



CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB BULLETIN

SUMMER 2022

Dialogue: Situate, Sow, Shape

by Kimberly Edwards, Sacramento

Noted essayist John McPhee once said that verbal communication is how we interact with the world. Words uttered can elevate a moment into a lasting memory. Similarly, dialogue in a story can sharpen the experience. Dialogue propels readers into a scene, making them front-row witnesses. Yet dialogue can be one of the hardest literary devices for a writer to master. Following are three tips for writing effective dialogue:

1. Know your reason for using dialogue. Verbal exchanges between characters serve many functions. These include: planting tension, elucidating relationships among characters, showing manner of expression, stressing a point, foreshadowing events to come, revealing back story, and breaking up long narrative. Dialogue should move the story forward. An exchange between characters alters the pace, nudging the reader or offering a respite to reflect. Exactly where in a story a dialogue should occur is a key author decision. Recognizing the *purpose* for choosing one place over another will help the author to construct the most appropriate exchange. When dialogue is simply jettisoned into narrative without being situated with purpose, it can confuse or annoy the reader to the detriment of effective flow.

2. Recognize the difference between dialogue and real talk. In writing, dialogue is a semblance of speech, a language with an intended mission. Dialogue differs from how we typically speak in person. The best dialogue reveals clues, carefully sown by the writer to deepen the story:

Q. How are you?


A. Better than last week this time. Or

A. Are you wearing that old felt hat again? Or

A. I heard you the first time. How the hell do you think I am?

As noted above, characters respond indirectly, obliquely, or with a twist. They don't waste time with the mundane ("I'm fine, thank you. And you?") Even in memoir, dialogue is not written exactly as a conversation might have occurred. This is because memoir, while projecting the intent of an exchange as it happened, should be laid out as a story organized for readers.

3. Keep it short. Every word counts in the compact world of dialogue. Long exchanges can lose a reader. Conversely, a crisp, whiplash exchange can pique and reveal characters' values, upbringing, or irritation with an ex after 20 years. Writers should remember to use only *he* or *she* "*said*," as verbs such as "*exclaimed*" or "*yelled*" can be better projected through body language or verbal dialogue from the character's mouth. (*Example: "I can't believe you did that again," he said, his jaw quivering and his fist so clenched that all veins fled into the folds of his hand.*)

Knowing where and how to use dialogue is a sense that develops over time. Read what the experts say. Pay attention to stories, and soon your ear will develop the ability to know the seeds to sow, where and when to plant, and how to shape dialogue for the good of the story. 



Kimberly Edwards, the immediate past president of the Sacramento branch, is a much-published author of nonfiction, with credits ranging from Cosmopolitan to The Times of India. Her most recent project is Sacramento Motorcycling: A Capital City Tradition, published in July of 2021 by The History Press. <https://www.sacramentomotorcycling.com/>

President's Corner: Life-Affirming Impact of In-Person Meetings



by Roger Lubeck, CWC President

Two plus years of COVID-19 have caused many of our writers to withdraw from the club. Members report they are writing less or unable to write. At the Redwood Writers meeting in May, Vickie Dello Joio taught us how to use our energy as writers. Vickie discussed ways to overcome writer's block in addition to the age-old advice, "just write." That discussion got me thinking about a different kind of writer's block. A situation where you can write, however, you feel unable or unwilling to write about the deeper emotions you are experiencing or feeling. Your anxieties, your fears, and your doubts about the future.

The branches are now starting to have physical and hybrid meetings, salons, readings, book events, and other member events that offer us a chance to escape from the isolation we have experienced in the last two years. At our last Redwood meeting, I felt like a chrysalis breaking out of its shell and opening its wings in the fresh dew of a spring morning. I was able to see and talk with old friends, welcome new members, and participate in an active discussion about books and writing; it was life-affirming.

The next time you are able to attend a monthly branch meeting in person, I encourage you to reach out and meet and talk with other members, especially new members. Find out what they are reading, writing, and what kind of assistance or support they might need or provide to the branch and club. "Writers Helping Writers" needs to be more than a slogan.

In the coming year (2022-2023), I hope to see a number of simple changes that will make it easier to join the club and more rewarding to be a member. I expect our branches will continue to prosper and grow, adding new members and new opportunities for members to be published; to learn about craft, publishing, and marketing. It is my hope that in some meaningful way each branch acts as creative leader in their community.

Finally, I want our members to achieve new levels of publications and personal satisfaction as writers and members of the California Writers Club. To that end, I am asking that each branch board and membership chair to establish a process during the member renewal period to determine whether a renewing member is published and has published in the last year. I expect that database on member publications will form the basis for recognizing member achievement in the future.



CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB

A 501(c)3 NONPROFIT

OUR MISSION: TO EDUCATE WRITERS OF ALL ABILITIES IN THE CRAFT OF WRITING AND THE MARKETING OF THEIR WORK.

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Perfect Pitch: Writing the Query Letter

Best-selling author Jonathan Maberry recently spoke to the High Desert branch in which he offered the ideal agent pitch letter. He has graciously given us permission to reproduce the letter in The CWC Bulletin.

Joe Bloggs
The Big Literary Agency
100 Success Street New York, NY 10000

Dear Mr. Bloggs,

If you have to kill the same terrorist twice in one week then there's either something wrong with your skills or something wrong with the world...and there's nothing wrong with Joe Ledger's skills.

PATIENT ZERO is a mainstream thriller in which a Baltimore cop is recruited by a secret government organization to help stop a group of terrorists from releasing a plague that can turn people into murderous zombies. The story is grounded in hard –but very scary– science and follows Joe Ledger as he goes from a cop with a troubled past to a hero leading a unit of first-team shooters against the world's deadliest threat. Joe Ledger and the DMS (Department of Military Sciences) would immediately excite readers of James Rollins' Sigma Six novels, Vince Flynn's Mitch Rapp series and Lee Child's Jack Reacher books.

Joe Ledger is a hero with heart: conflicted, compassionate, idealistic and extremely dangerous. *PATIENT ZERO* is a standalone novel with series potential. It's a fast-paced character-driven high concept thriller that pits Joe Ledger and the DMS against terrorists with cutting edge bio-weapons. He's the hero we need for these troubled times.

PATIENT ZERO is 140,000 words. I would be happy to send a synopsis, sample chapters, or the complete manuscript. I'm experienced and active in social networking, which will allow me to be an active participant in co-promotion, using Facebook, Twitter, podcasting, blogs, vlogs, websites, forums and other forms of viral marketing to build buzz for this book.

Although this novel can stand as a solo adventure, I have outlines for additional potential stories. I would also be willing to write short stories or novellas tied to *PATIENT ZERO* that can be posted as eBooks to help cultivate and maintain readership.

Your own remarkable track record with thrillers of every stripe is impressive, and you've done so well with best-sellers as well as first-time authors such as Joe Schmoe, Jane Doe and Bessie T. Seller that it's clear you get this genre. I look forward to hearing from via email.

Sincerely,
Jonathan Maberry

Jonathan Maberry is the New York Times best-selling author of thrillers, horror, science fiction, epic fantasies and mystery. He's a five-time Bram Stoker Award winner for his horror fiction. The letter above is the one he used to secure representation for the first in the Joe Ledger series, now with 11 titles from St. Martin's Griffin.



What Setting Can Do for Your Writing

by John Byrne Barry, Marin

Over the past five years, I've presented "Setting That Works" to six California Writers Club branches. What follows is a revised and distilled interview that I conducted with myself, based on questions from CWC-Berkeley's Cristina Deptula.

How do you know how much setting to include? What do you mean by "setting that works?"

I'm going to answer that with a story, about two elderly couples taking a walk

The two women are in front, the men behind, and one man says to the other, "We went out to dinner last night and had the best grilled fish ever—"

The second man says, "What restaurant?"

The first man slaps his hand on his forehead. "Damn. Senior moment. Help me out here. You know that flower, the fragrant one with the thorns?"

The second man says, "Rose?"

"Yeah, Rose," the first man says, then shouts to his wife, "Rose, what was the name of that restaurant we went to last night?"

Notice anything about that story? No setting. Not needed. Readers can picture the setting in their own way. Which is to say, my leaning is to skimp on setting.

Setting's primary role is to immerse readers in the scene, so they can visualize it, feel it, smell it. But it's a missed opportunity if that's all it does—even the most elegantly written setting can slow your story down.

The best and most memorable setting is lean and strong because it's working multiple jobs. It advances the story, or sets the mood, or echoes the theme.

