



The Write News Mt Diablo

A Monthly Newsletter

Elisabeth Tuck, editor

November 2021

In-Person and Zoom BRANCH MEETING

November 13, 2021

**Check-In 11:00 a.m., Writer's Table 11:15 a.m., Lunch 12:00 Noon
Business Meeting 12:45 p.m., Speaker 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.**

Register online at <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/current-cwc-mt-diablo-meeting/>

If you are attending on Zoom, once you complete payment, you will see a confirmation with a link to register on Zoom.

Polishing your Work for Publication

Featuring

Ally Machate

Each year, more than a million new titles are published by traditional and self-publishers. Every writer knows—or soon learns—that it takes multiple revisions to create a piece ready to compete for book buyers' attention. This talk will introduce you to the most common problems that plague written works and offer simple ways to identify and resolve them in your own draft. You'll receive tips on improving your work to keep readers' attention, polishing your manuscript at the technical level, and getting objective feedback before you submit or go to press.



1. Why it's so crucial that your manuscript be as clean, properly formatted, and well-written as possible before submitting.
2. How to identify and resolve some of the most common problems plaguing modern manuscripts, including things like inauthentic dialogue, ineffective use of nouns and verbs, and awkward rhythm, as well as classic advice such as "show, don't tell" and avoiding passive voice.
3. Why it's so essential that writers, especially beginners, seek out objective feedback and tips on how to get it.

Ally Machate is on a mission to help authors make great books and reach more readers. A bestselling author and expert publishing consultant, Ally has served small and "Big Five" publishers, including Simon & Schuster, where she acquired and edited books. Her clients include authors with such companies as Simon & Schuster, Penguin Random House, Rodale Inc., Chronicle Books, Kaplan Publishing, Sourcebooks, and Hay House as well as independently published bestsellers. Ally leads a diversified team of professionals who specialize in helping serious authors to write, publish, and sell more high-quality books. Learn more at www.thewritersally.com.

In-Person: Members \$25.00, Non-CWC Member \$35.00 (includes buffet lunch!)

Zoom: Members \$10.00, Non-CWC Member \$15.00

Register online at <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/current-cwc-mt-diablo-meeting/>

***President's Message:* Linda Hartmann'**

"Writing the Waves"

Every November, I find myself saying the same thing; "How did it get to be November again?" Time, one of the great equalizers. Each of us gets 24 hours in our day, and how that time is used primarily up to us. Looking at my "To-Do" List, I feel exhausted before beginning any work. The satisfaction each check-off brings is motivational, and I keep on going, and suddenly a new year is upon us. More to do, and a new list, as every year is different. As we grow and change, so do our goals.

November is also one of my favorite months because it includes my favorite holiday and some phenomenal traditions. There is so much to look forward to with Thanksgiving! It is a holiday that makes me happy to be with people I love, family, enjoy fantastic food, and be together for about a week. Time for bonding with the grandchildren, playing games, making recipes that have been in our respective families for years, and then the leftovers! Yumm! We hike, and swim, and explore together. We also do things that some might think a trifle nerdy, but we love doing them together. We each choose a topic for a lecture, seminar, or workshop. A schedule keeps us tracking so we can all be present for them. Subjects have varied, including making books by folding paper in a complex way, the Molokai volcanic eruption, computer coding, meditation, and growing orchids. Others were variations of noodle-making from four different places in China, ritual coffee tasting every morning, and learning how high school students are mentored on their entrepreneurial ideas (some that are so good they are funded)!

The writer in me began bringing journals to give as gifts to each and running workshops on writing about the importance of memories Thanksgiving brings to all of us. A gift that can keep growing. It is a gift that reminds us of the things that we are so grateful to experience, enjoy, people we may miss, and bring them back for moments of reflection, make their recipes, and keep their memories alive and joyful. It is not just our tastebuds and stomachs that we keep happy and full during this holiday, but the sharing, stimulating discussions, playfulness, the best that life is. We keep some of them for a family collection.

Leftovers make great sandwiches and nourishment enjoyed at the beach or a spot that we find along the way on our hikes. They never taste any better than they do outside, with nature, in all of its glory, to join us. Last year we scheduled our special seminars virtually on Zoom, and thanked technology for letting us be together across cyberspace.

Whatever your plans for Thanksgiving this year, know these two things:

1. You will have a more valuable holiday if you make someone or others less fortunate than yourself have a better holiday.
2. Gratitude will help make your day brighter, happier; it is a gift that is plentiful for everyone, and no one can take it away from you.

I wish YOU a month full of gratitude and good deeds, and a Happy Thanksgiving!



