



The Write News

Mt Diablo

A Monthly Newsletter

Elisabeth Tuck, editor

November 2023

Meeting November 11, 2023

"The Art of Diction: Word Selection for Writers"

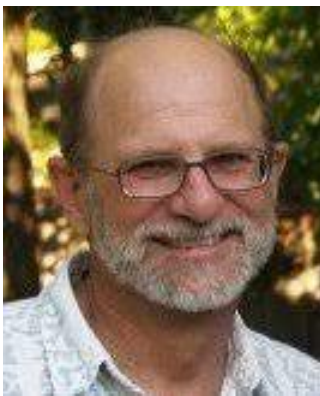
Featuring: **Roy Mash**

How do words come to us? In everyday speech we normally start with an idea in our heads. The idea then seems to flow directly into words with no intervening conscious process. The words, as it were, appear to be *selecting themselves*.

In writing, however, there is often a pause after the occurrence of an idea—a pencil-chewing moment in which the writer considers the best way to express the idea. This moment can be magical, but also exasperating. It can stretch into hours, or days, or weeks, or longer, so that the ideal of *le mot juste* may come to seem less like the Holy Grail than an albatross.

What You Will Learn

- What's the best way to express an idea?
- Which of several alternative words or expressions might work best?
- Sometimes, the very act of choosing a word can reverse the direction of the process.
- Settling on one particular word over another often leads to a new idea.



Roy Mash is a respected speaker with an impish sense of humor. He is the author of *Buyer's Remorse* (Cherry Grove Collections, 2014) and was a long-time board member of Marin Poetry Center. His work has appeared in more than fifty journals including *AGNI Online*, *Atlanta Review*, *Barrow Street*, *Nimrod*, *Poetry East*, and *River Styx*. He is the recipient of the Atlanta Review International Publication Award. In another life he held degrees in English, Philosophy, and Computer Science.

REGISTER ONLINE AT <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/meetings-and-workshops/>

LOCATION

Zio Fraedo's Restaurant
611 Gregory Lane
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

COST

\$25 CWC Members and \$30 Non-Members. Includes buffet luncheon.
Pay at the door or online with PayPal when registering. You do not need a PayPal account.

SCHEDULE

- 10:45 Registration Opens
- 11:15 Writers Table: **See page 3**
- 12:00 Buffet Luncheon
- 12:30 Business Meeting
- 1:00 Featured Speaker



In-Person – Members \$25.00 – Guests \$30.00

Members, bring your books to sell at the November meeting

Vice President: Michael Barrington

(President Barry Hampshire is with family overseas)



Michael originally wrote the following for the newsletter section Meet Your Board Members about the tasks various board members undertake.

When I joined CWC, MT Diablo Branch, I had no idea what I was getting into. Writing can be a lonely experience, and I was simply looking for a social setting where I could meet and discuss anything about writing with like-minded people. So what happened?

- I am currently the acting VP of the club and work very closely with Barry our president in planning and discussions as we try to help CWC MT Diablo meet the needs of our members and become a dynamic entity. I attend all Board Meetings.
- Two years ago I initiated and currently facilitate the Writers Connection, a free-wheeling, open-ended group that meets monthly for lunch where we discuss and share anything to do with writing, books, and our craft. We usually have a Flash Fiction prompt followed by shared readings.
- I usually attend Open Mic each month, sometimes to share my own material but more often to just listen to and appreciate the high quality of prose and poetry that our talented members produce.
- I am a great believer in new members being educated into the “mysteries” of CWC, and I work with the head of the Mentoring Group, Lyn Roberts, by making cold calls to members seeking their potential participation.
- I am currently mentoring three new members.
- I am acting as a personal writers’ coach for two members.
- I read for the annual Scholastic Competition and last year assessed more than fifty short stories.
- I participated in the Ekphrasis Exhibition by submitting a short story and offering an interpretation of a painting.
- Nine months ago I invited seven members to join me in writing a murder mystery, several participants had never before been published. Our goal was to have the novel completed by the end of this year and we are on track to do so. An eighth member joined us as an editor.
- As the Chair of the Program Committee, I work with a team responsible for inviting interesting and well-qualified presenters to our monthly meetings and two annual workshops. The flyers members receive with pertinent speaker information, does not happen by osmosis; both content and format are generated by this committee.
- I created and initiated the Holiday Competition for this year and am planning a fun day at our December meeting when the finalists will read their work.
- As the recent NORCAL (CWC Clubs of Northern California) representative for our club, I participated in a series of planning meetings for the Leadership Conference and took on the responsibility of being a presenter in one of the workshops.
- I regularly submit material to both our club Newsletter and that of the State CWC.

Members, bring your books to sell at the November meeting

Price your books, share tables, & bring dollars to make change if you aren’t set up to take credit cards.