The most common side gig for setting is defining or revealing character. In many novels, the camera sits on the character's shoulder. The reader sees what the character sees. If I'm walking in my neighborhood in Tam Valley, I might notice how flowers are bursting out all over. Someone else might notice the Teslas and Mercedes. What the character sees shows the reader who he or she is. I notice the expensive cars too, not because I care about cars, but because they remind me I live in a community where many people have more money than I do. That's revealing as well.

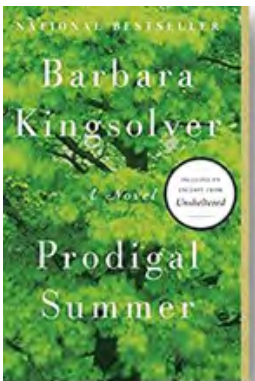
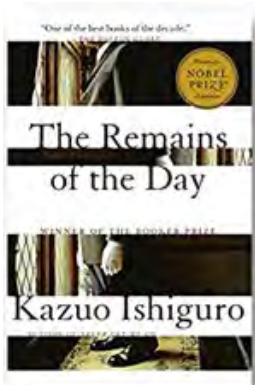
What books, and which authors, provide good examples of setting done well?

Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* comes to mind because the setting is so much about describing a culture and tradition more than a place. The story follows Stevens, a middle-aged butler in 1950s England, who takes a motoring trip to the West Country, where a former housekeeper lives. He's hoping he might rekindle a connection with her.

But most of the novel is his reminiscence of the time between the wars, when he presides over a large staff at Darlington Hall, a Downton Abbey–like estate, and strives to be the best butler ever. He's so obsessed with loyalty to a stuffy and antiquated tradition that he doesn't allow himself an emotional life. He leaves the bedside of his dying father to take care of "critical matters" in the household, like polishing the silver.

The setting reveals Stevens' character—not Darlington Hall as much as the devotion to "dignity" that sadly limits his life.

Then there's *Prodigal Summer*, by Barbara Kingsolver, set in the fecund forests of Appalachia. Deanna, a wildlife biologist, is studying a den of coyotes that recently migrated into the region, and she falls in love with a young man who has come to the mountains to hunt the coyotes.



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What Setting Can Do for Your Writing: continued from previous page

The setting here is the opposite of *The Remains of the Day*—it's humid and lush and bursting with procreating plants and animals. I read it long ago, and still remember the rowdy, sexy natural environment, the birds and bees writ large, and how that seeped into Deanna's complicated relationship with the hunter.

I also want to mention my "green noir" mystery, *Wasted*, set in the garbage and recycling world of Berkeley, rich with themes of reinvention and discarding that which no longer serves us. The setting is not only the recycling world, but Berkeley, a colorful, creative place ripe for ridicule. I was thrilled that one review of *Wasted* said I nailed the "vibe" of Berkeley. That's what the best setting does. It's more than painting a backdrop. It's capturing a feeling, a zeitgeist.

How important is setting to a story? What about books where setting is like a character? Is that possible?

Consider *The Perfect Storm*, a true story about the crew of a fishing boat caught in a vicious Atlantic storm, which escalates the way a character might, and is described with adjectives you might use with people—angry, fierce, relentless. Severe weather, because it changes, can be like a character. In *The Perfect Storm*, the setting is the story.


There are plenty of books where cities are like characters. Think 1980s New York City in Tom Wolfe's *Bonfire of the Vanities*, with its go-go greed-is-good bond traders and its polarizing racial tensions. Or Dickens' London, with its prisons, workhouses, and "misanthropic ice."

How familiar should you be with a place before you start to write?

A few years ago, I attended a panel on setting at the San Francisco Writers Conference and two panelists insisted that you had to be physically present to research setting, but a third presenter disagreed. If you want to find out what it's like to ride in the canals of Venice, he said, you can find that on YouTube.

Even before YouTube, there were authors who wrote about places they'd never been. A century ago, British writer John Buchan, who later became governor general of Canada, wrote an adventure novel set in the Canadian Arctic. But he'd never been there.

His son had, however, and he asked his son to share ten facts about the Arctic. He interrupted his son after three. "That's enough," he said. The rest he invented.


Nowadays, it's more possible than ever to see what places look like without being there. But that zeitgeist I mentioned earlier, you're not as likely to find that in a video. 



John Byrne Barry is a writer, designer, actor, crossing guard, and board member of Bay Area Independent Publishers Association (BAIPA). He is author of three novels: *When I Killed My Father: An Assisted-Suicide Family Thriller*; *Wasted: Murder in the Recycle Berkeley Yard*; and *Bones in the Wash: Politics is Tough. Family is Tougher*. Find out more at johnbyrnebarry.com. He is available to present "Setting That Works" to CWC branches.



Call for Submissions

Eva Barrows from the SF Peninsula branch invites CWC members to submit to the next issue of her literary journal, *Imitation Fruit*. They're looking for fun and upbeat short stories, poems and artwork. Deadline is July 6. No entry fee. Submission details at www.imitationfruit.com. 

Getting Reviews for Your Indie Book

For those of us who are indie authors—and that's most of us these days—getting reader reviews on Amazon, Goodreads, and book blogs is essential when it comes to generating sales. Sure, we'd all like to get a starred review in Publishers Weekly or a positive write-up in the New York Times but those perks are reserved almost exclusively for those lucky few who land a deal with one of the big traditional houses. Christopher Locke, Director of Membership and Member Services for the Independent Book Publishers Association, gave a presentation on book reviews to the Central Coast branch in March. Christopher has graciously allowed us to share a portion of his pass-out in the CWC Bulletin.

Ways to garner reader reviews for free:

1. Reach out to friends, acquaintances, and people who are in your network—if they are fans of the type of book you have written. Don't ask family to give you reviews. Amazon (and other consumers) don't want to read reviews from the author's family members. And, if they're not regular buyers of your genre, their review will throw off the all-important Amazon algorithm.

2. Do a book blog tour. Go to <https://articles.ibpa-online.org/article/all-aboard-the-blog-tour/> to read more about blog tours. Basically, the idea is to find blogs that are in line with the subject matter of your book and coordinate with the blogger to post an article about your book. This could involve a review, an interview with you as the author, or a giveaway of your book with the intention of garnering reviews from the winners.

There are tons of book bloggers out there, so you should research all the bloggers who write about books like yours. Each blogger has strict guidelines how to submit your book, so make sure you read their guidelines and follow them.

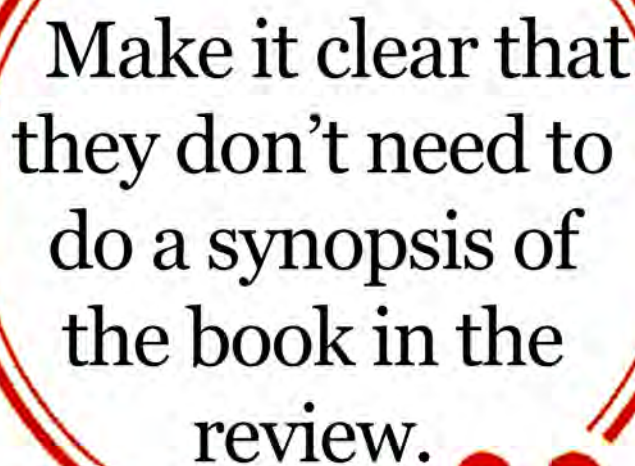
A good resource is *The Book Reviewer Yellow Pages* <https://bookrevieweryellowpages.com/authors/> by David Wogahn. It has 200 bloggers' profiles with contact info, 40 blog tour organizers that help you contact the bloggers, and information about 32 book review businesses, like Kirkus and Foreword Reviews.

Other online directories of book reviewers are Indie View, <http://www.theindieview.com/>, and Book Blogger List <https://bookbloggerlist.com/>

3. Ask everyone who likes your book to leave you a review on Goodreads and on websites where they normally buy books. People may email you, tell you in person, post about your book on social media—these are all opportunities to reach out to thank them and request a review. They love your book, so most are happy to do it.

To make it easier on them, tell them that they can simply copy and paste what they already wrote to you, so they don't have to take time writing an essay about your book. Make it clear that they don't need to do a synopsis of the book in the review. They just need to write one or two sentences, such as, "I love this book!"

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Make it clear that they don't need to do a synopsis of the book in the review.

Getting Reviews: continued from previous page

4. KDP Select conducts book giveaways at no cost to the author. You can put your book in KDP Select, and then sign up for the program to do a book giveaway. You can offer your book for free for up to five days of the 90-day period.