CONTENTS

- p. 3 Member Events, News & Salutes: **Al Garrotto; Linda Hartmann**
- p. 4-5 Some CWC Award Winners Around the State
- p. 6-7 Be Interviewed: **Gary Carr**; Reciprocity Among Branches
- p. 8 Literary Review
- p. 9-11 Members Short Works: **Denise P Kalm; Bob Poirier**; Upcoming Programs
- p. 12-15 Things to Do: Read for Scholastic & YWC; Writers Table; Lakin Class
- p. 16 Young Writers Contest First Prize Winner: poetry
- p. 17 Young Writers Contest Donor Page
- p. 18-19 In Memoriam: **James Dennis Wiseman**

Happy Thanksgiving



Member Events, News, and Salutes

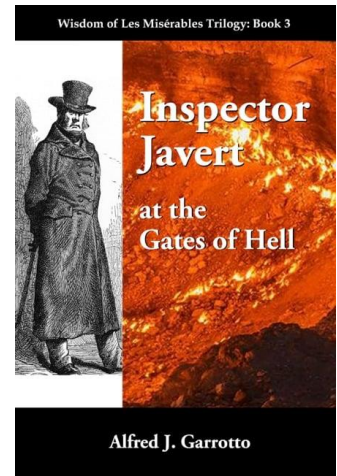


This section of the newsletter is regularly open members to submit information about milestones in their writing journey. Publish a book? Planning a reading at a bookstore or county fair? Speaking somewhere? Win an IPPY or other prize? Is your play being produced? The TV or movie version of your writing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

Al Garrotto

I'm delighted to announce a mid-October rollout for new my novel, *Inspector Javert: at the Gates of Hell*. Victor Hugo's most despised antihero stands on the parapet where the swirling River Seine beckons to him. He hesitates . . . then steps forward.

Readers wonder, "What happened next?" Did Javert cease to exist? Is there life on the other side of life as we know it here on Earth? If there is, what kind of existence awaits Javert—and each of us—on that "other side"? I offer readers my own version of what came next for Javert . . . and might for us.



Linda Hartmann, Mt. Diablo Branch President given the 2021 Jack London Award (JLA)



2021 Jack London Award winners who could attend the luncheon in person Oct. 17, 2021

Far right is **Rusty LaGrange**, High Desert branch, producer of our statewide *Bulletin* and therefore winner of the state award, the Ina Coolbrith. Rusty's branch also awarded her the JLA.

Next is **Linda** with new president, **Roger Lubeck**, behind and to her right.

Unfortunately I can't put names to the others but following are some of the write-ups for the winners this year. Maybe some of their accomplishments will inspire you to help out Mt. Diablo.

CWC Award Winners

Rusty LaGrange Ina Coolbrith Statewide Service Award

Rusty LaGrange is the editor-in-chief of the CWC state newsletter published 3 times a year, *The Bulletin*, for the last five years. The job entails collecting, archiving, and compiling the news articles and photographs from the 22 branches and laying them out in an attractive format. Until the November 2020 edition, Rusty had been doing this entirely on her own.

When Rusty took over the editorship of *The Bulletin*, it was published in hard copy and mailed to the members two times per year. With the emergence of an electronically distributed newsletter in a PDF file, the cost became zero as opposed to several thousand dollars per edition. We were able to solicit paid advertising, which has become a positive part of the budget.

Rusty sought out and secured the flip-page software to enhance the readability of our *Bulletin*, and unfailingly the advertising has covered that cost.

JACK LONDON AWARD WINNERS

Francine Thomas Howard

Berkeley

Francine, a proud product of the San Francisco public school system, has been a member of CWC, Berkeley branch, for over twelve years. Before she became the author of two Amazon bestselling novels, ranking number one and three across all genres and sales, Ms. Howard followed an earlier passion. She received her B.A. degree from San Jose State in pediatric occupational therapy and her MPA at the University of San Francisco. She left a rewarding career of treating children with physical disabilities to preserve her family's oral histories in written form.

With limited formal creative writing training, Ms. Howard credits a critique group sponsored by the Berkeley branch for developing her skills in the craft of writing. She is a strong believer in obligation and paying her good fortune forward. She has served the Berkeley branch as a three-term Vice-President, former member of the Diversity Committee, organizing the club's first appearance at the Oakland Book Festival, and instrumental in adding the name of Virginia Prentiss to the benevolent fund. She thanks the Berkeley branch for this honor.

Sarah E. Pruitt

Central Coast Writers

Sarah has been a member of her branch Executive Committee, is always one of the first to volunteer help with any club project or event. Sarah has been Hospitality Chair for a number of years. Although that position doesn't always ring with bells and whistles, it did put Sarah in the position to be the face of Central Coast! Recently Sarah stepped up to the President's role. Sarah's dedication to branch members imbues the branch with a sense of harmony, and has made Central Coast Writers stronger.

Renee Geffken

Coastal Dunes

Renee Geffken has been a member of Coastal Dunes for three years. Before joining in early 2018, she was a member of the Writers of Kern branch. Renee has been incredibly active in all club activities, including on the branch board. She has served as Corresponding Secretary, Newsletter Editor, and Central Board Representative. While newsletter editor, she attended events for local poets and writers to inform our members. If something was happening in the local writing world, Renee would know about it and the details for involvement. Renee writes poetry, essays, and short stories.

Andrew F. Sound

East Sierra – Ridge Writers

A software engineer by trade, Andrew works tirelessly for the branch, largely behind the scenes, to expedite the success of many projects. He has served as treasurer for five years, volunteered on numerous East Sierra initiatives with the community, laid the foundation for the annual fall Weird Storytelling Competition and Weird Weekend, and arranged the publishing, printing, and distribution of the East Sierra anthology *Scenes from Lives of Service: High Desert Veterans of WWI through Desert Storm*. As member of the board of the Historical Society of the Upper Mojave Desert, he interfaces with us on joint events.

