



WRITERSTALK

Volume 21
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Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

FEBRUARY SPEAKER

Scott Thomas Anderson

Got Life? Then you have a story Creative Nonfiction has Enduring Power

By Rita Beach

Everybody has a story, or so the saying goes. True-life drama turned into journalistic reporting or creative nonfiction can be as dynamic, thought provoking, and powerful as any conceived fictional piece of writing. Sometimes truth is stranger than fiction. The secret to allowing life to speak for itself comes from the author's ability to capture the story through words and structure.

At our February 13th meeting, award-winning author Scott Thomas Anderson will explore the genre of writing known as literary journalism. He is a journalist who has written for *The Sacramento News and Review* and *Sierra Lodestar* magazine, worked as a foreign correspondent in Ireland, and is currently a crime reporter for *The Press Tribune*, a northern California newspaper. In 2008 Scott won the highest honor for writing from the California Newspaper Publishers Association and a second-place win for Investigative Journalism the following year. In May 2012 he received the top award from the California Newspaper Publishers Association for his six-part *Ledger Dispatch* series on AB 109, the state's new criminal justice law.



Creative nonfiction, also known as literary or narrative nonfiction, is a relatively young genre of writing. Basically, it uses literary styles and techniques factually accurate like those of a reporter but has a narrative that reads like fiction. Creative nonfiction uses documentable subject matter from the real world and needs exhaustive research with verifiable references. Events are described in a narrative form rather than that of objective reporting, and finally, a literary prose style with polished language reveals that the goal all along was literature. In creative nonfiction the truth is supposed to be upheld but told in a literary fashion.

Literary journalism, memoirs, biography, personal essays, travel writing, and food writing are all forms of creative nonfiction. In the 1960s, reporters like Tom Wolfe, Truman Capote, and Hunter S. Thompson were considered pioneers in literary journalism. In 2010 and 2011, Anderson spent 18 months as an embedded reporter with California law enforcement agencies and invested hundreds of hours with attorneys and victims' advocates in small-town courtrooms.

During this same time frame, Anderson traveled across America looking at the effects of drugs and methamphetamines on our rural communities. The result was his book, *Shadow People: How Meth-driven Crime is Eating at the Heart of Rural America*, an exploration of our nation's modern methamphetamine crisis.

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JANUARY RECAP

Ready, Set, Go!

by Grace Tam

The room buzzed with anticipation as Beth Barany prepared her lecture "Jumpstart your writing: Essential tools for finishing your manuscript." At Harry's Hofbrau on January 9, Barany outlined four simple steps to buckling down and completing a manuscript, be it fiction, nonfiction, plays, or memoirs.

Barany began by addressing questions to the audience. "Does anyone have a work in progress? What do you mean by stuck or stymied?" Answers ranged from untangling plot knots and recapturing the story's original intent to cutting down word length and figuring out publishing opportunities.

Barany related her own experiences about setting aside time to write, only to end up washing dishes instead. To confront procrastination and other writer road blocks, she said the first step was to pin down one's motivation to write. What drives you to write? What do you care most about when writing? "What brings your hand to the page?" she asked.

Now that your hand is moving across the page, what's next? Step two is clarity. Barany stressed knowing your genre and its audience. Audiences of certain genres have expectations of what they're reading. For example, those who read graphic novels may be reading for an escape or a short story reader may be looking for intrigue. Each genre has unique facets and a particular audience. Some additional details to consider are story format, length, publishing options, cover designs, and marketing plans. Do you know your audience and are you building an author platform?

Continued on Page 6

President's Challenge

by Bill Baldwin
President, South Bay Writers

The Chosen Craft



My first part-time job assignment at the William and Mary Physics Library was to gather the journals lying in the pile on the floor and arrange them in order on a bookshelf. Looking at the formidable stack, I thought, "This will take forever." In fact I was done, as I recall, in less than fifteen minutes.

Later, my first day at a full-time job seemed interminable; but soon I was sloshing through with the best of 'em.

There's something to be said for discipline and routine tempering our creative freedom as writers. We may stumble into bursts of inspiration, but sitting down daily to write hones our skills and builds our determination – not to mention battering through writer's block.

What I learned last November, during my For-Heaven-Sake-Just-Write-Something-Down-Dammit-Month, was that I averaged about 500 words a day – which was better than no words a day. You may feel you're writing rubbish, but you are writing. And everything you write forces you to make choices: what word to use, how to arrange your thoughts, what to focus on. Whether you produce something that day that you want to publish, or not, you've kept your skills fresh.

And you're forced to try things and choose things: which word, which plot, which organization of thoughts. And writing regularly compels you to think about your writing.

It becomes interactive, like a relationship, like a romance; give-and-take develops between you and those words in front of you or in your head. You write – and the words talk back to you. You format, you polish, you submit, you promote yourself – and what you do reflects back and changes you. You develop your craft. You have your reasons for your decisions, your personal choices of style and structure.

Christopher Isherwood, in a novel, once described an act of violence towards a particular captive fowl. Later, in a memoir, he described the same incident, but the animal was different. I've always wondered why he changed the type of animal in the novel. Duck or chicken – why would it matter?

Whereas, Jack Kerouac changed the name of one small town in Nebraska in *On The Road*. Was it really just because his fellow hitchhiker said he hated the town? But you never know what will prod someone to sue an author. We develop our personal styles and make our personal choices.

So write, choose, develop your choices and styles. You're the only person who can write *as you*! – WT

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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.



WritersTalk

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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.

Submission deadline is the 15th of the month.

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)

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by Marjorie Bicknell Johnson

Editor



Writing Creative Nonfiction

Recently, *The Writer Magazine* reviewed the book, *You Can't Make This Stuff Up: The Complete Guide to Writing Creative Nonfiction*, by Lee Gutkind. At the same time, The Great Courses offered a lecture course and touted creative nonfiction as the next hot genre. Frank and I ordered *Writing Creative Nonfiction*, 24 lessons on DVD by Professor Tilar J. Mazzeo. At the August meeting, we offered South Bay Writers an opportunity to view and discuss these lectures in our living room on Tuesday nights, an experiment in answer to the dearth of creative writing courses currently available. While the course content was excellent, the delivery left something to be desired — perhaps we writers need coaching on how to give a talk.

So, then, what is creative nonfiction? A writer must tell a fact-based story in an imaginative way — not as easy a task as it sounds. Nonfiction writers must be dedicated to preserving the truth of their stories — who, what, why, where, when, and how. The creativity enters through the use of perspective, which, like a camera lens, allows the writer to focus the reader's attention and engage his imagination.

Course lectures included finding the story; writing great beginnings; showing, not telling; launching a narrative arc; building dramatic sentences; using rhetorical devices for emotional impact; creating compelling characters; using narrative perspective; devising dialogue strategies; researching nonfiction topics; revising your work; building your audience; and getting published.

