



The Write News

The Mt. Diablo Monthly Newsletter

Elisabeth Tuck, editor

September 2018

MT DIABLO BRANCH MEETING AND LUNCHEON

Saturday September 8, 2018 - 11:00 am to 2:00 pm

Book Marketing and Launch Strategies: Essential Tactics to Grow your Audience and Increase Book Sales

Featuring
Stephanie Chandler

With these powerful, proven tactics, you will be able to reach more readers, grow your platform, and ultimately sell more books.



You will learn how to:

- Build a pre-sales strategy with beta readers for feedback, buzz, and reviews
- Use easy, content-marketing tactics to build your mailing list
- Generate more book reviews
- Connect with online resources for massive exposure
- Leverage podcasting, blogs, and video that get results
- Promote with Facebook strategies you haven't heard anywhere else (really!)

Stephanie Chandler is a frequent speaker at business events and on the radio, and has been featured in *Entrepreneur Magazine*, *Businessweek*, Inc.com, and *Wired* magazine. She is the author of nine books including *The Nonfiction Book Marketing Plan: Online and Offline Promotion Strategies to Build Your Audience and Sell More Books*. Stephanie is also founder and CEO of NonfictionAuthorsAssociation.com, a vibrant educational community for experienced and aspiring writers and NonfictionWritersConference.com, an annual event conducted entirely online.

Sign-in starts at 11:00 am. Writers Table 11:15 – 12 noon. 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, September 5, 2018.** To reserve a spot, go to meeting registration on the CWC Mt. Diablo website at:

<https://cwcmtdiablo.org/current-cwc-mt-diablo-meeting/>

CWC is an IRS 501-c3 non-profit charitable organization (ID 94-6082827). Donations are fully deductible to the extent of the law.

RESERVATION DISCLOSURE:

In accordance with our contractual agreement with Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, the club is charged for every reservation confirmed on the day before the meeting. *If you are not able to attend this meeting and do not cancel your reservation prior to noon on Friday before the meeting*, you will be asked to remit the \$25 member fee or \$30 guest fee no-show payment.

***Memos from a Member:* Elisabeth Tuck**

Yes! Marlene is still our president but the board is trying something new. Marlene has asked board members to write the newsletters' "president's messages" this year. I don't know how I volunteered to be first but here I am. And here you could be in time. Every member no doubt has something positive to say about CWC, otherwise why are we members?



I joined CWC ages ago, thinking I wanted to write a book. Consistent with CWC's mission statement to educate, I've learned a lot about writing and a lot about marketing. Building on a UC Berkeley extension course on editing I took some time back as well as years of writing classes, I have continued to research and polish my editing skills.

Wearing many hats I've volunteered for this branch as: president, VP, reader, speaker chair, NorCal rep, newsletter editor, Central Board rep, state secretary, and managing editor of the 2018 *Literary Review*. Sporadically I offer Helpful Editor to Mt. Diablo members, and this month I'm our Writers Table speaker.

The Mt. Diablo branch runs a county-wide Young Writers Contest (YWC) which awards monetary prizes to middle-school-student winners. We read for the Scholastic Awards high-school writing contest, to earn some money for the YWC! Look into these activities and see if there's a way you'd like to help.

Surely it's apparent that I believe strongly in volunteerism as a way to help others and to learn and grow myself. Over the years I've volunteered for other organizations as well: YWCA, Scouts, and AFS Intercultural Programs. My volunteer work helped me win a place in graduate school at UC Berkeley and has helped with job applications. These days I volunteer for fun and friendship.

You too, can volunteer in any of the board positions listed later in this newsletter, some of which other board members will write about through the coming CWC year.

COME TO A BOARD MEETING AND GET TO KNOW SOME GOOD AND HELPFUL FRIENDS.

"EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS IN CWC, HAPPENS BECAUSE OF A VOLUNTEER"



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Member Events, News and Salutes



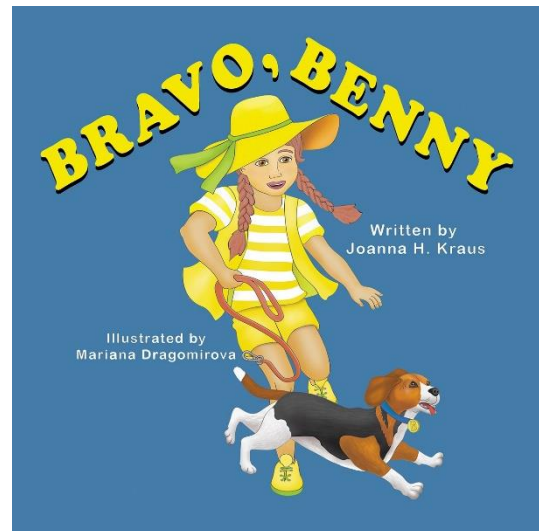
This section of the newsletter is regularly open to members to submit information about milestones in your writing journey. Publish a book? Planning a reading at a bookstore or county fair? Win an IPPY or other significant prize? Is your play being produced? The TV or movie version of your writing will be out soon? Let us know here.

Joanna Kraus

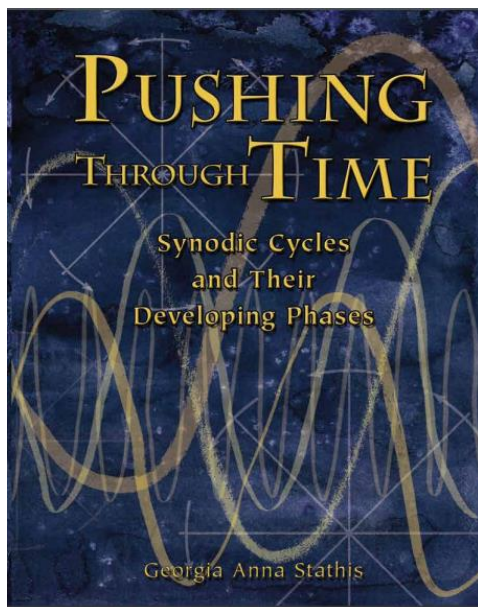
YOU
are invited to
Joanna Kraus's book launch and signing
of
Bravo, Benny
Saturday, September 8th, 2018,
4-5:30PM

Vista Room, Hillside Clubhouse,
Rossmoor Walnut Creek, CA
A brief presentation and refreshments.

RSVP by September 4th to either
tjkraushouse@hotmail.com or (925)939-3658



Georgia Stathis



Georgia has been writing weekly forecasts and more comprehensive articles for journals and magazines, submitting to anthologies and publishing books on financial and business astrology since the 1970s. She began working in the field in the early 1970s and noticed the crossover between financial and planetary cycles -- thus the crux of her work. Her experience in real estate, investment, and analysis works well with astrological cycles.

Georgia's most recent technical book, *Pushing through Time: Synodic Cycles and their Developing Phases* was released in April 2018. An earlier book, *Business Astrology 101: Weaving the Web between Business and Myth*, released in 2000, is still available and selling.

<http://starcycles.com/product/pushing-through-time-synodic-cycles-and-their-developing-phases/>. Georgia is a contributor to various journals, taught the undergraduate program at Kepler College for seven years and is a national speaker and workshop leader. She is a board member of the National Hellenic Museum in Chicago, whose mission is to preserve Hellenistic Culture and is chairwoman and a founder of the Alexandria iBase Project, whose mission is to preserve astrological literature.

NorCal Meeting May 5, 2018

George Cramer, Mt. Diablo's NorCal rep



NorCal (<http://cwcnorcalwriters.org/>) “is an association of the 14 northern California branches of the California Writers Club (CWC) that, due to proximity and common interests, have joined in the pursuit of ideas, opportunities, and events that speak directly to our craft of writing and the means of publishing. Our intent is to share branch awareness – successes and misses – as well as to scour our broader landscape, singling out and creating opportunities of value that will provide a benefit to branch members. We meet three times per year on the first Saturday of February, May, and October. All members of the California Writers Club are welcome. Contact your NorCal representative and attend with them.

The NorCal Group Mission Statement

Through exchange, collaboration, and execution of ideas, the intent of this group is to further the opportunities for writing and publication to the betterment of branches and their members.

Motto: Excellence through sharing and synergy.

NorCal is an intermediary between the fourteen Northern California CWC Branches and the CWC Central Board. As such, its value is in helping connect the branches to the State.