CWC Award Winners (cont'd)

Nancy Guarnera

Fremont Area Writers

Nancy joined in 2016. She can take a concept from inception to fruition. Every project she has initiated has been a success. She first served as Hospitality Chair and instituted welcome bags for first-time visitors at meetings. She volunteered in 2018 to assist with the newsletter, and took over as Editor in 2019. She ran a monthly book signing for branch authors at Half Price Books and initiated monthly Open Mics at a local Starbucks. During the pandemic, Nancy created SIP (shelter in place) Notes—weekly emails from the board to let members know that Fremont Area Writers was still here supporting them and their writing. In April 2020, Nancy initiated and edited a collaborative writing project Tell Me a Story (TMAS) with 23 branch members participating. The project completed a year later. Nancy's poetry, short fiction, and editorials are published in a variety of publications.

Rusty LaGrange

High Desert

Rusty has edited the branch newsletter, *The Inkslinger*, for ten years, setting the bar high for those who follow. She is a member of the branch Poemsmiths, and helped promote the return of the Adult Poetry Division at the San Bernardino County Fair. Rusty joined the team of branch writers who taught the writing workshops for inmates of the Victorville Federal Correction Complex. In addition to producing the statewide *Bulletin*, an outside activity includes the Lucerne Valley Museum board, and her portable kids' "Touch It" project.

Sue Andrews

Inland Empire

Sue spent 40 years in public education as a teacher of all ages, from preschool to junior college, then was a middle manager, and finally a special education principal. She dedicated her last 30 years educating deaf children in addition to teaching their parents and other educators American Sign Language. At her retirement party in 2010 Sue mentioned she wanted to write a book. A colleague gave her a card with the Inland Empire branch information. Sue joined and dove into the club, gleaning knowledge on how to write, took online classes, joined a critique group and a small writing group. She has served as Hospitality Chair, Secretary, Central Board Representative, and branch President from 2017 to 2020. When not writing, Sue's other passions include traveling and public speaking for the American Heart Association and the WomenHeart organization, the latter because Sue is a heart attack survivor.

Janet Elizabeth Lynn

Long Beach

Janet joined the branch in 2016 after she and her husband, Will Zeilinger, were guest speakers about their Skylar Drake Mystery Series, with six titles so far. Janet originated, invited speakers, and handled the significant details of the branch's first full-day workshop in 2019, a face-to-face workshop with professionals, speaking on crafting a pitch, editing, book cover design, manuscript formatting, and book production.


Linda Hartmann

Mt. Diablo

Linda had always felt torn between the arts and sciences. After a long career in critical care nursing, followed by a senior directorship for biotech departments, she retired into the arts.

Linda has served the Mt. Diablo branch as Vice-President and is currently President. To bolster the branch's involvement with young people, she simultaneously has been a juror, coordinator, and chair for the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards and juror each year for the Young Writers Contest. As well Linda is a member of multiple committees within the branch developed partially in response to the pandemic.

Linda's engagement, enthusiasm, presence, guidance, and humility have been the bedrock upon which the board has depended. She has advised on difficult decisions, embraced new technology, encouraged members to become involved, and promoted new ideas to keep the branch thriving. Her dedication to service for the branch and willingness to support new initiatives and outreach are evident.



Be Interviewed

These interviews are open to any Mt. Diablo Branch member so others get to know you, your work, and your thoughts about writing and the writing process. If you would like to be interviewed, let us know through this link:

<https://cwcmt Diablo.org/newsletter/>

Introducing New Member: **Gary Carr**

What do you like about writing?

I like stories and story-telling and the process of creating something that, for good or ill, has never existed before. I am fascinated by what I am able to dredge up out of the depths of my psyche.

What part of the writing process is most difficult for you?

Getting started; getting into the "zone."

Are there any resources, tools, or events that you have found especially helpful for writing or publishing?

A graduate degree in creative writing whose classes pushed me to do my best. One reason I joined CWC was to find additional ways to get my material published. I am also a member of a two groups of talented writers with diverse styles (Shadow of the Mountain Writers Group and Playwrights Center of SF).

What are you currently working on?

*I'm polishing **two plays**. One is about an actress who meets with an accident that confines her to a wheelchair. Determined to continue a career as a performer, she becomes a stand-up comic. The other is about the life and times of the eighteenth-century American poet, Phillis Wheatley, the enslaved woman who literally writes her way to freedom and becomes the first African-American in the U.S. to publish a book of poetry. I am looking for a producer for each play. Also, I'm writing a serialized mystery published monthly in a local newsletter. Additional projects include a second book of short stories.*

Who or what has influenced you the most as a writer?

Early experiences of theater and movies. Early contact with friends of my parents who were journalists. A grandfather, two uncles, and a brother, all of whom were natural comics and possessed a sense of the absurd. Getting good feedback from audiences/readers of my stuff. Specific writers would include Hemingway, Borges, Kafka (Metamorphosis) and Federico Fellini (La Dolce Vita).

How have your background, previous work, and/or experience contributed to your writing?

As Jack Matthews, one of my creative writing teachers, said, "Everything is grist for the writers' mill."

Approximately how long have you been a CWC member?

About three months. I am a newbie.

How has your CWC membership helped you or your writing?

