



The Write News

A Monthly Newsletter

Elisabeth Tuck, editor

April 2018

BRANCH MEETING AND LUNCHEON

April 14, 2018 - 11:00 am to 2:00 pm

Writing Humor

Featuring

Dean Gloster

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Death Scene: Why and How to Use Humor in Serious Stories



- Getting Past Myths about Using Humor (Comedy is *not* difficult, and it can be learned)
- The Eight Reasons Why People Laugh (More useful than humor theory)
- Ten Reasons to Use Humor in Serious Stories
- The Top Ten Humor Tools for Writers

"As writers, we make readers feel emotions, and one of the easiest to create is the humor response. That's fortunate, because excellent reasons suggest including humor in even serious stories."

"For example, characters' humor helps readers bond with them, because 98% of readers believe their sense of humor is at least average or above. Research shows that readers automatically assign an array of other positive attributes to characters who use humor, assuming that they are also creative, intelligent, cooperative, pleasant, and considerate. Humor is also one of the most compressed ways to convey other information in a story."

Dean Gloster is a former stand-up comedian who holds an MFA in writing for children and young adults from Vermont College of Fine Arts. His novel *Dessert First* from Merit Press/Simon Pulse was described by *School Library Journal* as a "divine debut novel... This wonderful story...will be a hit with fans of John Green's *The Fault in Our Stars* and Jesse Andrews' *Me and Earl and the Dying Girl*."

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, April 11, 2017.** To reserve a spot, go to the CWC Mt. Diablo website at: <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/current-cwc-mt-diablo-meeting/> Website, <http://cwcmt Diablowriters.org>

President *Marlene Dotterer*

Greetings Mt. Diabloites,



I hope everyone is enjoying the spring rain and warmer weather. It's always such fun to see flowers blooming. Poppies have made an appearance in our yard – a happy reminder that the seasons continue.

Another reminder of spring is the Young Writers Contest. It plays a large role in my life this time of year, although Lyn Roberts and Aline Soules greatly reduce my concerns by taking on a big share of the duties. I am so grateful to them for the work they do. At least 20 members have volunteered to judge the entries and they are all preparing to begin work on April 1st. I know the students are excited to see how their submissions fare.

If you've never attended the awards banquet in May, I encourage you do so. This is a great chance to meet members of our community and encourage young writers to keep practicing a skill that will help them throughout their lives. And while we do feature a speaker who will appeal to the youngsters, the topics apply to adult writers as well. This year our speaker is former Mt. Diablo member, Veronica Rossi, who writes internationally-published young adult novels.

Spring (and summer) also bring book festivals and writing retreats. We list a few of these in this newsletter and encourage you to participate. The Bay Area Book Festival in Berkeley is coming up April 28-29th. Volunteer at our booth if you can, or just attend for the great programs. It's worth your time.

If you're like me, spring has also brought you a few weeds, both figurative and literal. In between dealing with those, be sure to keep writing. I hope to see you all at our April meeting!

Happy Spring,
Marlene Dotterer



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Member Events, News and Salutes

Volunteering in the California Writers Club Booth

By *Patty Northlich*

At the 15th Annual San Francisco Writers Conference

February 15-18, 2018

Mark Hopkins Hotel

Volunteering in the California Writers Club Booth at the SF Writers Conference was a colorful adventure. Coordinator, Tim Jollymore, sent me my three-hour shift assignment, procedures, and California Writers Club talking points (Please do not say “CWC!”.) Tim had also sent the eight- page conference program, crowded with events including interview opportunities with agents, editors, coaches, and publicists and presenters; luncheons with key note addresses; evenings of dinners, Gala, Poetry and Jazz; an “Idea Walk” around Nob Hill; and Master Classes.

Especially helpful was the top-down map of the Mark Hopkins Hotel, showing 2nd floor Conference Rooms, Mezzanine level Quiet Space, Lobby level Ballroom and Registration area, and California Level below the Lobby, where I found our booth, strategically positioned, outside the Exhibit Hall.

The Exhibit Hall included vendors such as Cory Verner, President of Verity Audio Productions in San Diego who develops audio books for self-publishers and the Bay Area Independent Publishers Association in Marin, a lecture space, and the Conference Book Store. During breaks from our booth we were welcome to talk with these vendors as well as attend Exhibitor Talks and other Conference events open to the public.

