the bats and the rats and the things that fell off the ceiling and crawled on his toes. When he reached the outside of the cave, he saw something he had never seen before. It was two things that each had two legs and were all the same color. He didn't want company! He had to think of a way to make those things with two legs go away!

Then he remembered that those other things, the little things with four legs always ran away when they saw him. Maybe those things with two legs would run away, too! So he slid on his fat belly to the top of a nearby rock and right away began to bounce. He bounced higher and higher and even bounced hard enough to make himself grunt! But the Two Legs didn't move! THE THING had never learned to be careful so he bounced higher than he had ever tried before and bounced himself off the rock.

That's when the Two Legs and Two Legs saw IT! You know? That between the two of us THE THING had come out of the cave. It moved again so the Two Legs and Two Legs decided to not stay on that hill any longer in case THE THING knew how to run. It could, but not as fast as the Two Legs and Two Legs because they didn't have a fat

Publish an eBook: Mark Coker Workshop

cwcsacramentowriters.org

California Writers Club, Sacramento Branch, presents nationally-acclaimed eBook expert Mark Coker on Saturday, September 29. South Bay Writers members are encouraged to carpool to the ebook workshop for a fun road trip.

Let's Publish an eBook LIVE! Workshop

How to Produce, Distribute & Sell Your Work in the Evolving eWorld

Saturday, September 29, 2012

9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m. (Register at 9 a.m.)

Location: **Cattlemens**, 12409 Folsom Boulevard, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670, Hwy 50 at Hazel Avenue exit. **Cost is \$45** for CWC Members, **\$55** for Non-Members; **includes** morning coffee and bagels, plus lunch.

For complete details: <http://www.cwcsacramentowriters.org/wp-content/uploads/Mark-Coker-Eook-LIVE-Workshop-9-29-20121.pdf>

SPACE IS LIMITED. EARLY REGISTRATION IS ENCOURAGED!

belly like you know who! It didn't take long for Two Legs and Two Legs to reach the little lake at the bottom of his hill where they had left their boat. They were so glad to see the water that without looking over their shoulders they just jumped right in with a great big splash! Even they didn't know that they could swim so fast!

THE THING was right behind them but just when he saw the lake he suddenly remembered that he hated water. He slid to a stop at the edge of the lake—that was as close as he wanted to go—trying to see where the Two Legs and Two Legs were. He looked and he looked until his red eyes began to hurt. He stood still and didn't want to move right away while his brain was still thinking about what had just happened. Instead, he watched as the ripples in the water slowly stopped moving and the lake became still and shiny.

Suddenly, he saw something that seemed to be almost floating there. He moved closer to get a better look and guess what? The thing in the water moved, too. It didn't take him long to see that it had a fat neck with stripes and dirty looking spots on its body and that its eyes were staring, staring at him. Of course, he didn't want it there in case the Two Legs and Two Legs came back.

Somehow THE THING remembered that all the four leg things and even the two leg things ran away fast when-

ever he made a big grunting noise so he flopped down on his fat belly and bounced and bounced and grunted and grunted until he was sure that the thing in the water was gone. Then he straightened up as best he could and peeked over the edge and looked again into the water and GUESS WHAT! It was still there!

Something told him to spin around and start sliding back up the hill, go past the big rock and into his own personal cave, the cave with the bats and the rats and the things that fall off the ceiling and crawl around his toes.

He never came out of his cave again. So if you ever walk up that little hill and go past that certain cave and you hear a big GRUNT you will know that THE THING is really still in there.

Editor's note: These days, after a major stroke, Emma cannot hold a book to read and she cannot use a keyboard. But she doesn't let anything stop her from writing. She has learned to use *Dragon* voice recognition software. **WT**

Calling all ghosts and ghouls

October is right around the corner.

WritersTalk needs stories, articles and poems with a Halloween-ish theme—the scary, the paranormal, the eerie. Send us the ghosts from your closets—skeletons, too. **WT**

Book Announcement: *Hueless in Chicago*

by Nader Khaghani



The poem “Pomegranate Garden” begins the newly published work of fiction, *The Grand Conference of Birds at Grant Park/Hueless in Chicago* by Nader Khaghani. Its last stanza sets the tone:

For to create is to enrich life
To enrich life is to embrace living
to embrace living is to have lived fully
To have lived fully is to leave your mark behind
Create.

The protagonist Baroon is indeed hueless and searches for his personal style to give life to the locked up images inside his mind. What does it take to melt the iceberg? Where is the way, which impregnates the imagination with fresh creative and personal imagery?