The writer applies elements of a compelling story — a strong central character, gripping dialogue, a fabulous beginning — and paragraphs that keep a reader wanting more. In a nutshell, what works well for a piece of fiction must be applied to a nonfiction article, memoir, or biography.

We discussed when creative nonfiction becomes a historical novel. Mazzeo discussed adding dialogue that could have happened to add interest to a memoir; however, for a biography, the words spoken must be carefully researched quotes. In writing *Steve Jobs*, Walter Isaacson uses dialogue seamlessly; he lists interviews conducted 2009 – 2011 in twenty pages of sources. While George Orwell drew upon his experiences in the Indian Imperial Police in Burma and may have been a main character in *Burmese Days*, he calls his work a novel and reports that all characters are fictitious.

Jill Pipkin and Terry Denevan apply creative principles to memoir; Pat McAllister to a history of the American Basketball League; and Barbara Arnoldussen to teaching essay writing at International Technological University. Apala Egan, Carolyn Donnell, and Del Sparks were interested in the creative writing aspects of the course.

Would we do this again? It's been worth it for the discussions that followed our viewings of the DVD. We recommend forming your own classroom in your living room.

We are thinking about viewing a second course from The Great Courses, *Analysis and Critique: How to Engage and Write about Anything*, on various Tuesday nights. If you're interested, email newsletter@southbaywriters.com. — WT

A New Era is Born

WritersTalk on assignment

by Marjorie Johnson

UXMAL, YUCATÁN, MEXICO: 12/21/2012. The archaeological symposium, World of the Maya: Cycles of Time 13.0.0.0.0, featuring specialists Anthony Aveni, Harvey and Victoria Bricker, Susan Milbrath, Alfonso Morales, and Karl Taube, has eighty-eight participants, two from South Africa and the rest from the United States.

Professor Aveni, founder of the field of Archaeo-Astronomy, asks us, "Why is American pop-culture so enthralled with 12/21/12?" That date scores half a billion Google hits, written with impressive words and filled with "scientific" jargon: galactic alignments; flares on the surface of the sun; planetary alignments; reversal of the Earth's poles; and galactic forces as we pass through the galactic plane. He dispels these myths as well as other "end of the world" scenarios and states that there have been 253,000 predictions of the end of the world since 1000 AD.

There is no evidence that the Maya predicted anything for 12/21/12. The date December 21, 2012 occurs 5,126 years after the beginning of the current Maya cycle. In their day-count, today, 13.0.0.0.0 in Mayan, is 1,872,000 days after 11 August 3114 BC and is simply the first day of the next cycle.

As we cross the highway to the ruin at Sayil, place of the red ants, Alfonso Morales says, "In Mexico we have no pedestrians, only survivors." We see a tree growing a papaya as big as a banana squash and pass an ancient well, a manmade reservoir for rainwater. Sayil and Labna are in a Maya agricultural area with good soil. Corn, squash, and black beans are planted together; the corn grows up, the squash grows out and keeps weeds away, and the black beans climb on the corn stalks. If enough offerings are made to the rain god *Chaac*, the Maya have two harvests per year of three crops per field.

At Labna, many masks of *Chaac* decorate the stone buildings, and on the four corners of stones beneath them are offerings of cacao beans, seed corn, and squash seeds to commemorate the winter solstice as well as this very special day. We will return to Uxmal tomorrow when there will be fewer tourists.

At Kabah, modern Maya dress in costume to celebrate the new era. I make friends with Maya girls dressed as warriors with oversized headdresses. Warrior guards are posted by each building, and a priest/shaman blesses the plaza.

We celebrate the beginning of the new era at Palapa Sacnacte near Uxmal. We file into the courtyard and sit on folding chairs and look up at a half moon and Saturn and Venus. Venus, called *Chaac*

Ek or the great star, is related to the planting cycle. We hear drums, whistles, flutes, and the sounds of howler monkeys and frogs. A conch shell trumpet announces the Maya elder who wears a white robe and signals us to drink a cup of *balché* that tastes suspiciously like fruit punch—not the strong alcoholic beverage of legend.

The purification ceremony begins. A parade of costumed and masked Maya chant and sing solemnly. A boy dressed in a white robe crouches under the priest's table, and to one side stands a blue warrior, who symbolizes the victim to be sacrificed and the old era. The elder crosses himself, east to west, north to south. He repeats ritual words and blows copal incense smoke across each corner of a table marked with colored ribbons—red for west, black for east, white for north, and yellow for south; then he places offerings of cacao beans, seed corn, and jade beads. The drums, whistles, and flutes lead the Maya out. The conch trumpet signals the blue victim to walk away, ending the old cycle, and calls the boy (like our New Year baby) from under the table, heralding the beginning of the new era.

Helpers give us each an unfired pottery bowl filled with *balché* and we leave single file. We drink the *balché*, throw down and break the pottery vessels to end our old lives, and start the new era with a feast and dancing. —WT



Pictures from Marjorie's iPhone

GAME ON!

by Peter Duysings

GAME ON! is the first book of a five eBook series, *The Nicaraguan War Chronicles*.

Rob van Duis served two consecutive tours in Vietnam, on grueling and dangerous Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols. The shadow warriors' deadly warfare games of silent covert scouting operations against the enemy deep in the bush could last a few weeks at a time. Although their task was to locate, spy out enemy positions and call in strikes, they invariably took part in ambushes and small-scale raids. With numerous firefight missions under his belt, van Duis had become a skilled combat field operator. Once back stateside, he trained a team of twelve experienced combat operators. The story begins with Bravo Team's covert arrival into Nicaragua, when van Duis and his teammates hit the ground running as they battle Sandinista rebels deep in enemy territory.



Van Duis provides an insider's look at the trauma of warfare's brutality. Each mission is depicted with the intensity that only a real participant can portray. Even as a trained and experienced warrior, in the face of hideous combat he is affected by what he witnesses.

Bravo Team manages to overcome the odds with chilling and bristling fighting sequences that put the reader's mind in the very midst of terrifying clashes, close enough to see the whites of the enemy's eyes.

GAME ON! is available for Kindle on Amazon.com and is on Smashwords. The author's website is www.peterduysings.com — WT

Networking Log



Connect the dots

by Eléna Martina

I am hoping to hear somebody say that their New Year's Resolution is all about "Networking." Believe it or not, there are opportunities all around us to network with new writers, seasoned authors, editors, agents, publishers, and reading clubs, except that some of us choose to give it little interest. By attending monthly writers' club meetings we can get motivated, learn something new, mingle with acquaintances, and meet new people.

