

BRANCH MEETINGJanuary 14, 2022

11:00 - Check-In 11:15 - Writers Table (see p.3)

12:00 - Lunch

12:35 - Business Meeting

1:00 - Speaker



REGISTER ONLINE AT:

https://cwcmtdiablo.org/meetings-and-workshops/

The Magic of Storytelling through the Art of the Screenplay Featuring

Paul Zeidman

Paul loves to create a ripping yarn that grabs the viewer and takes them on a rollercoaster ride of thrills and excitement that they can't wait to experience again.

Paul is an award-winning screenwriter and the author of the three GO AHEAD AND ASK screenwriting books. Paul has also been running his screenwriting blog Maximum Z since 2009, co-hosts the Creative Writing Life podcast, and has been the featured guest on several screenwriting podcasts.



Writers will learn craft skills:

- Developing structure and conflict within your story
- Creating three-dimensional characters
- Taking the familiar and putting your own personal spin on it

Paul Zeidman was born and raised in the suburban wilds of southern New Jersey. He began writing at a very early age. Little did he realize that his desire to put words to paper and a subsequent love of all things cinematic would someday combine to launch his screenwriting career.

When not writing, rewriting, or reading scripts, he enjoys watching movies, reading books of all sorts, running somewhat long distances, and making what could possibly be the best pecan pie west of the Mississippi.

In-Person at Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill Members \$25.00 - Guests \$30.00 (includes lunch)

REGISTER ONLINE AT https://cwcmtdiablo.org/meetings-and-workshops/

January 2023 The Write News Page Two

President's Message: Barry Hampshire

Goodness gracious – it is about time to celebrate New Year. I hope all of you had a great Holiday Season.

Enough, it's time to get back to the grindstone.

Stop. Did I say grindstone? What does that imply? Laborious hard work.

Hold on. It is New Year. It is time to toss out the old and ring in some new. A time to breath in fresh air, tinged with possibilities and invigorating new ideas.

Oh, what should I write next? Is this what people call, writers' block? It's 5:47 a.m. and ...



Ah, now, I made the dog's breakfast (I have my priorities.) Then I made my own breakfast and fresh possibilities have percolated. By the way, I think my oatmeal with cranberries and honey tastes better than her whatever it is she scoffs down in three nanoseconds. I know she'll disagree with me before she curls up and goes back to sleep. Don't dogs (and cats) have a tough life? Back to CWC.

The New Year brings forth returning opportunities as well as new ones. Here is brief list of opportunities on the calendar:

- The Scholastic Writing Competition
- Young Writers Contest
- The Ekphrasis Project
- Writers Helping Writers Assistance Fund
- The new Members Directory



Please check these out on the website as well as in the Newsletter.

Wishing you all a great New Year with a productive and rewarding spell of writing. Share your work with others. Sometimes others' comments can open doors to amazing new pathways forward. Find times to share – may I suggest "Open Mic" and "Writers Connection."

Looking forward to seeing old faces as well as all new faces at our general meetings at Zio Fraedo's on the second Saturday of each month.

Barry

PROCEEDS FROM OUR BUCK A BOOK SALE IN DECEMBER TO BENEFIT OUR YOUNG WRITERS CONTEST AMOUNTED TO \$97, A RECORD! MANY THANKS.



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Member Events, News, and Salutes



This section is regularly open members to writing and submitting a short announcement about milestones in their writing journey. Include a picture of yourself or your book. Publish something? 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://cwcmtdiablo.org/newsletter/

Michael Barrington

Michael's article "No Sweat Marketing" has been accepted for publication by the online magazine Authors Publish and will appear in the January 5th edition.

Check out Authors Publish at https://authorspublish.com/about-us/



January 14 Writers Table

Expanding Your Horizons Beyond Your Book
Lucinda Jackson, certified career and retirement counselor



Once you write a book, is that it? No! After writing my books over the last 6 years, I've found the world has opened up in so many ways. This presentation will explore the many avenues I've discovered to extend my reach, collaborate with other authors, publish articles, appear on radio and podcasts, write a magazine column, join organizations, speak at diverse events, and start my own business. This Writers Table will offer ideas on how to expand your own horizons beyond publishing your book.

www.lucindajackson.com

Would you like to lead a Writers Table? We'd love to hear from you. Please reach out by emailing Andrew Benzie at andrew@andrewbenzie.com

QUESTION: How did you get kidnapped?



