



# The Write News

A Monthly Newsletter

Lyn Roberts, editor

January 2019



Saturday January 12, 2019—11:00 to 2:00pm

2019

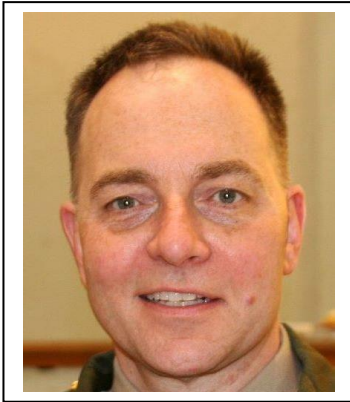
## Writing as a Search for Meaning

featuring

**Kevin Fisher-Paulson**



Kevin Fisher-Paulson will discuss the craft of writing from the perspective of purpose and structure. He will explore how the writing process begins with a commitment to the creative self. As Kevin explains, everyone has an autobiography but not everyone has a memoir. Everyone has instructions, but not everyone has a poem. Kevin will talk about choices, not habits, that usher the individual through the creative door.



- Writing as a search for meaning.
- How structure is inherent in the creative process and how choice of genres and voice and dramatic arc can affect the ability to communicate the message.
- Suggestions for best writing practices and best editing practices.
- Writing as a commitment to community.

**Kevin Fisher-Paulson** studied writing at the University of Notre Dame, with continued coursework at the University of Iowa and the University of Oregon.

Kevin's short story "Virtue Enough for Miss Grrrl" appeared in **When Love Lasts Forever**, by Pilgrim Press. His poems and short stories have appeared in **The Sentinel**, **Amethyst**, **RFD**, **Suburban Wilderness**, **Oberon** and **The James White Review**. He contributes irregularly to NPR, and his plays and monologues have been produced in the ODC Summerfest, Theater Rhinoceros and the National AIDS Theater Festival. His memoir, **A Song for Lost Angels**, was a finalist in the Ben Franklin Independent Publishing Awards. Kevin writes a weekly column for the **San Francisco Chronicle**. In his spare time he serves as Captain of the Honor Guard for the San Francisco Sheriff's Department.

He lives in San Francisco with his husband, two sons and three rescue dogs. You can visit his website at [www.twopennypress.org](http://www.twopennypress.org).

**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. 9th, 2019.** To reserve a spot, go to the CWC Mt. Diablo website at: <https://cwcmtdiablo.org/current-cwc-mt-diablo-meeting/> Website, <http://cwcmtdiablowriters.org>

## *Memo from Member:* John Marvin



You know, I occasionally fail to follow through on projects that I think, at the time, are really worthwhile. Take my blog, for instance. It is a choice on my writer's website, but if you choose it, it simply says something to the effect, "there ain't no content here." Well, now, whose fault is that?

So, when Bill Stong and I volunteered to write a President's column for the newsletter, and then a slot came up for our January *Writers Table* presentation on social media and how writers might use social media, it seemed fitting that I take on learning about blogs and relating that material to our members, some of whom might share a degree of interest in blogging, but had not taken it on, yet.

From my research so far, I have learned: a blog is a web log, but in the nineties some fella shortened that by dropping the "w-e." Not long after, someone else started using "blog" as a verb, and soon it was universal. The basic intention of early blogs was simply to create an on-line journal or place where the writer could place their thoughts, opinions, and personal interests on a web-published journal. In addition, blogs allowed readers to express their own opinions and responses to the author's writing.

Soon, however, blogs evolved into more complexity, and became communities where people of similar interests expressed their opinions, whether or not they agreed. These communities are called creative networks or social networks and some allow more than one writer to contribute to the blog.

As time went on, blogs became more and more common, and some numbers now are:

- \*there were over 170 million blogs worldwide by 2011
- \*over 20% of internet time is spent on blogs and social networks
- \*most bloggers (80+%) make little or no money from their blogs
- \*over 2/3 of bloggers have not added to their blogs in over a year. (I feel better already.)
- \*many blogs have little or no writing; they stress photos, visuals, services, et cetera.