Ways to garner reader reviews for a cost:

1. Goodreads have two options for book giveaways. Standard costs \$119 and premium giveaway is \$599. You can offer either an ebook or a print book. There is a limit of 100 books per giveaway. https://www.goodreads.com/giveaway/show_create_options

In addition to getting reviews for your book, a freebie on Goodreads gives your book good exposure. Whenever a Goodreads reader enters a giveaway, your book is automatically added to their “Want-To-Read” list and it creates an update in their newsfeed, so all their friends see the name of your book. Even if they don’t win the free book, since it’s on their “Want-To-Read” list, they may buy it anyway, especially if it starts to get a lot of good reviews.

2. NetGalley boasts a membership of around 650,000 readers. They’re educators, librarians, media professionals, book lovers, and more. These readers will download your digital galley or audiobook for free in exchange for an honest review and more. With some 650,000 book lovers on the website, it’s a great way to reach a lot of readers all at once. Also, even after your book has archived on their site, readers can still view your page and see your book’s great reviews.

NetGalley gathers information from readers about your books by filling out a questionnaire and voting on your cover. So you’ll get interesting feedback from readers beyond just reviews.

NetGalley is \$499 for 6 months for a digital galley. For their audiobook program, they offer a 2-month listing for \$499. Discounts are available by joining IBPA. <https://www.ibpa-online.org/page/ne>



Christopher Locke is Director of Membership and Member Services for the Independent Book Publishers Association. He describes himself as “an avid animal advocate and a sit-down comedian”. He spent ten years in the television industry before devoting his time to books and publishing. He is the author of the YA series The Englishtenment Adventures.

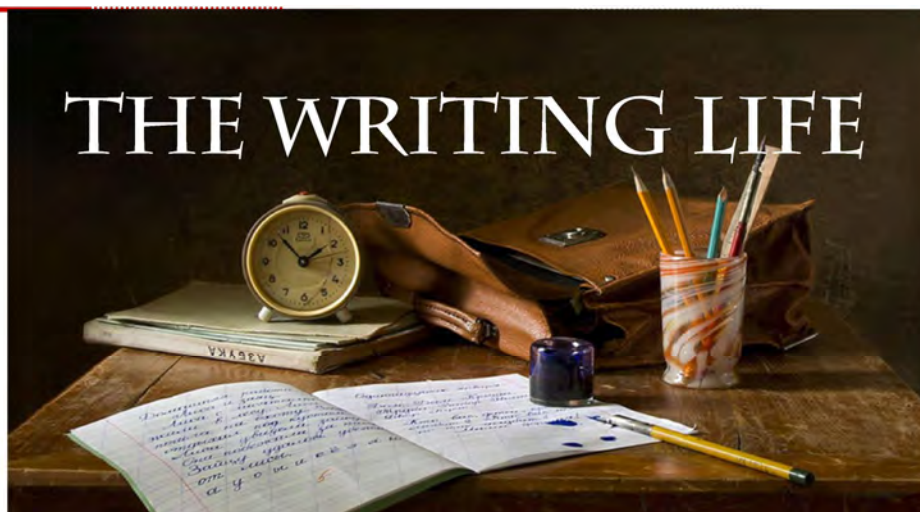
What’s Up with *The Literary Review*?

The team at CWC World Headquarters had every good intention of getting the 2022 *CWC Literary Review* in the mail and in your hands by the middle of June. But if the events of the past two years have taught us nothing else, we all understand how the best-laid plans often go awry. The biggest challenge proved to be supply-chain issues on the part of our printer. Just like baby formula, paper in large quantities and suitable for printing books suddenly became as hard to come by as toilet paper in March of 2020.

Meanwhile, the hardworking editorial team of Elisabeth Tuck (Mt. Diablo) and Anita Holmes (High Desert) have finalized the selections of prose and poetry, respectively, and are in the process of notifying everyone who submitted material for this year’s publication.

Our intention at this point is to mail the 2022 *Literary View* to each member in early September.





Giving Our Muse Full Latitude

by Dave LaRoche, South Bay

While there are likely as many variations to writing a story as those who write them, several methods stand out in popular use, are generally expected, and are formalized by professionals in speech and text.

The plotting standard makes its demands of world-building, inciting incident, goal and obstacles, and an outcome that finds change from the original. The character-driven approach delves deep into personal being with all sorts of physical description and psychoanalysis—the how, why, and when of a character’s side glance and its myriad possibilities of meaning.

From theme to polished product, the formulized steps between can be found in near all professional discussion of producing a story that, well done, will please an editor and compel a reader through to the final page. But, let me introduce a different approach to writing a story, and let me get there by asking a question.

Why do we write? Why do we spend endless hours punching out formula, not to mention the grinding away of related creative thought? I submit it isn’t for money as even the best of us isn’t earning a dog at the Wienerschnitzel. It isn’t for glory, as what recognition that comes is short-lived and generally self-created—a mention in a local newsletter, a few days on Facebook. The odds of appearing among the Pulitzer noms are astro. So why?

May I suggest, we write because we enjoy it—a world of our own we create that alone responds to our direction—an ego boost? It is a world of our making, absent the influence of others, a world that fits our profile, responds to our wants and needs, and within it, we find power, comfort, and pleasure. In that world, as in no other, we move the pieces, create the talk, establish the game.

If this touches a harmonic chord, and it does with me, then the hell with the binding rules, the hardened formulas, and let us write from our heart, the stuff that is us, the stuff that feels right. Let’s give our muse full latitude. Drop the reins of tradition and let the story flow—it’s only we that need be pleased. And the result? Authenticity, the true, unvarnished author—fresh thoughts, unique construction unadorned with external expectations from hackneyed “professional” voices ... and with that, who knows? The glory and money may follow.



Dave LaRoche’s many contributions to CWC are too numerous to count. Among many accomplishments, he founded NorCal Group in 2009, and in 2012 conceived the idea of the Literary Review and served as its first editor. He is the author of Abducted: A Mulhaney Crime Novel, What Price Charlie’s Soul, The Arkansas Rose, and The Mortician and Other Love Stories.

Seeing Herself as a Published Author

by Evelyn LaTorre, Fremont Area Writers

I doubt I'd have two published books that are selling well without the California Writers Club. For the past thirteen years the organization has helped shape my writing life. I've loved to read and write ever since learning how as a child. But it wasn't until I collaborated to get the centennial branch of the CWC, the Fremont Area Writers (FAW), started in 2009, that I could see myself as a published author.

I recall when our founder and first president, Bob Garfinkle, had only three of us on the FAW board. At various times over the last 13 years, I served as Secretary, Treasurer, and NorCal and Central Board Representative, when needed. In the beginning, our branch often had less than 15 members present at our pizza parlor gatherings. Later, over 40 members could be counted on to attend at a larger university facility or on Zoom.

Our speakers instructed me on how to write, design, and publish books. Program Vice Presidents arranged for thought-provoking presentations. FAW critique groups patiently read and reread my pieces about growing up in Montana and my adventures in Mexico and Peru.

In collaboration with dedicated FAW members, I helped plan workshops by experts like Brooke Warner, Jordan Rosenfeld, and Martha Alderson. I drank in their examples of quality word smithing and eagerly read their books on the writing craft. Their workshops showed me how page-turners are written.

Other CWC branches added to my ability to write prose. At a weekend retreat sponsored by South Bay Writers, I recognized how the numerous chapters that I'd written could be organized. The narrative arc that appeared surprised me. I came up with what I thought was the perfect title, *From Montana to Machu Picchu*. But it was soon changed by my hybrid publisher to *Between Inca Walls*.

Through CWC branches, including FAW and SF Peninsula, my knowledge of the art and business of being an author has expanded. Life in the fast lane of writing, publishing, and promoting my two books continues to be exhilarating. I am grateful to everyone who has contributed to my enjoyable writing life.


Evelyn's first published book, Between Inca Walls, about falling in love while serving in the Peace Corps, was awarded the 2021 Peace Corps Experience prize. Her second memoir, Love in Any Language, has numerous 5-star reviews on Amazon. Evelyn has had numerous pieces published in literary journals and magazines. She is often a featured podcast guest, lecturer, and presenter on topics such as how and why to write your memoir and the ingredients of a long-term marriage. <http://www.evelynlatorre.com>.



Flex Your Writing Muscles



The Rashomon Effect is named after Akira Kurosawa's 1950 film *Rashomon*, in which a murder is described in four contradictory ways by four witnesses. The movies *Outrage* and the *Usual Suspects* are among the dozen examples of stories and movies that focus on the unreliable witness. In novel writing the same story is often told from several points of view (POV).

In this exercise write a flash fiction (300+ words) told from the main character's point of view. Then write two different versions describing the same event in a different voice and from a different point of view. Be careful to avoid plagiarizing your own writing. Once you are satisfied with the three versions, see if you can combine and polish the three into a 1000 word short story ready for submission to the next *CWC Literary Review*. 



