



The Write News

A Monthly Newsletter

Elisabeth Tuck, editor

January 2018

Saturday January 13, 2018—11:00 to 2:00pm

PITCHING:

Telling the Story of Your Story

featuring

Amanda McTigue



We're writers, for heaven's sake! Sensitive artists, often introverts, and yet we're asked to "sell" our projects in a world of high stakes and short attention spans. In this presentation, through lecture and hands-on participation, we'll explore the pleasures (and challenges) of representing our work effectively to the people who can help us.

This will be an interactive session. Members are encouraged to bring:

- A one-sentence pitch
- A 50-words-or-fewer pitch
- Any pitch you'd like to work on live without notes (through very supportive coaching)



We'll Look At:

- Pitching as connecting
- Crafting your pitch
- Practicing your pitch
- Overcoming nerves to deliver your pitch

Amanda McTigue is a novelist, stage director and performance coach all of which make her the perfect pitching coach. Amanda spent 2016-17 completing a collection of themed short stories. One earned her a first Pushcart Prize nomination. Meanwhile she was staging Mozart's opera *The Magic Flute* at Sonoma State University. Her works for the stage have been produced at Carnegie Hall, the Minnesota Opera, and through collaborations with Disney Entertainment and Paramount Entertainment. Her debut novel, *Going to Solace*, was named a Best Read of 2012 by public radio KRCB's *Word by Word*. She's just returned from the remote Sierra Maestra Mountains of Cuba where she was researching her second novel, working title, *Monkey Bottom*.

Sign-in starts at 11:00 am. Luncheon 12 - 12:45 pm. Speaker 1- 2 pm at Zio Fraedo's Restaurant: 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. \$25 members, \$30 guests. **Reservation deadline: noon, Wednesday, Jan. 10th, 2018.** To reserve a spot, go to the CWC Mt. Diablo website at: <https://cwcmtdiablo.org/current-cwc-mt-diablo-meeting/> Website, <http://cwcmtdiablowriters.org>



President Marlene Dotterer

"I do not over-intellectualize the production process. I try to keep it simple: Tell the damned story."

—Tom Clancy, WD



Greetings Mt. Diablo Members.

It's time for new beginnings: welcome to 2018! Have you made resolutions? Maybe just suggestions? That's okay, too.

Sometimes we don't need big goals or changes – just little steps to give us some variety and maybe a small challenge. Whatever is on your plate, I wish you success and happiness in the New Year.

Speaking of plates, here are some of what's on ours in the next few months.

Our upcoming programs present real opportunities for all of us learn more about writing or how to get our writing noticed.

- Amanda McTigue is always popular, and this time (January) she's taking pitches from members to help us impress agents with our work. Her input will help everyone tighten up taglines and summaries, which helps whether you're publishing traditionally or independently.
- Clive Matson is an accomplished poet and writing teacher. In February he'll talk to us about word choice. Poets are especially versed in this aspect of writing, as every word they include has to carry the weight of the poem.
- At our March workshop, novelist Beth Barany will drill us in including the senses in our writing. The title of her workshop has me curious: "The 20 Senses." If we can include twenty of them, our readers will be well-enmeshed in our stories!
- In April, Dean Gloster will provide tips on how to enliven our stories with humor. Even the most draconian story will touch readers more if it's lightened strategically with a laugh.
- May is our Young Writers banquet, but don't think that means the speaker is just for kids. Last year's presentation was one of the best of the whole year, and this year we have our own former member Veronica Rossi, who has traditionally published 4 novels being sold in more than 25 international markets.

In January, some of our members are keeping busy helping to judge the Scholastic Art & Writing contest. We are grateful for their efforts!

Also in January, our own Young Writers Contest opens for submissions. Aline Soules is preparing our page on Submittable.com to be ready for the flood of entries. Lyn Roberts is gearing up to persuade you, our members, to help us judge THOSE submissions in March. And John Marvin is running all over Contra Costa County, dropping off YWC flyers to all the middle schools, and making sure teachers are aware of this perk for their students.