At the request of President Marlene Dotterer, I requested the following be placed on the May 5, 2018 agenda:

- Orienting new members
- The craft of writing support groups
- Creative activities for chapters
- Securing volunteers for projects and positions

While these items were not placed on the agenda, there were discussions throughout the meeting about volunteerism and the difficulty all branches, and the NorCal Group have in securing thoughtful and committed volunteers.

Treasurer Update: Jordan Bernal presented the Treasurer's report. The current balance is \$2,200.46. NorCal does not have a checking account. The group's money is a separate line item in the CWC State budget. Each July, CWC State credits \$2,000.00 to NorCal. When an expenditure is made by a NorCal member, the NorCal treasurer submits a request for reimbursement to the state treasurer who is responsible for issuing a check to that individual. There is an ongoing issue with the length of time between submission and the issuance of a check.

2018 – 2019 NorCal Officers

Chair	Carole Bumpus	San Francisco Peninsula Branch
Co-Chair	Kymberlie Ingalls	Six Branches
Treasurer	Dave LaRoche	South Bay Branch
Secretary	Evelyn LaTorre	Fremont Branch

Each of the above has agreed to serve a one-year term.



Writers Table Sept 8

Have you ever thought of being published? Did you know that CWC has an annual, juried *Literary Review* open to members? What are the hallmarks of good, literary writing and what is important for writers when submitting to the annual CWC Literary Review?

Join us on September 8 to learn about submitting to the 2019 CWC *Literary Review*.

Upcoming Writer Tables

November 10

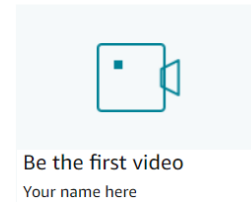
Making a Book Trailer, Part 2: Create a video using Adobe Spark®

"Tell your story with video."

Led by Judy Ingram

Have you noticed that Amazon is offering a space for video trailers related to books? This is what it looks like:

Related Video Shorts (0) [Upload your video](#)



December 8 – No Writer Table due to Three of Our Own

January 12 – Panel on Social Media

"Got platform?" 3 Panelists TBD

February 9 – Panel on Mt. Diablo Member Benefits

"Got your back." 3 Panelists TBD

March 9 – No Writer Table due to workshop

April 13 – Panel on Editing

"A third eye..." 3 Panelists TBD

May 11 – No Writer Table due to Young Writers banquet

June 8 – Writing Craft (format TBD)

"Polish it & it might shine."



Markets for Short Stories

When researching where to place your short stories, check *Duotrope Digest* (www.duotrope.com) It is a subscription site but offers a **free introduction until Sept 7**.

They say: "You will be required to provide a payment method when you set up your subscription. However you won't be charged until the end of your free month. If you cancel before the free trial ends, you won't be charged."

Mt Diablo Disclaimer: This is informational only and does not imply endorsement of product or service

If you have had success finding a place to publish through this organization, please send me a short description. By the same token, if you found them frustrating, please send that information for the benefit of the branch. I will use your name only with your permission. elisabethtuck@yahoo.com



Meet Your 2018-2019 Board of Directors and Committee Chairs

President:

Marlene Dotterer

**Vice-President:**

Judy Ingram

Secretary:

Judith Overmier

Treasurer:

Lucy Hart

Programs & Speakers:

Jill Hedgecock, Lyn Roberts, Al Garrotto, Elisabeth Tuck

Membership:

David George

Publicity:

Ann Damaschino

Central Board Rep:

Elisabeth Tuck

Newsletter:

Elisabeth Tuck

Helpful Editor:

Elisabeth Tuck

Event Logistics:

Danard Emanuelson

Board Advisors:

Kymberlie Ingalls, Al Garrotto

Young Writers Contest:

Marlene Dotterer

Community Outreach and**Member Benefits:**

Judith Marshall

Website:

Lyn Roberts, Andrew Benzie, Cheryl Spanos

Writers Tables:

Bill Stong and John Marvin

Reservations:

Dita Basu

NorCal Rep:

George Cramer

Our Upcoming Programs

Sept.9	Stephane Chandler Advanced Book Marketing and Launch Strategies	Stephanie has authored nine books on marketing, promotion, and strategies to build your audience and sell more books. Stephanie is founder and CEO of www.NonfictionAuthorsAssociation.com , an educational community for experienced and aspiring writers and www.NonfictionWritersConference.com , an annual event conducted online. A frequent speaker at business events and on the radio, she has been featured in <i>Entrepreneur Magazine</i> , <i>BusinessWeek</i> , <i>Inc.com</i> , and <i>Wired</i> magazine.
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

Still Time to Renew and Always Time to Join Mt. Diablo CWC

Please visit <https://cwcmtdiablo.org/membership/>

If **renewing**, click and follow the instructions to use PayPal to pay or

Pay by check: Make your \$45 check payable to “CWC-Mt. Diablo Branch” and mail to:

CWC- Membership, P.O. Box 606, Alamo, CA-94507.

Pay by credit card: Please provide the following information:

Credit Card # _____ Expiration Date (month/year) _____

Name as it appears on the credit card _____

Billing zip code _____ Security code on back of card _____

Renewal is \$45 annual membership, \$25 for dual membership.

If your address has changed, please note the change so it can be updated in branch records.

If you are a member and there are no changes to your information, you can just mail a check or credit card info to the address below or hand it in to the membership chair, David George, or the treasurer, Lucy Hart, at meeting check in. Please indicate **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

To apply for a **new membership**, an application is required and a copy of one of your stories or articles published or unpublished. The directions on the membership page on the website explain more. Go to the bottom of the middle column on the membership page and click on **Let's Start**.

Donation to the Young Writers Program

Add the amount to your \$45 membership renewal and indicate the donation.

Security Note: Membership information is not made public at any time.

If you have questions, contact David George via email at davegeorge7@comcast.net

Deadline to renew without penalty is Sept 30.

Renewal Year: 2018-2019

Revised 5/1/2018

Print and 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.

September 2018 coupon

MT. DIABLO CWC MEMBERS ONLY

PRINT THIS PAGE. CUT OUT THIS COUPON. WRITE YOUR NAME BELOW.

DROP COUPON IN THE BASKET/HAT/PAPER BAG AT THE MEETING
CORRESPONDING TO THE DATE ON THIS COUPON.

ONE COUPON WILL BE DRAWN EACH MONTH TO WIN \$25 CREDIT
TOWARD
A LATER MT DIABLO BRANCH MEETING.

Your name: _____

Must be present to win.

A Little Free Editing?

Elisabeth Tuck

HELPFUL EDITOR – A professional editor will accept the first 5 members who email me two pages of their work, preferably (but not necessarily) the first pages of an article or book, and I will edit (copy and content editing) as comprehensively as possible. Beginnings are crucial to your readers, or if you're struggling with something, maybe I can help. I will meet with you before or after the meeting to give you the edited pages and/or if you have questions.

You must:

- Follow all these directions. (If you want to be published traditionally, win contests, or have anything accepted for publication, you must follow directions, so this is practice.)
- Attend a meeting to receive the edits.
- Be willing for me to discuss something I've noted that might be of interest to the others if more than one of you want to talk.

Email your submission 10 days in advance (or earlier) of a meeting you plan to attend (12 point double spaced with 1" margins, white paper, and normal font)

Make sure you say which meeting you plan to attend.

I will read the pages carefully before the meeting and mark them up, showing you good points and misses.

If you have to miss the meeting, sign up to join a later month's group and get your edits at a later meeting.

I am not looking for clients. I just want to offer some help.

Disclaimer: I'm not perfect. Even editors need editors—witness this newsletter which I don't have time to have edited as I usually do! I've read for the *Literary Review* for several years now. Mt. Diablo has a good track record of quality pieces being accepted. Let's continue that by learning all we can about writing well!



Market for Novels

Vinspire Publishing, LLC, will open to un-agented submissions for ONE DAY ONLY on **October 1, 2018!** “We are looking for multicultural young adult, middle grade novels, and historical novels set between 1920 and 1925. No genres outside of those listed will be considered.”

Visit www.vinspirepublishing.com/submissions for complete details. Be sure to follow all posted guidelines as we are a family-friendly publisher. Submission time begins at 9:00 a.m. EST and ends at 9:00 p.m. EST. We look forward to reading your work!