You in the Newsletter: Short Works

Members, submit some of your writing fact or fiction for the newsletter. Muse about 2022, share a report on a book you enjoyed (or disliked) and why. Share a memoir piece. Share a writing tip. Share an upcoming event. Send your short works (around 750 words) to: https://cwcmtdiablo.org/newsletter/

"Twenty-Three Minutes" by **Bob Poirier**

Mary Baker, an administrative secretary at the Oakland diocese headquarters (HQ) on Harrison Street in Oakland, picked up the ringing telephone at her desk.

"This is Mary."

"Mary, this is Father Cabral at the San Francisco archdiocese HQ. I need to ask you a few questions about your entry for the archbishop's travel yesterday."

"Of course, Father. My rough notes show the archbishop left the diocese HQ at 8:30 yesterday morning. I already discussed this with my supervisor, but I will be happy to answer any questions you might have."

"It would be better if I do this in person. I'm near the Harrison Street campus. I'll visit you in ten minutes."

"Of course."

She hung up the office phone and set up a conference call on her personal phone to Tim, her husband of thirty years, and their children, Rose, the tall, dark-haired beauty at a Midwest university, and Paolo, their Alaskan environmentalist saving the planet one Tlingit village at a time.

"I'm expecting a visit from the diocese fixer," she began. "They want me to falsify my records to show the archbishop left the diocese HQ at 8:53 yesterday morning."

"Mary," Tim said. "As long as we've been together, you've always done the right thing. I'm confident this time will be no different."

"Dad's right, Mom," Rose chimed in. "This is the Catholic church. You can't get in trouble by telling the truth."

"I agree," Paolo said. "We've been a faith-based family all my life. As you always said, 'Do the right thing, and God will look out for us."

"Okay," Mary said. "The priest will be here in a couple of minutes. Mute your phones."

She pushed the Sleep/Wake button. The screen went blank.

Father Cabral, a short, corpulent man with a faint pencil-thin mustache, permanently florid complexion, and dead eyes entered the office.

"Give me your phone, Mary," the priest demanded.

"This is my personal phone," Mary said. "I only use it on personal breaks."

"I said, give me the damn phone," the priest insisted.

Mary gave him the phone.

"Mary Baker, as of this moment, your services at the Oakland diocese are no longer needed," he said. "I want you out of the building in fifteen minutes. Mister Murphy is waiting outside to help pack your belongings and escort you out of the building. Your final paycheck will be mailed to you tomorrow."

"What are the grounds for my dismissal, Father Cabral?" she asked politely.

"California is an at-will state; I don't need grounds. But, if you must know, the archbishop and I no longer have any confidence in your ability to be a team player," he replied. "That's why you women will never have a place in the church hierarchy. You don't have the flexibility to bend the rules for the good of the church."

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

He looked at his watch. "You have twelve minutes left, Mary. You should get packing."

The priest called Murphy into the office, then left and walked down a flight of stairs to the IT office.

"I need this phone completely scrubbed immediately, then delete the operating system," he said. "I want to return it unusable in the next ten minutes."

The technician examined the phone.

"You know this phone is on a live call, right?" the technician asked.

"Cheese and Rice," the priest blurted. He grabbed the phone out of the technician's hand and sprinted up the stairs to Mary's office. He burst into the office.

"Mary, Mary," he panted. "There has been a terrible mistake. Here is your phone. Of course, you are not terminated. In fact, what I meant to say is that we are authorizing a fifteen percent raise immediately. Mr. Murphy, please help Mary with her belongings."

Mary took the phone and resumed the conversation.

"Did everyone hear all that?" Mary asked.

"Every word," Tim said.