As you can see, we start the New Year with a full schedule. I hope you can join us for the ride. Keep writing!

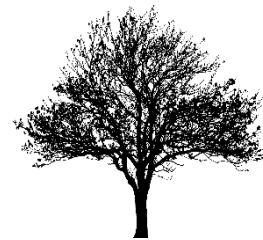
2018

CONTENTS

p. 3	Member Events, News and Salutes, Chloe Laube; Writers Digest Competition
p. 4	December meeting photos
p. 5	Critique Groups; Have You Been Profiled?
p. 6	Writers Tables
p. 7	Writers Workshop 29 th Annual Poetry Contest
p. 8	Our Upcoming Programs
p. 9	Attend a board meeting! Authors Helping Authors by Lynn Goodwin
p.10	Young Writers Contest Donor Page



Member Events, News and Salutes



Chloe Laube

Chloe has entered her self-published book, *Dream On, Dancing Queen* in the 25th Annual Writer's Digest Self-Published Book Awards in the category: Mainstream/Literary Fiction. Following are her scores and judge's comments.

- Books are evaluated on a scale of 1 – 5: 1 = needs improvement. 5 = outstanding.

Structure, Organization, and Pacing:	5
Spelling, Punctuation, and Grammar:	5
Production Quality and Cover Design:	4
Plot and Story Appeal:	5
Character Appeal and Development:	5
Voice and Writing Style:	5

Judge's Commentary:

Dream On, Dancing Queen by Chloe Laube is a tiny book that has it all. Fun and funny, the little volume is also a bit sad and scary. Laube has created a great narrator in Cara, her star of the novel. As Cara carefully unfolds the tale, she is careful not to spill any secrets until the time is entirely appropriate. I confess that I took a quick look at the last page but even that did not reveal the perfidy that barely proceeded.

Cara and bff Josie are aficionados of dance. Dedicated students and frequent cruise goers, they trip the light fantastic all over the world. While they understand the rules of the games, they do not stop their search for more. When Cara finds more, Josie is there with warnings. Cara's subsequent involvement with Nick proves Josie right with scandalous consequences.

With economy of words and pages, Chole Laube has skillfully delivered a top-notch tale that has bit of everything including travel, glamour, fun and mayhem. There is not a missed beat to be found on any page. The pace is steady but not forced. The climax is a surprise but not unexpected nor underserved. Cara's summation and farewell delivered on the last page left me with a smile.

This tiny book will appeal to plenty of gentlewomen readers! It is an ideal summer read. Unlike so many self-published books, there were no glaring typos. Laube either knew just what she was doing or saw to a careful proofreading. The only real flaw with this copy was that the pages leading up the chapter one were cut wrong and inserted upside down. The size of the book might be off putting for some who typically read weightier volumes but the size is perfect for the tale within. There is not a wasted word nor a need for one more.



Writer's Digest's 26th Annual Self-Published Book Awards

Whether you're a professional writer, a part-time freelancer or a self-starting student, here's your chance to **enter the "premier self-published competition exclusively for self-published books."** *Writer's Digest* hosts the 26th annual self-published competition—the Annual Self-Published Book Awards. This self-published competition "spotlights today's self-published works and honors self-published authors."

<https://app.wizehive.com/apps/WDSelfPub2018>

DEADLINE: April 2, 2018



Prepping for the December Meeting



Wrapping the books for the centerpieces on each table



Barbara Bentley, the creative genius behind the centerpieces!



Photos from the December Meeting



MEMBERS' BOOKS FOR SALE



Judith Overmeir, David George, Ann Damaschino



Jill Hedgecock,
Programs Chair

Joanna Kraus

Michael Banister

Kymberlie Ingalls



Judith Marshall

Marlene

CWC-Mt. Diablo Branch Critique Groups

by

Deborah Greenberg

Greetings from your new Critique Group Coordinator. I have volunteered to help members find other members writing in a similar genre to form critique groups.

