



The Write News Mt Diablo

A Monthly Newsletter

Elisabeth Tuck, editor

November 2022

Saturday November 12, 2022 —11:00 to 2:00pm

Members are welcome to bring their books to sell and sign*

Perfect for holiday gifts!

In-Person

Just One Thing

THREE OF OUR OWN: What You'll Learn

That One Sure Thing that works to promote each speaker's work

We'll ask for ideas from the audience also!



Jill Hedgecock

- Jill is an award-winning and internationally-published author. She writes book review columns for *The Diablo Gazette* and *Books 'N Pieces Magazine*. She is the author of four novels. Follow her at www.jillhedgecock.com.

Michael Barrington

- Michael has published four books and numerous articles both fiction and non-fiction. His current historical/biographical novel will be published later this year. Find him at www.mbwriter.net



Suzy Orpin

Suzy has always had a vivid imagination and keen desire to write. Suzy views the world through her own narrative, weaving in the fascinating challenges, triumphs, and lifestyles of the people she meets. As a professional culinary instructor in Berkeley, California, Suzy is intrigued by the diverse culture around her.

Sign-in 11:00 a.m. ***Members display and sell their published books from 11 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.** Lunch: 12:00 p.m., Business Mtg. 12:45, Speakers 1:00 p.m. to 2 p.m. at Zio Fraedo's Restaurant:

611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill.

Reservation To reserve, go to <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/meetings-and-workshops/> (\$25 members/ \$35 guests)

President's Message: Barry Hampshire



The weather has turned and it feels like Fall. Are this year's days of blazing hot temperatures behind us, or are one or two still awaiting an opportunity to surprise us? Life is an ever changing series of mysteries. What great grist for our writing mills.

Where do we look for inspiration? Is it the natural world around us, our family, history, or a love of cooking? No matter where we find it, there is one simple truth we must be willing to accept: a part of who we are is represented on the page. I think at least one aspect of every storyline touches a nerve (either pleasurable or painful) deep within us. This is the motivation that drives us to create our storylines and the conviction to continue when we falter. There is something we want to say, in either a positive or a negative light.

It takes courage to put words on the page, to face situations we normally run from, to seek catharsis, to tell a storyline that holds a message, or to openly express the love we hold in our hearts. I can imagine some of you saying that you love writing and it takes no courage. I believe it does, and you have every right to be proud of the courage it takes to express yourself on a page that others may read.

For many years, I found comfort and understanding in numbers and patterns. Words were imprecise and untrustworthy in my mind. What changed that I now embrace both numbers and words? A simple realization – numbers could not express the incredible experiences I had survived. And so I write. It does not come easily, but the final destination is not the goal – it is the journey to get there. Joy is brought forth by the courage we expend.

Take pride in calling yourself a writer and practicing the art. There will always be lessons to learn, but they do not invalidate what you have already achieved.

I once heard Neil Gaiman say that his first five books went nowhere. But when his sixth book took off, readers went back to his prior five and they too became best sellers. Once again, I return to the notion of courage. It takes courage to return to the computer on a regular basis with the intent of moving your story forward. Some may call it persistence. Whatever you call it, keep doing it.

Be brave, be bold, you are writers and through your words others may see this world differently.

Note: The deadline for submissions is the 20th of the preceding month Aug through May. You are expected to write your own copy that can be dropped into the newsletter. Keep event notices to a half page or less. 8.5 x 11 flyers cannot be accommodated nor will the editor reformat any announcement other than to place an attached picture of an author/book.

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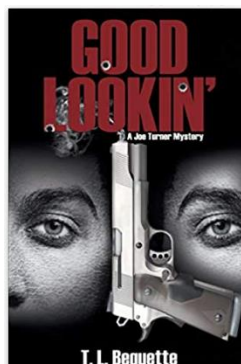
Member Events, News, and Salutes



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/>

Todd Bequette, Deborah Greenberg (aka Deven Greene), and Bruce Lewis

On Friday, October 28th from 1:30 – 3 pm, these Mt. Diablo branch members will speak at



Reasonable Books

3645 Mt Diablo Blvd Suite C,
Lafayette, CA 94549

“From Work to Fiction:

How Their Work Experience Informs Their Crime Fiction Writing”

Todd is an attorney, Deborah a physician and Bruce a journalist

Pre-registration is encouraged (925) 385-3026

See Deborah’s books below



Deborah Greenberg (aka Deven Greene)

Sunday, November 6th (2:00 – 3:00 p.m.) Book Signing for
The Erica Rosen MD Trilogy of Medical Thriller Novels:
Unnatural, *Unknowing*, and *Unforeseen*

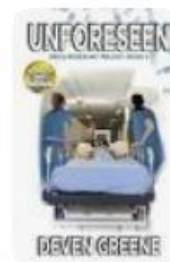
Barnes & Noble in Walnut Creek Plaza Escuela,
1192 Locust Street, Walnut Creek
Stop by and see the newly opened store.