CWC CENTRAL BOARD

July 31: Annual meeting, including election of officers, in-person only at the Holiday Inn at the Oakland airport. Each branch may send one representative to vote; any member may attend as an observer. Details, including exact start time, will be forthcoming from CWC President Roger Lubeck.

BERKELEY

June 18: Installation of officers and launch celebration for members who have published books in the past year. 1:30-3:30 p.m. Free and open to all. For Zoom link, email berkeley.cwc@gmail.com.

August 21: Summer Social, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in-person at 2000 Ardent Way, Alameda. Free and open to all.

CENTRAL COAST

June 21: Sonia Antake on “So You Want to Write a Children’s Book.”

July 19: Meredith May, best-selling author of *The Honey Bus*, on “Turning Memories into Art.”

Sept. 20: Karen Joy Fowler, best-selling author of *The Jane Austen Book Club* and *We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves*, on writing historical fiction.

Meetings begin at 6:15 p.m. via Zoom and in-person at Juice ‘n Java, 599 Lighthouse Avenue, Pacific Grove. No pre-registration required for in-person meeting; \$5 donation requested at the door. Attending via Zoom is free. For the Zoom link, email President Sarah Pruitt, sep23@sbcglobal.net, at least 24 hours in advance. Please put “CWC-Want to Zoom Your Meeting” in the Subject line.

FREMONT AREA WRITERS

June 25: Dr. Evelyn LaTorre on “How and Why to Write Your Memoir.”

Aug. 27: Steampunk author Shelley Adina presents the sixth installment of her Business of Writing seminars. Topic: “How to Craft Your Book Cover Blurb.”

Sept. 24: Joselin Linder, author of *The Faulty Gene*, on using humor in your writing.

Meetings are at 2:00 p.m. via Zoom. For the link, send a request to scottfrombayside@yahoo.com. Put “FAW Zoom Link” in the Subject line.

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On the Horizon: continued from previous page

HIGH DESERT

June 28: Kate Pendorf and Gayvin Powers, developmental editors and founders of “Much Ado About Writing” on how to know when your book is polished and ready for publication. 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. Visit cwchdwc.com shortly before the event for instructions on how to get the Zoom link. No fee. Meetings are recorded and posted on the High Desert YouTube channel.

July 26: Dean Koontz, prolific, best-selling horror author, whose latest release is *The Big Dark Sky*. 4:00 p.m. via Zoom. Free. Details, including the Zoom link, will be emailed to all branch presidents for distribution to their members. See page 25 of *The Bulletin* for more on this special event.

INLAND EMPIRE

June 18: Joan Gelfund, “Winning Writer.” 10:30 a.m. via Zoom and in-person at the Arlington branch of the Riverside library.

July 23: Member Open Mic. 10:30 a.m. via Zoom and in-person at the Ovitt Family Library in Ontario.

Oct. 22: Pualine Wiles, “Writer Websites.” 10:30 a.m. via Zoom and in-person at the Arlington branch of the Riverside library.

Meetings are free. For the Zoom link, RSVP on the Inland Empire Meetup site, or email President Sam Nichols ahead of time, samuelthomasnichols@gmail.com.

LONG BEACH

July 9: Best-selling sci-fi, fantasy and horror novelist Jonathan Maberry on “Crossing Genre Lines.”

Aug. 13: Jane Cleland, “Say What? Writing Dialogue that Sings.”

Sept. 10: Gayle Carline, “What’s the Point? Story, Subtext and Plot.”

Meetings are 2:45 to 5:00 p.m. on Zoom and in-person at the Ruth Bach Neighborhood Library in Long Beach. Due to pandemic concerns, the in-person meetings are members-only. The Zoom meeting is free and open to all. For the link, send a request to info@calwriterslongbeach.org by the first of the month.

MARIN

June 22: Mary Buckham on “Writing Active Hooks, or How Many Hooks are Enough?” 6:00-8:00 p.m. via Zoom.

July 19 and August 16: Summer Salons, a Marin tradition in which members share their recent work and receive support from fellow writers. In-person, location provided after registration is received.

Events are free with pre-registration. Go to cwcmarin.com/events.

MT. DIABLO

June 18: “Art Embraces Words,” an in-person event featuring members Al Garratto, Betty Hampshire and Ophelia Leong reading from their work, 2:00-3:30 p.m. at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. Free.

June 22: “Writers Connection.” in-person social event focused on informal discussions about the writing life. 2:00 p.m. at the Chicken Pie Shop in Walnut Creek. Free.

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On the Horizon: continued from previous page

ORANGE COUNTY

July 2: Jennifer J. Chow, "Writing Cozy Mysteries for Modern Readers."

Aug. 6: Poet Gustavo Hernandez on "What the City Holds: How Setting Amplifies Writing."

Sept. 3: Kaira Rouda, best-selling author of psychological suspense, including *Best Day Ever* and *All the Difference*.

Meetings are in-person only, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m., at Anaheim Packing House in Anaheim. Free to members and the general public.

REDWOOD WRITERS

June 18: Betsy Graziani Fasbinder on "The Heart of the Story: Using Developmental Coaching to Find and Finesse Your Story."

July 16: Kerry Schafer, "Marketing Your Book."

Aug. 20: Deborah Halverson, "Creating Lifelike Characters with a Little Help from Psychology."

Meetings begin at 1:30 p.m. on Zoom and in-person at the Finley Community Center, 2060 W. College Ave., Santa Rosa. \$5 fee for CWC members, whether Zoom or in-person. Sign up at redwoodwriters.org/meetings.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY

July 9: Lani Longshore on "Getting the Most out of an Anthology Project."

Aug. 13: Marie Sutro, "Building the Courage to Write."

Sept. 10: Terry Wells-Brown, "Introduction to Author Marketing Aids."

Meetings are Zoom only, noon to 2:00 p.m. Free for all. For the link, RSVP on the San Joaquin Valley Writers site on Meetup.

SOUTH BAY

July 17: The return of the annual summer barbecue after at three-year hiatus. Free and open to all members. Proof of vaccination or a recent negative Covid test required. To RSVP and receive the location, contact President Edie Matthews, pres@southbaywriters.com.

TRI-VALLEY

June 18: Jim Grayson on "Great Stories - How the Pieces Fit Together." 2:00 p.m. via Zoom and in-person at Four Points Sheraton in Pleasanton. Members \$14, nonmembers \$18. Register at www.trivalleywriters.org.



Check for the latest
branch activities on
calwriters.org.
Click on the
Events Calendar tab.



Member Spotlight



NEW RELEASES



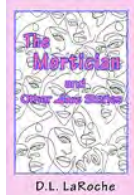
Lucinda Jackson (Mt. Diablo) has published *Project Escape: Lessons for an Unscripted Life*. A harried scientist sets off to make a break from her corporate decades and have an “extraordinary” retirement. Her struggle as a volunteer in the island country of Palau around purpose, identity, ego, and marriage provides an unvarnished but encouraging reference for those pondering major life changes.



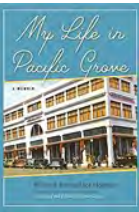
Janet Langton (Coastal Dunes), writing as j. f. langton, published *The Man with Grey Eyes* on Amazon in February of this year. Her previous books are *Chimera: Dancing in the Shadows* and *River of Skulls*. All are available on Amazon.



Crissi Langwell (Redwood Writers) released her ninth novel, *For the Birds*. When her ex returns to town, Cricket concocts a fake relationship to pretend she's over him—but now they must work together, and it's getting harder to lie. This humorous second-chance romance features a small town girl, her Scottish ex, and an obnoxious and lovable macaw. Find out more at crissilangwell.com.



D.L. LaRoche (South Bay) has just released *The Mortician and other Love Stories*, four short stories about love from the perspective of those involved. Each principal in these stories finds a different way to deal with the agony of self-doubt when faced with the loss of a love carved on their soul, and each will find a solution. Available on Amazon.



Heather Lazare (Central Coast) announces the release of *My Life in Pacific Grove: A Memoir* by Wilford Rensselaer Holman. Heather is the great-granddaughter-in-law of W.R. Holman, owner of what once was the largest department store between San Francisco and Los Angeles, and provided the editing and annotating for his memoir. Published by fellow CCW member Patricia Hamilton with her Pacific Grove Books imprint, and proofread by *The Bulletin* editor Joyce Krieg, the book is available at all online retailers and at local bookstores.