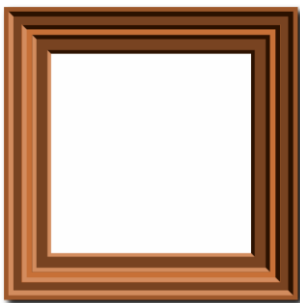
Many writers find critique groups to be quite helpful. If you want to join a critique group and haven't done so already, please sign up using the form on the Mt. Diablo branch website <https://cwcmtdiablo.org/>. I plan to match people up according to genre, geographic location, and time availability on a rolling basis. The bigger the pool of interested members, the better I will be able to optimally group people. Once members are connected, each group will be responsible for deciding how their group will run, and will function independently of the Mt. Diablo chapter. There may be some shuffling around as people try to find the most compatible group.

Details that each critique group must decide include: how often to meet, when to meet, how many members to allow, how many pages of each member's work to consider at each meeting, and whether or not to distribute material ahead of time or read it for the first time at meetings. I have a more comprehensive document that describes different possible formats and general rules to be considered, which I will forward to members once groups are forming.

After the first groups gel (hopefully in the next one to two months), I expect openings to be infrequent. Members will then need to wait until there is an opening in an existing group, or there are enough people signed up to start a new group in the same genre, etc. For that reason, I urge interested parties to sign up soon.



*Have You Been **Profiled**?*



This newsletter publishes member profiles. They are brief (usually around 400 words) biographies of members, which might include one's education, writing goals and experiences, and a picture of you/your book. It is a great way to acknowledge and become acquainted with one another.

To be profiled, please either contact membership chair David George

davegeorge7@comcast.net or contact this editor, Elisabeth Tuck

elisabethtuck@yahoo.com

Following are some questions to get you started writing a bio you might like to see in the next newsletter. Obviously not all can be answered in around 400 words!

Where are you from?

When did you begin writing?

What books/authors have influenced your life?

What are your current projects?

What inspired you to write your first book?

Would you change anything in your latest book?

Is there anything you find challenging about writing?

Do you travel for book research?

Do you have any advice for aspiring writers?

What is the wisest thing anyone has said to you about writing?



Writers Table for January 2018

Join our discussion before lunch on Saturday, Jan 13, for a most practical topic:

Muse Boards: Visual Techniques to Improve Your Writing: an innovative tool to transform your writing process.

- **Begins at 11:15 am** (there will be table signs directing interested members to the table)

- **Discussion Leader:** Jill Hedgecock

- **Summary:** A muse (or mood) board is a visual aid designed to create mood, inform plot, assist in character development, and/or inspire descriptive prose. Typically, the advertising industry, interior designers, wedding organizers, or more recently, web designers have used this technique. In writing, a muse board is less formal and structured than a storyboard, but can loosely serve the same function.

Jill will bring two sample Muse Boards that were useful in different ways for two novels.

Come join Jill Hedgecock as she shares *what* muse boards are, *how* to pick the formats that most closely match your writing goals, and *how* to reap the many benefits of using them with media options and the top advantages of Muse Boards.

Jill is our programs chair.

She was a panelist on “So You Want to Write a Book” at the San Ramon Library in September.

Her nonfiction piece about rhino poaching will appear in the *Africa vs. Asia* anthology in January 2018. Rhino poaching is the inspiration behind her young adult novel, *Rhino in the Room*.

Her work has appeared in the last two *CWC Literary Review* magazines.

Her short story “Broken” appeared in the CWC anthology, *West Winds Centennial* in November 2010 and an essay, “May Good Fortune Shine on You” was published in the *Carry the Light* anthology.

Writers Table: Have You Heard of Them?

Mt. Diablo's Writers Table is a benefit for members that happens from 11:15 am, before the branch's meetings, in September, November, January, February, April, and June.