Nevertheless...blogging continues to grow, especially as a web tool for businesses and as a tool in growing a community of similarly concerned humans. With that in mind, I promise to learn more about blogging, bring what I learn to the January *Writers Table* panel on Social Media, and maybe, just maybe, begin adding content to my own web log...er...blog.

Still, no promises.

John Marvin

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## Wrapping for the December Meeting



*Barbara Bentley, the creative genius behind the centerpieces!*



*Wrapping the books for the centerpieces on each table*

## Photos from the December Meeting



MEMBERS' BOOKS FOR SALE



Judith Overmeir, David George, Ann Damaschino

## 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 12, 10-11:00am Zio Fraedo's.**



## Confessions & Revelations

By: Bill Stong

The story I'm working on began totally by chance...more than ten years ago. It's not published...yet. The odyssey has been, well, long. Over the years, the labor of writing has proven to be moving, tedious, interesting, frustrating, and exhilarating. Overall, it's lots of fun. I've learned much—including a better appreciation of how much I really don't know—and have met interesting people, many now friends, I would never have met otherwise.

What started as an experimental writing exercise has become what looks to be a seven-volume, historical fiction saga. In a nutshell (to be opened only in an elevator) it is:

*"...a saga of the explosive Age of Exploration not told from the points of view of kings, queens, and nobles who stride through our history books. Rather, it is told by ordinary folks who were given sometimes impossible tasks to further the dreams and ambitions of their "betters."*

*By braiding history with the trials, hopes, successes, and failures of Japanese, Spanish and English characters—both real and fictional, this saga covers the epic, world-changing half-century from 1576 to 1626 as you or I would most likely have lived it."*

Regarding writing, my initial attitude was: "If I wrote it, it's good enough." Early on when a new writer-friend told me that constant revision is the fun part, I thought to myself: *Yeah, right. Maybe you, not me.*

I'm a slow learner. It took me more than two years to realize he was right. On my writing journey, most exhilaration has come when revising, when that perfect word, or phrase, somehow pops into my head. Unfortunately, by the time I had that revelation, years of unrevised prose covered hundreds of pages. Worse, as I attended CWC Mt. Diablo's presentations and workshops, I came to understand that I was breaking many rules of writing.

I took a step back. *Wow, there are rules?* I reviewed my work. One protagonist? I have at least three and they are all body-shifters: sometimes they are the protagonist, other times an antagonist. Like Hydra, other writing concepts raised their scary heads: POV? Story arc? Pacing? Dimensional characters? Voice?! *Really? What the hell are those things?* And, why should I care whether a reader cares?

I was at a crossroads: 1) the story had grown into several volumes (via another rule: ~ 80,000 words/book), 2) a lot of sweat had been shed, and 3) I had come to *believe* in the story. Standing alone at that desolate fork in the road, with the wind tousling my hair and the sun burning my face, I could either go left—and start over after learning all the rules; or I could go right and see it through.

Amazingly, the decision was made for me.

My characters surrounded me, got under my skin, and infiltrated my brain: "Forget it, Bill! This is *our* story. Your job is to understand who we are, why we're that way, and what we're doing. *You* must bring us to life so that others may know us and care about us. Admit it! Even you like us. If you stop now, you're nothing but a spineless wuss."

One of the Japanese characters told me my only other option was to commit *seppuku* and she would lend me her *wakizashi* sword. A Spanish character offered to betray me to the Inquisition followed by a leading role in an *Auto de Fe*. An English character told me he'd arrange to have me put on the rack in the Tower, then dragged through the streets of London on a hurdle to Tyburn where I'd be hung, drawn and quartered.

I pondered their offers. Their words. Their passion.

*Screw the rules.* I turned right.