Unwitting



Unnatural



Unforeseen

Lucinda Jackson

Please join the free Zoom meeting of the California Section, ACS, Women Chemists Committee
Saturday, **November 12th, 2022 11:00 am**

Guest Speaker: Lucinda Jackson, PhD- Author, PhD scientist and global executive
“Empowering Women Scientists: In Your Past, Present, and Future”

Zoom link will be shared the day before the event via Brown Paper Tickets.

Reservations:

https://calacs.org/event/empowering-women-scientists-in-your-past-present-and-future/?instance_id=485

Please register before Thursday, November 10, 2022, 12 noon.

Your email address is needed to send the Zoom link

For questions, please contact Elaine Yamaguchi at eyamaguchi08@gmail.com

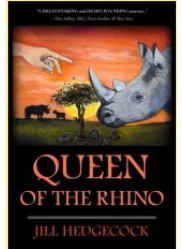
Member Events, News, and Salutes (cont'd)

Jill Hedgecock, Heidi Eliason, and Lucinda Jackson

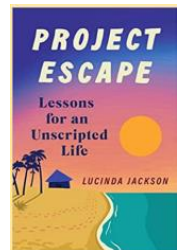
On Saturday November 26 from 2 – 3:30 pm these branch members will speak at

Flashlight Books
1537 N Main St,
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
“Transformed by Travel”

Jill is an award-winning and internationally-published author. Her fourth novel, *Queen of the Rhino*, was released this summer. Learn how her travels to Africa inspired two of her novels.



Heidi is an internationally published author and editor. Her solo motorhome adventures living and traveling in the US and Mexico for five years inspired her memoir, *Confessions of a Middle-Aged Runaway: An RV Travel Adventure*. www.HeidiEliason.com



Lucinda—scientist, executive, and author left the corporate world to join the Peace Corps at age 66. *Project Escape: Lessons for an Unscripted Life* reveals that she and her reluctant husband discovered things were not as advertised when they landed in the island nation of Palau.

www.lucindajackson.com



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/>

This interview of dual member **George Cramer** was conducted by author Michael A. Black and posted on the Mt. Diablo CWC Facebook site.

In which genre(s) do you write?

I'll try to make it complicated. I began *Robbers and Cops* as somewhat of a memoir but got bored with the protagonist, switched to a police procedural thriller then stopped for eight years to write *The Mona Lisa Sisters* as historical-literary-woman fiction.

I also write some, very little, poetry. And I love writing flash fiction.



Why did you choose those?

I get pieces of stories in my mind that determine what I'll write. Flash fiction's inspiration is about telling a story, beginning to end, on one page. Poetry is either about writing or a social issue, such as the 1864 massacre of a peaceful Arapaho and Cheyenne village in Sand Creek, Colorado.

Now tell us about your writing process—Plotter or Pantser?

Outlining and I don't get along. I begin writing with an idea and create ten thousand or so words either at the beginning or at the end. Then, I ponder how I got there, how or where the journey began. I take lots of detours.

Be Interviewed (cont'd)

Have you ever tried doing it the other way?

Yes—total failure.

What do you need for your writing sessions?

I still write in cursive, and my handwriting is so bad I need a laptop. Add a flat service and comfortable straight-back chair, and I'm set. I can be at my desk, kitchen table, library, or coffee shop. Conversations don't bother me, except at home.

Does anything hamper your writing?

Artificial sounds, music, radio, or television.

Is it hard to screen all of those out? Do you have a place where you like to write?

Libraries, surrounded by books.

What do you love about writing?

The hope of using written words to paint a picture another person can experience in such a way as to place themselves in the setting and scene.



Painting a picture... That's metaphorical. Your first book references a famous picture—The Mona Lisa. Care to tell us what that one's about?

I attended an introductory workshop when the instructor randomly handed out pictures of scenes. We were given fifteen minutes to describe the setting. Instead, I wrote the end of the manuscript. Eight years later, I finished the journey.

What's the most challenging aspect for you about writing?

It's when I'm searching for the right colors (words) to paint that perfect scene.

What is the hardest thing about being a writer?

Sitting down and writing that first word. Or when I've finished the manuscript, I'm about 10,000 words short. I don't want to add fluff.

Most writers try to cut words from a manuscript. How do you determine the proper length?

When I finish adding 10K new words, I've cut at least 5K and have to go back again.

Is there something you always put in your books?

Last year I heard that some authors always puts his name somewhere in his work. I took that as a challenge, and I'm hidden in *Robbers and Cops*. In *New Liberty*, the first in the Hector Miguel Navarro Trilogy, George Cramer gives advice to a young detective.