Six times a year, a Mt. Diablo member presents a topic or skill or service related to the world of writing. Each discussion leader has volunteered to share their unique writing experience on a subject in which they are an expert. Each session lasts between 30-45 minutes. Members who join the Writers Table bring lots of excellent questions.

Here's what participants have to say:

“Thanks to Lee Paulson, and his considerable efforts and contributions in establishing Writers Tables which have proven to be a valuable writing resource for our branch and its members. They provide valuable advice on a wide array of writing-related topics in a format that encourages branch members to get to know each other in a less-formal setting.”

“Thank you for taking a good idea and making it great! . . . I wish someone had reminded me at the meeting so I could sit in. I had wanted to hear that topic.”

“. . . John, very interesting presentation on Saturday! I learned a lot.”

Some recent topics have been:

“The Importance of Beta-readers & other Critique Inputs” Bill Yarborough, November 2017

“Writing and the Brain: what goes on inside your head when you are writing?” John Marvin, September 2017

“How to Develop a Book Cover” Andrew Benzie, June 2017

“Using Social Media Effectively” Kymberlie Ingalls, February 2017

We always have our virtual “Suggestions Box” out: please share with us writing topics you'd be interested in hearing about. Even better, if you have a writing skill you would like to lead a discussion on, let us know!

For those less-internet-inclined, at each Mt. Diablo meeting there are physical “Writers Table Request Forms” on the tables—please fill one out with your feedback, ideas, and requests. We promise to respond to everyone who includes their email address.

J & B John (Marvin) & Bill (Stong)

Co-Project Leaders for CWC Mt. Diablo Branch Writers Table

- O February: TBD, initial solicitation outstanding
- O April: TBD, potentially a mini-panel; topic being evaluated
- O June: “Making a Book Trailer” by Judith Ingram



Drawing for Mt. Diablo Members

Print, write your name, cut out the coupon below and be in a drawing for \$25 off a future meeting.

After each drawing, the non-winning coupons will be destroyed. Look for a new coupon each month in the newsletter. One coupon per member per meeting. A member may only win once per CWC year, i.e., Sept – June.

January 2018 coupon

MT. DIABLO CWC Members only. Good for \$25 off one mtg

Print this page. Cut out this coupon. Write your name below and drop in the

Basket/hat/paper bag at the meeting corresponding to the date on this coupon.

One coupon will be drawn at each meeting to be applied to a future mtg.

Your name: _____

Must be present to win.



29th Annual Poetry Contest by The Writers' Workshop

The Writers' Workshop of Asheville, NC, a non-profit organization, is sponsoring its Annual Poetry Contest open to any writer regardless of residence. Guidelines are posted at: www.twwoa.org. For questions, email writersw@gmail.com or call 828-254-8111.

Deadline: Postmarked by Feb. 28, 2018

Awards:

1st Place: Your choice of a 2 night stay at The Mountain Muse B&B in Asheville; or 3 free **online** workshops; or 10 poems line-edited and revised by our editorial staff.

2nd Place: Two free workshops; or 8 poems line-edited.

3rd Place: One free workshop, or 5 poems line-edited.

10 Honorable Mentions

Guidelines:

All work must be unpublished.

Each poem should not exceed two pages.

Multiple entries are accepted.

Your name, address, phone email and title of work should appear on a separate cover sheet.

The **entry fee is \$25 for every 3 poems.**

All entries receive comments from the judges.



Enclose self-sealing SASE for comments and winners' list, and mail to: Poetry Contest, 387 Beaucatcher Road, Asheville, NC 28805.

Emailed submissions may be sent to writersw@gmail.com with "Poetry Contest" in the subject. Entry fee is payable online at www.twwoa.org.