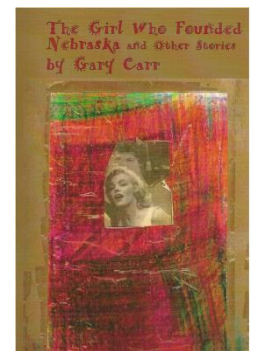
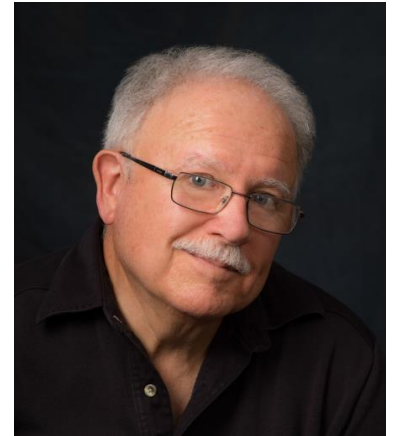
CWC gave me an opportunity to read a piece of my flash fiction at the last online Open Mike.

Do you have published works?

The Girl Who Founded Nebraska and Other Stories, EXIT Press, San Francisco. >>>>>

The Left Side of Paradise: The Screenwriting of John Howard Lawson, UMI Press, Ann Arbor

Plus numerous produced plays and screenplays.



Be Interviewed cont'd

Do you have any advice for new writers?

Sit down at your laptop and pound out your idea. Don't second-guess or edit yourself—that comes later. The first page or two may be garbage—don't worry about it—but once you hit your zone, you're on your way.

How do you define success as a writer?

Finding an audience, getting published, and making an impact on people.

What are your future writing goals?

Getting more pieces published and produced.



CWC's Policy of Reciprocity Among Branches

By Karen Gorback

San Fernando Valley branch

Your branch membership is now better than ever, especially since many California Writers Club (CWC) branches are currently conducting meetings online.

The Central Board has verified that any CWC member may attend a meeting of any other CWC branch for the same price as the host branch members. Some branches have no charge for meetings, so your attendance at their meetings would also be *gratis*.

Some branches charge a small fee for their members to attend meetings, and you are welcome to attend their meetings for the same, nominal fee. Branches inviting non-member guests at a higher price should indicate something like “non-CWC member guest.”

The Northern California branches have a consolidated events calendar at: <http://cwcncalwriters.org/events/> The Southern California branches do not currently have a consolidated calendar. A single, statewide calendar has been proposed. In the meantime, click on the state website's interactive map of the branches at <https://calwriters.org/cwcbranches/> to learn about meetings at other CWC branches. Find contact information for each branch there. Contact the southern branches to learn about their meetings and upcoming programs.

So, put on your “Zoom shoes” and venture into cyberspace.

Please note that this policy applies only to branch meetings, not necessarily to contests, submissions to a branch newsletter, or any other activity a CWC branch may organize. In those cases, the branch makes its own policy. And keep encouraging your writer friends to join CWC – with reciprocity at all the other CWC meetings. Such a deal!



Homonyms: Do you know the correct spellings and definitions? Microsoft won't flag these if you use the wrong one.

alter/altar	current/currant	cord/chord	ascent/assent
uninterested/disinterested	illicit/elicit	aisle/isle	accept/except
altogether/all together	yoke/yolk	climatic/climactic	canvas/canvass
stationary/stationery	censor/censure	breach/breech	adverse/averse

Literary Review 2022

by Elisabeth Tuck

The 2022 Literary Review submission window is not quite ready to open. You should receive an email when it does. Anita Holmes from the High Desert branch will manage poetry, David George will be the submissions manager, and I will manage prose. David is currently working with the state webmaster to facilitate submission tasks. He will not be hand-paddling submissions as he has in the past. It's up to our authors to read and follow instructions as with submitting to outside publications.

Again this year, feedback from the judge readers will be a yes/no option.

The new state president would like to publish many more submissions this year. He comes from Redwood, a branch that publishes anthologies regularly. The process for branches that produce anthologies is to have a committee that works with authors to polish pieces. I'm hoping that branches that don't have a process like that will mobilize to help each other submit excellent pieces. I'm happy to edit assuming you give me plenty of time.

A new aspect this year will be that Anita and I will briefly review each submission **before** it goes to a judge. If MS Word lights up with problems, or we spot issues, we will return the piece to the sender who then has the option to rework it and return it to us before the deadline. We are not part of the judging and will not edit the submission or offer advice other than "As written, this is unlikely to be selected." It will be up to the author to read the piece aloud to themselves to see what they can find, to ask another good author/critique group to review it and give written feedback, and/or to find an editor to review the work with them so they can return it polished before the deadline, January 31, 2022. The judges will not know if the piece has been returned.

I invite you to judge prose and poetry. You may submit even if you are judging as pieces do not go to the branch they came from. You may judge as much or as little as works for you and your schedule. There will be judging guidelines to use. Several judges have commented that they have learned a lot about writing from judging.

The submissions window will open shortly. I'm working to get the submission guidelines, judging criteria, and an informative FAQ sheet on the central website, www.calwriters.org. You will do yourself a great service if you read everything carefully before submitting.