Things you never put in your books?

Steamy sex. I tried it once, but my two daughters were horrified that I would write about sex—never again.

What are your favorite books (or genres)?

Now that's a tricky question. I like Bernard Cornwell immensely. I was not a fan of his until I read a few of his works while studying for an MFA at the Institute of American Indian Arts. But that is strictly for fun. Among my favorites for content and impact, I would have to include *Hard Times: For These Times* by Charles Dickens in 1854; and *The Stranger*, the 1942 novella by Albert Camus.

Be Interviewed (cont'd)

What is the easiest thing, if anything, about being a writer?

The ability to take on any project that allows me to avoid sitting down and writing that first word. My best escape from creating new material is to self-critique and edit my already-written work.

Those would be considered classics by most people. Which current writers influenced you the most?

Right up there is *The Round House* by Louise Erdrich and *Perma Red* by Debra Magpie Earling. These two indigenous authors are incredible. Anthony Marra's *A Constellation of Vital Phenomena* should be a must-read for every person living in these trying times. As far as right now, I choose *Black Pearl* by Donnell Ann Bell. I can't wait to get her autograph and talk writing.

Are there any books you won't buy? Horror stories by Stephen King. I can't handle horror. However, I have a paper and hardback copy of *Stephen King On Writing* because he is such a phenomenal author.

Your new book is *Robbers and Cops*. Is it a crime story, police procedural, or a sociological novel?

Wow! I would have to say a thrilling sociological police procedural.

You have an extensive background in police work and investigations. Has this helped you with your crime fiction?

With *Robbers and Cops*, I wanted to build a story around two brothers. I met one of them when I helped a San Mateo detective take him into custody. My involvement in the incident was limited to hours, yet the story haunted me for decades. When I fell in love with writing, I used four decades of investigation experience to go from the ending back forty years in time and created the road that ended with my completed manuscript.

What is one of the most daring things you've done?

Overcoming my fears while becoming a certified scuba diver without knowing how to swim so I could dive with my oldest son, a professional deep water diver—we never did.

That sounds like it would make a good story. Have you considered writing about your experience as a memoir or fictionalizing it into a novel?

Never going to happen.

Who's the most remarkable person you've ever met?

My Dad.

You have a lot of fans. Anything else you'd like to tell them?

Please visit my blog and then come make a guest post about your work.

How do your readers contact you or buy your books?

Email: gdcramer@outlook.com

Website: <https://gdcramer.com> There's a buy link on my website.

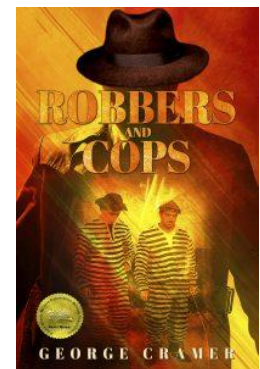
Blog: <https://gdcramer.com/george-cramer-blog/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/george.cramer.56211>

Buy Books: available for pre-order to be released November 1, 2022

Amazon <https://tinyurl.com/4xw228ft>

Barnes and Nobel: <https://tinyurl.com/4t4h6x8y>




Robbers and Cops is fascinating odyssey of complex characters spanning five decades in its telling. Imagine if Elmore Leonard had written *The Grapes of Wrath*, tossed in a dash of *The Naked and the Dead*, and finished up morphing into a pure Joseph Wambaugh police procedural. ~Michael A. Black, Amazon Bestselling Author




Upcoming Programs

2022

Dec 10 	Jordan Rosenfeld	“Building setting and scene” Buck-a-Book: Members bring gently used books to sell for \$1. Proceeds to Young Writers Contest
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2023

Jan 14 	Paul Zeidman	Writing and marketing
Feb 11	TBD	
Mar.11	TBD	
Apr 8	Andrea Firth	Flash fiction and non-fiction
May 13	TBD	
June 10	TBD	

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



It's Almost Time for the Young Writers Contest!

Marlene Dotterer

When the Young Writers Contest opens for submission on January 15, 2023, it will be 27 years old. I don't know the life expectancy for contests put on by small non-profit organizations, but it's possible that 27 years is an impressive number. YWC has grown a lot in those years, and I assure you, it still has a lot of growing to do.

But for the last couple of years, this contest for middle school students has been on life support. Without more volunteers to do some of the heavy lifting, I was ready, however reluctantly, to pull the plug.

We've made some operating changes to bring a more team-centered approach to the contest. We will be asking people to help during the submission period and teams have been organized to handle the myriad tasks needed to prepare for the Awards Ceremony in May. Two already extremely busy women, Lyn Roberts and Margie Witt, have offered to work as co-chairs with me, to give me time to perform my other YWC job: tech support and submissions.