Another great idea is to attend the writer's conference in your area. They are venues for obtaining updated facts and literary wisdom, but these events don't come cheap, and I should know. I attended the 2011 San Francisco Writers Conference, a three-day event where I spent over \$1,000 in hotel, parking, gasoline, meals, and conference fees. I must point out that you can choose to attend a one-day conference and spend less.

My personal advice is never to turn into a particular conference follower, but to attend other literary venues with brand new speakers, different arrangements, other cities and accommodations that will expose you to new literary contacts and interests. Try to make your next conference a vacation destination if you can; it will double your pleasure.

Avoid missing clear opportunities in 2013 to showcase your book and skills. Start by bringing a copy or two of your book every time you come to any literary gathering. Trade it, sell it, give it away, or show it to someone who sounds interested. When you exchange books with others, you can ask them to exchange reviews.

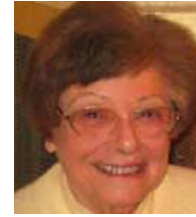
Many authors take themselves for granted. They may find that the compliments of others are enough to start them feeling comfortable with their own literary creations and boost their perseverance in writing.

Another way to promote your books is the club's Book Exchange/Review: exchange books and reviews with another SBW member. This month, *Jaguar Princess* by Marjorie Bicknell Johnson received an Amazon review in

Accolades

by Andrea Galvacs

Happy New Year! Last month some people worried about the Maya putting a hex on the world.



They worried for nothing, but only for one suspenseful day. This year, ending in 13 should keep the anxious and fearful busy for 365! But it can also be an incentive for you, ambitious writers: to create the best you can out of spite!

Pat Bustamante's poem "Songbirds" will be published February 2 in the *Song of the San Joaquin Quarterly*.

Marjorie Johnson's article, "The Fibonacci Quarterly: Fifty Years," was in the November 2012 *Fibonacci Quarterly*.

At the last meeting Sherrie Johnson showed everybody the approval copy of her new book *Straight Man Gay Two*, to be published this month.

Steve Wetlesen's Japanese style English language tanka, written for Christmas 2012 greetings, was sent out to at least 100 different recipients. The persons who commissioned this art piece were so pleased that they gave Steve a generous bonus. — WT

Steve Wetlesen's Japanese style English language tanka, written for Christmas 2012 greetings, was sent out to at least 100 different recipients. The persons who commissioned this art piece were so pleased that they gave Steve a generous bonus. — WT



Sherrie Johnson shows her new book to Marjorie Johnson at SBW January meeting — Photo by Carolyn Donnell

exchange for one she posted about my book, *Clinging to Deceit*. You can read both reviews on Amazon.com.

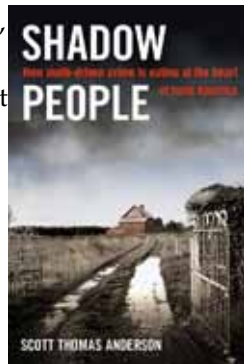
Contact ElénaMartina at networking@southbaywriters.com. — WT

Literary Journalism

Continued from Page 1

In *Shadow People*, Scott Anderson used literary journalism to communicate the information he uncovered on this subject, as well as what he had witnessed associated with methamphetamines, such as child and elder abuse, domestic violence, and assaults and homicides.

California Writers Club South Bay Branch is proud to present Scott Thomas Anderson as our speaker at the February 13th meeting at Harry's Hofbrau on Saratoga Avenue. Your support of the club is vital through your attendance at meetings and workshops to enable our organization to continue to offer quality speakers and workshop presenters. Show up early, enjoy a hearty meal, listen as the February awards are presented, and then be ready to be enlightened, engaged, and entertained by our speaker, Scott Anderson. —WT



David Strom reads January 18
—Photo by Carolyn Donnell

Ready, Set, Go!

Continued from Page 1

Barany's third step is purpose, the impact of your book on the world. Barany listed two types of impact: results and experience. Results are what the reader gets from your book. It may be instructional like *Accounting for Dummies* or your message to the world as in "Life is like a box of chocolates." What do you want to give your reader?

Experience is what you want your reader to *feel*. Does your book evoke feeling and if so, what feeling is that? If the reader takes away something from your book like a message or lesson, then it is the by-product of your purpose. The purpose of experience is to allow your readers to feel and live what you want to show them. "We read fiction because we want to feel excited, confident, scared, and so on," Barany said.

Lastly, a plan of action must be implemented. Barany urged to form a plan of action in small chunks and in harmony with your writing style. Some write in spurts, while others may write daily. Also, clarifying a starting point and an end goal will make it easier to set monthly, weekly, and daily goals. "Plans are only as good as the actions you take," she said.

She briefly demonstrated an exercise of NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming). She told us to visualize images and to place ourselves in those images. We were to concentrate our feelings and reaction to the images. However, sadly, she didn't cover anything concerning NLP.

Beth Barany can be reached at beth@bethbarany.com. —WT



Beth Barany
—Photo by Carolyn Donnell



VP Rita Beach introduces Beth Barany
—Photo by Carolyn Donnell

Open Mic moves

By Carolyn Donnell

Several people found their way to the new open mic venue at the library in Willow Glen on Friday night, January 18. South Bay Writers President Bill Baldwin has been hosting the SBW open mic for several years and continues with this new location after the closing of Borders and some Barnes & Noble stores. Join us every third Friday at 1157 Minnesota Avenue, San Jose.

The first Friday continues for the time being at the Almaden Barnes & Noble.

Persons reading included

- Woody Horn, from *Mad City Fuzzy*, about his life as a movie extra;
- Mike Freda from *Mrs. Morgan*, a memoir about a 90-year-old woman who finally gives up;
- Brian Penkoff, from his novel, *Out of Uncertainty*, an ongoing saga of uncertainties in a young man's life;
- Dave Strom, from his novel, *Comic Book Code*, set to a background of Superman movie music;
- Andy Mitchell, from *Rocket Man, Sci-Fi* about mysterious images on Mars; and
- Pat Bustamante, from *In the Country of Spoiled Children*, and a poem, 2012 *Goodbye God Bless*, about the New-town shootings. —WT

Basement Steps

by Dave LaRoche

In winter, I'd hafta go down those steps to shovel in coal for the old man, or maybe up to get some preserves for the woman. I knew the basement. I'd roller skate there when it rained, or make stuff from wood when I could find the keys to the old man's toolbox. But the light, the only one there, was in the far corner from the stairs—over the bench with the tools. So going down and coming back was in the dark. I'da run most times but I might hit a post or slip on a roach near the drain by the washer—always a drippin' there—and you couldn't ever see a dang-blasted thing, same as havin' your eyes closed.