Our Upcoming Programs



2018

Jan 13	Amanda McTigue Pitching	Yale graduate Amanda McTigue has been a writer/consultant for Disney Entertainment and Paramount and most recently a lecturer at Sonoma State. Her debut novel <i>Going to Solace</i> was KRCB's best read of 2012 and will be followed by a short story collection, <i>This is Not Water</i> , and the novel, <i>Monkey Bottom</i> . www.amandamctigue.com/am/Home.html
Feb 10	Clive Matson "Word Choices"	Clive Matson is a lifelong poet and author of the acclaimed <i>Let The Crazy Child Write!</i> He has published nine volumes of poetry, and in 2003 co-edited the award-winning anthology <i>An Eye For Any Eye Makes The Whole World Blind</i> . Clive has taught creative writing workshops since 1978, centered on his unique Crazy Child method, leading the East Bay Express to laud him as Best Writing Teacher In The East Bay in 2006.
Mar 10 WORK SHOP	Beth Barany "The 20 Senses"	Beth is an award-winning novelist and writes in three genres (young adult adventure fantasy, paranormal romance, and science fiction mystery.) She runs a successful business as a coach and consultant for authors and has presented in Italy, Boston, Washington D.C., Seattle, and Los Angeles.
Apr 14	Dean Gloster "Writing Humor"	Dean is a former law clerk to two U.S. Supreme Court Justices and a former stand-up comedian. In winter, he ski races. When Dean is not at home in Berkeley, Saucy the dog guards the commas in his manuscripts. Dean thinks that writing, flying, and ski racing have lots in common: According to Douglas Adams, all you have to do is throw yourself at the ground --- and miss.
May 12	Veronica Rossi Young Writers Contest	Veronica Rossi is a best selling young adult fiction author. Her debut novel, <i>Under the Never Sky</i> , was released in January 2012 and deemed one of the Best Books of Year by School Library Journal. The series appeared in the <i>NY Times</i> and <i>USA Today</i> best seller lists and was published in over 25 foreign markets.
June 9	Brooke Warner She Writes Press	Brooke Warner gave a TED talk on June 22, 2017. She is a publisher of She Writes Press, president of Warner Coaching Inc., author of <i>What's Your Book?</i> and <i>How to Sell Your Memoir</i> , and co-author of <i>Breaking Ground on Your Memoir</i> . She is also a regular Huffington Post blogger and a master teacher of memoir who co-leads the popular course "Write Your Memoir in Six Months." Her expertise is in traditional and new publishing. She sits on the boards of the Independent Book Publishers Association, the National Association of Memoir Writers, and the Bay Area Book Festival. Her website has been named by The Write Life as one of the Top 100 Best Websites for Writers.

If you've heard a good speaker on writing or publishing, contact Jill Hedgecock: hedgewriter@sbcglobal.net

If you have an event, news, or a salute to share, please send to ElisabethTuck@yahoo.com

Attend a Board Meeting

This is YOUR branch. Extra minds and hands are always welcome.

There's always room at the board meetings for observers, the maybe-I'd-like-to-get-involved-ers, advisors, and the just plain curious. Join us. (Liz usually serves coffee or tea.) We meet 10:00 -11:00 before regular meetings unless there's a workshop. This is your branch too, and volunteer organizations can always use helping hands and new ideas.

Next board meeting: Jan 13, 10-11:00am Zio Fraedo's.



Authors Helping Authors by B Lynn Goodwin

“Together we can change the world, one good deed at a time.” ~~Anonymous

If you are an author, your good deed can be helping other authors. One of the kindest things you can do in addition to buying an author's latest book is to post a review. To write a quick review in one or two sentences simply tell why you recommend the book. Put it in a Word Doc so it will be ready to cut and paste.

For a more detailed review, start with the moment you liked best. Articulate the questions the author is exploring:

- What if you have a gift that no one can accept?
- Ever been puzzled by a partner's behavior?
- Ever wonder how others handle the costs of their bad decisions?

I usually include a brief summary and identify the author's writing strengths. You can compare a book to others, but you don't have to. Readers are interested in the thoughts and feelings of other readers. If you look at the reviews on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and Goodreads, you'll see that lengths vary. I've written one-sentence reviews and I've posted 350 words or more. Generally, less is more.