Sometimes creativity flows unimpeded and the book/poem/painting finds a life of its own and before we know it, the work has self-pollinated. All we need do is reap what our psyche has already sown. Other times, like Baroon, we find ourselves on the ropes and nothing seems to jell.

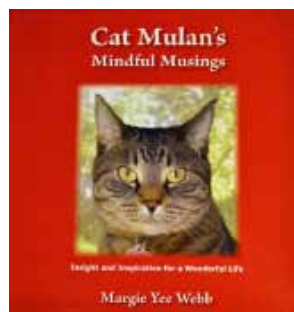
Locked up images want to pour out but remain jumbled up and boxed in, and the spiritual energy has turned gray. Where can we find those sunny bright colors to paint our psyche out of the maze? What can turn our creative energy, which has festered and turned gray, back to color?

Cat Mulan's Mindful Musings

by Margie Yee Webb

Margie Yee Webb is pleased to announce that she was awarded “Best Nonfiction, Gift Category” and “Best Book Design, 2nd Place” for *Cat Mulan's Mindful Musings: Insight and Inspiration for a Wonderful Life* in the Northern California Publishers & Authors Association's 2012 Book Awards. Tim Flynn of RelKey Books and James Neal were the design team for the book. She was also awarded Certificates of Excellence for “Gift” and “Color Photographs, series” in the Cat Writers' Association 2011 Communications Contest.

Margie's *Cat Mulan* book has led to her next project, *Not Your Mother's Book . . . On Cats* for which she is seeking true cat stories. *Not Your Mother's Book (NYMB)* is a new anthology for a new century from Publishing Syndicate. On Cats, On Travel, and On Writing are some of the nearly 40 *NYMB* titles accepting stories. For submission guidelines and story deadlines, visit http://publishingsyndicate.com/publishing_syndicate/submissions/nymb_submit_guidelines.html.



Writing is Rewriting is Revising: 7 Ways to Do It

by Nancy Curteman

<http://nancycurteman.wordpress.com>

Most authors agree that writing is rewriting is revising. The question is how to do it? After many long hours of editing my work, I've developed a few strategies that seem pretty effective. Here are seven of them.

1. After completing your novel, put your manuscript out of your sight and out of your mind for at least a couple of weeks. This will allow you to detach enough from your masterpiece to enable a needed measure of objectivity.
2. Examine the opening of the story. Make certain it starts with something happening that will impact the viewpoint character and set her on a path toward a goal. Delete any poetic descriptions of clouds.
3. Check your chapter endings. Most of them should end with something that hooks the reader—a twist, disaster, crisis or a character in serious jeopardy (physical, emotional, mental).
4. Look carefully at your viewpoint character. Check to see that most of the story takes place in that character's viewpoint. Revise scenes in which you jumped in and out of several different character viewpoints. Take out unnecessary self-indulgent author intrusions.
5. Consider the story ending. Does the ending solve the character's problem or show that she met her goal? Does it answer the question posed at the beginning of the story? If not, revise.
6. Be sure your timing is correct. Don't place your character in Paris at three pm and in San Francisco an hour later. A timeline chart really helps.
7. Find every “coincidence” in your novel and replace it with struggle for your character.

Of course, line edit your novel. Eliminate all spelling and grammar errors. Often your best work results from writing, rewriting and revising.

Editor's note:

Nancy Curteman's blog, address above, has many excellent writing tips. **WT**

Terse on Verse for September

by Pat Bustamante

Sept-Ants

Getting antsy for an answer,
Sent that opus long ago.
Thought it good, a true entrancer!
Why the delay in telling me so?

— Pat Bustamante

MERCY! You've submitted a poem, or other manuscript, after encouragement from an editor. Your first query letter was that good! Now you are hearing nothing; time to send another (as tactful as possible) query.

I'm looking forward to reading a tome or two about "The Waiting Game;" we already have best-sellers regarding "The Hunger Games." Patience — how does one manage that in the free-lance arena? You really believe in this market that appears to be perfect for you — but you are aware of much competition, so check your armor, and for goodness sake do not antagonize the editor/publishing group that displays interest in your work.

Sooner or later, you will hear. Try not to push it. You may gain some new "best friends" from this situation.

In any case, you now have proof that you are writing something worthwhile. Keep that friendly attitude even during wait-frustration, even if your work is ultimately rejected. You have begun a dialog: "You need. I will provide!" A door is opened now; keep studying the requirements they have laid out.

A genuine friendship may occur between author and publishing team. May it happen for you!

And if you are rejected at first, nothing should stop you from trying again. What the publishing world wants is a prolific author as opposed to a one-time-masterpiece-maker. Best-selling authors all had rejections at some early point.