Goin' down was the eeriest. Each step taken another into the black—not even a shadow to guide ya. Going back wasn't so bad. I'd have a look around before pulling the string on the light cord and follow my vision to the stairs—I'd make it real clear in my head before startin'. Sometimes I'd be scared. I'd know there was something else—something livin' there in the coal bin or just wandering around. I'd need to pull in and get smaller, try and stay outta sight. If it were after me, I could run I usta think, especially if it was close, though I'd hafta watch out for stuff that was there and tried memorizin' the locations. Once I saw eyes—green and dripping and big. Jesus, that was a night.

Once I was down there barefoot—musta been summer. I'd left the stairs, my hands out front like a blind man, and was going okay when I stepped on a turtle we had down there eatin' those bugs. Well, I slipped to the front, and I fell on my backside a screamin' bloody murder. The woman came down and fetched me, and I had to sit on an ice pack the rest of the night. Brother, that was a cold one.

I'm older now, and a Boy Scout with one of those right-angled flashlights you hook onto your belt when you're explorin' a cave or maybe just hikin'. I got it for Christmas with a lot of other scout stuff. I don't have any problems travelin' the basement now, just hook on my scout light and push the switch up; watch those bugs run for cover while I'm keepin' the monster at bay. —WT

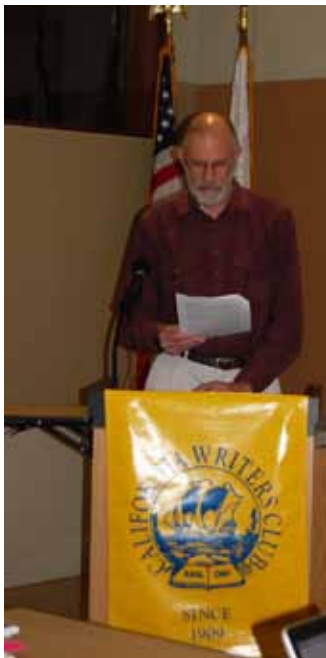
Resident Expert: February 13

by Rita Beach

Because of the awards presentation, there will be no resident expert segment of the February meeting. Come to congratulate winners of the WT Challenge and find out who gets a special award. —WT

More Photos

See more photos under Events on our Home Page southbaywriters.com; or go to <http://southbaywritersgallery.shutterfly.com/>



Mike Freda and Pat Bustamante read at Open Mic January 18
—Photos by Carolyn Donnell

Bomb!

by Jamie Miller

This was my moment, the thing I had trained for! I searched along the cramped space until I found it. A huge block of C-4 explosive, expertly placed.

I keyed my radio. "Got it."

"Excellent!" Leader answered. "Find the red and white wires."

"There aren't any."

"There must be. Keep looking. Just don't touch anything."

"No red and white wires. There's a pair that's lavender and, uhhhh... chartreuse, I guess."

"Lavender and chartreuse? Inconceivable! Keep looking. You need to cut a red wire."

"No red wire. I'll cut the lavender one."

"NO, WAIT!" Leader shouted.

There was a tiny spark and —

* * *

Author's note: I wrote this 100-word flash fiction in response to all those TV dramas where the hero has crawled alone into an air conditioning duct at the White House or the wheel well of an airborne 747. But how, I always wonder, does he know it's the red wire? What if the detonators have blue and yellow color-coding? What happens when mad bombers don't follow Code? —WT

Beware! Fake Reviews

by Marjorie Johnson

Some authors create accounts on forums under assumed names in order to "create a buzz" about their books. Some promote and review their works using at least one pseudonymous Twitter account. On August 25, 2012, the *New York Times* revealed that the use of fake reviews is widespread. There are places where one can buy book reviews; a few hundred rave reviews can transform an unremarkable book into a worldwide bestseller. On the other hand, some authors receive malicious one-star reviews designed to sabotage their books.

Read all about it on Forbes.com, 8/28/2012: "Fake Reviews: Amazon's Rotten Core." —WT

Broken pencils are pointless.

Denouement On K Street

First published on *UnlikelyStories.com*, August 2008
by Maureen A. Griswold

At last, it happened.

Breaking news: massacres at three elite schools, Washington, DC. Fifteen fatalities thus far, two dozen wounded evacuated to trauma centers. Schools and government buildings in lockdown. Gunmen at all three schools dead by suicide, SWAT teams swarming the facilities. Live press conference identifies first victims: student fatality Michael Ellis, son of Richard Ellis, Secretary of Health and Human Services; student fatality Jennifer Davis, daughter of Senator Tim Davis of Texas; student fatality Dennis Johnson, son of Congresswoman Maxine Johnson of Maryland; student fatality Courtney Carson, niece of former senator and current oil lobbyist Richard Carson; among the critically wounded, Trevor Harris, son of Eagle News Anchorman Jason Harris.

Kurt Robey, Director of Public Affairs for Americans for Firearm Rights (AFR), cussed his cell phone. Sit tight, he repeated to the office manager, he'd be there. Massacres and the media going nuts were nothing new.

But it had happened. These victims, these parents.

He turned up the car radio's volume. Details were sketchy, rushed, reporters and anchors bumbling, their shock, this time, genuine. These schools? These kids?

Robey's reputation as the best in the business hadn't come from lightweight challenges. His re-branding the public face of AFR after years as a top lobbyist for the gun industry, his cultivating legislators, his crafting and achieving agendas marked him clever, talented, unique. *60 Minutes'* recent profile portrayed Robey as a cool head for crises and power building. He would navigate AFR through this.

Incoming information shifted to frenetic chatter between anchors, reporters, and pundits. Robey preferred radio. TV visuals elicited and manipulated emotion, complications for his line of work. Sound, radio, suited Robey's fine-tuned ears. TV packaging of American gun slaughter was all too predictable: maudlin commentary, cloying music, eyewitness accounts, victims' family and classmates' testimonials, handmade signs and flowers piled as memorials at carnage sites, candlelight vigils, version after version of "Amazing Grace," with, of course, rote condolences from politicians and a presidential sentiment of heavy hearts with the victims and their families held in the nation's thoughts and prayers.

Nonetheless, visuals greeted Robey when he found his staff in the conference room watching TV. Several observed how unnerved journalists and pundits looked this time. The victims' parents were of the Beltway, societal peers and personal friends of the media elite who covered them. And now, one of their own, Anchorman Jason Harris, appeared live as he dashed into Georgetown University Medical Center where his son with a bullet to the brain had been rushed to surgery.

The staff moved slowly to Robey's order to mute the TV. He went to the head of the table, all business, braced for the outburst which erupted the moment he sat. Holy Jesus! Politicians' kids, Jason Harris' kid. Security at all three schools

breached at the same time! How? Why? Reaction would be huge this time. Congressmen, senators, media personalities — their own kids shot. The gun control lobby —

"Shut the hell up," Robey shouted. "First things first. Get out a press release for the website and the phones."