If something bothers me I'll mention it if it's not a spoiler. If I can't write anything good, I move on to the next book.

Once you're satisfied with the review, it's easy to cut and paste into Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and Goodreads.

- Go to the site where you want to place your review.
- Find the search box.
- Type the book title and/or author and hit return.
- When the correct page comes up, scroll down to the box that says “Write a Customer Review” or “Add a Review.”
- Click on the box. Amazon asks some questions to guide you. Barnes & Noble doesn't. You can simply rate the book and paste in your review or you can tell people what the book intends to convey and how well it does its job. Or use my guidelines above.

Often the sites will notify the author when a review is posted. Not always. It's controlled by algorithms.

Places you can post without prior permission:

- Amazon, <http://www.amazon.com>
- Barnes & Noble, <https://www.barnesandnoble.com>
- Good Reads, <https://www.goodreads.com>

Sites where you need to talk to the site owner first. Click on the “Contact” button to do that.

- Island Editions accepts guest reviews at <https://islandeditions.wordpress.com/guest-blog-posts-series-and-articles/>
- Women can review books for Story Circle Network, <http://www.storycirclebookreviews.org>, although they're interested in reviews of books that have been submitted by publishers and authors.
- The same is true of Writer Advice, <http://www.writeradvice.com>.

Another way to help authors is to recommend their books to your friends, writing peers, and book groups. Word of mouth is often the best publicity. Paying it forward matters. Won't you help an author today?

Author B. Lynn Goodwin's self-help memoir, *Never Too Late: From Wannabe to Wife at 62*, is available on Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and through <https://www.indiebound.org/book/9781633936089>.

Young Writers Contest Fundraising

Sponsored by

The California Writers Club, Mount Diablo Branch

Please consider joining one of the following donor clubs to benefit our programs in support of young writers. Your tax-deductible gift will appear in the contest program in May, and in the newsletter every month in the year you donate. Or remain anonymous if you prefer!

DONATIONS A/O Oct 2017

The Jack London Founder's Circle (\$500+)

The John Steinbeck Society (\$250 - \$499)

Judith Overmier

The John Muir Member Club (\$150 - \$249)

The Ina Coolbrith Laureate Club (\$100 - \$149)

Judith Ingram

Elizabeth Koehler-Pentacoff

David George in honor of Elizaeth Koehler-Pentacoff

The Mary Austin Writers Club (\$50 - \$99)

Ken Kerkhoff

Linda Force

Lynn Goodwin

Kathy Urban

The Helen Hunt Jackson Group (\$25 - \$49)

June Gatewood in honor of Christopher Cecchini

Jill Hedgecock

Al Garrotto

Chloe Laube

Judith Overmier

The Gertrude Atherton Guild (\$10 - \$24)

Fran Cain

Robert Poirier

Sara Wilson

Edward Stanislawski

Lucy Hart

Patty Northlich

Lee Paulson

Maya Das

Christine Tomerson

Contra Costa County middle school students who enter the Young Writers Contest are eligible for cash prizes in short story, poetry, essay/personal narrative, and humor. Contest submissions are free. Check our branch website for details: cwcmtdiablowriters.wordpress.com/young-writers-contest/

The Mt. Diablo Branch hosts an awards luncheon in May of each year.

All program expenses are supported by individual donations and grants. Thank you for considering membership in one of the above donor clubs.

** Please list my membership in the following donor club: _____

Name _____ Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____ Acknowledge my gift in honor/memory

of: _____

Or via PayPal click "buy now" on the Mt. Diablo website

<http://cwcmtdiablowriters.wordpress.com/next-program/>. Please add the \$2 transaction fee

Make a check payable to: *CWC Mt. Diablo Branch*. And mail to:

CWC Mt. Diablo Branch, P.O. Box 606, Alamo, CA 94507 Attention: Young Writers Contest