These are important changes, but in all honesty, they are stop-gap measures. The bottom line is that the Young Writers Contest needs new blood. It needs a leader with new ideas and familiarity with trends and technology to reach our target audience. It needs research to reach more schools, and marketing to help those schools learn about us. It needs an efficient organizer to stay on top of it all, and a grant writer/fundraiser to keep it solvent.

For now, the contest is open for submissions on January 15, and we can look forward to more amazing stories and poems from our middle school students. Contra Costa's middle school students are always excited about this contest. I am relieved we can offer it for at least one more year.

Thank you to everyone who supports us with your time and donations.



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://cwcmt Diablo.org/newsletter/>

This month's works are as-submitted by the authors.



COUNT DRACULA'S DINNER PARTY

By **Linda May Force**

It was another drizzly night in Transylvania. The mesmerizing howling of the neighborhood werewolves formed a perfect backdrop to the soft hooting of the owls. The ground was moist from the evening dew. Ravens and crows were madly hopping around searching for anything edible to feed their hatchlings which were safely tucked in their nests up high. It was an eerie sight observed by the superstitious local gentry. The sights and sounds brought back collective memories of past bone-chilling happenings.

Looking closely through the forest of trees, one could see the crescent moon casting ghostly shadows on the turrets of a decaying castle. At first glance it seemed as though figures were moving about in the towers. But all was quiet so that could not have been why these aberrations appeared so life-like. Suddenly a strange ear-piercing cackling sound was heard and it appeared to be coming from the lower terrace of the castle. The grounds keeper, Walters, sloughed off these sounds as they were not unfamiliar to him. He was aware that the castle residents had some unusual proclivities and abnormal dinner guests. Count Anton Dracula and Countess Wilhelmina Dracula often dined with upper crust vampires. They both enjoyed entertaining and having lavish supper parties.

Formidable looking and ruggedly handsome, the Count stood 6 feet 4 inches tall, blond with piercing blue eyes. Many a female had fantasies about liaisons with him. His brow spoke of a marked intelligence countermanded by an easy and personable demeanor. He commanded the highest respect. Anton was smart, enigmatic, and charismatic – after all, he was close to 400 years old and always impeccably dressed. Anton ordered his business and evening attire from tailors in London's Savile Row.

The Count worked with a public relations firm (Morgan & Garrett, LLC) to establish himself on Linked-In and open a Facebook account. Adrian at VampiresGeek.com was assisting with communications which would become necessary during planning.

As a politically savvy wife and brilliant hostess, the Countess managed all the arrangements for the dinner party. Wilhelmina a raven-haired, green-eyed beauty from Barcelona was madly in love with her husband. She was particularly excited by managing to engage the Hollywood Vampires rock group. This was to be a surprise and even the Count had no idea what was in store that evening.

Later, the Countess was going to be fitted by Francesca for her new ball gown to be worn that evening. It was silky satin and dyed a beautiful shade of cobalt blue. It was encrusted with London Blue Topaz stones and sparkly glittery Zircons.

Countess Wilhelmina had spent a month planning the dinner menu and most of the day supervising the kitchen unit. See the insert below for the menu. Philippe De Lafayette, the Head French Chef, and his staff had outdone themselves!

Appetizers	Stuffed Frog Legs and a pâté of Pink Dragon Millipede Roe Eggs marinated in brine solution...finger food
Soup	Shark Fin Soup
Salad	Imported seaweed from Australia tossed with Pacific Rim crocodile. The chef insisted on this type of crocodile because it was cold blooded. The salad dressing consisted of 1000 year-old essence of cockroaches and blood extracted by leeches.
Soup	Scorpion and Spider Stew with Carpathian Mushrooms
Main Dish	Bat Ala King
Dessert	Scorpion Crispies
Beverage	Bloodberry Wine

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

The reason for the dinner party was that the Count was seeking support from his counterparts. The big concern dealt with deferred maintenance needs for the decaying castle. The subterranean tunnels were flooding. The torture chambers, relics from past generations of vampires, were sorely in need of repair to their former function - these torture chambers had to be revamped to incorporate new high-tech methods such as robotics. Rising water in the nearby river was causing disruption to the extensive graveyard. The existing earthen dam was being sorely challenged and in eminent danger of breaching.

Compounding the Count's dilemma about renovations to the castle were other occurrences in the countryside. There was a big danger to the vultures which resided there as they were soon to be classified on the Transylvanian Endangered Species list. This had huge implications for the vampire species which considered vultures as essential to their preternatural persona. Further, the Count and his colleagues were extremely worried about the graveyards. The grave diggers union was threatening to go on strike. They were seeking wage increases for working overtime during the daylight hours. In the last 12 months, there were more happenings with dead bodies strewn about. This was not good.