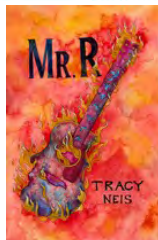


Judy Lussie (Tri-Valley) : has released her third novel, *Bought Daughter*. Mei-Ling, who was sold as a child, dreamed of going to America. Could she marry a Chinese missionary for the chance even if she did not believe in his God? Would her past forever haunt her? Judy uses her cultural background to write stories about Asian American women. *Bought Daughter* is based on her grandparents.



Karen Misuraca (Redwood) is the editor of DeepCultureTravel.com. In her newest title, *Secret Sonoma: A Guide to the Weird, Wonderful & Obscure*, she reveals the quirkiest, strangest, and least-known places and people in the county, from fighter jets to Star Wars and hidden museums, roadhouses, ghosts, and a Field of Dreams. Released by Reedy Press, October 2021

continued on next page



Member Spotlight: continued from previous page

Tracy Neis (Orange County) wrote a one-act play about the Beatles that was staged in Liverpool's "Ticket to Write" festival in October of 2021. She recently published *Mr. R*, the fourth book in her series of novels that reimagine the Brontë sisters' stories with a British Invasion-era twist.



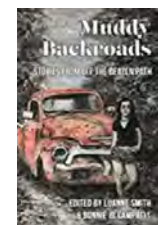
Mary Smathers (Central Coast) has published a bilingual children's book, *Felipe the Frog Learns to Swim: La rana Felipe aprende a nadar*. Will Felipe learn to swim before strong winds blow through his jungle home? This is the first in "Tropical Tales," a series of bilingual children's books.



Roberta L. Smith (High Desert) released her second book of short stories, *Distorted 2*, in May 2022. Within its pages are eight macabre, short and simple stories designed to intrigue the reader. Easy reading for those who like their stories on the dark and dangerous side. www.bertabooks.com



Mary Vensel White (Orange County) published *Starling* in May. "A riveting story with an unlikely hero," *Starling* follows the story of Gina, a woman with a mission ... and a secret she's been guarding for twenty years. This is Mary's third published novel.



Short Stories, Poetry, Articles, Honors and More

Henri Bensussen (Redwood Writers) had her short story, "Hawaiian Odyssey," accepted by MadVille Publishing for their anthology *Muddy Backroads*, 2022.



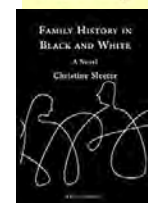
Nikki Lewen (Central Coast) is thrilled to share that all three books of her *Three Sisters Trilogy* have been bouncing around Amazon's Top 100 sellers in a couple different fictional categories, and hit three #1 rankings on Valentine's Day. The *Three Sisters Trilogy*: Book 1, *Three Sisters: A Tale of Survival*; Book 2, *Return to Three Sisters*; Book 3, *Three Sisters Destined*.



Nancy J. Martin (Redwood) has recently had her short story "Those Colorful Streets" published in both the Redwood Writers 2021 anthology *Remember When*, edited by Shawn and Crissi Langwell, and in *Work in Progress*, edited by Mandy Haynes. Nancy is the author of *From the Summer of Love to the Valley of the Moon*. <http://nancyjmartinauthor.com>



Luanne Oleas (South Bay) published a blog post exploring the personality traits of cropdusters, "Traits That Help Identify Your Average Ag Pilot." This was a byproduct of the research conducted for her novel, *Flying Blind, A Cropduster's Story*, available in paperback or ebook. The article is available at: <https://aerofleetone.com/traits-that-help-identify-your-average-ag-pilot/>



Christine Sleeter (Central Coast) received the International Impact Book Award in the category of multicultural literature for her novel *Family History in Black and White*. 

Congratulations!

Never too Late to Recognize Passion and Achievement

by Kimberly Edwards, Sacramento

On May 22, wearing a T-shirt that read, “It took 99 years for me to look this good!” Kiyo Sato of the Sacramento branch accepted an Honorary Lifetime Membership for her book *Dandelion through the Crack*. This remarkable story, covering the 1942 Japanese Internment, earned Kiyo the 2008 William Saroyan International Prize for Writing New Nonfiction, one of the highest honors bestowed on a CWC member.

Kiyo, who joined the branch in 2005, expressed gratitude to CWC for helping her with her manuscript about her family’s experience, which began when signs appeared in Sacramento calling for the confinement of “persons of Japanese ancestry.” With just 10 days’ notice, her father carefully selected items to stash in the government-allotted bedroll: hammer, nails, saw, wire, small carpenter tools, bucket, tarp, and jug. These items became devices for combating heat, sandstorms, and lack of good water.

Age 18 and thinking she was an American, Kiyo felt ashamed being “rounded up,” her home searched by the FBI, and forced to leave the family strawberry farm. Transported in packed trains and trucks in 127 degree heat, the family was sent to barracks in Poston, Arizona. Public latrines, nine holes in a row, added to her humiliation.

A photo from the day they left Sacramento depicts a collie-mix, its front paws clawing the back of a truck. “He’s trying to go with us,” says Kiyo. “But he had to be left behind. Our dogs Molly and Dicky were nervous. They ran around as if to corral us. We put them in the back shed with plenty of food and water. We cracked the door so that they could get out after we left. Even now I shed tears thinking how they must have searched for us all over each day. I know they died of grief, and to this day, I can’t talk about it.”

First published by Willow Valley Press in Nevada City, Kiyo’s book was renamed *Kiyo’s Story* upon purchase by Soho Press in New York. When invited to speak at the Smithsonian, Kiyo was handed white gloves and led into a glass cubicle where she discovered letters confiscated by a Military Intelligence officer. “Here I saw my own letters to my teacher, Miss Cox. I had no idea I was investigated so thoroughly.” Kiyo asked if she could talk with that officer, age 94. “He told me, ‘Someone should write about those horrendous conditions you people lived in.’ I thought, ‘You might read my book’.”

Each chapter opens with haiku, written by Kiyo’s father, who kept a journal:

Dandelion,
How long you have been
stepped upon?
Today you bloom.

This image became the book’s original cover. “The seeds spread in the breeze, carrying hope, and will bloom again,” says Kiyo, emphasizing that her father taught perseverance – don’t give up. “Let go of what you can’t do anything about, but follow the little light.” He also quoted parts of Longfellow’s Psalm of Life. “He told us it was important to leave footsteps. Each one of us should leave our footprints, wherever we can.”



Kiyo Sato (center) is honored by leaders of the Sacramento branch, from left: Gloria Dyer, First V.P./ Programs; Kimberly Edwards, President; Chris Hennessy, videographer; Linda Champion, First Friday Network Coordinator, and Cheryl Stapp, Director.





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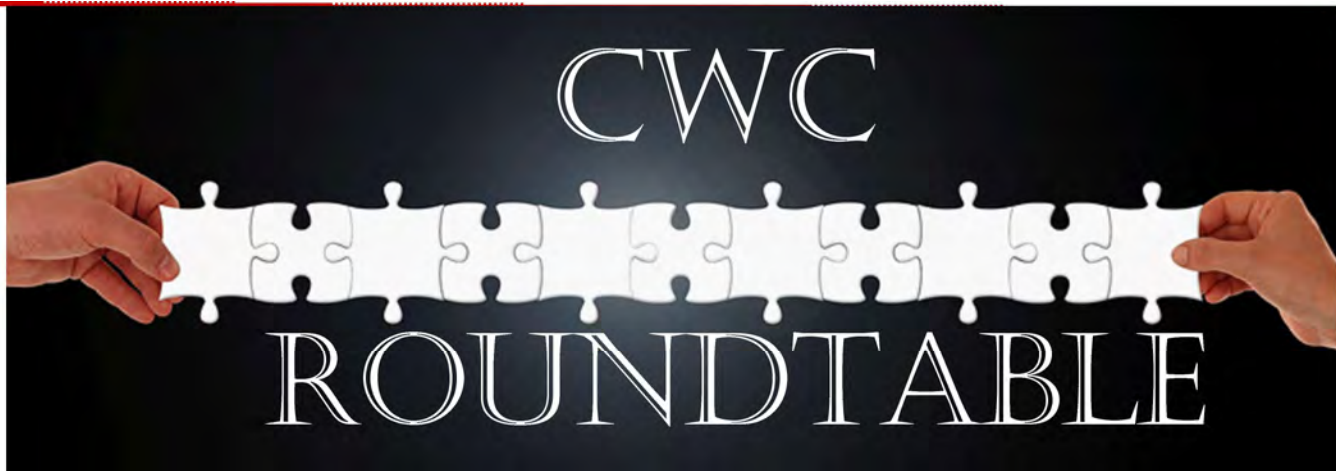
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Today's topic: ***Branch anthologies: best practices, lessons learned, danger zones, and more.*** If you've got an idea for a future CWC Roundtable discussion, send your topic to editor@calwriters.org.