**I like
cooking my family
and my pets.**

**Use commas.
Don't be a psycho.**

You in the Newsletter: Short Works

Members, See your writing in print

Send your short works (up to 750 words, preferably less) to be included in the Mt Diablo branch newsletter to: <https://cwcmtdiablo.org/newsletter/>



The Problem of Marketing the “Should Reads”

by

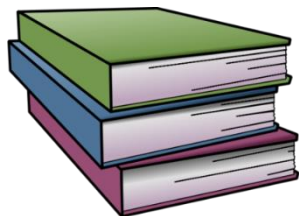
Denise P. Kalm

As I Marie Kondo’d my place this year, the first task I faced was looking at which books I could donate to our local library. A few obvious ones stuck out, but once I removed the “will probably never read again” and the “didn’t really like this one anyway,” I was left with a large number of “never reads.” Not surprisingly, most were non-fiction and all offered insights on concepts I still found interesting. And yet, I didn’t read them. These included many writing guides, a sad confession to make. I managed to let them go, hoping that someone else might find value in them. But I realized that these books led to deeper thought about a problem many of us non-fiction writers face.

Marketing is Hard

CWC marketing topics are always popular and yet, we go home with high hopes and defined plans and too often, nothing comes of our efforts. Even as fewer people read as much as they did previously, enjoying too many other distractions, there’s still a robust market for fiction. Fiction lets us escape into other worlds and other people’s lives, escaping our own for a moment. Non-fiction doesn’t work that way.

Non-fiction generally represents the “should reads” in our bookcases and libraries, the books which stand to potentially improve our lives, deepen our awareness of ourselves and our world and challenge our beliefs. And yet, too often these are the books you buy but don’t read. If you’re a writer of such books, you may have found that it is hard to sell these books and even harder to develop an audience. While someone may buy your book, if they never read it, you don’t have a devoted reader who will buy more.



I’ve written career books, and while articles from these books are popular (and a short read), it’s harder to get someone to buy/read them. Once a person reads my book, they are appreciative that the lessons are told in story, so that you can read my books a bit more like novels. But getting someone to read it in the first place is the challenge.

Think about it. You want to get the next job, hopefully one more tailored to your interests and one that pays more. There are many books that can help you land the job and you might buy one or two. But you don’t read them, because A) we simply don’t want to face what we might be doing wrong and B) we don’t enjoy looking for a job. This can be true of diet and exercise books. The will is there to buy them or at least look for one. But that determination falters when faced with the need to actually sit down and read one.

What Can You Do?

As we can’t go into our reader’s households (or heads) to convince them of how we can help them, we have to be more subtle. I’ve sold more books when I’ve given a talk than at any other time. People will commit to hearing someone talk about something for an hour when they can’t find themselves able to put that time into reading. Place some hooks into your talk to encourage the sale. “I wish we had more time together so I could tell you X and Y, but I’ve covered them in my book.” Make sure to create a talk full of story. That’s what people remember and repeat.

Articles and blogs online can also serve to draw people in. If they are willing to read shorter snippets of valuable information from you and they enjoy your style, they’re far more likely to want more. Sites are often looking for good content. And for you career writers, don’t forget LinkedIn where the average person spending time on the site is considering their next career step. Don’t be afraid to share links to other content, establishing yourself as a trusted advisor.

You in the Newsletter: Short Works (cont'd)

Give It Away

I'm not suggesting giving your books away though I often offer a book to my coaching clients as part of their program. Giving away a piece of what you've written can draw them in for more. Andy Weir famously gave away chapters of *The Martian*, which led to a movie contract and more book deals. We may feel we have these amazing secrets people should pay to learn, but remember: We always have more good content to share. Invest in yourself by giving some of it away to cement your reputation as a source.

It's a tough marketplace out there, but with a little ingenuity, you can improve your outreach. Give it a try!

Henry and the Red Dog

by

Robert Poirier

Henry looked up from the swing set in his grandmother's backyard to see a red dog watching him. About the size of his grandmother's English setter, the dog was sitting just inside the partially open gate to the yard.

He remembered what she had told him about meeting strange dogs.

"Stand up straight – pretend there is a string pulling you up from the top of your head.

Talk softly but firmly.

Don't look the dog directly in the face

Don't smile – the dog might think you're snarling at it.

Don't make any sudden moves.

Don't bend over the dog."

Henry walked slowly up to the dog, then squatted and waited for it to come to him.

"That's a good dog," Henry said, as confident as a seven-year-old could manage, as he offered the back of his hand to smell.

Cocking its head inquisitively, the red dog followed Henry's movements. Then, when Henry reached to pet the dog under the chin, its manner changed abruptly. The red dog looked at the gate behind Henry. Its hackles raised, its tail became rigid, and it made a menacing low rumbling growl. Suddenly it leaped at Henry, bowling him over. Just then, a stocky, muscular brown dog with a short, smooth coat entered through the open gate and charged at them.

The red dog, barking ferociously, stood between Henry and the brown dog as the much larger dog paced in front of them, looking for an opportunity to attack.

"Oma," Henry screamed, but his fear-constricted voice only managed a squeak.

Henry scooted on his bottom away from the two dogs until he could shakily stand. He ran for the hose at the side of the house, opened the hose bib, and dragged the hose towards the dogs. He used both hands to press the trigger. The nozzle, set at the "shower" position, did not reach the dogs. At this point, his grandmother looked out the kitchen window, realized what was happening, scooped up a sturdy black cane, and hurried to the sliding glass door to the backyard.