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Editor's note: The deadline for submissions to this newsletter is the 20th of each month Aug through May.

Writers Table: Genre Discussions, Nov 11, 2023

Five Tables... (More than) Five Genres

FICTION

1. Romance
2. Women's Fiction
3. Young Adult
4. Short Stories
5. Memoir (and/or Non-Fiction)
6. Fantasy

NON-FICTION

1. Memoir (and/or Fiction)
2. Journalism
3. Business
4. Self-Help
5. Academic
6. Medical

**CHILDREN'S STORIES****POETRY**

Where does humor fit in?



Members, you are most welcome to attend any board meeting.

The next board meeting is a Zoom meeting at 2 p.m. Friday, Nov. 10.

For the Zoom link: <https://cwcmtdiablo.org/contact-us/> Select President or Webmaster

We're always glad to welcome volunteers to assist with all this branch does. It's a great way to make friends, add to your résumé, feel good, make a difference, etc.

MEMBERS, bring your books to sell at the November meeting! Price your books, share tables, and bring dollars to make change if you aren't set up to take credit cards.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING



Member Events, News, and Salutes



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

Kylie Wang

Kylie's first book, *Stuck in Her Head*, was published on October 24 with Earnshaw Books. The co-written young adult novel is a coming-of-age story set in Hong Kong about two teen girls navigating societal pressure, complicated relationships, and mental illness. Kylie first started working on the book with an elementary school friend when she was 14, and it was published at 17 years old. You can learn more and buy it at:

<https://twoteenauthors.com/stuck-in-her-head/>



Joni Keim

Greet Lafayette, a local magazine delivered monthly to over 9,400 households, is highlighting Joni in the "Author's Corner" of their November issue.

Joni's writes non-fiction with themes ranging from technical (self-care and natural health) to memoirs to spiritual. www.jonikeimbooks.com

Diablo Gazette authors from the CWC Mt. Diablo branch

<https://www.diablogazette.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Diablo-Gazette-October-2023-D.pdf>

Colleen Gonzales reviews the movie *A Haunting in Venice* and *Love at First Sight* p.6

Jill Hedgecock reviews the book *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig p.6

And wrote about: "Volunteering at Care for Wild's Rhino Sanctuary: An Unforgettable South African Adventure" p. 10

And in her "For the Love of Pets" column, Jill addresses "Halloween Hazards for Pets" p.16



Pangolin

David George's regular master gardener column: "The Garden House: Where Kids Grow" p. 11

CONGRATULATIONS

Jill Hedgecock Mt. Diablo's Jack London Awardee



“Jill served as the program chair for her branch for eight years, was a co-chair for the Young Writers Contest for two years and has judged this contest for over a decade. For four years she has judged the scholastic Art and Writing Awards, an important fundraiser for the branch. Jill twice received the branch Distinguished Service Award and is a frequent presenter at her branch’s Writers Table, sharing information on topics such as book trailers, travel writing, muse boards for authors, and more. She has been a featured speaker for the Tri-Valley, Napa, and Sacramento branches. Jill is an award-winning and internationally-published author of four novels. Her monthly book reviews and pet columns appear in the *Diablo Gazette*, a local online and print newspaper. Jill’s short stories, personal essays, and nonfiction pieces have appeared in multiple anthologies, newspapers, and magazines.”

Elisabeth Tuck CWCs Ina Coolbrith Awardee



“Elisabeth has quietly assumed roles that are both important and incredibly difficult for many years. She has devoted countless hours to the CWC Literary Review over a time span of eight years. As acquisitions editor she coordinated the work of a team of volunteer screeners who read every single submission and offered helpful feedback. As managing editor for four editions, she was responsible of every aspect of this massive project, from submission intake to printing and mailing. She has served as secretary of the Central Board from 2016 to present. This is an arduous and time-consuming job as it involves keeping accurate meeting minutes and records of all reports.

At her branch, Elisabeth has ably handled a variety of positions including president for four years, vice-president, speaker chair, and for eight years, newsletter editor. A meticulous editor, Elisabeth is always ready to offer advice to branch members who need assistance with editing their work.”



Whatever Happened to Punctuation?

By Michael Barrington

I have just finished reading my third novel by Sally Rooney, followed by Cormac McCarthy's latest, *Stella Maris*, and I'd like to report the speech marks are missing! Punctuation goes in and out of fashion, and the marking of text with inverted commas to signify direct speech seems, in the current moment, is decidedly going out of fashion.