Keith Gaboury, Incoming President, Berkeley: The Berkeley branch did not put together an anthology this year because we've been busy with running the Poetry, Fiction, and Non-Fiction Guilds, Kristen Caven kicking off the Writer-in-Residence Program at Joaquin Miller Park, and running the monthly Speaker Series program with informative and engaging guest speakers. In the future, we hope to attract the right volunteer who will spearhead a new Berkeley branch anthology.



Sarah Pruitt, President, Central Coast: As much as we might want to take on projects such as a branch anthology, we simply do not have the volunteers. To my knowledge, Central Coast has never published an anthology in our 20-year history.



Patrick Sturm, President, Coastal Dunes: Yes, we publish an anthology and every member is eligible to be considered for publication. It is very important that entries for the branch anthology be submitted anonymously, in order to demonstrate that everyone within our diverse community of members has an equal opportunity to have their entries published.



Terry Tosh, President, Fremont Area Writers: We are thinking about making an anthology using our SIP Notes (Shelter In Place). This was a weekly feature that we emailed to our members, then biweekly as the pandemic lingered on. Everyone was invited to submit an encouraging message, or just whatever they felt like writing. We now have 52 SIP Notes collected and stored in our newsletter archives.



Jenny Margotta, Treasurer and Anthology Editor, High Desert: We have guidelines that we supply to anyone wanting to submit to our anthologies. Most of our members comply with the guidelines. When they do not, they are given an opportunity to either correct their work or, if the problem is the subject matter itself, they can submit another work. If they don't choose either of those options, yes, their work is rejected. Make sure you have a dedicated team to help select the submissions, then organize, proofread and edit them, as well design the cover and format the interior. It can be a lot of work. In all, HDCWC has produced nine anthologies.

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CWC ROUNDTABLE (CONTINUED)

My advice for success is to make each one just a little different and don't produce them too often. We generally do one every other year, and we have found that choosing a theme for each anthology works well. We also offer cash prizes to help promote interest in and excitement for being a part of an anthology. And we try to have the book available in November so it's available for holiday gift-giving.



Sam Nichols, President, Inland Empire: We did an anthology in 2019 to celebrate our twentieth anniversary.



Kathryn Atkins, Publicity Chair, Long Beach: We don't publish an anthology. We don't have the volunteers to handle the logistics of an anthology.

Diane Vickers, Program Chair, Marin: We don't publish an anthology. We are a small branch with few volunteers.



Nona Smith, Anthology Editor, Writers of the Mendocino Coast: We have a juried process for accepting pieces. The jurors are club members, and they are given 5-7 pieces to judge on a scale from 1-9. Poetry is given to judges who write poetry themselves; the same with fiction and non-fiction pieces. Each piece goes to two judges, and then a third if the judges' scores are vastly different from each other. My biggest piece of advice? Be organized! Obsessively organized. Names must be omitted from pieces before they are sent to the judges. Each judge should be given written instructions about what they are looking for in a piece in order to give it a ranking. Every submission and bio must be kept track of. It helps to have a written timeline for each part of the editing process.



Linda Hartmann, President, Mt. Diablo: We have mentioned the desire to do an anthology since prior to the pandemic, but since that occurred, volunteerism has been slim and all current volunteers and board are simply too busy. I hope that after the pandemic quells, this will change with the energy of meeting in person again and more members joining our branch.



Sarita Lopez, President, Napa Valley: We have three published anthologies and plan to publish one as a club once every two years. Not everyone who submits is published. We are selective. We have an internal team for Fiction, Non-Fiction/Memoir and Poetry. Submissions are judged based on a rubric and submissions are sent in anonymously. My biggest piece of advice is to make sure the head editor has a strong timeline to work with. Also, make sure to have a pretty exact budget in place.



Crissi Langwell, Our branch publishes two anthologies each year. One anthology is for fiction and memoir, and our other anthology is dedicated to poetry. Each anthology is different. For our prose anthology, the editor has a team of judges that blind-read each piece and score them based on a rubric, and then the editor has a final say on which pieces are included. For the poetry anthology, the editors are the judges, and they determine which poems will be included through a blind reading. It's important to have a team involved, plus plenty of support from the board and past editors. We are lucky to have both.

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CWC ROUNDTABLE (CONTINUED)



Kimberly Edwards, President, Sacramento: Our first anthology will come out in the next 60 days. We started with an Anthology Committee, which developed review criteria and organized the process. The goal was to give as many members the opportunity to be published, as long as they met the standard. After experiencing difficulties that concerned the board, we consulted CWC friends with long-term experience at the branch and Central Board levels. We decided that the anthology would best be done outside the branch. We engaged an outside professional editor with years of experience. In the end, 41 percent of the submissions received were selected for inclusion. Lessons learned: Be clear on the role of an Anthology Committee in relation to the board: what information needs to be disclosed to the board, the body with “duty of care;” who has oversight for timeline, review process and criteria, communication with submitters, and titles for committee members, e.g., editor, managing editor, etc. It is vital that the committee understand that they report to the board and that they do so regularly. It is also vital that those in decision-making positions have credible writing credentials with the membership.



Karen Gorback, President, San Fernando Valley: Our last anthology, *String of Pearls*, was published in 2017 and edited by long-time member, superwoman, and author Rita Brown. At this time, we do not have anyone to step into that type of leadership position. From what I remember, it was a massive amount of work, and I do not know if it was financially feasible. When I gaze into my crystal ball, I don’t see another anthology in our near future.



Laurel Anne Hill, *Fault Zone* Editor-in-Chief, SF Peninsula: We have published six *Fault Zone* anthologies between 2010 and 2015. Only three were published between 2016 and 2021. One anthology per year resulted in burnout issues. We are selective as to the material we accept. For the most recent three issues, poems were selected by the Poet Laureate or former Poet Laureate of San Mateo. Almost all of the selected poems were publication-ready. We accepted a couple conditional to very minor changes being made. All short fiction or nonfiction pieces were evaluated for provisional acceptance by one assistant editor and the editor-in-chief. Provisionally accepted stories underwent developmental, line and copy editing. Authors were given options to comply with requested changes. The occasional person who declined to adequately work with the editorial staff received a rejection letter. Make sure you have a dedicated staff of sufficient number to get the job done without burnout.



June Gillam, President, San Joaquin Valley: We have just started the process to publish our first anthology. We are being mentored by Lani Longshore of Tri-Valley branch. We plan to work with our members until their pieces are of publishable quality via a series of workshops. My advice: Get an experienced mentor to sit on and to advise your Steering Committee.

Dave LaRoche, Past President, South Bay: The last and only branch anthology we did (*Who Are Our Friends*) was produced and published in 2009, edited by Meredy Amyx. This was during a time when I was president and I recall some of the high and low points of production and publication.

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CWC ROUNDTABLE (CONTINUED)



1. Production and printing costs were a surprise, well over \$900, little of which we recovered in sales. If a profit is expected, marketing and sales are as important as producing the book, and a strong, experienced, motivated, team is required.

2. Decide first on your primary objective: Do you want a quality product representing the best your branch has to offer, or do you want the preponderance of members represented, each to see their work in print? Now you have the basis for selection.

3. Our production team was headed by Dick Amyx, a knowledgeable, quietly forceful, team-building sort who clearly delineated assignments and followed up. Make sure a qualified person heads production.

4. A strong editor is also required—preferably one who has done this before, but at least a writer/instructor with experience in judging the craft and can tell a story from a toss of words.

5. A “team” is needed but the production of a book is not a democratic process. Rules need to be established on every level. Related to content and composition the editor has the last word.

6. Minimize the interface with authors. That is, don’t get bogged down arguing a point in a manuscript. The editor is god. Accept or reject. If you elect to edit, suggest small changes to get the manuscript published; don’t negotiate. Producing a book is a big task, and renders time quite precious. Don’t spend it heedlessly.

7. Choose participants carefully, explain in detail, and motivate continually. You don’t want a principal resigning in the middle of the project. A plan B might be advisable.

These are some of the takeaways I recall from watching our anthology evolve.



Lani Longshore, Secretary, Tri-Valley: Tri-Valley Writers is selective, but the anthology committee works with members to revise submissions. We rarely reject submissions, and only after a conversation with the author. Each author is assigned one member of the reading committee to address any issues, and given a short time frame for revisions (about three weeks). The committee has detailed guidelines to ensure all pieces are judged fairly. If you’re thinking of doing a branch anthology, make as complete a timeline as possible, with detailed task descriptions. Once you know how much there is to do, you’ll have a better idea as to how large a committee you need, and what tasks will need to be contracted out to a professional.





