

THE BULLETIN

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California Writers Club

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The Bulletin is the official publication of California Writers Club, an educational nonprofit 501(c)3 corporation.

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EDITORIAL MATERIAL

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Contact Your Branch Membership Chair

OUR MISSION

Educating writers of all levels of expertise in the craft of writing and in the marketing of their work.

Read This and Win!

By Donna McCrohan Rosenthal, Centennial Chair

In a recent issue of *The Bulletin*, a piece about the upcoming Centennial asked, “If the California Writers Club did only one thing during 2009, what would you want that to be?” The question generated a response – actually, only one – a request that we avoid grammatical errors in *The Bulletin*. My first thought, “gaaahhhh!” gave way to the realization that we certainly do need to put our best foot forward in 2009. After all, why attract media attention and, if everything goes well, new members, if we can’t offer them a quality operation?

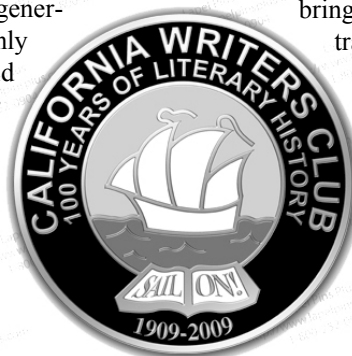
Some branches have gotten an impressive start. The Redwood Branch has announced their latest anthology, a poetry writing contest, and The Craft of Writing: A Series of Revision Workshops for January 24, January 31 and February 7.

Tri-Valley has scheduled a workshop for members, and the anthology book-launch party in the fall. Redwood’s Rob Koslowsky has developed a CWC-related program to bring to schools. East Sierra has a traveling Family and Oral History seminar with several stops already lined up.

At the state level, Central Board members have talked about CWC participation in book fairs and non-book events, and burying a time capsule (tentative subject: what do you see as the future of print publishing 25 years from now?) *Bulletin* Editor Joyce Krieg has cre-

ated a superb literary map that we plan to produce before long. We have Centennial pens, cloisonné pins and tote bags available to members (place your orders with

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We’ll be stylin’ when we’re wearing a cloisonné lapel pin telling the world CWC is celebrating its 100th anniversary.

Ruth E. Theodos: 1917-2008

High Desert is mourning the loss of founder Ruth Eleanor Theodos, who died December 1 in Ramona at age 91.

Ruth founded the High Desert branch in 1985, was a former president of the CWC Central Board, and was among a handful of CWC members to have been awarded the Ina Coolbrith Lifetime Achievement Award, the



highest honor bestowed by CWC.

She also holds the distinction of being considered High Desert’s most colorful member, friend and mentor, and with her many years working for television producer Chuck Barris as a chaperone on the *Dating Game*, she had a never-ending supply of interesting stories to share.

Ruth was the author of *Kiss Butterflies and Other Flutterbys: Prose and Poetry*, and was one of the founders of the High Desert Center for the Arts.

Services were held December 9 at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Ramona.



One Way to Unblock Yourself in 2009

This past year, I wrote the first draft of a 389-page novel in around nine month's time. That's little more than one page a day. Pathetic, until you consider that I'd been seriously blocked and had not written one word of fiction in over three years.

JOYCE'S VOICE



By Joyce Krieg
Central Coast Branch

Not only did I produce a book-length manuscript in 2008, but writing fiction became a joy for me for the first time ever. The transformation felt like nothing short of a miracle.

I credit it all to a technique known as Morning Pages, which I discovered in a book called *The Artist's Way* by Julia Cameron.

Distilled to its essence, Morning Pages is the daily practice of writing three pages of anything immediately after arising.

I'm normally the world's most cynical skeptic when it comes to anything that carries a whiff of pop psych touchy-feely. But at this time last year, I was desperate enough to get my writing career back on track that I was willing to try anything. A colleague in

my critique group recommended *The Artist's Way*. My New Year's Resolution for 2008 became the result: to set my alarm a half-hour early every day and give Morning Pages a fair trial.

Ms. Cameron recommends filling our three pages with random, stream-of-consciousness thoughts – she calls them “blurts” – with no editing or revision. For the first couple of months, I did just that.