Anton realized that he would need team members for grooming to become project managers. As such, he ordered the Vampire Resource Management office to conduct a headhunter applicant search 12 novice embryonic vampires who would be schooled in the prescripts of project management, value engineering, contracts, and leadership. The Count himself was going to hold a series of seminars which would be held in the dilapidated dank dungeons in the sub-basement. This venue would work well for classrooms and lecture halls.

Count Dracula had spent the last three months writing a syllabus. The first two weeks would focus on Murder Boards and Stakeholders. These topics were something the embryos could sink their teeth into. "They're going to love it," he thought!

On the first full day of class, Alexandru (one of the Senior Vampire Mentors) started the discussion with the ground rules for the class. Alexandru was emphatic and instructed the novice embryonic vampires that there would be no texting during class and no surfing on-line dating sites like VampiresMeet.com to quench their blood lust. He said "If I see any of you sneaking peaks at your cell phones, you will have yours taken away." But Alexandru would not have been so categorically harsh if was not necessary to meet the Count's timetable. He recalled his early days 350 years ago and how brazen he had been then.

At the beginning of the first class, Cornel and Dragomir (two of the novice embryonic vampires) were having a dispute over the components of the Project Charter. The class homework assignment, as specified in the syllabus, was to list all the items that needed to be included in the Project Charter and to explain their function. Cornel was looking at big picture items while Dragomir was concerned with milestones and budgets. Alexandru was pleased that Cornel and Dragomir were sharpening their preternatural skills in lateral thinking and structured creativity.

Alexandru then offered his clarification and said "We need to establish a Murder Board, develop the Business Case, and identify the Stakeholders and their requirements before we go any further." "What's a Murder Board?" excitedly everyone chimed in. "Do we get to murder someone?" By this time other embryonic vampire classmates were gathering around and Alexandru had their attention. "Let's see if we can figure this out. Can anyone explain why we'd want to destroy a project at the beginning once it's identified?" he asked. You've got to be kidding," Brigita commented. Gavril chimed in with "When do we get to murder someone?" The others nodded and started vibrating acknowledging Brigita's reaction and Gavril's question.

"Okay class. Let's put on our preternatural thinking caps," Alexandru said. At this point Alexandru recognized that more explanations were needed. "First," he said, "we are not going to murder anyone. And second, we need to understand the importance of the Murder Board along with the Peer Review, Scoring Models, and Economic Factors." Stephan raised his hand. "Alexandru, I think I'm getting it. We have to go through these steps in order to assess the need for the project and then, if justified, proceed to craft a Project Charter."

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

“Stephan you are exactly right,” Alexandru said approvingly. “But class, keep in mind we might have to initially reject some projects due to cost or complexity. And this is the purpose of the Murder Board which is to scrub down the list and “murder” some of the projects.” End of Chapter 1 of a larger work.

Linda is a licensed civil engineer/land surveyor in the State of California. Her specialties are seismic analysis and structural engineering forensics for structural failures. She attained her Doctorate Degree and after leaving the federal government was hired as an adjunct professor at a local university. Currently, Linda is CEO of LMFORCE Management Consulting and enjoys mentoring young women thinking of majoring in engineering.

CHARLOTTE

By **Bob Poirier**

Wilson stirred from his spot nestled against Charlotte on the sofa. She reached down to scratch his ears.

“What is it, boy?” She asked.

Wilson let out a low growl, lumbered off the sofa, and stared at the front door.

Charlotte heard a car door close twice and looked out the window. She could see two large men walking up the stairs leading to the front door. They stopped just long enough to break the lights on each side of the path. Then the lights in the still-running car went out.

A quiet voice followed a soft knock on the screen door.

“Charlotte, we have some bad news about your husband. Please open the door.”

“Get away from the door, or I’m calling the police,” she shouted.

“Cut the screen and give me the sledgehammer,” the voice said.

Charlotte went for the key ring alarm fob on the counter. The door crashed open as she activated the emergency alarm on the fob. Two men burst into the room and snatched the key ring out of her hand as the alarm started blaring. One of the two held her in a chokehold.

“I have her, Greg,” he said, “Take care of the alarm.”

“Remember Mikey,” Greg said as he forced Wilson into the pen and hurried toward the alarm panel. “Stay focused. Keep your hands off her.”

Greg took a piece of paper out of his pocket and started punching buttons on the alarm panel. The third set of numbers silenced the alarm.

“My husband went to Safeway for some ice cream,” Charlotte rasped. “He will be back any minute.”

“No, Charlotte,” Mikey said as he groped her with his free hand. “Your husband, Bud, is in Phoenix on a business trip. We have the information from one of his office people.”