Writers of the Mendocino Coast (WMC) is mourning the loss of founding member Doug Fortier. As their website notes, there probably wouldn't be a Mendocino branch if it wasn't for Doug's tenacity. From writersmendocinocoast.org:

A year or so after founding, the club was floundering. Doug held it together with determination and his conviction that getting together once a month to share our craft made us all better writers and might get us published. He had an amazing ability to network. Every writer who moved to the Mendocino Coast and showed the slightest interest was met by Doug. Almost always they joined WMC. Each month he welcomed new faces, until today in this tiny community, the club has grown to 85 members.

Doug loved learning and believed there was always more to learn about writing. He wanted our WMC speakers to teach us something new. At Board Meetings, evaluating the past month's program, his greatest criticism was: "Not enough craft."

We are one chapter of a state-wide organization, the California Writers' Club. Until he got too ill to travel, Doug journeyed faithfully to the Bay Area to attend these meetings. Mercifully, he kept the political shenanigans of what went on to himself. "How was it?" we would ask. "Nothing much to report," he'd say.

He was our person; we were his tribe. We will all miss him terribly.

From Doug's bio on the WMC website:

In the '60s, computers provided Doug his first taste of creative expression. Until retirement in 1997 he actively explored computer languages and hardware technology while working in small companies. For five years he and wife Claire developed painting skills and studied visual arts at Mendocino College. He's been writing since 2006, has won awards for short fiction in the Mendocino Coast Writers Conference, and appeared in multiple writing club anthologies.

President Susan Lundgren said, "When he told us he was sick he worked hard to teach us everything he did to keep us going. It's taken many people to replace what he did for us. He told me what he most wanted to be remembered for was that he contributed to the local writing community. And he did. Massively."

In January, WMC honored him by inviting speakers from the San Francisco Writers Grotto to talk (on Zoom) about Doug's favorite writing book, *642 Things to Write About* and how it came together. Even best-selling author Po Bronson attended.

To honor Doug's memory, WMC is sponsoring a scholarship to the Mendocino Coast Writers Conference.



Watercolor portrait
by Erik Dertner



NorCal Group Reaches Out

by Carole Bumpus, NorCal Group Chair



As we emerge from two years of isolation, NorCal Group continues a tradition of showcasing CWC at two major literary events: the San Francisco Writers Conference (SFWC) and the Bay Area Book Festival (BABF).

This is the ninth year that we at NorCal will represent the state-wide CWC at the San Francisco Writers Conference, July 21-24 at the Hyatt Regency Embarcadero. And the most important aspect of our booth are our volunteers. If you would like to volunteer, contact Kymberlie Ingalls (Napa Valley) at cwc.1909.kci@gmail.com or Linda Hartmann (Mt. Diablo) at lindadhartmann@gmail.com. Please note that in volunteering at the CWC booth, you may display your books on the table, but you may not sell them. Our purpose at SFWC is to spread the word about CWC and how it has helped us become better writers and get published. Volunteers are also permitted to attend one SFWC presentation during their shift.

Also for only the second time, the SFWC has offered two members from each of the twenty-two branches free passes to the Poetry Summit and the Screenwriters Summit, which are all-day programs held in conjunction with the conference and worth \$195 each. This is a very big gift to our club and should be regarded as their acknowledgement of who we are and what we represent as CWC and for the conference. Information on applying for the free passes has been sent to each branch president.

NorCal Group staffed a booth at the Bay Area Book Festival in Berkeley May 7-8. Our gratitude and thanks go out to all the volunteers who stepped up to staff the booth after a two-year hiatus. And a special thanks to our volunteer coordinator, Keith Gaboury (Berkeley), who handled all the many details including arranging the volunteer roster, the set up and tear down of the booth. We are in your debt!

Members who gave their time at the booth include Constance Hanstedt (Tri-Valley), Jeff Kingman (Napa Valley), Jenifer Rowe (Sacramento), B. Lynn Goodwin (Tri-Valley and Mt. Diablo), Terry Tierney (Berkeley), Michael Barrington (Mt. Diablo), June Gillam (San Joaquin Valley), Gloria Dyer (Sacramento), Gary Durbin (Berkeley), Kristen Caven (Berkeley), Amarjit Pannu (Berkeley), Frances Stephenson (Mt. Diablo), Heidi Eliason (Mt. Diablo), Lucinda Jackson (Mt. Diablo), Adele O'Neill (San Joaquin Valley), Senait Mesfin Piccigallo (Mt. Diablo), Henry Hitz (Berkeley), Randall McNair (Berkeley), Karma Bennett (Berkeley) and Keith Gaboury (Berkeley).



The CWC booth at the Bay Area Book Festival, May 7-8 in Berkeley. In the center photo, Keith Gaboury of the Berkeley branch heads up the volunteer effort to raise awareness of CWC among thousands of readers and writers who attend this annual event.



It's Election Time!

Just as your branch has conducted an election of officers for 2022-2023—or will do so soon—your parent organization, California Writers Club, elects officers on an annual basis. This year's election will take place at the July 31 Central Board meeting, an in-person event at the Holiday Inn in Oakland. Each branch is allowed to send one representative to the meeting and cast one vote.

Nominating Committee Chair Donna McCrohan Rosenthal (East Sierra) is presenting the following slate for consideration by the Central Board:



President: Roger C. Lubeck, Ph.D. (Redwood)

Roger has been a member of the California Writers Club (CWC) since 2014. He was elected president of the CWC board in 2021 after serving as vice president for two years. Roger is the Immediate Past President of Redwood Writers and is the branch's Membership Chair. Roger is the author of ten published novels, two business books, short stories, poetry, and two preformed short plays. Roger is a Psychologist with a background in university teaching and worked for 25 years as a business consultant. Roger is the president and publisher of It Is What It Is Press.

Vice-President: Robert (Bob) Isbill (High Desert)

Bob is past president of the High Desert branch and currently serves as Programs/Publicity Chair and Central Board Representative. He is the statewide Director of Advertising, a 2009 recipient of the Jack London Service Award and the Ina Coolbrith Award in 2017. Bob has written professionally for local magazines and business journals about ostrich farms, jet pilots, and hilltop houses, and has done over one hundred written arbitration decisions for the Better Business Bureau.



He is a graduate of Chapman University and of the Teamsters Leadership Academy in Washington, D.C. Bob has thirty years' experience in the dispute resolution field. He has been a small claims advisor, mediator for the San Bernardino County Courts, and an arbitrator for the Better Business Bureau since 1997. He was the creator and project director for seven "Howling at the Moon" writers conferences. Bob was HDCWC organizer and coordinator for a 24-month writers workshop conducted at the Federal Correctional Complex which resulted in nine FCC inmates included in the 2012 High Desert anthology, *Desert Gold*. Bob

is also the founder of the Dorothy C. Blakely Memoir Project, which pairs high school students with senior citizens whose memoirs are written by the students and compiled in anthologies produced by High Desert. He is the creator of On-Topic Speakers for You, a High Desert speaker's bureau launched in 2022 on www.ontopicspeakers.com.

Election Time: continued from previous page

Secretary: Elisabeth Tuck (Mt. Diablo)



What Am I Doing in a Writing Club if I Don't Write?

Don't write? Oh yes I do. I've started two novels and have written many short stories and memoir pieces. I just have no interest in publication.

Write? I've been writing:

- CWC state Central Board minutes since 2016
- thousands of emails over the 3 years I headed the *Literary Review*
- plenty of feedback judging the *Literary Review* 2014-17
- dozens of agendas as Mt. Diablo branch president for 4 years
- several articles for *The Bulletin*

—lots of emails to entice speakers to Mt. Diablo 2009 -12

—untold articles while producing the *Mt. Diablo Write News* 2014 to present, and

—reams of feedback (and even charts) while editing for private clients and submitters at the CWC 2006 East of Eden Conference and now in my branch as the "Helpful Editor."

Bio? I'm a born and bred Yankee from Staten Island, NY; have lived in Houston, Austin and Ft. Worth, TX; Atlanta, GA; Toronto, Canada; Sydney, Australia; and best of all, the San Francisco East Bay. I have a BA from University of Texas at Austin, and an MSW from UC Berkeley. This year we will celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary, and I cannot believe we have one son who also probably can't believe he's not far from 50, another son four years behind (both accomplished career-wise), and two fabulous grandsons.

Treasurer: Constance Hanstedt (Tri-Valley)



Constance was raised in the Midwest and currently resides in Livermore. She was the co-owner and CFO of a general contracting firm in Pleasanton for 30 years.