In our booth, I enjoyed volunteering with CWC members from other chapters. We handed out Club brochures and signed up prospective members for appropriate chapters. I enjoyed the chance to review facts about CWC – its founding in 1909, when Jack London and his friends met on the grounds of Joaquin Miller's home in the Oakland Hills, its incorporation in 1913, its 2,000 members in twenty-two chapters throughout California, and its general purpose for authors – providing meetings, a forum for literary criticism, and opportunities for discovery, development and growth.

We were urged to be energetic in our exchange with conference attendees, and to outline how CWC has benefitted us personally. Easy! I talked about our Mount Diablo Chapter monthly meetings, networking opportunities, diverse and informative speakers, workshops, critique groups, book exchanges, and volunteer opportunities, such as the Young Writers Program and National Scholastic Program jurying, and the all-important friendships to be made. I especially enjoyed meeting the attendees – listening to their stories, learning where they were from, and what they were working on. My two favorite encounters of the day were the of the Cincinnati Zoo veterinarian, who was there “to learn how to write right!” and a retired attorney from Bakersfield, who was searching for information on the lost “Lost Hills,” California.

It was a colorful adventure volunteering in the California Writers Club Booth. More adventures surely await volunteers and attendees at **next year's San Francisco Writers Conference to be held February 14th-17th, 2019, at the Hyatt Regency Embarcadero Hotel** (ed. note: BARTable!). Early Conference Registration and Hotel reservations are available now!

Respectfully, Patty

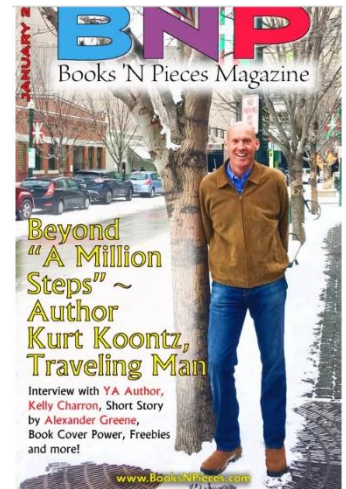
Member Events, News and Salutes (cont'd.)

Jill Hedgecock

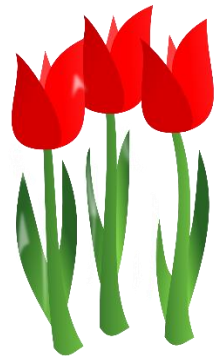
Jill has been writing a monthly column, reviewing traditionally published books for online, Concord-based *The Diablo Gazette* (see picture below) since February 2016. Jill's "BookEnds" column has caught the attention of the founder of *Books N' Pieces Magazine*, an online publication that features short stories, writing tips, and book reviews, which has requested (and received permission) to reprint Jill's past columns.

Books N' Pieces Magazine, is open to other types of submissions. Visit <http://www.altpublish.com/submit/>.

In other news, Jill's short story, "A Year and a Day" has been accepted into the Young Adult anthology *What Doesn't Kill You* to be published through Serving House Books. It is due out this summer.



Check out the *Diablo Gazette* as an online magazine to contribute to. The February issue also contains an article by another Mt. Diablo member, **Robin Gigoux**, author of "I Fought PG&E and Won."



Joanna Kraus

CWC member, Joanna Kraus, was the guest of Utah Valley University, Orem, Utah, March 15-18 to attend the commissioned premiere of her new play, *Tamales and Roses* based on her popular picture book *A Night of Tamales and Roses*. While there, she taught a master class and conducted Q & A sessions with university students and audiences. The story is about a flower girl who gets stage fright and can't walk down the aisle to start the wedding ceremony. To her surprise, her Hispanic family still loves her.

After several performances in the Noorda Theatre on campus, the bi-lingual play will tour area Utah elementary schools.

Kraus is the author of several prize-winning scripts from Theatre for Young Audience. Her latest picture book, *Bravo Benny* is forthcoming.

Next page, see snapshot of Kraus with cast.

Member Events, News and Salutes (cont'd)



Joanna Kraus above in green sweater surrounded by cast members



HELP NEEDED

Positions Open for Fiscal Year 2018-2019

President's tasks:

- Build agenda
- Preside over board meetings, general meetings, and an annual planning session usually in July
- Coordinate with board members and committee chairs
- Write monthly newsletter column (optional but a good way to communicate)
- Send branch emails and announcements to the membership using MailChimp, gmail or whatever you're comfortable with
- General facilitation between members and with other branches
- Follow documented month-by-month job description for tasks and events

Skills: General organizational abilities, able to address meetings, and discretion.