“Mikey, stay focused,” Greg said. “We’ll have time for that after we get the money. Don’t put any marks on her until we take the proof-of-life video.”

“Charlotte,” Greg said as he took a compact stun gun out of his pocket. “It’s thirty seconds before the alarm people call and another two minutes before they call the police. Mikey will let you go for a few seconds. This gun has two hundred thousand volts but will only hurt for a second if you don’t resist.”

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

Charlotte wriggled free from the relaxed chokehold when the stun gun probes touched her clothes. When Greg pressed the red stun button, the burst of deafening crackling sound frightened Wilson, who scrambled out of the pen, grabbed Greg's wrist, and pulled it down. The stun gun probes rested on Mikey's thigh as Greg reflexively hit the red stun button. Mikey convulsed, groaned in pain, and dropped to the floor, pulling Charlotte and Greg down with him.

In the scrum on the floor, Charlotte's hand rested on Wilson's stainless steel water bowl. She grabbed the heavy bowl and smacked Greg on his temple, just in front of his ear. She watched his eyes cross and hit him again in the same spot. Greg's eyes rolled back in his head, and he was still. Charlotte picked up the stun gun and zapped Greg, then zapped Mikey again.

"That's for being handsy, asshole," she said.

Charlotte quickly put on her leg brace, picked up a nine-iron from Bud's golf bag, and opened the garage side-yard door, then the gate.

The driver was focused on the house's front door and did not see Charlotte creep up to the driver's side door. The nine iron shattering the window was the first indication that something was wrong. The female in the driver's seat stared wide-eyed at Charlotte, who swung the club and hit the windshield twice. The second strike made the windshield opaque.

The car peeled out of the parking spot and ran head-on into a Martinez police department cruiser checking on the unanswered alarm. The airbags on both vehicles deployed.

The driver exited her vehicle and staggered away. Charlotte threw the club at her legs, tripping her. She fell to the pavement. Charlotte picked up the club and stood over her.

"Please put down the golf club," the police officer sternly requested when he climbed out of the cruiser, hand on his service weapon.

Charlotte dropped the nine-iron. "They tried to kidnap me," she gasped. "There are two more inside, all zapped up."

Charlotte called her neighbor, Teresa, who quickly visited with coffee and cookies. They sat on the sofa, hugging Wilson until the police officer briefed them.

"The driver, who is the sister of one of the assailants, is singing like a bird," the police officer said. "She said she worked for your husband for a couple of years until he fired her for some inappropriate purchases. She overheard him say that the alarm code was the transposed four digits of the neighbor's street address. They got the addresses of the nearest neighbors and tried them until they got one that worked."

"Your dog probably saved your life," he continued. "The driver said they forced her to go along with the plan and would probably have killed you and her after they got the money."

"Why don't you spend the night at our house?" Teresa said after the police officer left.

"No, thank you," Charlotte said. "This is our house, and Wilson and I will protect it."



A new study recently found that humans eat more bananas than monkeys. I can't remember the last time I ate a monkey.



The Story Behind California Writers Week

Anthony Folcarelli and Barb Truax worked to get the California State Legislature to declare the third week in October as California Writers Week.

For several months in early 2003, with the expert help of Anthony Folcarelli, the Central Board of the California Writers Club (CWC) worked to establish California Writers Week. The plan was successful and on September 4, 2003 at 10 a.m., CWC members gathered on the Assembly floor in Sacramento to receive a Joint Legislative Resolution from Assemblyman Tim Leslie. The Resolution is endorsed by the California Library Association.

Our Day in Sacramento



Former CWC President Barbara Truax (holding resolution) with Assemblyman Tim Leslie and Anne Marie Gold, member of the executive board of the California Library Association and head of the Sacramento Library.

<<

Central Board Representatives join Barbara on the Capitol Plaza for a photo op. √

√



The whole gang joins Barb outside the capitol. Left to right: Dianne Levy, Marin president and CWC webmaster; Dave Sawle, Berkeley Central Branch (CB) rep; Carol McConkie, Redwood president; Jeremiah O'Brien, Marin CB rep; Bill Baldwin, South Bay president and CB rep.; Amy Peele, Marin CB rep and secretary; Anthony Folcarelli, Sacramento, special consultant to the CB; Tom Adams, Sacramento CB rep and CB vice president; Jackie Krug, Sacramento; Marilyn Smith Murphy, Sacramento.

Front: Teresa LeYung Ryan, Peninsula; Beth Tigner, Sacramento; Shirley Adams, Sacramento; Barbara Truax; Octavia Simien, Sacramento president.

Photographs by Dianne Levy and Don Truax.