## ***You in the Newsletter: 100-Word Stories***

Members, you are welcome to continue sending in 100 word stories for publication in the newsletter. They challenge you to condense a story and most are pure fun. [elisabethtuck@yahoo.com](mailto:elisabethtuck@yahoo.com)

### **Perfection**

By Ceci Pugh

Adonis passed by. Turning in our direction, his lips curl into a slight smile.

Like deer in headlights, we stop in our tracks.

Our eyes linger—hypnotized by the up and down movement of his posterior, fitted tee shirt, designer jeans and broad, chiseled shoulders. Each step: slow, deliberate and confident.

“Don’t see his kind in Walmart,” I muttered.

“Damn!” My daughter retorted. “There goes Oregon’s finest.”

Between bursts of laughter we walk away. As a final salute to perfection, she gives him a thumb-up farewell salute; just in case he had no idea he made women twitter with desire.

### **Roamer**

By Ceci Pugh

Matt spent adulthood scoping the field for perfection. Each girl a catch; maybe one deserved a ring. Never satisfied, his eyes roamed from her, assessing others with x-ray vision.

He hired a beauty queen with glistening blond hair, emerald eyes and hourglass figure as his secretary. She, smitten by money—he lusting her looks; it was mutual self-love.

The third date he proposed and she accepted. On their evening of wedded bliss he suffered a stroke. In the hospital his eyes roamed the white walls, machinery hooked to his body, railings of his bed—she was nowhere to be found.

### **Used ‘n Lookin’ Fer Love**

By Ceci Pugh

(Advertisement misplaced in the Personal Column)

Used car for sale. High mileage. Dents. Needs a paint job. Worn CD player and saggin’ front upholstery. Pipes are rusty. The four baldin’ tires still crawl over river beds, though their tolerance for cold water has lessened. Can’t find a better trail blazer as it has traveled miles over dusty roads and sand dunes. Some joints need oilin’ but the engine still hums, and the spark plugs fire occasionally—although a lot less than before. She just needs to percolate with high octane gas, a little WD40 and hands on lovin’ care and she’ll be like brand new again.

### **PRECOGNITION**

By Linda Force

It was July in 1973 at a church picnic in Oakland. This is where I first experienced precognition. It was boiling hot even in the shade. A very old woman dressed all in black walked towards me. The closer she got, the colder I got and the air suddenly felt thick. She came right up to me holding out a raffle ticket. Now I was shivering. Something induced me to buy it. Later they had the drawing and I KNEW without a doubt that my ticket would be pulled. Absolutely incredible - I won first prize, a beautiful Persian carpet!

## ***Writers Table for January 2018***

**January 12** – “*Got platform?*” Panel on Social Media

Panelists will cover the key basics for:

Andrew Benzie – *Facebook*

Kymberlie Ingalls – *Facebook Live*

John Marvin - *Blogging*



Social Media--your writer platform, your Web presence. While the topic can be intimidating and sometimes overwhelming, there are a few components that are high-value and should be at the top of your platform strategy. With the saying "A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step," come join a *Writers Table* panel which has been instructed to leave you with something concrete and realistic--that is, something you can go home and do before the end of the weekend. Also, bring your questions because while we will cover the most prominent--Facebook, Facebook Live, and blogging. Social media is such a broad area we would like to know what else *Writers Table* could be covering.

## ***Future Writers Tables***

**February 9** – “*Got your back*” Panel on Mt. Diablo Member Benefits

Panelists

Marlene Dotterer – Website

Deborah Greenberg – Critique Groups

Elisabeth Tuck – Helpful Editor

Members of Mt. Diablo Branch have automatic access to a huge range of benefits. If you aren't taking advantage of them all--maybe because you're not aware of them, please join our *Writers Table* on some of the key benefits aimed directly at helping writers. We will cover the branch website (a great part of YOUR platform), critique groups (great for supportive feedback on your writing), and Helpful Editor (good for helping with writing problems.)