NOTE: There are several advisory board members who will support you. This is a team effort.

Board Members: Attend 8 board meetings as available before general meetings, not usually when there's a workshop and the branch doesn't meet in July or August. Offer advice or suggestions, serve on committees or assist as you are able.





Our Upcoming 2018 Programs

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 "Writing Great Fiction? Living a Great Life"	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 the 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. Since then she has added 4 books to the series and has written 2 novellas.
June 9	Brooke Warner "Hybrid Publishing"	On June 22, 2017, Brooke Warner gave the radio TED talk, "Green-Light Revolution: Your Creative Life on Your Terms." She is a publisher at She Writes Press, president of Warner Coaching Inc., author of <i>What's Your Book?</i> , <i>How to Sell Your Memoir</i> , and co-author of <i>Breaking Ground on Your Memoir</i> , a regular <i>Huffington Post</i> 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. TheWriteLife.com named her website one of Top 100 Best Websites for Writers. Warner lives and works in Berkeley, CA.

Summer Break: July & August

Sept.9	Matthew Zapruder TBD	Matthew Zapruder is an associate professor in the Saint Mary's College of CA MFA Program in Creative Writing, and editor-at-large for Wave Books. From 2016-17 he was Editor of the Poetry Column for the <i>New York Times Magazine</i> . He authored several poetry collections, most recently <i>Sun Bear</i> (2014), and <i>Why Poetry</i> (2017), a book of prose about poetry, Ecco/Harper Collins. With Brian Henry, Zapruder co-founded Verse Press, which later became Wave Books.
Oct.13	Penny Warner TBD	Warner has published over 60 fiction and non-fiction books for adults and children which have been translated for 16 countries. Twice Penny has won the Agatha Award for Best Children's Mystery and was nominated for the World Mystery Anthony Award for Best Children's Mystery. She has appeared on dozens of national television shows on stations including PBS, ABC, CBS and NBC. She has been teaching child development for over 30 years, writes a column for a local newspaper, and creates fund-raising murder mystery events for libraries across the country. A Mt. Diablo member recently heard her speak and described her as funny and informative.
Nov10	David Corbett "The Compass of Character"	After a career as a high-profile private investigator, Corbett turned to writing in 2000. His first novel was nominated for both the Anthony and Barry Awards for Best First Novel of 2002. He has since published 5 more novels. He also wrote a nonfiction book, <i>The Art of the Character</i> . He will discuss identifying your character's deepest longings, exploring their resistance to pursuing them, and revealing how that conflict generates behavior.
Dec. 8	Three of Our Own	Our December meeting is a festive, sit-down meal where three members are invited to speak on a particular theme.

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

How to Put Drama in Your Writing And The Necessity For It

Presentation by Joanna Kraus to the December 2017 meeting.

If I asked you to cross the room and exit, and you did so successfully, fine, but in a play or novel no one would pay good money for that. To put drama in writing there has to be conflict and this should be part of the structure of the story.

There are essentially 3 basic areas within which one writes: a theme, characters, or a situation. And there are essentially 4 basic conflicts, a human against: another, nature, society, or self.

So if we have a character about whom we care or who has involved us: X needs to leave the room. What prevents her? Example against nature: X needs to leave, but there's a wild fire raging nearby. Figure out some suggestions for other basic conflicts.

Author, Sid Fleishman said, "Up the ante." But it doesn't have to be anything catastrophic as long as the character wants it desperately and must circumvent obstacles in their way.

Some examples from literature:

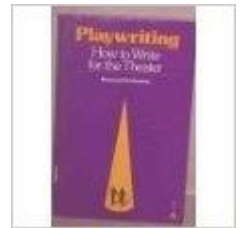
One human against another: woman must leave her husband, Ibsen's *Doll's House*

Against nature: Hemingway's *Old Man and the Sea*

Against society: Ibsen's *Enemy of the People*

Against self: an inner terror that prevents the desired action as my book, *A Night of Tamales and Roses* where the flower girl is afraid to walk down the aisle strewn petals.