Things to do

CHECK OUT SOME OF THESE FACEBOOK GROUPS AUTHORS COULD BENEFIT FROM COMPILED BY JILL HEDGECK

Facebook Groups for Authors			
Groups	Member Count	Rules	
5-day Author Ad Profit Challenge	24K	Excellent Amazon Ads, feedback on hooks, finding keywords	
Selling for Authors (Related)	9.4K	No self promotion, collaborate with other authors	
20booksto50K	65K	Learning about book marketing, no book promotion	
Book Connectors	5.6k	book chat; giveaways; events, launch events, signings, talks	
Indie Book Cover Designs for Authors	1.9K	Premade covers available	
Indie Cover Project	12K	Post covers of your book for feedback	
<u>Book Signing Events for Author, Readers and Bloggers</u>	4.3K	Can post your events once (nationwide), delete after done	
<u>Authors' Networking Group</u>	11.9K	Can post your books, request street teams, promote blog posts, must help others	
Thinkers & Writers	1.7K	Post your writing on this page	
There's an Ebook in the Room	24.2K	Can post your ebooks	
The Book Hangout Spot	870K	Can post your books, ask book related questions	
Writers and Authors Promotions	105K	Must post your own work (no PAs)	
Book Advertising	222	Can post your books	
Marketing for Indies	1K	Can post your books (but need description) - not links only	
Book Promotion	35.5K	Can post your books	
Book Addiction is Real and You Need Help	853	Can post your books	
Book Promotion International	103	Can post your books	
Aroma's Books, Books, and More Books	40.6K	Can post your books	
Aspiring Writers Unite	109K	Can post your books	
Dream Big Book Marketing	690	Book promo allowed with marketing tip	
Best Book Promotion	1.1k	Can post your books	
Best Little Book Promotion on FB	1.5K	Can post your books	
Indie Author Book Promotion Page	38K	self promotion allowed, asks for engagement	
Just Write	676	self promotion allowed (every 3 days)	
Promote Your Book	396	Can post your books	
Book Challenge by Erin	744	Requires collaboration with other authors post after reading their books	
Girls Who Love Books	7.8K	No self promotion, collaborate with other authors	
Compiled by Jill Hedgecock 10/21/22			

REVIEW BOOKS—WHAT ARE YOU READING AND WHY?

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/>

Things to do (cont'd)

EKPHRASIS EXHIBIT

Our Exhibit is inspired by Ekphrasis, a Greek word defined as writing that describes or explains other art; we add that art can describe or explain writing.

Visual Artist Initiates



.....INITIATE



Author Responds

The Ballad of Andy & Rocky
Along the way Rocky
dipped the blossom into
several ponds so it could
drink and stay fresh. Rocky
jumped over the border
fence of the

RESPOND



Author Initiates

Railroad Betty. The bad
seeds have become quite
powerful, hovering over
the railroad tracks like
shadowy wraiths. Invisible
to the naked eye, they feed
off the energy

INITIATE



Visual Artist Responds



RESPOND

[Register for Workshop #2](#)

Workshop #2 will focus on Responders (but open to all): the how-to of understanding what you are seeing or reading, and responding to it from a writerly or visually ekphrastic way. **October 27, 2022 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.** Click to register.

[Register to Participate](#)

Sign up to let us know you want to participate. The Ekphrasis Committee will create random teams of a visual artist and an author.

[Submit Your Work](#)

Submit your work using this form. The fee for submission of one work is \$20.00. If you submit as both Author Initiator and Author Responder, the fee for the second submission is \$10.00.

[Overview](#)

Calling all Artist and Author members of CWC-Mt. Diablo Branch, LAA and LAC. We invite applicants to complete the Application Form on their respective websites to participate. You will pay your fees when you submit your writing and/or fine art works. Selections of fine art and written works will be accepted by the Ekphrasis Committee, composed of members from all three organizations. The Ekphrasis Committee will create random teams of a visual artist and an author.

- Author members of CWC -Mt. Diablo Branch Authors must go to <http://cwcmtdiablo.org/> and to the Ekphrasis page to access the Authors Registration Page.

Contact Linda Hartmann for further information: ekphrasis@cwcmtdiablo.org

I before E

Except when your foreign
neighbor Keith receives eight
counterfeit beige sleighs from
feisty caffeinated weightlifters.

Weird.



Each pronoun agrees with their antecedent.



Verbs has to agree with their subjects.



Don't use no double negatives.



A writer mustn't shift your point of view.

Things to do (cont'd)

Scholastic Writing Awards Juror Recruitment 2022-2023 Scholastic Awards

Subject: Support Young Writers as a Scholastic Awards Juror

Dear Members,

As a respected member of the CWC-Mt. Diablo Branch, and of the literary arts community, I would like to invite you to join us as a juror for the 2023 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. Join the ranks of the many illustrious artists and writers who have judged with the Awards in the past, including Wangechi Mutu, Red Grooms, Marc Brown, Langston Hughes, and David Sedaris, among countless others.