**March 9** – No Writers Table due to workshop

**April 13** – Panel on Editing

“*A Third Eye...*” 3 Panelists TBD

**May 11** – TBD

**June 8** – Writing Craft (format TBD)

“*Polish It & It Might Shine.*”



## Young Writers Contest 2019

This annual contest is proudly sponsored by the Mount Diablo Branch of the California Writers Club. Contest is open to 6th, 7th and 8th grade students who live in or attend school in Contra Costa County. Categories include short story, poetry, personal narrative and humor.

**DEADLINE:** Manuscripts must be received by **9:00 p.m. on March 25, 2019**. Winners will be notified by email by April 20, 2019. Non-winners will not be notified.



**TEACHERS:** STUDENTS MUST SUBMIT THEIR STORIES AND POEMS THEMSELVES. We are striving to encourage individual creativity and expression. Do not send entire class assignments. Each submission requires individual student information.

**PARENTS:** Parents of winning students will be requested to give permission for the child to be photographed for print, videotaped, or electronically imaged and agree to allow his or her child's picture to appear in newspapers, news releases, and/or other published formats.

**PRIZES:** Winning *short stories* and *poems* from each grade level will receive \$100 for first prize, \$50 for second prize and \$25 for third prize.

The *Humor Award* of \$100 will be awarded to one winner (combined grades) or one winner in each grade level, at the judges' discretion.

The *Betty Tenney Personal Narrative Award* of \$100 will be given to the best personal narrative in each grade.

Second and third place prizes may be awarded in the personal narrative category at the judges' discretion.

Manuscripts are accepted  
via [Submittable.com](https://www.submittable.com)  
January 15 – March 25,  
2019.

Prizes will be presented to winners on **May 18, 2019**. Further information on the awards ceremony will be provided to the winners. Parents are welcome. Teachers of winning students will be invited to attend the ceremony.

CWC is a federal non-profit 501(c)(3) <https://cwcmtdiablo.org/> Questions? Email us at [youngwriters@cwcmtdiablo.org](mailto:youngwriters@cwcmtdiablo.org).



## Drawing for Mt. Diablo Members

Print this page, write your name on the coupon, cut it out, attend the January meeting, put the coupon in the glass/basket/bag 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 2019 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.

## Our Upcoming Programs



2019

<b>Jan 12</b> 	<b>Kevin Fisher Paulson</b>  <i>The Process of Creativity</i>	Kevin Fisher-Paulson will discuss the craft of writing from the perspective of purpose and structure. He will explore how the writing process begins with a commitment to the creative self. As Kevin explains, everyone has an autobiography but not everyone has a memoir. Everyone has instructions, but not everyone has a poem. Kevin will talk about choices, not habits that usher the individual through the creative door. A series of prompts for the real life that morph into prompts for the imaginative life will be provided.
<b>Feb 9</b> 	<b>Steven Nightingale</b>  <i>The Arts of Language</i>	Steven Nightingale is the author of ten books: two novels, six books of sonnets, a long essay on the city of Granada, Spain, and a book of short fiction entitled <i>The Hot Climate of Promises and Grace</i> . He is a graduate of Stanford University
<b>Mar. 9</b> 	<b>Susanne Lakin</b> <b>WORKSHOP</b>	C. S. Lakin is a multi-published novelist and writing coach. She works full-time as a copyeditor and critiques about two hundred manuscripts a year. Layer your novel to success with this innovative, simple technique!
<b>Apr. 13</b> 	<b>Elizabeth Stark</b>	Host of Story Makers Podcast (StoryMakersShow.com), author of the novel <i>Shy Girl</i> (FSG, Seal Press) and co-director and co-writer of several films, including <i>FtF: Female to Femme</i> , a creative documentary and <i>Little Mutinies</i> , a short (both distributed by Frameline.) She earned an M.F.A. from Columbia University in Creative Writing and has taught at the Pratt Institute, UCSC, St. Mary's where she was the visiting distinguished writer, and elsewhere. She co-directs and teaches at BookWritingWorld.com and SonomaCountyWritersCamp.com. Elizabeth is currently producing a feature film called <i>Lost in the Middle</i> , and is finishing a novel.
<b>May 11</b>	<b>Rachel Herron</b>	TBD



## Book Trailer Presentation by Jill Hedgecock

### OVERVIEW

Key points for book trailer scriptwriting include:

- keep it simple and short (2 minutes maximum)
- incorporate themes and book endorsements
- introduce the key characters and setting in the opening scene
- hint at what the character wants (or maybe doesn't want)

The key places to market include your website, and Facebook.