Then at dawn on March 4, I sat down with pen and pad and actually started to tell a story. I did the same thing every day that followed, adding to the story at home and on the road, in sickness and in health, until November 20, when I scribbled those two magic words: The End.

Why do Morning Pages work? I have a few theories:

1. Because we do it first thing in the day, we are sending a signal to ourselves that writing is a major priority in our lives.
2. It's a lot less easy for the “stuff” in our lives to interfere when we're writing when everyone else is still snoozing. The phone is less likely to ring; there's nothing interesting on TV, and the stores aren't open.
3. After spending a half hour on writing early in the day, the story sticks in your head for the next 18 hours. The Muses reward your industriousness with flashes of ideas and inspiration throughout the day.
4. When we do it every day, we don't lose the thread of the story. Characters, setting and plot cooperate with us and hang together seamlessly.

5. It feels *good* to get your writing done first thing in the morning!

Anticipating your questions:

No, I don't necessarily write exactly three pages every morning. Once I fell into the rhythm of the technique, I committed myself to one scene in the novel. In the kind of books I write, that's usually three pages, give or take.


No, I don't really do this the *very* first thing when the alarm beeps me back to consciousness. First, I attend to a basic bodily function and second, I feed the cat. But after dealing with those two undeniable forces of nature, I am writing. In my jammies, yawning and bleary-eyed, but writing.

No, you do not have to do this with notebook and pen. The computer (or typewriter) is permissible, as long as you actually produce your pages before anything else. No checking e-mail or the Google news headlines, and no playing Bejeweled!

No, you cannot do this anytime but the first thing in the morning. Don't ask me why, but it just doesn't work at noon or night, or even waiting for coffee and the *Today* show.

Just one example: This column, scribbled into a notebook at 6:40 a.m. on December 26, 2008, in a friend's guest bedroom in Sacramento.

It works, my friends. Try it.

Note: A ten-year commemorative re-issue of The Artist's Way is still in print and readily available by order from your favorite independent bookseller or the usual online dealers. Used copies of the original 1992 release, published by Jeremy Tarcher, are likewise easy to find. 

CWC Bulletin 2009 Schedule

March-April 2009

Deadline: February 27, 2009

May-June 2009

Deadline: April 24, 2009

July-August 2009

Deadline: June 26, 2009



Submissions: CWC members are invited to submit articles related to writing and the writing life via e-mail to Editor Joyce Krieg. Be sure to indicate “CWC Bulletin” in the subject field. Submissions are subject to editing for length and grammar. Sorry, we are unable to print news of members' sales and publications.

September-October 2009

Deadline: August 28, 2009

November-December 2009

Deadline: October 30, 2009

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Next CWC Central Board Meeting

**Sunday, Jan. 25
8:30 a.m.**

**Grand Californian Hotel
Anaheim**

Each branch is entitled to send one representative as a voting member to the Central Board meeting. All members in good standing are welcome to attend as observers.

Sail On! Blogging for \$\$\$

According to www.internetworldstats.com 1,463,632,361 users populate the internet world wide. At www.technorati.com the folks aren't nearly so precise and estimate 133,000,000 blogs in use around the globe.

Shuffling the numbers around shows that only nine percent of the internet denizens are bloggers. That in turn indicates room to grow.

Surely there must be some way to capitalize on that and make a few bucks.

Enter the pop-up and banner ad folks.

These folks will pay you to have their ads on your blog. Every time someone, anyone, goes to your blog, the ad company registers a 'hit' for your site. The more hits, the

more \$\$\$ Well, more like more ¢¢¢.

That is the key. You have to have something to blog about that will virtually drag people to your site. First, if you don't already have one, you need to create a blog-site. It's pretty easy and mostly free. Mostly free because you do need an internet connection and that usually requires paying subscription to an ISP.

To get help on creating your blog, go to www.wordpress.com or www.blogspot.com. If neither of those suit your fancy, do a

GOOGLE search for 'create a blog.' From there, simply follow the instructions to get your blog up and running.

When it comes to finding sources for pop-ups (and pop-under, by the way) and banner advertisers, I'm going to do a cop-out. I don't want to put myself in the spot of endorsing one or any of the sources. I'm sure that if you have the keyboard savvy to create your blog, you'll know how to Google around and find ad sources.