"I recorded it and will order a word-for-word transcription," Rose said.

"The next time I'm in the city, I'm gonna hunt him down and kick his ass," Paolo said.

Cabral blanched at the last statement.

"What can I do to make this right and have you all sign NDAs?" the priest asked.

"Reinstate me at the fifteen percent raise," Mary said. "Then immediately create a new position with a three-year contract as an HR Ombudsman, so no other employee has to go through this. I will create the policies and procedures for the job. In three years, when I turn sixty-five, I want a six-month severance package and full medical benefits for my family."

"Is that all?" the priest sneered.

"No," Mary replied. "I want you to resign your post, return to your home country, and serve God in an impoverished village for three years."

"And, if I don't agree to this?"

"I'll speak with my friend at the State Labor Board on Clay Street when I meet her for lunch at Shake Shack. I am confident they will initiate a lawsuit when I claim that you fired me illegally. The discovery process will bring up this phone call where you made some interesting statements."

"Okay, Okay," the priest sighed. "The paperwork and NDA will be available for you to sign tomorrow at noon. I will put you on paid leave for two weeks. I will be gone by the time you return."

"No, Father Cabral," Mary said. "I will remain at work and follow the process closely."

"Very well," the priest said and left her office.

"Wow," Rose and Paolo said simultaneously.

"Okay," Mary said. "I'll hang up now; I have work to do. Tim, I'll see you at home this evening. Rose and Paolo, stay safe."

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

Since we're writers we should also be readers. The Write News is always open to publishing book reviews by members. Any book you enjoyed is fine as long as it's within CWC guidelines of no proselytizing, vulgarity, politics, etc. To submit a book review, let us know through this link: https://cwcmtdiablo.org/newsletter/

Silk by Alessandro Baricco

(originally translated from the Italian in 1997 by Guido Waldman Michael read the 2006 translation by Ann Goldstein)

by Michael Barrington

Silk is a startling, sensual, hypnotically compelling novella about a French silk merchant, Herve Jancour's several dangerous journeys to and from Japan to obtain silkworms from one of its islands. Invited to stay in the court of an enigmatic nobleman, referred to as the "master of all that world might take away from the island," he becomes enchanted by the nobleman's reserved and beautiful concubine.

They do not touch. They do not speak. Though their bodies remain apart, they only meet in the presence of the master, or another woman, the reader can feel their vibrating and intoxicating chemistry. A glance takes the place of a kiss, a cup of tea sipped from the same place on the rim becomes an amorous embrace. Even the single note she gives him he cannot read until his return, and when he does, he becomes a man possessed.



"Come back or I shall die," she begs him.

I was spellbound with the story, and the powerful, evocative, but terse, descriptions: "Once he had held between his fingers a veil of Japanese silk thread. It was like holding between his fingers nothingness."

It is a small book of less than one hundred pages, but that belies the fact that some chapters are simply a few sentences. It reads almost like a fable, an allegory but written with poetic license. The word choices, sentence structure, chapter sequences, and layout, all create a delicate air of mystery, wonder, and unrequited love.

It's a book that needs to be read slowly, and possibly several times. Words are at a premium. On each of his four journeys to Japan, it's as if the author had cut and pasted the same section. But a close read shows that he can change a single word to affect a whole chapter. He reaches Lake Baikal which "the people of the place called the 'sea'." In his three subsequent journeys it becomes 'the devil,' the 'last,' and 'the saint.'

I am amazed how much emotion is conveyed in such a short story. As one critic writes, "it is beautiful, sensual, desperate, and heartbreakingly sad."

A must read!



- An allusion walks into a bar, despite the fact that alcohol is its Achilles heel.
- The subjunctive would have walked into a bar, had it only known.
- A misplaced modifier walks into a bar owned a man with a glass eye named Ralph.
- The past, present, and future walked into a bar. It was tense.
- A dyslexic walks into a bra.