Networking makes the contact so much easier, but please do not overdo it. Whatever information is sent in a rejection does NOT make an opportunity for arguments about how wrong they are, how they are missing out!

Accept that you are not the boss here. Read a rejection letter as some advice for potential improvement, do your re-writing, and submit elsewhere.

Remember that a "lengthy wait" after submission could best be looked at as the "glass half-full" — a possible sale! (Unfortunately I have bragged about such a sale, when it was not yet actual — and it did not happen, alas. My friends are very forgiving!)

It would be so nice if the petitioned editor would jump through the telephone or leap through your computer to tell you, "IT'S WONDERFUL." As you wait for an answer, daydream the lovely scenarios.

"The Waiting Game . . .," hmmm.
Throw a bunch of scantily-clad writers at a line of arm-locked grim editors — a new Olympic competition! **WT**



Speak Aloud

For this man of the written word
I braved a rare, desert night rain.
Martín Espada recited his work
his rhythmic, melodic voice
demanding poets to speak up
convey information with an edge.

The evolution of a poet being
the revolution of a conscience
the invisible becomes visible
an outlet for the unspeakable
words unspoken for all to hear.

I approached this poet advocate
signing his offering of books —
he glanced at my pen
which, of course, I handed to him.

Are you a poet?

Y...e...s... Yes, I am a poet.

His fingers caressed my pen...
¡Alabanza! to you, poet!

Surrendering his book, he said...
Believe in yourself.

Now, it would have been more than
enough
to know that Martín Espada went on
that night
to inscribe his books with my pen
but...

Believe in yourself?
Words spoken for all to hear
the invisible became visible.

— Leslie E. Hoffman

Thirty-five and Still Alive

She's thirty-five and lookin' good, at last, a single lady.
He got the boat, she got the house, the court gave her the baby.
She won't miss those wild fights nor all his tools he took, and
She's thirty-five and still alive and lookin' good and lookin'.

She planted flowers, painted walls, new couch and satin curtain
Her simple way to say good-bye to years and years of hurtin'.
So, day by day while baby plays, she's washin' clothes and cookin'.
She's thirty-five and still alive and lookin' good and lookin'.

A steadfast, cheerful, loyal man she longs someday to be there
To sometimes hold her through the night and softly whisper, "I care."

Another lonely day goes by, she does her exercises.
She's going out on Friday night; a glint of hope arises
'Cause nights were made not just for dreams nor just to read a book in.
She's thirty-five and still alive and lookin' good and lookin'.

— Richard A. Burns

My Truest Hope

By Hi-Dong Chai

One of my most treasured possessions is a small, framed photograph. It is a simple black-and-white picture of an elderly woman. Her eyes are closed, her hands clasped, her head bowed. The woman is my mother, not long before she died at age 92.

I keep the picture in my home office, on a windowsill beside my computer, where I see it every day. You could say the story of that photo is the story of my life. It is especially the story of a dark and frightening time in my life, when I nearly threw everything away. My mother saved me then. Or I should say, her faith saved me. All her life Mother never stopped praying. At last I discovered why.

I loved my mother deeply, but for most of my life I did not follow her example. I did not pray like she did and I did not live to love others. From the moment I arrived in America as a teenager I worked. Hard. I became an electrical engineer at IBM, then a college professor. I married an American woman, Phyllis, and raised a son and daughter. I owned a house in San Jose and a cabin in the mountains. I played golf. By the time I reached my fifties I was proud of my accomplishments. My family had been penniless refugees during the Korean War. Now I was a successful American.

Everything changed one morning when I woke up and noticed something strange at breakfast. My coffee had no taste. *Did Phyllis switch brands?*

A few days later in class I raised my arm to write on the chalkboard and felt faint. My arm dropped to my side. My students stared at me. "Must be getting old!" I tried to joke when I recovered.

Soon everything I ate and drank had no taste. I lost interest in teaching. I didn't want to get out of bed in the morning. A fog settled over me. My life, which I'd worked so hard to achieve, suddenly felt like a struggle. It had no taste. It seemed utterly pointless.

My doctor gave me tests but found nothing. As I was leaving his office he handed me a pamphlet: *Depression*. The moment I got outside I crumpled it up and threw it away. *How insulting!*

Off the Shelf

by Edie Matheine & Betty Anichand



"My life is an open book."

In Korea, where I grew up, depression was considered a sign of weakness, even insanity. Besides, what did I have to be depressed about?