Don't expect to make any fast money here. It will take time and more effort on your part for your blog to become popular. That is THE key. The blog has to generate lots of interest. Remember what I said, more hits - more ¢¢¢.

If you are good at blogging, more ways exist to make money at it than reaping income from ads. Hire yourself out as a blog writer for example.

An article on CNN.com said: "...blog ad spending is roughly twice what it was last year." The same article said web advertising is expected to top \$23 billion by 2010. The money is there; you just have to work for it.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



By Casey Wilson
CWC President

www.calwriters.org

CWC Centennial: Submit an Idea, Be Eligible for a Prize

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your branch rep before January 19th and we can fill them at our January 25th meeting). Note that we haven't finalized prices as we go to press, but your reps will know by the time you receive this *Bulletin*.

We'll have prizes, too – free prize drawings for members with gift certificates, books about writing, and the like. For this we need your suggestions on how members will enter, because it would be unfair to donors, and disappointing for members who want the prizes, if they go to winners who have no use for them and instantly throw them out. Your ideas, please...?

On the subject of suggestions, and with an emphasis on a shared commitment to quality, perhaps you'll also let me know at cwccent2009@yahoo.com, if the California Writers Club would do only one thing during 2009, what would you want that to be?"

HAPPY NEW YEAR. HAPPY CENTENNIAL. SAIL ON. 

Adventures in Comparative Linguistics

By David Mathew Gray, Berkeley

The English noun INFANT contains three Latin elements. IN means "not," as in IN-AUDIBLE and INFREQUENT. FA is a form of the verb FARI which means "speak" and is related to FABLE and FAME. NT is a variant of the common English suffix ING which we add to verbs. Thus, infants are children who have not yet reached the age where they are expected to be speaking. This expectation is universal. People in all societies speak at least one language.

When the first humans migrated out of Africa, where our species began, they probably did not have language as we understand this concept. The several hundred languages and dialects that are spoken today evolved from a few dozen proto-languages that began independently of each other at various places. Here are a few of the families that they became, together with their probable places of origin, branches and major current languages. Afro-Asian can be traced back to Northeast Africa, Hamitic branch (Berber, Coptic) and Semetic branch (Amharic, Arabic, Hebrew). Austronesian began in Southeast Asia, Malayan branch (Indonesian, Tagalog) and Polynesian branch (Maori, Hawaiian). Uralic began in the Ural Mountains, Northern

branch (Finnish, Estonian) and Southern branch (Hungarian, Samoyed).

The native languages of half the people in the world are Indo-European. Add people who speak one of these as a second language and it is obviously the most important family. It originated in Eastern Europe or Central Asia; the exact location is uncertain. Contemporary languages evolved from eight dialects: Indo-Iranian (Hindi-Bengali, Pashto, Farsi), Armenian, Balto-Slavic (Russian, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, Lithuanian), Greek, Albanian, Romance (Spanish, French, Italian, Romanian), Germanic (Swedish, German, Dutch, English), and Celtic (Breton, Welsh, Irish).

My writing a book on comparative linguistics, *The Web of Languages*, resulted from the convergence of passion and professional skill. My academic training and subsequent career were in psychological research, but I have been fascinated by English and other languages since high school. When I retired I sought a simple, non-technical explanation of how languages continuously change, how they are related to each other, and how they reflect the values of

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How I Found My Niche Market

By Audry Lynch, South Bay

I was born Cambridge, MA and my husband and our three children moved to California in 1970. My husband was attracted to the area because of an opportunity to work in the now famous Silicon Valley. When people asked me about the move I said proudly, "I'm moving to Steinbeck Country."

I earned my B.A. at Harvard University and my Master's Degree at Boston University. Sad to say, the works of John Steinbeck never appeared on any of my reading lists. Later, after I faced the empty nest syndrome, I pursued a doctorate in Educational Psychology at the U. of San Francisco.

For thirty two years my "day job" revolved around being a junior high school guidance counselor. I loved it and usually describe it as "being at the front of educational and social change." For the past twenty-five years I have taught English classes as adjunct faculty at Mission College in Santa Clara. My "night job" keeps me in touch with the problems and successes of our many immigrant populations.