As a writing juror for the Awards, you would commit to read and score student works, from teen writers age 13 through senior in high school. Adjudications take place between mid-December, 2022 and mid-January, 2023. Expect to spend roughly 10–20 hours during that time period reading and scoring your assigned works. All of the works are accessible online, so you can read and score works from the comfort of your own computer!

This is an excellent opportunity to support young writers exploring their creativity, and get a firsthand look at nationwide trends in writing education. Jurors report finding the experience enlightening, engaging, and rewarding. I personally find it to be inspiring and revitalizing!

The adjudication process is the core of the Scholastic recognition program. Jurors look for works that exemplify the Awards' core values: originality, technical skill, and the emergence of personal voice or vision. The students may enter in any of 11 categories of writing, and as possible, we try to match what you want to read and judge with the writing our group is assigned.

We would love for you to join us this year! We are looking for 18-20 committed jurors from our membership, and one or two back-up jurors in case of illness or the unexpected. Thank you for your consideration. We hope to hear from you soon. Please contact Linda Hartmann if you are interested in this incredible opportunity, at vicepresident@cwcmtdiablo.org

About the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards:

Since 1923, the [Scholastic Awards](#) have recognized creative teens in grades 7–12 with opportunities for exhibition, publication, and scholarships. A few of our industrious Alumni include Stephen King, Tschabalala Self, Kay WalkingStick, Charles White, Joyce Carol Oates, and Andy Warhol. With 29 art and writing [categories](#) where creative teens can submit their work, there are multiple opportunities for students to be recognized for creative excellence. The Scholastic Awards distributes more than \$300,000 in direct [scholarships](#) annually. In 2021, the Scholastic Awards received over 320,000 submissions from students nationwide. Support the work of talented and creative teens by adjudicating some of the hundreds of thousands of pieces submitted to the Awards each year!



*Young Writers Contest First Prize Winner******POETRY – 7TH GRADE*******1st Place****You****Evelyn Van Huysse**

Prospect Sierra School, El Cerrito

Teacher: Matthew Williams

Weathered hands stained coffee-brown
Soft hair threaded in silver, glistening with the honor of age
Twinkling eyes, speckles of light dancing in the tenebrose
depths
Skin carved into creases, you are a page that has been crumpled up and smoothed out countless
times
Feet tapping in an endless rhythm, a song long perfected over the
decades Bronze necklace over your heart, so worn it fades into you
Rings, dull or shined, grace your seasoned and scarred fingers, glowing with the same dusky
radiance as the rest of you
Face filled with spots and furrows, freckles and birthmarks, crow's feet and laugh lines, you are a
constellation of time and of memories
Puckered lips curve into a smile that gleams with a golden serenity
Voice, cracked and ancient, winding down and climbing up, you talk in the language of
reminiscence
Mind, mature yet sharp, a labyrinth brimming with echoes of days gone by, you are a book of
history and legend
Heart, vibrant and endless, bursting with an eternal joy that enchants and delights, you are a
waterfall of colors and love
Soul, wise and giving, twirling in the endless universe, you are nothing less than the very stars
above your head, nothing less than a vast galaxy, constantly expanding and creating
Forever in your infinite waltz, you praise the sun and the clouds and the earth at our feet with
each reverent pirouette
You
Almost gone but never
missing You
Not buried in the
earth But singing to
the skies



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 2022



JACK LONDON FOUNDER'S CIRCLE (\$500+)
SOCIETY (\$250 - \$499)

Judith Overmier

Susan Berman

David George in honor of Jan & Lee Paulson

JOHN MUIR MEMBER CLUB (\$150 - \$249)

Lily Gwilliam

MARY AUSTIN WRITERS CLUB (\$50 - \$99)

Robert Poirier

Marianne Lonsdale

Patty Northlich

Chloe Laube

Sherida Bush

THE JOHN STEINBECK

Linda Hartmann

Cindy Leonard

Ken Kirkhoff in honor of S. M Pejathaya

INA COOLBRITH LAUREATE CLUB (\$100 - \$149)

Kathy Urban in honor of **Susie Wilson**

Elizabeth Pentacoff in honor of **Susie Wilson**

Karen Clayton

Stanford Stewart

HELEN HUNT JACKSON GROUP (\$25 - \$49)

June Gatewood

Barry Humphries

Lynn Goodwin

Jana Haertl

Jane Bloomstrand

Colleen Gonzalez

Corrienne Heinemann

George Cramer

Jerry Blair

Juanita Martin

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://cwcmtdiablo.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://cwcmtdiablo.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