True, I'd lived through hardship, but so had almost everyone in Korea in those years. My older brother Hi-Seung died after being conscripted into the Japanese army during World War II. My father, a Christian pastor, was taken away by invading North Korean soldiers and never returned. My family nearly starved during the Korean War. I waved goodbye to my mother from the deck of a freighter carrying me to America when I was just 16.

But I'd put my family's wartime trauma behind me years ago. My father worshipped a no-nonsense God and he expected us to do our duty, to endure without complaining. *I'm not depressed, I told myself. I will get better on my own.*

I didn't tell Phyllis about my symptoms. She worked as a nurse and was very involved at our church. Our kids were in high school and college. They had busy lives. Why burden them with such nonsense?

I managed to get up and go to work each day. Yet the fog over me thickened.

My routine felt draining. My success meant nothing. One weekend I drove alone to our cabin in the mountains. To my own surprise I found myself sitting on the floor with a knife in my hand. *Who will miss me when I'm gone? No one.*

At the last minute I remembered my father and became frightened. He had been very clear about what happened to people who disobeyed God. I looked around the cabin. *What are you doing, Hi-Dong? Get out of here!*

I returned home and admitted to Phyllis what I'd almost done. "Hi-Dong, why didn't you tell me?" she cried. "How long have you been feeling this way?"

"A few months," I mumbled. I felt so ashamed, consumed by guilt and remorse and self-recrimination.

"I'm going to make some calls," said Phyllis. "We're going to find you a psychiatrist. We are going to get you help."

Phyllis had to force me to go to my first appointment with Dr. Cavanaugh. I answered his initial questions like one of the robots my IBM colleagues had worked on years ago. Then he said, "Tell me about your parents."

Continued on Page 13

Truest hope

Continued from page 12

I stiffened. "My father was a pastor. He died when I was young," I said. "I don't have many memories of him. I will tell you about my mother."

"Okay," said Dr. Cavanaugh.

So I talked about how every morning I awoke to find my mother praying. She made me breakfast and we said prayers before I went to school. My father didn't earn much as a pastor so Mother took in boarders. She sewed all our clothes, including school uniforms for me and my three brothers and two sisters. When parishioners from the countryside churches where my father preached came to visit, she welcomed them, and the chickens and other animals they brought. She fed our visitors and gave them advice.

She talked to God out loud through the day; she was a constant source of love and support. Only once did I see her pain. Passing Hi-Seung's room one day not long after he died from his war wounds I noticed someone inside. Mother. She sat on my brother's bed clutching to her chest the small box with his ashes. Her face was anguished. Yet even then she was not weeping. Even then she was praying.

"Mother moved to America and lived with my sister in Cupertino. She died two years ago. She is gone now. So that part of my life is over."

"I see," said Dr. Cavanaugh.

He told me my depression stemmed from keeping my feelings inside about my wartime trauma in Korea, triggered most likely by my mother's recent death. In subsequent sessions he encouraged me to "feel those feelings" and talk them out. I did as instructed, but I didn't see the point. Feelings are of no use in engineering. Besides, hadn't Father taught that God desires obedience? Not giving in to emotions! Not weakness!

One day Dr. Cavanaugh said, "I've noticed something, Hi-Dong. You've told me a great deal about your life. But whenever I ask about your father you say very little. Tell me about him, whatever comes to mind."

For a long moment I sat there, silent. Dr. Cavanaugh waited.

Reluctantly I began to talk about my father, how dedicated he'd been to his work, how loving yet strict he was at home. "I loved him but feared him." Why did I feel so uneasy talking about my father? At last I came to the day the North Korean soldiers took him away.

"I had gone with Father to tend our community garden," I said. "When we got home we saw two soldiers talking with Mother at the gate. 'We are holding a meeting to talk about what will happen to the churches now that Seoul is part of North Korea,' the soldiers said to Father. 'Please come with us.'"

"Father did not look frightened. He only said, 'I have not had breakfast. Let me go inside, eat and change my clothes.' The soldiers said, 'That will not be necessary.'"

Father and Mother looked at each other. Father looked at me. Then, with the soldiers on either side, he walked back out the gate and down the road. We never saw him again. I was thirteen."

I stopped. I realized my cheeks were wet. I buried my face in my hands. I felt Dr. Cavanaugh at my side handing me a tissue. "I didn't do anything to save him," I sobbed. "I didn't do anything...."

At last the tears subsided. An image came to my mind. I could see it as clearly as if it were right in front of me. A black-and-white photograph of Mother praying. My nephew had taken the picture shortly before Mother died.

I thought of all the times I'd seen her praying. The time I'd found her clutching my brother's ashes. Who was this God Mother prayed to? This God who was always there, not to judge but to forgive and to love? To give hope in our hardest struggles. Was that God there for me too?