In a 1965 book by Bernard Grebanier called *Playwriting, How to Write for the Theatre* (Harper Collins) I discovered the helpful concept of **the proposition** which gives a sound structure for a play or story and focuses on a single protagonist. The proposition is a logical statement of the plot, BUT it is not a synopsis. It deals with the main action only, action that is in the story, but not the actual ending.



First, ask what the play or story's **action** is about. Grebanier calls it resulting action. Or you may prefer to call it the dramatic question. There is an occurrence in the middle of the plot that leads logically to the end. Grebanier calls it "the Cause of the action." This is where all the obstacles and struggles that the protagonist faces occur.

Drawing for Mt. Diablo Members

Print this page, write your name on the coupon below, cut out the coupon and bring it to the meeting. Drop it in the basket 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.

April 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.

CWC Mt. Diablo Branch's Writers Table

Join our discussion **before lunch on Saturday, April 14**, for a most practical topic:

There are Many Paths to Publication: *What I Learned While Publishing my Book!*

Logistics:

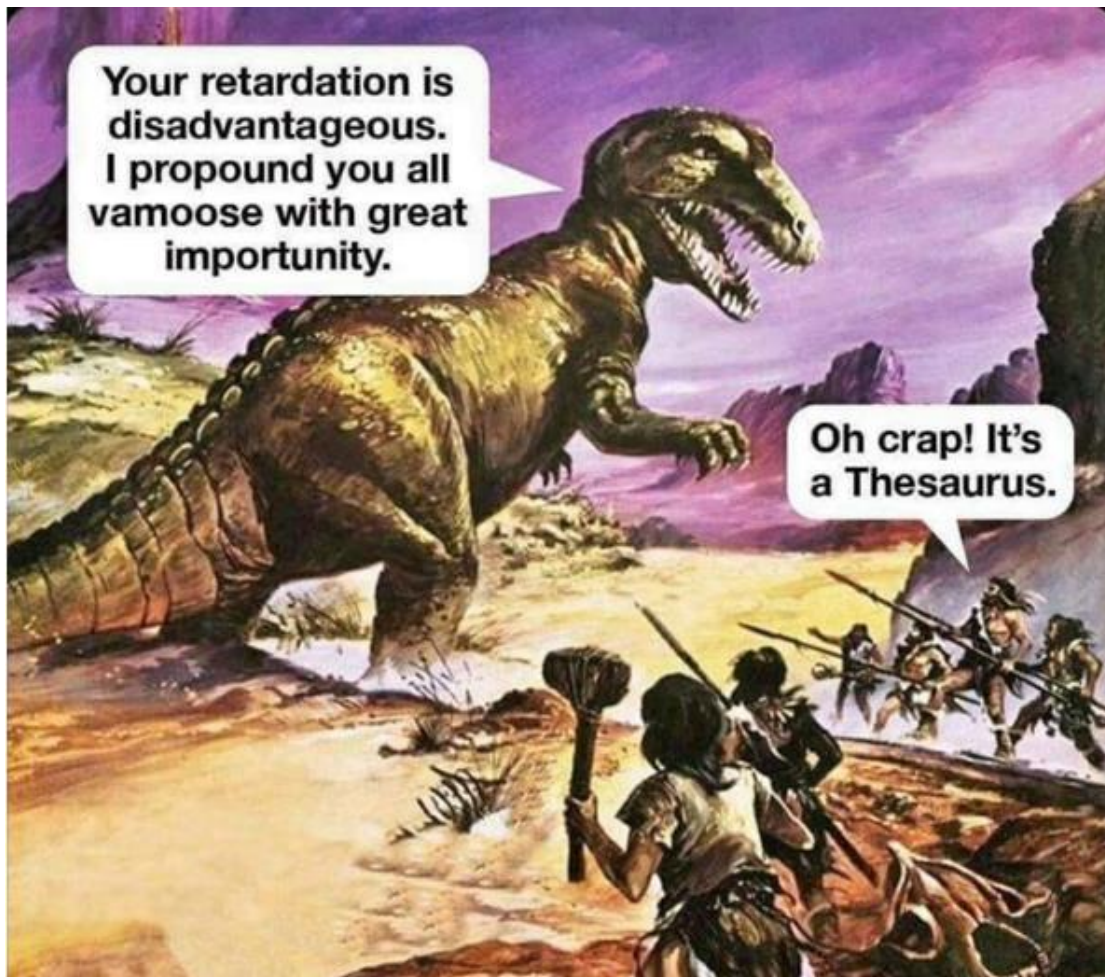
- **Begins at 11:15 a.m.** (there will be signs directing interested members to the table)
- **Discussion Leaders:**
 - √ Andrew Benzie
 - √ Robin Gigoux
 - √ Al Garrotto

Summary: Three of our members with a diversity of genres and paths share their publishing experiences. Please join this trio of authors to hear how they did it and what they learned. Bring your questions related to *your* publishing journey.