Cormac McCarthy called punctuation, "Weird little marks. I believe in periods, in capitals, in the occasional comma, and that's it." Since this was his first novel after a sixteen-year hiatus, I started reading it because I was intrigued by the subject matter, dedicated solely to a dialogue between two people, a woman who self-committed to a mental institution and a psychiatrist. It was a disaster. After twelve pages I'd had enough and just couldn't handle page after page with no italics. However, I was sufficiently intrigued to purchase the audio book. And oh, my goodness, what a difference. I didn't want to stop listening. I was totally enthralled by the female and male voices that gave color and texture to a dynamic, intriguing, and labyrinthine script.

But with Sally Rooney, not so. Why she has chosen to use this technique in her novels, only she can say? I found it gimmicky at best since her lack of italics didn't enhance the flow of the story or blend with the rest of the text. But a greater irritant for me was her use in all three novels of another technique, the way she attributes the spoken word. No writer wants their characters to become disembodied, but attribution, clarifying for the reader *who's saying what*, is key to maintaining good order in dialogue. It sustains the novel's pace and orients and relieves the reader from unnecessary guesswork. As writers we shouldn't have to send the reader window-shopping in search of a speaker to "assign" the script to! Distractions of that sort break the spell of the interactive flow, and are really an earmark of the inexperienced writer.

I'm speaking here, of course, of "*she said*" and "*he said*" the most common attributions, and their host of variants. When it's evident who's talking, the reader can readily do without them. Often enough, in a brisk exchange between two people once the talk gets rolling, it takes nothing more than a paragraph change, the customary tool for differentiating speakers, to make clear to the reader who's saying what. Repeated attributions can serve to heighten the intent of the exchange two people are having. Beginning writers in particular are prone to suppose that "*she said*" and "*he said*" become too humdrum, are used too frequently, and need to be replaced by such alternatives as "*she replied*," "*he explained*," "*he responded*," "*she murmured*," "*she protested*," and so on... all of which, when used judiciously, are useful.


Repeated indications as to who's doing the talking can also be used for dramatic effect. And this is where Sally Rooney drives me crazy. A creative writing teacher advised, not to labor too much about attributions,

"Go ahead and use 'she said' and 'he said' with little fear of over-use! They soon enough become mere transparencies for the reader, barely noted in passing as the reading proceeds."








If this is the case, why does it irritate and distract me from the story line making me want to stop reading? In Rooney's *Normal People* on just one page I counted thirteen times her use of "*he said, she said*."

An additional curiosity is Rooney's point of view as she described her characters. In *Beautiful World Where Are You* much of its tension comes from the disconnect between the spare prose of the third-person sections, (I can't remember seeing a semi colon in any of her books) with sometimes one paragraph filling an entire page, and the rambling soliloquies of the emails. Once they have been named, she ghosts her characters through page after page by simply referring to them as "*she*" and "*he*," and given that she rarely fully develops them, I found it annoying and my attention flagging.

But there is a reason her books are bestsellers. In addition to her famous sex scenes, described as "the best in modern literary fiction," she captures with unembellished, often plaintive prose, the angst of her millennium audience, albeit, her sometimes meandering chapters while reflecting the time and milieu, can be perplexing to those of us north of the age of forty. But be that as it may, I still need my punctuation.



OUR UPCOMING SPEAKERS

Dec 9		Holiday Story Results	Readings from the stories
Jan 13		Achy Obejas	Story telling crosses genres, crosses cultures, & is its own art form.
Feb 10		Brook Warner	TBD
Mar 9		Amanda McTigue	Workshop:
Apr 13		Eric Elfman	Flash fiction and non-fiction
May 11		Karen Grassle	
June 8		Joint Book Team	What was the experience like?

If you've heard a great speaker on writing/publishing/editing, let our Speaker Committee Chair, Michael Barrington, know. Select his name at <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/contact-us/>

What is the Young Writers Contest?

The Young Writers Contest has been a part of Mt. Diablo's annual schedule since 1995, a contest that has become a trusted part of the Contra Costa middle and home-school community, and a vital part of our mission to educate and engage the community in writing.

The contest is open to middle school students whether a public, private, or home-schooled student. They electronically submit writings in the categories of short story, poetry, essay/personal narrative, and humor. We organize volunteer readers in the branch to read, confer, and rank the submissions. The first second and third winners in each category for each grade receive cash prizes at a celebration in their honor. There the winners may read from their pieces. Families, teachers and branch members are all welcome, and there are smiles and cameras clicking everywhere in the room.

In recent years we've assembled for sale a booklet of the winners' submissions.

To volunteer to help or read/rank, contact Quynh Trinh at: <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/contact-us/>

Don't write like this:

Northern California authorities have arrested a man in connection with the death of the mother of *The Sandlot* actor **Marty York**, who was found dead in her Del Norte County home Thursday, according to authorities.

It was NOT Marty who was found dead as this arrangement of words implies

They were very professional and reasonable. I strongly recommend them for tree work. **There** number is

Remember that THERE has HERE in it so it's a place.