Upcoming Programs

2023

Feb 11	Kevin Fisher-Paulson	"Honoring the Creative Self" 1. Creativity is a marathon, not a sprint. You have to train your body, spirit, and mind how to run that long race. Kevin will give us exercises to build creative muscles. 2. Creativity relies on inspiration, perspiration, and desperation. Kevin talks about how not to get in the way of that which can inspire you. 3. Creativity requires a commitment to what you believe and the story you have to tell. Kevin will guide people to find their story, and to cherish it.
Mar.11	Workshop 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



Things to Do

An Author Ad course starts 1/11 Jill Hedgecock

This is the Author Ad School course that rocketed my understanding of book marketing to a whole new level. It is best for indie authors, but it works for traditional and pre-published folks. I wish I had done this course before I published my first book.

There is so much to learn, it can be overwhelming at times, but I'm eating the elephant one bite at a time. Yesterday, I learned how several of my precious 7 Amazon keywords I'd selected were totally off base.

The 5/6-day course is free, but it does require dedicated time and a commitment to learn. Register via: https://bryancohen.lpages.co/jan23/

- A verb walks into a bar, sees a beautiful noun, and suggests they conjugate. The noun declines.
- A simile walks into a bar, as parched as a desert.
- A gerund and an infinitive walk into a bar, drinking to forget.
- A hyphenated word and a non-hyphenated word walk into a bar and the bartender nearly chokes on the irony.
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MEMBER BENEFIT

Member Directory (replaces Our Authors)

by Marlene Dotterer, Webmaster

Mt. Diablo members now have a way to find other branch members and to contact each other on a safe and private basis. This is accomplished through our new <u>Member Directory</u>.

The Directory can also be accessed through the menu on our website homepage: https://cwcmtdiablo.org/member-directory/

The member directory page lists our members with tags showing the genres they write or read, whether they are published, if they are available as a Beta Reader, or offer a writing-related service such as editing, writing coach or teacher, book design, publishing, marketing, etc. The search feature allows you to search by any of these categories.

This Member Directory page is accessible to the public on the web. However, you control who sees your profile and who can send you messages. Following are the instructions on how to add yourself to the directory.

Instructions for Joining, Logging In, Privacy Settings, and Creating a Profile First: Create an account

- 1. Click HERE to access the registration form. Fill out the form and submit.
- 2. Please save your username and password in a safe place.

3. How to login to your account

- a. Go to the website Home Page.
- b. In the Menu Bar at the top of the page, find "Member Directory" and hover your cursor over the words.
- c. You will see a sub-page titled "Login." Click on that.
- d. You will be taken to a login screen to enter your username and password.
- e. Do this every time you need to login.
- f. You MUST login to message other members or to update your profile.

Second: Set your preferred privacy options (do you want your profile and social media accounts available to the public? Just to other Mt. Diablo members? No one?)

4. Set your privacy options.

- a. Log in to your account. You will see your profile page. At this point, it is important for you to choose your privacy settings.
- b. Click on the "Gear" icon to the right of the photo area. You will see four buttons: Edit Profile, My Account, Logout, Cancel.
- c. Click on My Account.
- d. Click on **Privacy**
 - i. **Profile Privacy:** you can set your profile to be hidden from everyone, even logged-in members.
 - **ii. Avoid indexing my profile by search engines:** choosing "No" prevents robots from accessing your profile.
 - **iii. Hide my profile from (public) directory**: choose this if you don't want the public to see your name or profile. Mt. Diablo members will see your profile once they are logged in.



Remember

this

- **iv.** Who can send me private messages? Choosing "Everyone" means all logged-in members. (The Message button is not available on the public directory. Only logged-in members have access to it).
- v. Save your changes.