We're looking forward to seeing you there! Best regards,

John Marvin & Bill Stong

NEXT WRITERS TABLE: June 9: *Making a Book Trailer*, led by Judith Ingram



Marin Writers Conference 2018



Removing the Risk
from Writing and Publishing

keynote

MICHAEL LARSEN

APRIL 22
9-430

Make Your First Pages Shine*

with editor

MARY RAKOW



Book Passage
51 Tamal Vista Blvd.
CORTE MADERA

The Promise (and Peril) of Self-Publishing

RUTH SCHWARTZ & DAVID KUDLER

Bay Area Independent Publishers Association (BAIPA)



REGISTRATION
Early Bird

(until April 1)

\$105 members

\$135 nonmembers

after April 1

\$135 members

\$165 nonmembers

CWCMARIN.COM/MARINWRITERSCONFERENCE

Pitching Sessions with Agents



KIMBERLY CAMERON
Kimberly Cameron & Associates



DORIAN MAFFEI
Kimberly Cameron & Associates



CARLISLE WEBBER
Fuse Literary Agency



PETER BEREN
Literary Agent



JENNIFER MARCH SOLOWAY
Andrea Brown Literary Agency

CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB—MARIN

Includes continental breakfast with coffee and boxed lunch from Mill Valley Market.

One-on-One Add-On Sessions Available with Michael Larsen and Mary Rakow (Sign up at cwcmarin.com)
Join us for a no-host dinner with Michael Larsen afterwards (Details to come.)

*Submit your first pages in advance to marinewc@gmail.com for a chance to be selected for workshopping.

cwcmarin.com/marinwritersconference



Volunteer at the Norcal Booth at the Bay Area Book Festival

Saturday and Sunday

April 28 – 29, 2018

Downtown Berkeley, California

The NorCal Board provides a booth at which CWC members are invited to volunteer to inform the public about the California Writers Club and to invite prospective writers to join a branch near them which supports writers in California. Volunteers may sell their own books in addition to promoting the CWC. If you do choose to sell your books, you will need a California Sales Tax License. http://www.taxes.ca.gov/sales_and_use_tax/index.shtml

We need volunteers to work the booth in the following times indicated by WHITE FIELD shifts:

	SET UP 10AM-NOON	NOON – 2PM	2 PM – 4PM	4PM – 6PM
SATURDAY ONE				
SATURDAY TWO				
SATURDAY THREE				
	NOON – 2	2 PM – 4PM	4PM – 6PM	BREAK DOWN 6 PM – 7 PM
SUNDAY ONE				
SUNDAY TWO				
SUNDAY THREE				

A total of 14 volunteers would be great. Additional volunteers can be accommodated. If anyone wants to take two contiguous or non-contiguous shifts, that is also fine.

Remember, the primary purpose of our appearance is to represent the Club to the public. In the past we have also been allowed to display and talk about our books as a SECONDARY presentation. Exhibitors off duty can attend any of the open-to-the-public presentations and any paid-admission presentations they have purchased. Please see <https://www.baybookfest.org/> for the event schedule.

The Festival tells us, “Tens of thousands of people of all ages attend the festival. According to a 2016 study led by UC Berkeley’s Haas School of Business, festival-goers come not only from the East Bay but from San Francisco, Marin, the South Bay, and elsewhere in the state and nation. They tend to be highly educated and have disposable income. Nearly 46% of attendees cited “to shop for books and other items” as their top reason for visiting. Ergo, members of Berkeley, Mt. Diablo, Tri-Valley, SF Peninsula, Marin, South Bay and Fremont branches might be most interested.

Please take advantage of this opportunity to serve the Club, to involve yourself in a great literary event, and to promote your career as a writer. Contact tim_jollymore@yahoo.com as soon as possible to arrange an appropriate shift at the CWC booth.





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

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