For an equal number of years I have been a traffic school instructor on week-ends. It's been a humorous occupation listening to the stories of all the "innocent victims" of our justice system. I found that traffic school is one of the most democratic institutions in our country since it cuts across all social/economic lines. Currently I have retired from my "day job" but I continue working at the other two.

My interest in Steinbeck led me down many paths: lecturing and teaching Steinbeck's works; conducting tours of Steinbeck Country; delivering papers at Steinbeck Conferences; membership in Steinbeck Club and other Steinbeck organizations; writing three books on the subject. The books are: *With Steinbeck in the Sea of Cortez*, *Steinbeck Remembered*, and *Two Rebels With a Cause: John Steinbeck and James Dean*.


I have been a Steinbeck collector for forty years. Dick Hayman, whose collection now resides in the Steinbeck Center at San Jose State University, probably was the first person to encourage me in this pursuit. Over

the years I have met many other Steinbeck collectors and have enjoyed exchanging news of Steinbeck "finds" with them. I found that this pursuit is more addictive than collecting baseball cards. My collection is eclectic and I collect anything that I can find related to Steinbeck and his work. Without a definite focus my collection, like Topsy, "just grew". But, suffice to say that it has taken over my whole house.

Since my schools did not introduce Steinbeck into my life, I had to discover him on my own. I used to spend many summers on Cape Cod reading and swimming. One day I discovered a copy of *Cannery Row* at my little West Harwich Library. The opening lines entranced me. I thought to myself, "Who is this guy? Does this place really exist?" That summer I read straight through the entire Steinbeck canon, a feat that I have never repeated with another author.

As for my other interests, I'm an inveterate reader and an inveterate traveler. When I travel, I look for Steinbeck books in other languages. This summer I was lucky to find some in Spanish (Argentina) and in Portuguese (Brazil). I am a joiner so I belong to several organizations and I'm always happy to introduce Steinbeck to these new audiences.

I love receiving *The Steinbeck Collectors Gazette* and I receive many new ideas from each issue. It has opened many new doors for my own personal research. I only hope it will continue to flourish and attract new members.

If my interest in Steinbeck seems excessive, I'm sure that my family and friends would agree with you. One of my friends refers to Steinbeck as "the other man in Audry's life." 



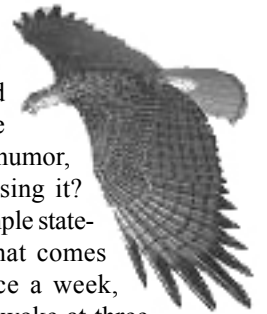
Wasted

By J.D. Blair, Mt. Diablo

The clock just chimed five and the Red Tailed hawk is perched on the aviary longing for dove flesh...the doves are flirting, putting too much faith in the security of wire mesh. Much of what went on here today was wasted time...deep caverns of it are gone, unused and plowed under. Where is the uncharted prose, the free verse, the pithy humor, when I'm not using it?

Where is that simple statement of truth that comes once a day, once a week, month, year? I woke at three this morning and it was that truth that woke me. I told myself that I needed sleep and would remember it. I didn't of course. It was just a snippet of a thought but it was clean and clear and had a slight music to it. It's what I've been looking for all day and at three this morning I tossed it aside, dropped it into that pre-dawn "out" basket to be looked at later. It is now later and the truthful thought is now vanished whimsy and tonight I won't sleep for fear of losing more. Is one truth more important than another? Is there a truth gauge? I suppose that is what is meant by "a measure of truth." There must be a place for unused truths, a burial ground or halfway house. I imagine this is as close to truth as I will come today.

Time and the hawk have flown. What a waste.



Writing for The Bulletin

CWC members are always invited to submit their work for publication in *The Bulletin*. We're looking for short essays, inspiration, how-to, humor, poetry, even short-short fiction, as long as it has something to do with writing or the writing life. Submit as a Word doc attachment to Editor Joyce Krieg, joyce@joycek.com. Sorry, at this time we are unable to publish news of member sales and publications.

A few caveats: Please indicate "CWC Bulletin Submission" in the subject field of your e-mail. If Joyce's spam blocker bounces your message, just hit "Reply" and it should sail right through. Do not submit "docx" Word docs (the version that comes with Vista). Please convert them to "rtf" format.