Robey dictated, the manager transcribed: "Americans for Firearm Rights joins our entire nation in expressing our deepest sympathies to the families of victims associated with Dearborn Academy, Saint Mary's School, Delaware Military Academy and all others affected. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families. We will have no further comment until all the facts are known." Signed: Kurt Robey, Director of Public Affairs, Americans for Firearm Rights.

Robey spotted a "Breaking News" graphic on TV and ordered the audio on. Senator James McGee was issuing a statement. His solemn face and brief statement conveyed shock and grief. "However," he concluded, "it still remains for America to protect the Second Amendment. Guns must be accessible to law-abiding citizens."

"Good boy," Robey smiled. McGee nodded to the press, did not allow for questions and departed. The good senator was worth every penny of AFR's PAC contributions.

A staffer's frown disrupted Robey's satisfaction. AFR's sponsored gun show next week. What to do?

Robey glared, irritated. "Columbine. Columbine, the NRA — that's exactly what to do. NRA proceeded with their Denver convention two weeks after Columbine. Anyone who can't swallow that doesn't belong here."

"It's different this time. These kids —"

"And why not them?" Robey countered. "Yes, it's tragic, but it's the price we pay for living in a free society."

Robey issued directives. Phones ringing. Alone in the conference room, Robey overheard them answered, the press release being read to those calling for AFR comment.

He opened his laptop. As composer, Robey created memos, emails, bulleted instructions. As maestro, he issued them to particular media personalities to disseminate the talking points, the framing, and the spins.

The manager brought him a fax with great news: a major gun manufacturer's announcement awarding AFR a six-figure grant. Robey grinned, stretched and looked up at the latest development airing on TV. A videotape of a gunman had been mailed to a network. He picked up the remote and turned on the audio. This was standard: a male in fatigues, a black stocking cap pulled over his face, stood against a bare backdrop to speak a disjointed manifesto point blank at the camera. The monotone voice was young, alienated, and contained a slight accent, perhaps American southwest.

"Homegrown," Robey told the manager, "another idiot kid whining he's disenfranchised, bullied, victimized. Boo hoo."

"There are many more of us," the gunman rambled. "Expect us, America, expect us everywhere."

"Your fifteen minutes are up, asshole." Robey pressed the remote's off-button with a dramatic flourish of his thumb, but the manager had already left.

Continued on Page 12

The Lunch Box

by Karen Hartley

The usual wispy layer of cool fog obscured the ocean from the sand's edge to infinity. Ivy was on her daily morning walk along the beach, the same thoughts crowding her mind. *What's wrong with me? I'm not snobby or conceited. I don't put on airs. I simply live the way I want. If it weren't for Annabelle, I'd have no one to talk to. And why, why can't I find love?*

Although Ivy had other women friends, Annabelle was the only one she was close to. The others had often shown jealousy of Ivy. They called her Lady Ivy because her jet-black hair fell around her shoulders like tangled ivy. And her fingers, also long, were like thick ivy branches. Lady Ivy kept to herself. As beautiful as she was, no man would come near her.

Often on her walks, Ivy saw him. She thought it interesting that he was so outrageously handsome. She also wondered if, like herself, he was always alone because of his looks. Many times Ivy thought about catching up to him and starting a conversation, but she held back, afraid to approach.

Ivy frequently collected shells and stones on her beach walks. And many times, she walked with tears in her eyes. Tears for the one thing she didn't have; that thing which always eluded her.

Slater Forbes lived alone at the opposite end of the beach. Early on a Tuesday morning, he sat at his kitchen table and looked at the ocean through the window on the opposite wall. On the table in front of him was one of his most cherished childhood objects.

The Lunch Box was fifties-era metal and still in vintage condition, painted in tartan plaid with a neon yellow handle. The hinges weren't rusted and the catch still worked perfectly. He had carried his lunch in it all through grade school. As a grown man, Slater was physically gifted: tall, extremely handsome, flawless skin, sculpted jaw line. He'd known several women, but after a few dates, they all disappeared. Reflecting back, Slater remembered one day in the nearby market, when he'd overheard two of those women one aisle over, talking. At first he wasn't sure he was hearing correctly. He stopped his cart and listened more closely; he recognized their voices.

"He's just too much," one said.

"I know what you mean. I was never sure he was sincere. You know what I'm saying, right?"

"Yes. Whenever we were out, I always heard a voice in my head, 'He's just too pretty.' That type is never for real."

Then the other woman said what Slater had heard so many times. "You can never count on a guy that good looking. He's almost always about himself. I went out with Slater a couple of times, and I really wanted it to go somewhere, but I was too scared. Scared he'd turn out to be true to form."

He'd heard all he needed. That day, Slater had returned home, convinced he'd never find true love. Months had passed since then. Now, sitting with his lunch box, he had an idea. With the beach in front of him, and the good memories associated with his lunch box, he began formulating his plan.

The next morning was warm. Slater was up early, anxious to carry out his idea. "This has to work," he said, taking a sheet of his monogrammed stationery. Moments later, his words were on the page: "If you're reading this, then you found the lunch box and this note inside. I've seen you on the beach many times. You're so lovely. I know you've seen me too. I've also seen your tears when you walk alone. I'm willing to guess we're in the same situation. Here's my number. Please call and give us the chance to meet. We'll be glad we did. I'll be waiting and hoping."

There's only one cave on the beach. If I put it just before the entrance, it should be a sure thing. Slater folded the note, put it in the plaid lunch box, then gently ran his hands over the box and held it to his chest. "Here goes."

He locked his door and headed down to the beach. The cave was about fifty feet from the stairs leading to the sand.

No one was around; *it's too early.* He unfolded his canvas beach stool a few feet from the cave, sat down, and held the lunch box. "The moment has to be just right. She walks the same path every morning. She always passes this cave, and every day, she looks in. So many times I've seen her from a distance, when she wiped her tears."

A few minutes later, Slater saw Ivy on the beach. Quickly, he placed the lunch box at the cave entrance, grabbed his stool, and ran up the stairs. Safely out of her vision, he walked back to his house.

Ivy was still several feet away from the cave. The fog had receded and the morning sun glinted off a metal box, so bright that she shaded her eyes. "What's this? I've passed by here every day and have never seen anything like it." Ivy bent down and picked up the lunch box. She sat on a nearby rock and gently fingered the metal. When she reached the catch, she slowed her fingers and paused.

Maybe I should just leave it alone. Someone left this here for a reason. Do I have the right to snoop? Ivy sat for a few more minutes; then her curiosity won, and she opened the lunch box.