Vinspire is Vice President, Judy Ingram's publisher, a small publishing firm in South Carolina.

Mt Diablo Disclaimer: This is informational only and does not imply endorsement of product or service



CWC Central's Website

If you go to the state CWC website, www.calwriters.org, you will see all kinds of warnings that it may be an unsafe site. That is because Google has set up warnings for sites that don't have SSL certification. On July 22 the central board authorized the state webmaster to buy and install the product that provides the certification. In the meantime, just click out of any screens that warn you of danger and proceed to the website. It is safe.

For more info see: <https://www.globalsign.com/en/ssl-information-center/what-is-an-ssl-certificate/>

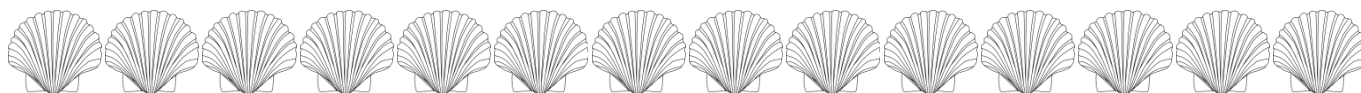
Attend a Board Meeting



This is YOUR branch. Extra minds and hands are 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, not workshops. This is your branch too, and volunteer organizations can use new ideas and helping hands.

Next board meeting: September 8, 10:00-11:00 a.m. Zio Fraedo's.



Attention Mt. Diablo Branch Authors:

The Oakley Library is starting a monthly culture/arts/self-improvement program to be held on the third Tuesday of each month. They are looking for authors to speak about their works. For more information, please contact Doug Thomas at dthomas@ccclib.org.

Judith Marshall, Community Outreach Chair



Do I Need to Be GDPR Compliant?

By Judith Ingram

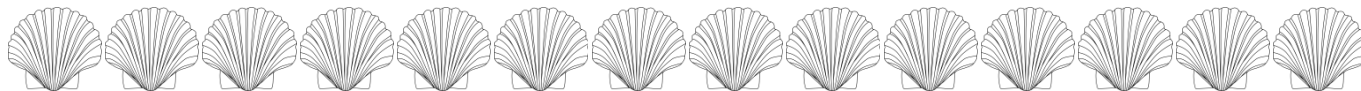
Do you maintain a list of subscribers to your blog posts, newsletters, marketing campaigns, podcasts, or any other form of online contact? Do you offer products or services, even free ones, that require you to store personal data, such as names, email addresses, or phone numbers? If so, then you are probably subject to a new law called the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), effective May 25, 2018.

Established by the European Union (EU), the GDPR protects the privacy of residents of countries in the EU. If your subscriber list contains people who live in the EU (which still includes the UK), or if you are uncertain where some subscribers live, then this new law requires that you contact all those people and ask them for their consent to continue receiving whatever it is you are offering. In this "re-engagement campaign," you send your subscribers a new request form to opt-in to your subscriber list. If they do not respond to your campaign, you must drop them from your list and delete all their data from your records.

This rule does not apply to residents outside the EU, so you do not have to ask U.S. residents for new consent to be on your list. However, if you are uncertain where your subscribers live, it's safest to send your re-engagement campaign to all your subscribers.

To help you navigate this new regulation, I recommend an excellent article by Laura Christianson, available online at <https://bloggingbistro.com/gdpr/>. In both a written article and an 8-minute video, she explains the law and its implications for email marketers, and suggests four action steps toward compliance. Her article is well researched and should answer most questions you might have.

For more facts about the GDPR, visit <https://www.eugdpr.org/>.



You In The Newsletter!

Following are some of the many 100-word stories submitted by Mt Diablo members. More will be included in the October Newsletter and readers are invited to continue to send them in. It's a great exercise to see if you can condense a story to so few words. Poets do that regularly. This is a challenge to all our members to see what you can do! Poets, send us some 100-word poems. Non-fiction writers, send us some 100-word pieces too! Let's WRITE OUT LOUD. Put your work out here for others to enjoy.

The Good Guy By Heidi Eliason

When Don's breathing returned to normal, he was still gripping the poised bat. He looked down at the enemy sprawled in the dirt, one shoeless foot tangled in a mesquite bush. Blood matted black hair, obliterated brown skin.