Don't Call Us – We Won't Call You

By Joan D'Onofrio, Mt. Diablo

I need a job. I am 70 years old, and Craig (Craig'sList) and I have been sitting at my computer sending out resumé's and cover letters by the carload. I have had two interviews out of the 107 ads I answered. The applications I e-mailed all over town seem to be floating somewhere in outer space. I've had very few responses, but mostly no responses at all.

What is happening here?

I earned a BFA over 40 years ago so my educational profile is adequate, my work experience is impressive, and I know the basics of the Microsoft Suite. I worked my way up the corporate ladder in a small publishing company and moved on to other companies earning more and more money with each job change and promotion.

After 36 years in the corporate world working for others, and at the ripe old age of 64, I quit my job and moved from Minnesota to the East Bay in California. With my 401K in hand and a business plan I put together myself, I opened four financially-doable exercise clubs. I considered myself smart, fearless, adventurous and became part of the new trend in exercise franchises. Six years later, I eventually tired of the long hours and financial responsibilities and sold all four clubs. I still wanted to work—make that needed to work—but now I wanted to have a boss and not be one.

It was after reading an article in the *New York Times* titled: "For a Good Retirement, Find Work, Good Luck" that I put 2 and 107 together. Luck is the clue. The article made

it very clear that age matters in the world of work no matter what the Supreme Court rules or the Department of Labor Standards Enforcement Agency lists as discriminatory. I had to face it. It was, indeed, my age. So, I put the article down and immediately deleted all the dates from my resumé. In a few days, I got my first call.

Don't get excited yet. The call came from a catering company. The voice on the phone said: "I like your resumé. Would you be

able to come in for an interview tomorrow?"

I arrived the next day and was met by a supervisor who shoved some confidentiality papers at me, told me to sign them, and handed me an apron. Another woman came up to me and put me to work making sandwiches. Apparently, I had been hired on the spot.

By 8:30 a.m. all the sandwiches and platters were assembled and packed into huge plastic cooler bags that each person was required to take to specific locations (office buildings and several day camps). We were required to sell everything in our cooler bags! Being new, I was assigned to accompany one of the other staff members to learn the selling process and the assigned routes. When I got in my assignee's car, the pathetic little thing told me to get out and go home. "This is not a job for you," she said.

"... age matters in the world of work no matter what the Supreme Court rules or the Department of Labor Standards Enforcement Agency lists as discriminatory."

I left, got into my car, and cried all the way home. I didn't know what was more upsetting: the fact that the job was ridiculous and the company was breaking every health code on record, not getting paid for the three-and-a-half hours I worked, or being fired by a co-worker.

Still I continued to send out more date-

less resumé's and cover letters. I got another call a few days later from an insurance company. I was told to come in for an interview and ask

for Doreen. However, when I arrived at the office, there were seven people in line ahead of me and 23 people sitting in the reception area. You guessed it, they were all there waiting to see Doreen. Now what did I get myself into? But, I dutifully filled out the application like everyone else, and eventually we were all herded into a huge auditorium.

A kid, young enough to be my grandson complete with the sniffing nose, began the 50-minute pitch that turned out to be a cattle call to recruit sales people. There was no salary involved, although the kid kept assuring us we would all be making huge six figure incomes very soon. Everything was based on commissions. I quickly did the math and concluded that if I spent ten to twenty hours a day driving all over town every day of the week—including weekends—squeezing in 10 to 20 interviews daily, I might earn something. But, six figures? Come on, get real. Did I mention they don't pick up the tab for gas?

I'll tell you now what is happening. No one wants you when you're old and gray. Dates, on or off a resumé, scream old. I always thought if they could only see me, they would never believe I'm 70. My age is hampering any interest in me as a potential employee. On top of that, if you're not there when the phone rings, forget about it. You've lost.

Have you noticed there are no human resources departments where you can speak one-on-one with a human being who will let you fill out an application right there in front of them? If there is a functioning department, it's very well hidden. No, you
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Comparative Linguistics

continued from page 3

their speakers. After I made an exhaustive search and found that no such book had ever been written, I decided to write it myself. I plan to explore these topics in future issues of *The Bulletin*.

When writing was invented, history began. People's own words were now recorded. However, we also have the words of prehistoric people. They are hidden in plain sight, are used in our everyday speech and provide us with important clues about what prehistoric people thought.