The note was folded in half. Ivy touched it with extreme care and noticed the very fine stationery. Now her curiosity peaked and she couldn't resist. She would read it.

Ivy remembered something her military father had told her about avoiding furtive movements in situations where one didn't want to be observed. She leaned back, then *very slowly*, moved her head from side to side. *Good. No one around.* With the same care, she opened the note and read it.

"I don't believe this," she said aloud. "This is the guy I've seen here. I know what he means about us being in the same situation." *Hard to believe no woman would want him; then again, I've been left by so many men. Maybe women have treated Slater the way men treated me.* Not trusting us simply because we've been blessed, or cursed, with better than average looks. "Okay, maybe that's it, but should I call?"



Continued on Page 13

Soldier of the Tide

Our captain said...
I'm the soul of a sailor, I am,
Sailing salty seas, dodging bars of sand,
No more will I set foot on solid land,
But I will visit you in dreams whenever I can.

Look for me as the storm rolls in,
When clouds appear and the rain begins,
Then think of me as a long lost friend,
And as I pass the sun will shine again, but till then...

Let's sing until the night is gone,
Watch the sunrise on the beach till the break of dawn,
And make all our dreams live on and on,
Make our dreams live on.

Before I leave you and the life we knew,
I have treasures I'll always share with you,
Gaze at the countless stars, look at the oceans blue,
Drift and dream together, that is what we must do.

Cry not for me when I leave you again,
I'm a soldier of the tide and the prevailing wind,
The winds of change carry me to my journey's end,
Away from you and the places I've been, so...

Let's sing until the night is gone,
Watch the sunrise on the beach till the break of dawn,
And make all our dreams live on and on,
Make our dreams live on.

Now comes the time to set my sails,
My body is healed now, no longer frail,
I say goodbye and wait for stronger gales,
Toast to our memories of another time, another tale...
Toast to our memories of another time, another tale.

— Rita M. Beach



Music Box

I could liken you to a music box
and I could sing the song you play
for I know it well.

And when you stop I could breathe
new life into you for I know life well.
Oh, Music Box your song
is joy to me.

I could listen to you for endless hours
and not need Sleep or
Bread or Wine.

I could hold you in my arms, unafraid
that you would break, because you're not afraid
of breaking.

And I can sing with you
and feel with you
laugh, cry, sigh
and love
with you.

Please don't let
the
Music Box
Stop.

— Karen Hartley

Chopper Girl

by Jamie Miller

I followed the car into the parking lot and found a lucky spot just to the left of it. Only then did I notice the girl driving. So blonde and beautiful, she belonged on a calendar.

"Hey," I called through the window. "Your car?"

"All mine." She gave me a flirtatious sideways glance, barely turning her head.

"Nice restoration job. Perfect paint."

"Better'n new. Nice talking to you. I've got shopping to do."

"So, can I buy you dinner? *Pedro's* makes incredible chili rellenos."

She eased her door open and slid her seat back, then swung her legs out. Her right one was a prosthesis, her foot was a spring, the kind athletes favor. The right side of her face was scarred from jaw to hairline.

"Ohmigaaahd! What happened to you?"

"Helicopter crash," she said, casually, as if it happened every day.

"Wh--whe--how?"

"Afghanistan. My gunship. An RPG. Lucky hit. Blew the tailboom right off. I autorotated down. My gunner died. Nice guy. Three kids. Any more questions?"

"Uhhh--"

"Questions like how many Taliban did I kill? What was rehab like? Was it as good as video games? Go ahead. Ask."

"I-I-I'm sorry," was all I could manage.

"Yeah, it was better than video games. Except when somebody gets hit, they're always gonna be dead. Excuse me. I've got shopping." She walked briskly across the lot.

I paused for a long moment, then ran to catch up with her. "Hi. I'm Bryan."

She shrugged, and a random gust of wind blew a strand of her long blonde hair over her eyes. She brushed it back. "Lisa."

"Hey, you never answered about dinner. I'd like to hear more about your car."

She studied my face and eyes for a long while.

"Are *Pedro's* rellenos really as good as you claim?" — WT

February Terse On Verse

by Pat Bustamante



Feb-U-Airy!

When the wind blows
In February
All my stories tend to be scary.
Advice to self:
Back to heart-warming!
Ignore ANY weather
That's rainy or storming.

— Pat Bustamante

I hear a lot of complaints about rainy weather. I much prefer rain to having a drought. But I had actually envisioned the holidays as sunny days. Hey, was I wrong about that! It is easy to compare floods of writing ideas (or a drying-up!) to the weather.

Given that February is a short month, this outpouring should be brief. Short stories, short poems, short novelettes — all good fun for me, either creating them or reading them.

I have just read a best-selling novel by a famous writer that echoed persistently. “Didn’t I read this same story before — but by a different author?”

Yes — and no. The book was a reprint and came out quite a while back. More current fiction used the same sci-fi/spooky stuff idea for a plot, though skillfully changed to a more futuristic tone. The author of the original story has often admitted to plot/idea theft himself, saying that there are only a few good story-plots, so every writer is copying. The last better mouse-trap has already been invented!

I like scary stories. I am told sometimes that all the scariest stories have already been told. Oh, no, I do not believe it! As we invent new things, as our perception of our universe changes, new scary things will happen. The plot setup may look familiar but the creatures we imagine will always be changeable, just as we humans grow, expand, change our worlds.

Mars is next; watch out, Mars! Ray Bradbury had wonderful ideas about Mars (so did Edgar Rice Burroughs, and many other excellent writers) but even better than the creepiest chill he could raise was the concept of what humans can do and what they should do.

Don’t worry too much about being called a copycat. The most important element in your story, your poem, your memoir, is YOU. There is actually only one of you! Even if you happen to belong to a set of quadruplets you are one of a kind in your thoughts, the way you react to anything new, how you would have the world be. So, write on! There may be nothing new in the plotline category but putting yourself into your story — that makes it unique.

I look forward to hearing about all the new manuscripts that appear in this new year. Hooray for a new year! And I am looking forward to that comet, and whatever it brings! —WT

Weekly Poem Prompt

Look for a weekly poem prompt at the following website:
www.ericagoss.com/index.php?page=poems

Ison the Comet

by Steve Wetlesen

Ison, named after the spacecraft that first spotted it, will be the sight of everyone’s lifetimes if it lives up to astronomers’ current estimations. It may possibly outshine the brightness of a full moon as it swings near our sun, approximately in November 2013.

Please do not worry; it has already been calculated that there is no chance at all it could strike earth.

Haiku for Cosmic Anticipation

Broad daylight comet?
Thanksgiving or turkey flop?
Keep your eyes open!