"MS-13 member or a rapist," Don said to himself. "Probably both."

Skidding tires spit gravel behind him, the glare of floodlights transforming the dusk to a bright stage. Don turned to face a police car in a swirling haze of dust, a gun pointed at his chest.

"Freeze!" yelled the cop.

"It's okay," Don said. "I'm the good guy."



Linda Force

It was 1958 and radio was the primary vehicle for news. On a day in January, KGO radio announced a public safety alert at 9:37 a.m. It reported that a brain-eating amoeba was spotted in Palo Alto and was working its way up the peninsula towards San Francisco.

The entire Bay Area went into a panic. Thousands of terrified parents picked up their children from school.

The broadcast was a hoax. I remember laughing at how people could be so gullible about a one-cell organism. But a Vampire Amoeba's bite causes infection and even death. Better watch out!



Fire Robin Gigoux 7/23/18

The black scar is visible from my home across the valley. My son and his family live blocks from where the fire—that burned for more than six hours—began.

Wind drove the flaming beast east and uphill, toward open space and away from most populated areas. Property damage was minimal. Two firefighters suffered minor burns. Had the wind changed direction, the outcome would surely have been disastrously different.

Afterwards, my son showed me photographs he took of smoke billowing toward his home. Once again, my heart skipped a few beats.

The scar reminds me daily that life is precious.

You In The Newsletter! (cont'd)

Decision Point Barry D. Hampshire

Starlight shone bright and reflected off the snow, allowing me to read the tattered note. Relief flooded through me: It said “North.” Despite sleepless nights, I instantly recognized my child’s writing. A clue as to where she had gone, but only frigid wilds lay north.

The prospect of heading into that expanse froze my thoughts. But the image of Abby’s smile shook all trepidation aside. I attached my snowshoes and picked up my pack. Soon, dawn would allow me to search for tracks in the snow. Her smile seemed to hang in the trees’ branches. I had to go.



Assault with a Dead Weapon by Jim Hasse

I observed an altercation last week in the seafood department at Safeway. The argument was over freshness. An irate and intoxicated customer threw a large chunk of Atlantic salmon at the seafood manager and hit him in the face. A bloody nose was the result.

Being a retired law enforcement officer, I stepped in and made a citizen’s arrest. I told the customer he was being arrested for Assault with a Dead Weapon.

When the police arrived they complimented me on my creativity, but just charged the man with Battery and Drunk in Public.



¿NO HOPE FOR ME? By Phyllis Houseman

During the bus ride across Uruguay, my Peace Corps partner Doris and I stopped speaking.

When passengers got off at Melo, I snatched my backpack, finding a rear seat.

Watching new travelers board, my jaw dropped. A costumed *huaso* locked eyes and sat next to me.

Huaso, the Uruguayan gaucho. Politeness stopped me from snapping a shot of the man’s wide *chupalla*, the colorful poncho on his shoulder, the knee-high leather boots.

We chatted about his grandchildren and dead wife.

Everyone broke up at his parting words.

¿Estás seguro de que no hay esperanza para mí?



by Ada Peacock

You In The Newsletter! (cont'd)

WALKING WISDOM

Denise P. Kalm

“Good luck with your job search.” With these words, the SVP—my final interview of the week—closed off our call.

My heart sank. Until this moment, I knew I had the job. What had I said?

Dispirited, I headed for the Canal Trail, needing fresh air, otters and greenery to soothe my battered ego. Fifteen minutes later, I had a terrific idea for marketing their newest Cloud solution, which I emailed immediately to the SVP. No expectations; it was 6:30 on a Friday where he worked.

A new email appeared. “You’ll be hearing from the hiring manager on Monday.”



Vengeance

Chloe Laube

Darkness. The only light was a thin beam from the microwave’s clock.

Be quiet.

The knife-drawer squeaked.

Listen.

No sound. He was still asleep.

The knife with the serrated blade was the sharpest.

Be careful.

I groped cautiously inside the drawer.

Move your hand to the left. You’ve got it.

I gripped the handle and pulled it from the drawer.

Don’t ever call me fat, mister.

I opened the door slowly to acclimate to the sudden light.