Languages in the same family have a shared vocabulary, but the same word is likely to be pronounced differently in different languages and may even have a different meaning.

If you read classical Greek and Roman literature in the original, you will find many words that they adapted from other languages. This process began when people who spoke one language interacted with those who spoke another. The process continues. Read the signs and labels in your local supermarket and you will find dozens of words that migrated to English in the last century. Read the current issue of any popular foreign language magazine and you will find many words that recently were taken from English.

Explore these topics with David by sending at e-mail to: dmgl789@yahoo.com.



Berkeley

If you and your writing colleagues are thinking about self-publishing an anthology, Berkeley member Risa Nye has done just that and has much helpful information to share. The good news is, she had total control over the look and feel of the book, and the price. The not-so-good news is dealing with distribution issues. "The most important lesson in all this is that people like us can publish a lovely book and do it for the most part on their own terms. . . there is no greater feeling than walking by a bookstore and seeing our very own book in the window."

Write Angles –

Al Levenson, Editor

Central Coast

John Moir, author of *Return of the Condor*, discussed his belief that writers have an obligation to share their work with other people at the November Central Coast meeting. If we have a story, the implication is that we have an audience, and we should look for ways to share our story with others. Enter contests. Send our query letters. "It means putting it out into the world, sharing it with others . . . being an entrepreneur, looking for ways to get that writing out so others get to share it."

Scribbles – Joyce Krieg, Editor

East Sierra (Ridge Writers)

Author Kathrine Bates gave a fascinating discussion as to how she wrote the play "The Manor" at a recent meeting of Ridge Writers. "The Manor" is performed at an actual house, the Greystone Mansion in Beverly Hills, and is based on a real-life murder mystery from the 1920s. A unique aspect is that multiple story lines are carried out in various rooms of the mansion, with the audience moving from scene to scene instead of the traditional stage and curtain. Frederick Gary Hareland reports, "This actually worked out quite well, I'm sure due to the amazing thought process of Kathy, who was able to coordinate it all so well; my hat is off to her. I don't think many playwrights would be capable of this type of multidimensional thinking. And she wrote it all in three short days – I say bravo."

Writers of the Purple Sage –

Liz Babcock, Editor

Inland Empire

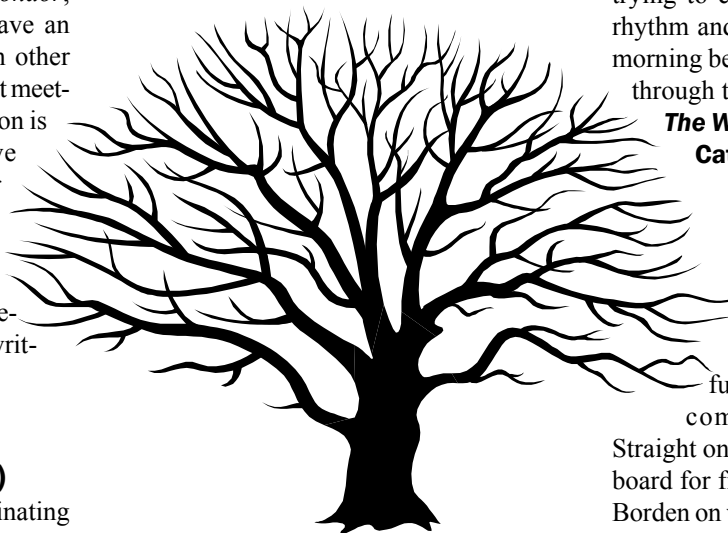
Inland Empire announces the following win-

Branching Out

"Nuggets from the Newsletters"

ners of their "Road Less Traveled" writing contest: First Place Poetry, Eileen Malone, "After the Pilgrimage;" First Place Short Story, Holly Gaglio, "Westbound;" First Place Nonfiction, Jay Lewenstein, "The Sun Runner;" Second Place Poetry, Victoria Waddle, "Arc;" Second Place Short Story, Frances Kayugawa, "Road to Haole Land;" Second Place Nonfiction, Aaron Reed, "A Walk in the Park;" Third Place Poetry, Katrin Talbot, "Every Six Months;" Third Place Short Story, Victoria Waddle, "Dry Run;" Third Place Nonfiction, Susanna Solomon, "A Well Defined Trail."