By the time she reached Henry, the two dogs were on their hind legs, snarling and biting. Pieces of bloody fur littered the ground beneath them. The grandmother dropped the cane, took the hose from Henry, turned the nozzle to "jet," and hosed down both dogs, who quickly separated. The brown dog, shaking off water and harassed by the snarling red dog, slunk out of the yard. The red dog turned to look at Henry and then, panting heavily, collapsed onto its side. The grandmother hurried to the gate, closed it, then picked up the cane and approached the red dog.

"No, Oma," Henry cried, kneeling beside the wheezing dog. "It was trying to protect me. Look, there's a note on its collar."



You in the Newsletter: Short Works (cont'd)

The grandmother read the note. "We are sorry, but we have to leave Pepper behind. She is two years old and has had all her shots. Please love her."

The grandmother hugged Henry.

"Hank," she said using the nickname she had given him, "You are the bravest boy I know, but please, wait another five years before you do that again. Pepper protected you, so we can keep her if you like."

Pepper was at Henry's side for the next ten years until the week before he left for university. She died quietly beside him as he petted her and told her what a wonderful dog she was.


Henry buried Pepper's ashes in a sunny corner of the yard, planted a blue plumbago bush over her, and installed a small plaque inscribed with her name along with the Mark Twain quote:

"It's not the size of the dog in the fight. It's the size of the fight in the dog."







Upcoming Programs

2021

Dec. 11 	<i>What You Wanted To Know About Three Types Of Publishing</i>	Todd Bequette: traditionally published at The Wild Rose and Black Rose Writing; Heidi Eliason: self-published; Lucinda Jackson: hybrid published at She Writes Press.
--	--	--

2022

Jan 8 	Brooke Warner <i>What It Takes To Finish A Book</i>	
Feb 12 		
Mar. 12 		
Apr. 9 	Betsy Graziani Fasbinder <i>How to Be the Best Ambassador for Your Book: Pitfalls to Avoid, Practices that Pay Off</i> WORKSHOP	Betsy is an award-winning, genre-jumping author, a licensed psychotherapist, and an in-demand communications trainer. She has coached public speaking for the reluctant and the downright phobic in fortune 500 companies, non-profit organizations, throughout the U.S. and abroad, working with executives, as well as with authors, activists, entrepreneurs, politicians, and thought leaders.

If you've heard a great speaker on writing/publishing/editing, email our speaker chair, Lucinda Jackson, at programs@cwcmtdiablo.org



Things to do

Mastering Meetup.com and Other Tips for Club Growth Free Meeting Courtesy of High Desert Branch

The methods for reaching today's socially conscious and tech-savvy audience may require different steps than what worked in the past. Does your CWC Branch have a MeetUp.com account or have you been considering one? What outreach changes have you made during the pandemic?

Whether you are a branch organizer or a writer, if you want to know more about reaching a wider audience, join us **Tuesday, November 23, 2021 at 6pm on Zoom** for an interview with a marketing professional on. We have arranged for this expert to share his insider knowledge and guide us toward success in this format designed to increase your branch membership.

Brian Gaps is the Orange County branch president and 2021 Jack London recipient. He will share techniques used to grow club membership in a year in which most branches lost members. Equally vital to the future success of the club is that the new member average age is an estimated 25 years younger than the club's traditional membership.

The Orange County branch Meetup.com group exceeds 900 members and the email guest list has climbed toward 200 opt-in subscribers converted from social media platforms. Average branch Zoom attendance consistently meets or exceeds pre-pandemic live audience sizes.

Brian is a senior copywriter working in the advertising and marketing industry. He is a former partner at a boutique digital agency and co-hosted a marketing radio show on KLAA AM830. He taught an 11-year-old how to build a YouTube channel that reached over 50 million views.

Statewide CWC president, Roger Lubeck, observed during the recent Jack London Awards ceremony, "This is the guy other branches should listen to."

The High Desert CWC (HDCWC) will present this event at no charge to CWC members wishing to attend. Visit www.hdcwc.com for more information and the link to this program. You may also sign on with this link: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86220784034?pwd=TThCMWhyc0FYbjRid1JmUnZiWit6Zz09>

Meeting ID: 862 2078 4034

Passcode: 375034

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,86220784034#,,, *375034# US (San Jose)

+12532158782,,86220784034#,,, *375034# US (Tacoma)

Writers should be readers. What are you reading? What book would you recommend to others and why? What worked? What didn't work? Why? Are there cultural, literary, or historic references? Is there any philosophy or thinking about life and living? Does the author set scene and outline characters well? Are there interesting subplots or asides?

So here's the challenge and opportunity to member-writers of all genres, send me some short(ish) book reviews to put in the newsletters. <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/newsletter/>

The Lamorinda Weekly, a free local paper, is **looking for a Lafayette City Reporter**. Required qualifications: Excellent writing and communication skills. Ethical and professional. Live or work in or near the Lamorinda area, and have the ability to write balanced, researched, well-structured articles. Prior journalism experience desired but not required. Understanding of AP style is a plus. Compensation is on a per article basis. Part time, flexible hours. Work from home. Send resume and writing sample to Wendy@Lamorindaweekly.com or call 925 377-0977

Things to do (cont'd)