Constance is the author of *Don't Leave Yet, How My Mother's Alzheimer's Opened My Heart* (She Writes Press, 2015), which was named a finalist in the Pacific Northwest Writers Conference in 2011 and a finalist in the National Indie Excellence Awards in 2015. While continuing to write memoir, her primary focus is on poetry. Her poetry chapbook, *Treading Water* (Finishing Line Press, 2022), explores the integral aspects of family, loss, redemption, and compassion. In addition,

her poems have appeared in numerous literary journals and anthologies, including *Calyx*, *The Comstock Review*, *Rattle*, *Naugatuck River Review*, *The Porter Gulch Review*, California Writers Club *Literary Review*, and Tri-Valley Writers anthologies.

In 2021, Constance accepted the position of Treasurer of the California Writers Club. As an active member of the Tri-Valley branch, she has served as Vice President for two terms (2015-2018) and Treasurer for four terms (2017-2022). She also formed and leads the Poetry Critique Group and enjoys judging poetry for both the California Writers Club *Literary Review* and Tri-Valley's High School Writing Contest.

CB Reps, Save the Date

Sunday, July 31

In-Person, All Day (more or less)

Holiday Inn, Oakland

Watch for details from President

Roger Lubeck

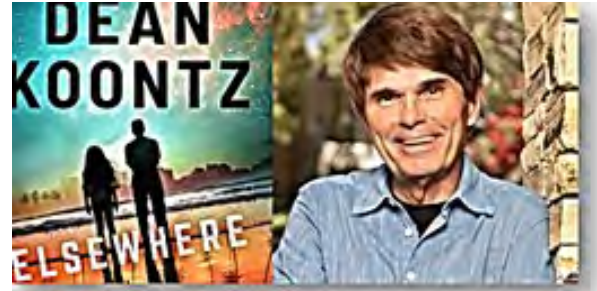


Up Close with the Master of Suspense

by Bob Isbill, High Desert

Prolific suspense author Dean Koontz has generously agreed to meet with California Writers Club members via Zoom on Tuesday, July 26, at 4:00 p.m., hosted by the High Desert branch of the CWC. This special event is presented at no charge to CWC members. Links to the meeting will be distributed to CWC presidents for distribution to their branch membership.

In coordination with the July 19 release of his latest novel, *The Big Dark Sky*, Koontz will discuss his writing career. Those wanting specific questions answered may submit them using the following link by June 20:



[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc2BoTxmCmEwSBRK_AeiUsttEzL8iwzbrQeMnwdd8RXfv5HOg/viewform?usp=sf_link)

[1FAIpQLSc2BoTxmCmEwSBRK_AeiUsttEzL8iwzbrQeMnwdd8RXfv5HOg/viewform?usp=sf_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc2BoTxmCmEwSBRK_AeiUsttEzL8iwzbrQeMnwdd8RXfv5HOg/viewform?usp=sf_link)

Questions will be compiled for Dean Koontz and submitted to him for review prior to the Zoom meeting. We are working to accommodate a very large audience for this event.

With a track record of many of his 150 books on the *New York Times* best-seller list and at least sixteen of his novels made into movies, Koontz is on the short list of America's most prolific and successful writers. His works have been translated into 38 languages and sold over 500 million copies.



Put Your Work in the Spotlight!



Just released a book? Had a short story, poem or article appear in a magazine or anthology? Won a literary contest? Share your good news with your fellow CWC members. Send an announcement, 50 words or less, to editor@calwriters.org. Covers should be submitted in JPEG format as an attachment to the email. Deadline for the Autumn 2022 issue is September 1.

PROJECT ESCAPE

Lessons
for an
Unscripted
Life

LUCINDA JACKSON

LJ Ventures

AUTHOR, SPEAKER, CONSULTANT

Empowering Women in the Workplace and the Next Act

Lucinda Jackson, PhD scientist and global corporate executive, is the author of the memoir *Just a Girl: Growing Up Female and Ambitious* about her struggles to succeed in male-dominated oil and gas and chemical organizations. Her story continues in her new book coming out April 2022: *Project Escape: Lessons for an Unscripted Life* about the complex transition from hard-hitting career to retirement. Jackson is the Founder of LJ Ventures, where she speaks and consults on energy and the environment and empowering women in the workplace and post-career. Connect with Jackson or find her books at: www.lucindajackson.com

“Career-focused women don't slide into retirement unscathed. *Project Escape* celebrates self-reflection, re-discovery, adventure, acceptance and love. It is an exciting, evocative hope-filled journey not to be missed!”

— Margaret Davis Ghelmetti, Author, *Brave(ish)*

It's Cool to Renew

If you've not already renewed your CWC membership for 2022-23, now's the time to do it. The membership year is July 1-June 30, so don't delay. See your branch Membership Chair for details.



THE CWC BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL MEMBER NEWSLETTER OF CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB
PUBLISHED FOUR TIMES A YEAR: MARCH, JUNE, SEPTEMBER AND DECEMBER
SENT BY EMAIL TO ALL CURRENT MEMBERS

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Member Spotlight: For new book releases, short stories, poems or articles, or news of literary honors. 50 words or less by email to editor@calwriters.org. Put “Member Spotlight” in the Subject line. Send a copy of your book cover in JPEG format as an email attachment.

Articles on writing craft, the writing life, marketing and publication: Send a proposal to editor@calwriters.org. Contributors will receive a short blurb to promote their books and/or services.

“CWC Roundtable” and “On the Horizon”: Instructions on contributing to these features will be sent to all branch presidents, newsletter editors and publicity chairs approximately one month prior to the deadline. Watch for an email from Sandy Moffett, sm@sandymoffett.com.

Photographs: JPEG format, sent separately (not embedded in a Word doc or PDF). Please provide complete details in the caption, including names of people pictured.

Deadlines: First day of the month prior to publication. March 1, June 1, September 1, December 1.

Advertising Opportunities in *The Bulletin*

- ✓ Reach some 1800 writers in 22 branches throughout California four times a year.
- ✓ Increase your visibility, sell your services, promote your book, increase speaking engagements, pump up web traffic, and more.
- ✓ Affordable rates—as low as \$30 for a business card-size ad, up to \$200 for a full page.

Details: Go to calwriters.org/bulletin and scroll down to the section on advertising. Or contact Advertising Director Bob Isbill, _advertisingcwc@gmail.com, 760/221-6367.

From the Editor's Desk

Writer Beware!



Scams aimed at writers usually take the form of shady agents, contests with exorbitant entry fees, coaches and courses that promise best-sellerdom but fail to deliver.

I very nearly fell victim to a different type of fraud entirely.

The offer came from a trustworthy source of gig work. Would I be interested in ghostwriting an article for a conference program? Sure. We traded emails, going over content and tone, bullet points to cover, deadlines. Everything seemed legit. The “client” offered a dollar a word, paid in advance, for 2,000 words. Hot damn! Two grand for eight pages, double-spaced. Life is good.

A few days later, FedEx showed up on my doorstep with a check—for \$9,980! Wow, this guy really is generous, thinks I. The check is from a credit union located in Tucson, Arizona, illegible signature, dated 2020. Weird. My first impulse was to deposit it at my bank’s ATM and see what might happen. Just about the same time, the “client” began sending texts. Did the check arrive, and had I deposited it yet? But—but—I protested, there must be some mistake. Wrong date. I was still so innocent, I took a photo of the check and texted it back. No, no, the guy replied. It’s fine. Just put the check in your ATM already.

Finally, slowly, the penny dropped. You’re being played, Joyce! I’d vaguely heard of overpayment scams, but usually connected with items being sold on eBay or Craigslist. Who knew honest and trusting gig writers were also prey? What happens is, once the victim deposits the check, the crook asks to be reimbursed for the difference, usually by an electronic funds transfer. The mark complies. A few days later, the bank returns the check as bogus. The victim is out the money. In my case, it would have been around \$8K.

Instead of the ATM, I took the check inside my bank and they confirmed that yep, it’s probably counterfeit. Whatever you do, *do not* deposit it! Meanwhile, the guy is barraging me with texts insisting I must deposit the check *now*. Needless to say, I blocked his number. I reported it to the Federal Trade Commission. I contacted the credit union in Tucson. They thanked me profusely and said they would have their fraud division look into it. I’ve even traced the FedEx airbill back to the holder of the account, the Sacramento City Unified School District, believe it or not. I’ve contacted them, but have heard nothing back, which is a bit discouraging. I’m guessing someone just swiped a stack of airbills from them and sold them on the black market.

I know it’s highly unlikely, but still—I want to catch this guy!

Let this be a cautionary tale. If someone tries to hire you for a freelance writing gig and sends you a check for way above the agreed-upon fee, it’s a scam. Do not cash the check!

Just call me the sadder but wiser girl.

—Joyce Krieg