The brick of cheddar was in the butter-bin of the fridge. The cheese sliced easily, and I polished it off.

Delicious.



You In The Newsletter! (cont'd)

Hope Camille Minichino

My instructions had come the usual way, a text at three a.m.

Parade today.

Hope you'll be there!!!!

Hope: that's me, the only female in the crew. My lucky day. The job was mine.

A stickler for punctuation, the boss would never end a sentence with more than one mark. Four exclamation points was code for four o'clock in the afternoon.

Bruises still fresh, I settled atop the highest hill and adjusted the scope on my 300 Win Mag.

Phtt!

The councilman went down.

Time to pick up my daughter and tell her that her dad died a hero.

()



The Head Bob Poirier

Malone waited weeks for this. His source insisted the “UCSF Head” would turn 21 at this bar tonight.

The Dad arrived at eight carrying the open-sided, converted bowling bag. The head, with his tiny body, peered out at the growing crowd.

The Dad ordered the family ritual Glenfiddich single-malt for the celebrant and tilted the glass so he could drink.

Amazingly the head grew a torso. Another drink, legs! Excitedly, the Dad ordered a double.

The head gulped it down, gasped, toppled over, and died. Women fainted. Men screamed.

“Damn,” Malone thought. “He should’ve quit when he was ahead.”



A Secluded Place Cecilia Pugh

Sleep is a tomb of silent retreat where one’s body is abandoned for timeless hours in an unknown space. With blind eyes one wanders aimlessly through uncharted territory and twisted labyrinths, in search of answers to unresolved concerns.

A place of unexpected discoveries, where inspirations resembling jewels, glimmer like pirate’s booty in hidden caverns and frustrated desires play out on personal movie screens.

A vital time away from noise, action and decisions, where unsettled thoughts and tribulations float through a healing balm of black silence allowing a tired vessel to rest, until the body flowers refreshed when morning dawns bright.



You In The Newsletter! (cont'd)

My First Solo Heather Still

Clunk-clunk clicks my heels as I step towards the white void. Thump-thump beats my heart slamming in my chest. A four point five tremor shakes my fingers as one hand grips the stand, the other slipping down the shaft of the microphone.

A mix of denim and bare legs wait, a blaring silence hushing the faceless bodies.

A single strum of the piano keys fills the auditorium, then another long strum, and finally, the violin joins in. I count down from three, open my mouth, and pray my voice doesn't crack on my first note.

El Cambio Va Bill Stong

Venezuela voted and telephone poles all over Caracas still carried thin metal party posters. A friend and I hoisted one into a tree.

As cars drove by, we punched that sign. The loud, tinny racket startled drivers who cursed and stuck out their heads wondering what they had hit. Nobody looked up.

It was fabulous fun until a police car turned onto the street. My friend panicked and climbed higher.

A sharp crack slowed time. Below my dangling legs, a limb floated downward...the hood of the Caraqueno cruiser glided into view...the rotten limb shattered itself on the windscreen.

Fun over.

Return label: San Quentin Prison Marjorie Witt

I cry. Then I open the box.

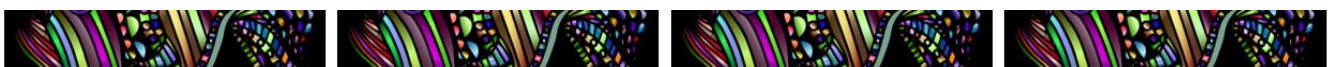
Yellow stubby pencils. Game of Thrones paperback.

Keys. Dream home and car forfeited. Wallet. Driver's license. No money.

A used tissue. Was he crying when they arrested him? I toss the tears into the trash can. I crinkle up the yellowed restraining order.

The clothes he last wore, his favorite jacket, T-Shirt and jeans. I hold them close, inhaling the scent of his being.

I place everything back in the box except the jacket. I'll wear it until the day my son is released. Twenty years from now.



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 Mount Diablo CWC newsletter every month in the year you donate. Or remain anonymous if you prefer!

DONATIONS A/O Sept 1, 2018

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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.

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

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

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

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CWC Mt. Diablo Branch,

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Attention: Young Writers Contest



THANK YOU TO ALL WHO SUPPORT THIS ANNUAL CONTEST