Fresh Ink – Laura Slattery, Editor



Long Beach

Long Beach kicks off 2009 with an open mic night on January 6. The February program features Jeremy Aluma, project manager of "Book By Authors: North Long Beach." Members are invited to bring and share fiction, nonfiction, poetry or plays, no longer than 300 words, related to the theme of North Long Beach. The branch meets on the first Tuesday of the month from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Los Altos branch library.

Anne Magris, President

Marin

A great film director like Alfred Hitchcock has much to teach writers of books as well as screenplays. Hitchcock expert Gil Mansergh shared the master's secrets at a recent Marin branch meeting. Mansergh screened clips from Hitchcock's famous films, and from these snippets, themes emerged: the wronged man, an identifiable

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landscape, famous music, faces and eyes, the incompetent cop, the innocent hero, the hero as Everyman. As President Barbara Truax reflected, "Hitchcock's many movies are worth studying no matter what you are writing. His storyboards are legendary; his plots fascinating and his use of themes universal."

Marin Writes – Jett Walker, Editor

Mt. Diablo

Think you have to write every day in order to call yourself a real writer? Not necessarily, says columnist Camille Minichino. "As long as you write some time, it doesn't matter when or how often. If you're like me, freaked out at the thought of doing anything on a routine, you'll just get frustrated trying to change that rhythm. Find your rhythm and go with it, whether it's every morning before the kids are up or in spurts through the week. Just get it done."

The Write News –

Catherine Accardi, Editor

Orange County

The first program of the new year is entitled, "Start the Year Write" and promises to "catapult your writing to a successful 2009." Other programs in the coming months include Susan Straight on how to use history as a springboard for fiction on February 14, and Phil Borden on writing about his experiences as a contractor in Iraq on March 14. Orange County meets on the second Saturday of the month at the Orange County Public Library and History Center in Orange.

Orange Ink – Carol Celeste, Editor

Peninsula

Peninsula's January 17 meeting will feature a creativity session led by member and creativity mentor Mary E. Knippel. Mary plans to lead members in a playful, hands-on session of writing exercises and collage-making. Collage allows the creator to join words with visual images, resulting in stories rich in imagination and depth. Journal writing, according to Mary, "is a creative, empowering path to self-discovery and change as well as a connection to working on our inner life and outer relationships."

The Peninsula Writer –

Linda Okerlund, Editor

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Branching Out

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Redwood

Branches that would like to have more time for members to network and socialize might consider the programs offered by the Redwood branch. In addition to the monthly meetings with a guest speaker, Redwood sponsors a "salon" every other month in a member's home for eating, chatting, and reading of their written work. Redwood is kicking off 2009 with a series of Saturday workshops January 24, 31, and February 7 at the Petaluma Senior Center. Topics include point of view, characterization, dialog, setting, and critiquing your manuscript.

The Redwood Writer –

R.K. Koslowsky, Editor

Sacramento

Author T.E. Watson had some thoughts for members of Sacramento's Nonfiction Network on how to promote our books once they're in print. "Have a lot of faith in your book. Create expectation. Talk about your book." One promotional tool that Watson employs is an 18-by-24 inch poster featuring his book covers that he gives away at book fairs and speaking engagements. His method answers the question, "How do you get people to see you?"

Write On – Julie Bauer, Editor

San Fernando Valley

If your New Year's resolution includes writing a screenplay in 2009, heed this advice from Hollywood literary agent Michelle Wallerstein: "Stop thinking you have to write the most unusual script of all time. This kind of thinking will destroy your chances of not only selling your script, but of keeping your agent. I've found that new writers have the tendency to try to impress people by 'thinking outside the box.' Well, folks, the 'box' is there for a reason. Throughout movie history, people have loved certain types of films. They go to see them over and over again. When you are working to get into the business, go with the flow."

The Valley Scribe –

George Hirai, Editor

South Bay

The new year brings to mind resolutions. In addition to the usual writers' resolutions (write on a regular basis, network, put your

work out there, find a mentor), President Dave LaRoche suggests, "Do all writing as if it's a submission – tame the sloth. Letters and cards, emails, diary and journal entries, annotations and reminders, all – treat them as your best effort and apply what you know about vocabulary and structure and the rest."