In my heart I knew he was. And not only for me. Even for my father. How else could he have found the strength to go so bravely to his death? It was because he knew God would receive him with loving arms.

I did not have to feel guilty for failing to save Father. I could reach out in prayer not in weakness but in strength.

"I think I'm ready to deal with this now," I said to Dr. Cavanaugh. "Thank you."

That was my final session with Dr. Cavanaugh. From that day my depression lifted, not all at once but like fog being blown off to sea. I try to live every day with peace, joy and grace.

I keep my photo of Mother praying where I can see it so that I remember the faith that sustained her through untold hardships. And if dark thoughts come, I turn, as my mother did, to that faith in a light that brings us through our darkest hours.

Editor: This appeared in August 2012 *Guideposts* to give hope to someone suffering from depression. **WT**

Memoir Class

The memoir class, "Writing Down Memory Lane," will meet at the Camden Community Center, Union Avenue, Tuesdays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m., beginning October 2. Contact: 559-8553. Beginners welcome.

Parallel Construction

by Marjorie Johnson

Sentences and lists are awkward when they contain a series of items with inconsistent grammatical structure. If you change to parallel structure, the relationships between different items of information become clear.

For example, which of the two sentences below is easier to follow?

- 1) At the February meeting we will hold a discussion of the new health plan, whether to revise the procedures manual, and then a draft will be developed of the early retirement policy.
- 2) At the February meeting, we will discuss the new health plan, decide whether to revise the procedures manual, and draft an early retirement policy.

In the second sentence, the parallel verb tenses saved space and helped us grasp the ideas immediately. To help your writing flow smoothly and make sense, use the same format for items you present in a series.

The same approach applies to lists, which are much easier to read when the grammar is parallel.

When copyediting, be sure to reread lists or items in series and check the verbs for parallel construction. **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 and we will add your listing to our directory of experts.

Astronomy, History of Astronomy

Bob Garfinkle ragarf@earthlink.net

Banking

Pam Oliver-Lyons polpap@prodigy.net

Character Development

ArLyne Diamond, Ph.D.

ArLyne@DiamondAssociates.net

Counseling/John Steinbeck

Dr. Audry L. Lynch

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Aero, Aerospace

Jerry Mulenburg

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Growing Great Characters

from the Ground Up

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Disorder/Psychology

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Woody Horn 408-266-7040

Thanatologist: Counseling for Death, Dying, and Bereavement

Susan Salluce susansalluce@yahoo.com

Contests and Conferences

Please send announcements of contests and conferences to 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

Central Coast: 5:30 third Tuesdays, Bay Park Hotel, 1425 Munras Avenue, Monterey. centralcoastwriters.org

Fremont: 2:00 fourth Saturdays at DeVry University, 6600 Dumbarton Circle, Room 204, Fremont. cwc-fremontareawriters.org

Marin: 2:00 fourth Sundays, Book Passage in Corte Madera. cwcmarinwriters.com

Mount Diablo: 11:30 second Saturdays, Hungry Hunter, 3201 Mount Diablo Boulevard, Lafayette. mtdiablowriters.org

Redwood: 3:00 first Sundays at Copperfield's Books, 2316 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa. redwoodwriters.org

Tri-Valley: 11:30 third Saturdays, Oasis Grille, 780 Main Street, Pleasanton. trivalleywriters.com

Sacramento: 11:00 third Saturdays, Tokyo Buffet, 7217 Greenback Lane, Citrus Heights. cwcsacramentowriters.org

San Francisco/Peninsula: 10:00 third Saturdays, Belmont Library, 1110 Alameda De Las Pulgas, Belmont. 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.theywerewe-reachanging.com.



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
September 2012						1
2	3	4	5 6:00P Regular Dinner Meeting	6	7 7:30P Open mic Barnes & Noble Almaden, San Jose	8
9	10 Deadline <i>WritersTalk</i>	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21 7:30P Open mic Barnes & Noble Pruneyard, Campbell	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Future Flashes						
Oct. 3 Reg. Dinner Meeting	Oct. 3 LITERARY COSTUME CONTEST	Third week October CALIFORNIA WRITERS' WEEK	Nov. 7 Reg. Dinner Meeting			

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At the meeting.

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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



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

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

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

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

MAIL TO

Address Correction Requested

September Regular Monthly Meeting 6 p.m. Wednesday September 5

Harry's Hofbrau
390 Saratoga Avenue
San Jose

Laurie McLean and Linda Lee
present
Self-Publishing Bootcamp

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.