— Stephen C. Wetlesen

A Comet Is Coming

by Pat Bustamante

My friends will recall I said a comet is coming. It is, and it’s a whopper!

The whole world is aware that 2,000 years ago, give or take a few years, a star with a tail was recorded as showing up in both night and day’s sky. The omen was interpreted as something special is happening. And Earth is still cognizant of that prophecy.

As to the current comet, Russian astronomers located it first. The Sunday newspaper-supplement *USA Weekend*, 12/9/2012, reported that it will be as bright as the full moon!

Will it crash here? Is this the prophesized end of our world?

Well, no. Passing by Earth 37 million miles out, on the path calculated so far, is safe enough.

SETI (our government’s welcome committee for space-alien) and I disagree: I think alien life came here long ago. Rode in on a comet, which sowed life in Earth’s ocean.

Comets are often referred to as dirty snowballs because their tails show measurable amounts of water coming from the ice on the comet’s head. A comet’s orbit around our sun is also predictable. The Sun keeps some pet comets out there, as well as many planets beyond Pluto that we are just now discovering.

So a comet is a fragment from some explosion somewhere. Not past believing, that a comet sent seeds of life from some older doomed world. Life needs water. Comets have crashed here before; passengers might have arrived in the form of tiny bacteria or a virus. Was 2012 scheduled, as per mistaken interpretation of the Maya calendar, as our doomsday? If you are reading this, of course, NO! What about 2013? That’s the year the comet comes. When it passes close to our Sun, will it stir up solar storms that short-circuit Earth’s electrical grids? Or, will it provide only a nice light show? — WT

Denouement on K Street

Continued from Page 8

Robey yawned and rubbed his fatigued eyes. His shoulders had tensed from the marathon with the laptop. He listened to the staff speculating about the massacre in the lulls between answering phones. They hushed when he entered their workspace. He told them he would get a quick bite to eat at Molly Pitcher's Bar & Grille on K Street then return and finish up for the day.

He removed his jacket from the coat tree while assuring them things would return to normal despite today's events. AFR would triumph as long as it and the rest of the gun lobby hung tough with no compromises on regulation or anything else.

Robey removed his new compact semiautomatic Smith & Wesson .45 ACP Chief's Special from his shoulder holster, drawing appreciative stares and comments. With it tucked into the holster, his jacket buttoned, no one on the street could see Robey packed heat as did all AFR staff, local gun bans notwithstanding.

Outside, his mind cleared. Police and news helicopters flew low and loud. With security and emergency services on full alert, DC would be the safest locale in the country. There were fewer pedestrians this late autumn afternoon. They looked nervous, hurried. Remarkable, Robey thought, how fear is visible, even palpable. Fear permeated the air, block after block, and he sensed it as sure as he sensed his feet on the sidewalk, his clothing against his skin, the solidity of holster and gun alongside his chest. Quite something, this fear in the air. It wouldn't last. It would evaporate and vanish with the next news cycle, scandal, infotainment.

A small crowd gathered on the K Street sidewalk near 17th where the Jumbotron fronting Eagle News DC studio showed broadcast coverage. Large gold headlines flowed beneath behemoth imagery. Robey, head down, sped by even as something made the crowd gasp. A businesswoman, her hand to her mouth, stepped backward and collided into Robey, causing him to stumble and grab her shoulders to prevent both of them falling off the curb.

"She's dead!" the woman screeched at him, "the congressman's daughter!"

Robey followed her shocked upward stare. In high definition, breaking news: a photo of a smiling blonde adolescent, Brooke Irwin, age sixteen, time of death 5:42 p.m. EST, Georgetown University Hospital. Next flashed stock footage of Representative Alex Irwin and his young wife. Melanie Irwin had been introduced to Robey at a recent AFR fundraiser and had charmed him more than most political spouses.

The woman looked up at Robey. "This is terrible, terrible."

"Nah, lady," interjected a twenty-something fellow in front of them. He raised his eyebrows and smirked. "Just another bang-bang day in the U-S-of-A."

Robey removed his hands from the woman. He wanted to grab the jerk now walking away, grab his collar, spin him around, call him a S-O-B, but something made Robey and the woman flinch and with a violent yank of their heads and upper torsos, their knees buckled, their bodies dropped.

Robey lay on top of the woman and wondered why they were on the sidewalk in a heap, contorted, why the woman twisted underneath him with his full weight on her did not move or groan. Whatever dropped them repeated, loud, ceaseless, merciless. Screams, panic, footsteps, shouts and moans preceded another deafening barrage. Silence. Robey, his cheek against the side of the woman's face, heard an exhalation merging into a grotesque gurgle.

Something excruciating jammed into his ribs. Something as hard and as forceful as a baseball bat had hit him two, no, three times. Whatever hit him, dropped him, belonged to the engulfing insanity: thuds of the others hitting pavement, more screams, hysteria, more torrents of red-hot metal zooming and vibrating through space just above his head.

He had to get his weight off his gun. He had to breathe. He tried once, twice, to roll off the woman, but perceiving and commanding his extremities seemed impossible. His feet, legs, arms, and hands were leagues away. He closed his eyes, stilled his mind, willed himself to roll onto his back.

An animalistic sound, primal, deep and awful surprised him as his back and shoulders flattened against the sidewalk. The sound had surged from his core to roll up his throat and explode from his mouth. More pain. Boiling oil pouring onto his belly, chest and right shoulder. Electricity coursed from his shoulder, consumed his useless right arm, hand, and fingers, no longer flesh, muscle and bone, but fire, sparks and needles.

Robey heard a male voice yell something about Glocks. *Glocks, yes*, Robey thought. His ever-efficient mind retrieved a mental summary of Glock 9 mm: capability to fire five rounds per second, a magazine that can hold thirty-three hollow-point bullets, experienced shooters able to reload in seconds.

He hadn't seen a damn thing. It had happened too fast for his brain to register danger. It sounded like several shooters who could have concealed their weapons under long coats. If only he'd seen something he could have drawn and fired his Chief's Special. He could hardly see the woman, the dead woman beside him. If not for her bumping into him, the Jumbotron, the televised girl, the jokester, his being distracted those several seconds, he would not be down, would not be on this pavement, wounded, hemorrhaging.

Hearing became Robey's primary sense as thick darkness wrapped round him amid the hell on K Street. Panic's strike in his solar plexus receded along with fading perception of his limbs, his body's periphery.

It isn't fair, he thought. He was only forty-six. He was not done, he couldn't be. He had only been walking. He was son, husband, father. Only this of his identity along with sounds, especially shots tearing through space above and around him, remained from all else falling away.

Robey then realized something about sound. Sound is vibration: hearing was his first sense at birth; hearing would be his last sense in this premature, hideous death. Unable to shout, unable to verbalize, he mentally protested this inappropriate death, this too soon, this so unfair death.