Mt. Diablo Branch Open Mic Events

Open·Mic·Night·is·¶
FUN·and·Inspiring!¶

You'll·be·amazed¶
(blown·away,·actually)¶
by·the·talent·in·our·club.¶

WE·HAVE·TWO·OPEN·MIC·EVENTS·EACH·MONTH.¶

• Please·register·to·attend·.....See·our·Events·Calendar·for·upcoming·events.¶

Zoom·Open·Mic¶

Wednesday·after·the·second·Saturday·
of·the·month.↵

7:00·p.m.¶

Join·us·for·our·virtual·open·mic·session.·**We·
need·readers!**·¶

This·monthly·event·is·turning·into·a·cozy·
group·of·regulars.·This·is·nice,·but·in·danger·
of·becoming·staid.·Come·show·us·what·you·
are·writing·and·shake·us·up!¶

¶

This·event·is·open·to·the·public.·All·writers·
are·welcome·to·read.¶

In-Person·Open·Mic¶

Holiday·Schedule:·No·meeting·in·
November.·Next·meeting·is·December·
2nd,·12:00·p.m.¶

Experience·the·stimulation·of·a·friendly·
audience!·Meet·us·at·noon·for·an·optional·
lunch.·Reading·starts·at·1:00.¶

Chicken·Pie·Shop↵

1251·ARROYO·WAY↵

Walnut·Creek↵

<https://chickenpieshopwc.com/>¶

This·event·is·open·to·the·public.·All·writers·
are·welcome·to·read.¶



Things to do (cont'd)

Mt. Diablo Branch Young Writer Contest

Volunteer to help with contacting schools, reading submissions, and/or help with the awards celebration for the students. Contact Marlene at: <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/contact-us/>



Help Out Reading for the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards 2022

Linda Hartmann

The branch earns a stipend if we have enough judges to read. Volunteer! Judging begins in late December. Contact Linda at: <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/contact-us/>

The nation's longest-running, most prestigious recognition program for creative teens. The Awards give students opportunities for recognition, exhibition, publication, and scholarships. In 2021, students across America entered nearly 230,000 original works in 28 different categories of art and writing.

Teens in grades 7-12 (ages 13 and up) can apply in 28 categories of art and writing (11 categories in writing).

Writing Categories: (eleven)

Critical Essay	Personal Essay & Memoir
Dramatic Script	Poetry
Flash Fiction	Science Fiction & Fantasy
Journalism	Short Story
Humor	Writing Portfolio (graduating seniors only)
Novel Writing	

Things to do (cont'd)

Attend the branch meeting either in person or on Zoom and participate in the Writers Table Q & A

November 13, 2021

CWC LITERARY REVIEW: How to Achieve Submission Success

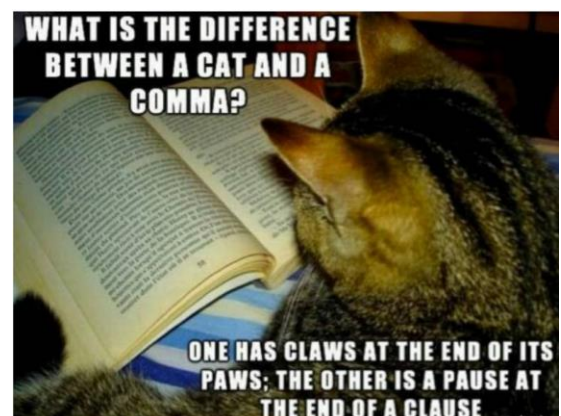
Presented by Elisabeth Tuck



The Literary Review, a juried collection of member's superior poems, stories, fiction, and nonfiction published annually by the California Writers Club, is one of the many benefits of membership. Elisabeth Tuck has been the managing editor in recent years, and through her Writers Table presentation she will share her tips and knowledge to help you improve and polish your manuscript prior to submission.

Elisabeth will be talking about grammar and punctuation, how to check for accuracy to find and eliminate your errors, the importance of using critique groups, the value of reading out-loud, proofreaders, and follow the rules for submission.

Susanne Lakin will be offering her intensive 8-week course on writing the commercially successful novel in January. Enrollment opens Jan 1. Sign up at www.livewritethrive.com to be notified about courses and specials.



Young Writers Contest First Prize Winner

POETRY – 8TH GRADE

1st Place

From Me to You

Marilyn Jia

Teacher: Leslie Detter

School: Joaquin Moraga, Moraga

Yesterday I left a tea bag outside your room,
 behind your closed door with the water gone lukewarm.
And as its speckled weight laid across my fingers
you greeted me like an empty house
 with four tear-stained walls.
It's been like this lately, the days getting shorter and you always looking past me into the blank sky.

Did you know that Jupiter has 79 moons orbiting its surface?
 There must be at least 79 people who want to see you wake up early, who would give
 half of themselves to make you happy.
 But Jupiter is enveloped in endless clouds. It stares at the deep orange desert or the milky
 swirling storm or the walls of its room. For no fault of its own, it sees
 nothing.

I would give you a bowl of fried rice. I would give you a heavy blanket. I would give you half of me.

(Helplessness, settle into the backs of my hands, the curve
 of my neck, the space behind my eyes my mind my chest)

And you might be my mother, my son, my neighbor's son, my student, my aunt's friend from high school.
Either way, someone will always be reaching for you,
so please stay afloat for just a little while longer.

Because I don't want to remember it like this—
 The way your lights are on at midnight, blinds closed at two in the afternoon.
 The way you lie in the passenger seat and I stand useless on the sidewalk; the brush of light
 humming on your eyelashes, white marble countertops.
 One whisper of a breath. Holding my hands together.