Writers Talk – Dick Amyx, Editor

Tri-Valley

Tri Valley's December meeting featured member B. Lynn Goodwin, author of *You Want Me to Do WHAT: Journaling for Caregivers*. She says voice is the key to carving out our unique paths as writers. "Who will tell your story if you do not?" she challenges. Editors frequently cite "voice" as the factor that makes a manuscript stand out from the slush pile. In her journey as a caregiver for her mother, Ms. Goodwin deepened her own understanding of voice and encouraged her fellow Tri Valley members to discover and share their voices.

Write Around the Valley –

Kelly Pollard, Editor



West Valley

West Valley recently celebrated the 95th birthday of a very special lady: Betty Freeman, founder of the San Fernando Valley branch, and one of the principal figures in chartering the West Valley branch. In the newsletter, Betty reflected on her career as an educator and a ghost writer and her recent decision to write her memoirs. "What fun to have a second career, one that is creative and personally satisfying. And what a job to be able to share it with other writers. Writers, artists, musicians – we are all in the same business – a business of the heart!"

In Focus – Kathy Highcove, Editor

Writers of Kern

WOK members turned lemon into lemonade when a guest speaker had to cancel at the last minute. They turned their meeting into a mini-workshop on writing memoir. President Carol Black says, "Memoir writing is very therapeutic. It lets you see the big picture that you couldn't see when you were actually going through that part of your life. It calms the soul. . . Even if you never publish it, a memoir is absolutely worth the effort it takes to write it."

The Write Way –

Marty Gorsching, Editor



CWC Member Benefits

Heyday Books

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30% discount on all titles. Call 510/526-2916 or visit www.baytreepublish.com and identify yourself as a CWC member.

Dramatica Pro Software

Discounts on this popular screenwriting software are available by ordering through www.storymind.com. CWC members get a \$5 discount off the already-low price. Use coupon code DISCOUNTBONUS and enter CWC in the comment box.

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Don't Call Us – We Won't Call You


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have to do everything on-line. Even my supervisor at our local hospital, where I serve as a volunteer, could not interview or recommend me for a paying position. I still had to go on-line and fill out an electronic application. Well, I did, but I never heard from them either.

As for the professional job-placement organizations, they're only looking for specific people with very specific job skills and even they turn you away. I know, because I've tried them, too. The number of jobs available, they'll tell you, is pretty sparse, but if you happen to be a master at Excel, PowerPoint, and Word and are young, you'll probably have a better chance at becoming gainfully employed—at least for a little while. Worst part is I always thought I could fall back on a job as a sales clerk. Alas, even those have dried up.

In the end, though, maybe none of this will matter. It seems some wild-and-crazy scientists have built the world's largest, most gigantic, humongous atom smasher and launched it this summer. Intended to

unravel the mysteries of the universe and reveal startling esoteric scientific "stuff," the experiment was a flop. As if we really need to know more about how the universe got started. Other, even wilder-and-crazier, scientists believe this endeavor to be potentially catastrophic and will create black holes that will swallow up the earth—yup, in one gulp it'll all be over. However, something went wrong at the last minute, and the whole mission was scrubbed. So, either even more people are now out of work, or, perhaps they need more staff. I'm considering submitting my resumé.

Joan is the author of Short Circuit Stories: Intimacies of the Exercising Woman published in 2008. She is presently working on two books. One is about growing up in a dysfunctional Italian-American family titled: Chocolate Chip Meatballs. The other is simply titled: Dear Joan and is about the dissolution of her 38-year marriage. 

January-February 2009

Sacramento Sponsors Flash Fiction Contest

What: Flash fiction contest.

Who: Sponsored by Sacramento branch; open to all CWC members.

Theme: Open.


Word Count: 500 maximum.

Prizes: \$100, \$50 and \$25 for first, second and third place, plus publication in the branch newsletter, *Write On!*

Deadline: Must be postmarked by March 31, 2009.

Entry Fee: \$10 per submission.

For more information:

www.sacramento-writers.org or contact Contest Chair Evelyn Luscher, eluscher@sbcglobal.net. 



The Bulletin

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**CWC is 100?
That's a winner!
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