Third: Create your profile

- e. Now you can create your profile. You can add a photo, and make selections among these categories:
 - i. **Published** choose this if you are a published author. Read our new criteria for published to make sure you qualify. The criteria are also listed at the end of this article.
 - ii. **Genre** choose all the genres which apply to you.
 - iii. Beta Reader Are you available as a Beta Reader? Let us know!
 - iv. **Professional Service** List your writing-related business or service here. If yours is not listed on the dropdown menu, drop me an <u>email</u> to include it.
- 5. Next, write up a biography. Look at other bios if you aren't sure what to write.
- 6. If you have a website or other social media accounts related to your writing, you can enter those links here.
 - a. If you already have an Author's Page on our website, you can copy and paste that profile in your new on the member directory.
 - b. If your profile is public, these links will be seen by the public.
 - c. Only provide links to the sites you want the public to see.
- 7. Update your profile. You can come back to change your profile at any time.
- 8. Visit other members' profiles and use the Message Button to contact them!

Have questions? Need help? Email Marlene at mailto:webmaster@cwcmtdiablo.org

Napa Valley Writers Presents:

"Podcasts as Platform: Making the Most of the Newest, Hottest Medium"

Napa Valley Writers will feature **Betsy Graziani Fasbinder** who hosts a bimonthly podcast, *The Morning Glory Project(MGP): Stories of Determination*. The MGP, now in its fourth year, includes interviews of inspiring survivors, thrivers, innovators, trailblazers, and barrier busters. Betsy is dedicated to telling, or helping others to tell their stories. She is a licensed psychotherapist and works as a developmental editor and coach for public speakers and writers of memoir, fiction, and non-fiction. She is award-winning author of a novel, *Fire & Water*, a critically acclaimed memoir, *Filling Her Shoes*, and *From Page to Stage: Inspiration, Tools, and Public Speaking Tips for Writers*.



WHEN Wednesday, January 11, 7-9 p.m. WHERE Napa Valley Unitarian Universalists, 1625 Salvador Ave. Napa

Napa Valley Writers, a non-profit organization, is a branch of the California Writers Club and holds monthly meetings. Cost is \$5 for members, \$7 for non-members. Students with ID, free. For more information, contact lenorehirsch@att.net or see napavalleywriters.net

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Young Writers Contest First Prize Winner

PERSONAL NARRATIVE - 7TH GRADE

1st Place
◆

Dorris-Eaton School, Walnut Creek Teacher: Sydney Maxwell

ERODED INTO SPACE by Avery Liu

So oily. So cold. So fearful. Those were my fingers. The feeling of having a heavy rock deep down inside and just carrying it around, feeling like the world was going to pull you down to the underworld. My nose felt like a million tiny molecules were swimming around in it, and my eyes stung with that same feeling of burying my head in a pile of sand. I sat, unable to imagine walking out of the door in my house that loomed in front of me and I slowly moaned as I slid my shaking fingers along the smooth keys that felt like pebbles straight from a river. They are all humans, too. They are all humans, too. I kept whispering to myself frantically, trying to convince myself with useless words.

"Avery, let's go now!" My mom shouted from upstairs.

Her voice immediately sent chills down my spine and I hesitated, trying to process everything. I was convinced that perhaps, it was all a dream and that those cruel tingles that spread rapidly throughout my body like bacteria were nowhere close to reality.

My heart felt like it was going to drop out of my chest as our car parked outside the performance theater. I



frantically bit my lip to keep myself from tipping over. I stepped gingerly outside the car and took in the cold morning air that blew my hair all over my face like wild grass. I clutched my piano books as I saw children of a huge range of ages walk in the theater. I felt so dizzy that everyone walking past us seemed like a blur of gray that hurt my eyes. The halls in the building were dark and gloomy, and I completely believed that I was entering a cave in the middle of a black hole. The atmosphere seemed to change and filled with an urgent whisper that seemed to say *hurry and fail, hurry and fail*. The sweat on my arms multiplied in puddles

as I tugged on my dress to wipe my hands only to get a fruitless result.

I winced as I saw metallic black seats that lined the top row in a perfect ruler shape and the weight of my heart had quickly increased within seconds. My nails dug into my books like they were necessary for me to live and the lights of the theater began to flicker and shine eerily on the stage that rose like an undefeatable giant in front of me, and I was that pathetic ant with not a single way to escape.