The way I've sliced you an orange,
 and you tell me it's gone bitter. Maybe it has or maybe it hasn't,
but either way you keep throwing it aside like it's something
 you can't stomach anymore



“The true purpose of arts education is not necessarily to create more professional dancers or artists. [It's] to create more complete human beings who are critical thinkers, who have curious minds, who can lead productive lives.”



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 September 2021

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

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

Robert Lane

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

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

Kathy Urban

in honor of Susie Wilson

Judith Marshall

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

Lynn Goodwin

Uyen Chau Nguyen

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

Janet Clark

June Gatewood

George Cramer

Robert Poitier

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

Dennis Yee

in honor of Natasha Yee

Johnathan Singh

in honor of Ali Singh

Marjorie Witt

Ravinder Ramchandani



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 submission is free. Check our branch website for details:

<https://cwcmt Diablo.org/young-writers/>

In May the Mt. Diablo Branch hosts an awards ceremony to honor the students--if there's no pandemic!

All program expenses are supported by individual donations and grants.

Please list my membership in the following donor club: _____

Name _____ Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____ My donation is in honor/memory of: _____

To pay via PayPal click "buy now" on the Mt. Diablo website: <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/young-writers/>

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

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO SUPPORT THIS ANNUAL CONTEST



In Memoriam

James Dennis Wiseman 1928 – 2021

The following write-up is compliments of Jim's daughters Tracy and Tanya. James loved the CWC-Mt. Diablo Branch, its events, and the members he cherished. He also brought his family along whenever possible. James volunteered to read for the Young Writers Contest and made appreciated donations.

My father ended his journey in this world after 93 years. He was my dad, friend, mentor, and advisor. He taught me to always be curious, seek knowledge, and always grow and learn.

His passions were many: writing, sailing, dancing, travelling and photography. He was a rebel, a philosopher, and an adventurer. He influenced my life. He was an incredible soul, and we will all miss him dearly. He instilled in me his values of honor, compassion, integrity, and humor. He loved all types of music and poetry, referring to himself as a hopeless romantic.

My dad received 8 medals in ballroom dancing and he was my dance partner many a time. Whether enjoying cocktails in exotic locations or discussions on spirituality, philosophy, and history, we always had fun. He authored 6 books including a family history book which I will cherish.

He lived a full and fascinating life that took us all over the world. As a young man growing up in Kingston upon Thames just outside London, he always had eyes on the horizon. He grew up during WWII, which definitely impacted his decision to live life to the fullest.

Dad married Patricia Mary Cullen whom he met one weekend while riding in his motorcycle club. My dad applied for and was awarded the prestigious George VI Memorial Fellowship (US equivalent = Rhodes Scholar) which gave him the opportunity to study in America and receive degrees from Columbia and Harvard Universities.

He explored the world and saw the King Tut exhibit while it was still in the tomb, crossed the Sahara desert, drove a car from England to Iran and sailed up the Nile.

Ready for more adventures, my mum and dad headed off to Iran, Ghana, Nigeria, Boston MA, Vancouver BC, Sydney NSW, Canberra ACT, and finally Lafayette, CA, near San Francisco.

Continuing his love of new things and adventure, he had a varied career from being an apprentice draftsman to a UN representative in Africa, Entrepreneur in Canada and America, CEO of an Airline in Australia, Silicone Valley Director, USPS Regional Manager to Author in America. He was Chief of Mission for Africa and set up a management school in Ghana that is still there. He believed in encouraging people to be their best.

He made a pivotal choice while working for the UN – send his children to boarding school and rise up the ladder in his career or leave a job he loved so he could be part of his children's lives; he chose his family. As much as work drew him away, it was his family that he treasured. His five children were all born in different countries. Family was important to him and filled his heart with joy. We will dearly miss his incredible wisdom and support as he was an active part of the lives of his children, spouses and 8 grandchildren.

My dad was a visionary and what he called “early adapter,” always expanding his skillset and learning new things. He loved archery, film making, and English lawn bowling. He was one the first people to have a home



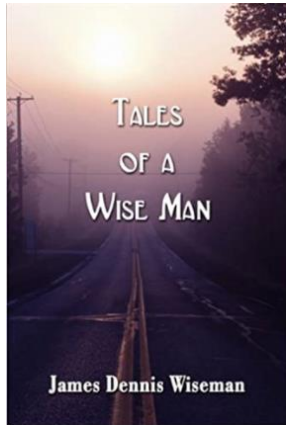
computer (TRS-80,) and taught himself basic programming. My father loved the sea and outdoors. Because of this, we were fortunate enough to grow up with all kinds of boats to enjoy while creating magical memories camping. He achieved a lifelong dream of owning a 32' sailboat, on which we spent most weekends exploring the Bay. He adventured on cruises all across the globe, several of which I was able to accompany him. As my fellow traveler on this earth, we had many experiences.

Dad never stopped traveling, having just completed trips to the Southern California Coast and Lake Tahoe in the past few months.

He is now joining his beautiful wife.

"Not all who wander are not lost." – JRR Tolkien

Outward Bound James Dennis Wiseman, you are deeply loved and we will miss your wit and wisdom....
till we meet again In sha'Allah



March 2011



July 2015