Yes, unfair. He, Kurt Robey, the best in the business, the cool-headed strategist, inflicted by what he treasured, as he lay dying. *Unfair*, he thought — this price, this time, this spot on K Street. — WT

Contests

105 Writing Contests

by Carolyn Donnell

Poets & Writers lists 105 writing contests with deadlines between today and March 16. All of the contests listed in the P&W database at pw.org/grants have been carefully reviewed and are of real benefit to writers.

While you're perusing the listings, please take a look at the entry for *Tusculum Review's* annual literary prizes, which offer \$1,000 and publication to winners in poetry and fiction.

An extensive list of contests appears on preditorsandeditors.com and on writersdigest.com/competitions/writing-competitions. — WT

Flash Fiction Contest

WriterAdvice seeks flash fiction, memoir, and creative non-fiction running 750 words or less. Submit to 8th *WriterAdvice* Flash Prose Contest by April 18, 2013. First place, \$200; second, \$100; third, \$50. Details at writeradvice.com/ — WT

Prizes for *WritersTalk* Challenge

Winners of the *WritersTalk* Challenge for the submittal period July 16 through January 15 will be announced at the SBW meeting on February 13. This is an ongoing contest; keep submitting your creative work. Work published in *WT* is entered automatically into the *WT* Challenge competition. — WT

The Lunch Box

Continued from Page 9

She thought about whether to go for it all the way home. The phone was close to the door. She took a deep breath and dialed.

"Slater Forbes." His voice matched his looks. Ivy caught her breath. After a long pause, she heard it again.

"You're the woman I see walking every day."

Her heart skipped. "How do you know?"

"I wrote my private number on the note and waited for you to appear. You look in the cave every time you're there."

"I love the lunch box," was all she could

think to say.

"May I come and actually meet you?"

He was irresistible. "Umm, sure. I'm by the cave."

"I know. I can be there in five minutes."

Ivy and Slater met at the cave every morning for months.

"Nothing fancy, no frills," Ivy told Annabelle one afternoon during the third month. She hadn't spoken too soon, in case she would face rejection again.

"How wonderful for you! This time I sense something different." Annabelle was right; her next communication from Ivy was an invitation.

Three months later, Ivy and Slater stood

WRITERSTALK Challenge

What is it?

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

Genres

Fiction, 500 – 1500 words

Memoir, 500 – 1200 words

Essay/Nonfiction, 500 – 1200 words

Poetry

Judging Periods

January 16 through July 15

July 16 through January 15

Prizes

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

Judging

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

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



Directory of Experts

Do you have specialized knowledge that might help a writer bring authentic detail to a scene? Send a message to newsletter@southbaywriters.com 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

glynch0001@comcast.net

Engineering: Mechanical, Aero, Aerospace

Jerry Mulenburg

geraldmulenburg@sbcglobal.net

Growing Great Characters from the Ground Up

Martha Engber martha@engber.com

Internal Medicine/Addiction

Disorder/Psychology

Dave Breithaupt dlbmlb@comcast.net

Marketing and Management

Suzy Paluzzi, MBA jomarch06@yahoo.com

Mathematics/Fibonacci Sequence

Marjorie Johnson

marjohnson89@earthlink.net

Teaching and the Arts

Betty Auchard Btauchard@aol.com

Telecommunications Technology

Allan Cobb allancobb@computer.org

Television Production

Woody Horn 408-266-7040

Thanatologist: Counseling for Death, Dying, and Bereavement

Susan Salluce susansalluce@yahoo.com

CWC Around the Bay

These are published meeting locations and times for other CWC branches in the greater San Francisco Bay Area. If you're thinking about attending one of their meetings, be sure to check the website first for details.

Berkeley: 1:30 third Sundays, Oakland Public Library Main Branch. cwc-berkeley.com

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

Contests, Workshops, and Conferences

Senior Poets Laureate Poetry Competition

Entries are now being received for the 21st annual Senior Poets Laureate Poetry Competition (state and national laureate awards) for American poets age 50 and older. Deadline June 30, 2013. For rules, download from www.amykitchenerfdn.org or send #10 SASE to SPL 2013, P. O. Box 1821, Monterey, CA 93942-1821. — WT

Big Sur Screenwriting Workshop, April 12-14

Lodge at Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park. See www.bigsurscreenwriting.com for details and list of faculty speakers and screenwriters. \$50 registration, deadline March 1. — WT

Writing for Life Workshops

Writing intensives with

- James Scott Bell, June 28-30
- Davis Bunn, Sept. 14-15
- Michael Hauge, Oct. 19-20

For information go to www.writingforlifeworkshops.com

Want more?

Listings commonly appear in *Writers Digest* and *The Writer*. Check their websites and also the websites of other CWC Branches listed above.

Please send information on contests, conferences, and workshops to newsletter@southbaywriters.com. — WT



The nature of pi

Fibonacci Numbers: Fingerprints of God

Here's a video showing some spirals related to Fibonacci numbers in nature. http://quietube.com/v.php/http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e9MwNm0gXd8&feature=player_embedded%22%3

To understand why mathematicians love Fibonacci Numbers so much, go to youtube.com to view the amazing video, Nature by Numbers – You Tube.

Enjoy! — WT

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
February 2013					1 7:30p Open mic Barnes & Noble Almaden, San Jose	2
3	4	5 7:30p SBW Board meeting	6	7	8	9
10	12	12	13 6:00p Regular Dinner Meeting, Harry's Hofbrau	14	15 7:30p Open mic Willow Glen Library, 1157 Minnesota Ave	16 Deadline <i>WritersTalk</i>
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		
Future Flashes						
	March 1 and 15 Open mics	March 5 SBW Board Meeting	March 13 Reg. Dinner Meeting			

South Bay Writers Open Mic

Read from your own work, from your favorite authors, or just come to listen. See calendar for schedule.

Note third Friday location: Willow Glen Library, 1157 Minnesota Ave, San Jose

Contact Bill Baldwin (408) 730-9622 or email WABaldwin@aol.com

Your ad could go here

\$7 per column inch for SBW members

\$10 per inch for nonmembers

Members Books

Go to 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
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 or go to www.poetrycentersanjose.org/calendar.html



Stay Informed

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

Ongoing Critique Groups

Our Voices

Meets in Campbell 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

**South Bay Writers
February Regular Monthly Meeting
6 p.m. Wednesday, February 13**

Harry's Hofbrau
390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose

SPEAKER: Scott Thomas Anderson

Got life? That's the story
Told by a prize-winning
literary journalist

WritersTalk deadline is always
the 15th of the month.

Regular dinner meetings are
second Wednesdays 6 – 9 pm



Harry's Hofbrau

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