Using a professional book trailer service can increase your chances of having your book trailer accepted to websites like [www.trailershelf.com](http://www.trailershelf.com) and [www.bookreels.com](http://www.bookreels.com) where big-name authors' book trailers are displayed. Chasing Light Studios who produced Jill's book trailer will work with you to meet your needs and budget. Their services generally run below market and can run from basic (\$350) to deluxe (approximately \$1800). Jill's trailer for her book *The Rhino in the Room* can be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/287911864>.

### PLATFORMS FOR YOUR BOOK TRAILER

#### Virtual and Social Media

- Your blog
- [www.trailershelf.com](http://www.trailershelf.com) (free or expanded services)
- [www.bookreels.com](http://www.bookreels.com) (free) (choose lots of relevant categories)
- Smashwords profile (must be YouTube)
- Vimeo (profile)
- Facebook
- Instagram videos
- Tumblr (can post from [bookreels.com](http://bookreels.com))
- Author Central – Amazon
- U-Tube (include keyword tags, a clear title & description so your video is findable)
- [www.GoodReads.com](http://www.GoodReads.com)



#### Events, Advertising, and Special Opportunities

- Book Launch (ipad – book events)
- Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa Calendar - <http://www.zoomaru5.com/index.php?id=0&display=&portal=contracostaarts>
- For Children's Books and SCBWI Members – Launch Year: SCBWI Bookstop (10/23 to 12/7) \$25 ad includes slot for video



## *Attention All Poets!*

Would you be interested in leading a poetry workshop for teens and adults?

The [Oakley Library](#) is hosting a "Roses Are Read" event in **April 2019**, featuring two sessions: first, a poetry writing workshop, followed a week later by an open-mic session, where participants can share their work.

The library is considering either morning or evening sessions, with the following dates in mind:

**Morning event:** Saturday, April 20 (workshop) and Saturday, April 27 (open mic).

OR

**Evening (6:30 p.m.) event:** Tuesday, April 23 (workshop) and Tuesday, April 30 (open mic).

You may lead both workshop and open-mic sessions if you wish, or just the workshop.

If you are interested or would like more information, please contact **Doug Thomas**, Adult and Teen Services Librarian for Oakley Library, at (925) 625-2400. Or email Doug at [dthomas@ccclib.org](mailto:dthomas@ccclib.org).

***Don't Miss Robert Dugoni—an excellent speaker!***

THE 3<sup>RD</sup> TRI-VALLEY WRITERS CONFERENCE

Keynote Speaker:

Robert Dugoni

Presenters:  
 IngramSpark  
 IBPA  
 Smashwords

[conference@trivalleywriters.org](mailto:conference@trivalleywriters.org)  
[www.trivalleywriters.org](http://www.trivalleywriters.org)

Early Bird Registration

Members \$115  
 Non-Members \$140  
 Students \$80

Registration begins  
 December 1, 2018

Seating is limited

Saturday April 13, 2019  
 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

**Four Points by Sheraton**  
 5115 Hopyard Road  
 Pleasanton, CA

## 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 Sept 2018

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

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

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

**Edward Stanislawski**

**Linda Force**

**Patty Northlich**

**Chloe Laube**

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

**Robin Gigoux**

**Phyllis Nagle**

**Maya Das**

**Sheryl Ruzek**

**Fran Cain**

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

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

**Elizabeth Koehler-Pentacoff**

**Ken Kirkoff**

**Kathy Urban**

**Judy Ingram**

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

**June Gatewood**

**George Cramer**



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/](http://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