Thump. Thump. Thump. The sound of the piano keys vibrated with applause at the same beat that still lingered in my eardrums when there was a moment of silence. Thump. Thump. Thump. The way other kids confidently strode on to the stage made me fill to the brim with jealousy. I held my teeth together to prevent them from chattering from so many reasons I could not open my mouth a crack to share. The applause seemed to grow in momentum, and I swore that my hearing would give out for any second as the beat of my heart blended with the applause into one beat and one sentence flowing in an unstoppable river. Hurry and fail. Hurry and fail. I closed my eyes to take away the pain but the darkness did not have a single crumb of light. It just felt cold, seeping into my skin, spreading deep down inside, and adding to the weight of the rock. There was no moon in a dark night at sea, the only noise was deafening waves of applause, slashing and cutting deep into my heart that lingered only for a moment above the surface, a helpless little sailboat, all alone.

"Hurry! Go, it's your turn!" My piano teacher whispered frantically to me.



Young Writers Contest First Prize Winner (cont'd)

Her voice rang in my ears as I stumbled down the aisle to the backstage that was illuminated with a single white light that could have faded at the touch of a single raindrop. My arms shook as I stepped onto the stage, unable to recall a single thing in the song I was playing and feeling so much fear that it overpowered me like a fire spreading through a helpless forest. I wobbled as I gently sat down in the piano chair, and I keep my shivering eyes glued to the keyboard. The lights shone on me and seemed to taunt me with their cruel rays that pierced through the fake smile that was plastered upon my face. The silence vibrated in the air and broke through every little wall of comfort inside of me. I could see their little pieces fall further and further away until they were only specks of what they had once been. The stage seemed to shake like my body, they type of shaking that never stops.

I closed my eyes, unable to stop myself from wanting to scream and run far, far away, but somehow there was a feeling that seemed to sing serenely, saying that there was a tranquil room inside of me, waiting to be opened. So I let it open and let the lake of calmness surround me, swallowing every hardship in my world. My fingers delicately lay themselves upon the keyboard, and in a way, I felt as if they were a whole different part of me. Not those scared feelings of discouragement or the angry applause that added to the rock that lay frozen in my heart. What I saw was bravery and a smile so wide that it could never frown again. Music spilled from the piano, and I just sat there in that room absorbing the melody that seeped deep into my bones. When I was finished, I sat there with a real smile as I heard applause that rubbed lovingly against that rock, making it erode into tiny pieces that floated, far off into outer space.





December 2022 The Write News Page Twelve

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+) Judith Overmier Susan Berman David George in honor of Jan & Lee Paulson Lily Gwilliam	Linda Hartmann Cindy Leonard		
JOHN MUIR MEMBER CLUB (\$150 - \$249)	INA COOLBRITH LAUREATE CLUB (\$100 - \$149) Kathy Urban in honor of Susie Wilson Elizabeth Pentacoff in honor of Susie Wilson Karen Clayton Stanford Stewart		
MARY AUSTIN WRITERS CLUB (\$50 - \$99) HELEN HUNT JACKSON G		GROUP (\$25 - \$49)	
Robert Poirier	June Gatewood	Colleen Gonalez	
Marianne Lonsdale	Barry Humphries	Corrienne Heinemann	
Patty Northlich Chloe Laube	Lynn Goodwin Jana Haertl	George Cramer Jerry Blair	
Sherida Bush	Jane Bloomstrand	-	
Contra Costa County middle school students in short story, poetry, essay/personal narrative website for details: https://cwcmtdiablo.org/ In May the Mt. Diablo Branch hosts an award All program expenses are supported by indivi	e, and humor. Contest submityoung-writers/ Is ceremony to honor the studual donations and grants. ***********************************	ssion is free. Check our branch dentsif there's no pandemic!	
Please list my membership in the following de			
	Address		
City/State/Zip			
PhoneE-m	E-mail		
Amount enclosed: \$	My donation is in honor/memory of:		
To pay via PayPal click "buy now" on the Mtwriters/ Or make a check payable to: CWC Mt. Diable	o Branch. And mail to: CWO		

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO SUPPORT THIS ANNUAL CONTEST

Attention: Young Writers Contest