Member's Work

See your writing in print! **100 words or less.** Practice being brief.

Send your work to: writenews@cwcmtdiablo.org



LUNA

By Robert Poirier

California Transient orca number CA122, a killer whale known as Luna to the members of her pod, recognized the boat engine as it neared her three-month-old, 500-pound, seven-foot-long calf. She called to the calf to dive as the engine stopped. The black-and-white-patterned calf was partially beneath the surface when Luna heard the pops. She realized her calf was injured, raced to it, and pulled it further underwater. The pops continued as the bullets whizzed close by them for a few feet then sank.

Luna, the pod's matriarch, was near the middle of her expected fifty-year lifespan. This calf was her fourth. Three of her offspring were in her pod, along with two adult males and three females. The pod operated like a wolf pack, hiding at a fifty-foot depth in the giant kelp forest canopy and darting out to separate the grey whale calves from their mothers as the whales migrated north through the Monterey Canyon.

Five years prior Luna's third calf, only a few days old, had been killed by a speeding boat. Luna carried the dead calf for several weeks until its body was in shreds.

This time other pod members gathered around Luna's wounded calf to comfort her while Luna swam to the surface to investigate. She breached and remained on the surface long enough to catch a glimpse of the operator as he looked back from the retreating boat. She now had two pieces of information: the operator's face and the sound of the boat engine.

She then swam back to her calf. Although one bullet had pierced the trailing edge of the calf's dorsal fin, and another had grazed its back behind that fin, she would still be able to swim with the pod.

Four days later, Luna heard the familiar boat engine approaching. She signaled to her fellow pod members, who gathered the fronds and stalks of giant kelp from the forest canopy a few hundred yards closer to the shore.

When the engine stopped, Luna breached between the boat and the kelp forest. The hurried shot missed by a wide margin. She knew the next shot would be much closer. The boat engine started again, moved closer to the canopy, and stopped a second time.

When the engine stopped, the members of the pod hung a hundred pounds of kelp fronds and stalks around the propeller. Luna breached again, and two shots rang out. The second shot nicked her dorsal fin as she dove.

The shooter started his engine again, but the kelp stopped the propellers, and the alarm sounded, indicating an overheating engine.

The shooter cursed, stripped to his underwear, and went over the side of the boat to clear the propeller. He was peeling away the kelp fronds when he felt a disturbance behind him.

He turned toward the kelp canopy and saw a three-thousand pound, twenty-foot orca, with teeth bared, heading straight for him at fifty feet per second. The shooter did three things in quick succession. He soiled himself, opened his mouth to scream, and drowned.

Luna picked up the shooter's body, breached, and dropped the body back in the boat. Later that day another boater spotted the shooter's boat and contacted the Coast Guard.

By the time the Coast Guard arrived the next morning, the shooter's facial muscles had contracted to show a death mask of horror. A rumor started that the shooter had been frightened to death by a mysterious, terrible sea creature. No one suspected it was simply a revenge killing.



Things to Do

(These items are informational only and do not imply endorsement of any product or service)

WRITER ADVICE'S NEWEST CONTEST

Writer Advice's Current Contest seeks Micro Fiction for a new contest, which ends December 2 at 9 pm PT.

We're open to micros, including "dribbles" (exactly 50 words), "drabbles" (exactly 100 words) and any fiction (or fictionalized but true experience) **up to 500 words**. Labels don't matter. Content does.

We ask for \$5 to help defray the cost of prizes and an additional \$10 if you'd like individualized feedback. Many contestants keep coming back because they like the feedback.

For this contest the prize money, which is \$300, will be divided equally among the winners, and we'll post up to 15 pieces, which means you'll earn \$20 or more for each piece published.

Additional details and tips for success are explained at <https://writeradvice.com/latest-contest-information/>. Scroll all the way to the bottom for the Submittable link.

B. Lynn Goodwin

You in the Newsletter!—Book Reviews

Writers should be readers. What are you reading? What genre is it? Would you recommend it to others and why? What worked? What didn't work? Why?

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/contact-us/> select Write News.

Please no advertising your books. Newsletter policy doesn't allow it, but you certainly may review a fellow member's book you enjoyed.

Writers Connection is a social place where like-minded people, hapless authors and creative geniuses can come together and chat about the one thing they all have in common: the compulsion to write. It is open to any writer, published or not, interested in a freewheeling, nonjudgmental, welcoming, and relaxed environment.

When you register, let us know if you want to be a reader. The first seven people to sign-up will be given a slot to read for five minutes. If we have more than seven requests to read, we'll start the list for the next event.

We'll have time for discussion, but please remember, this is not a critique session! Talk about what you liked, not what the author can do better.

Join us **November 29** (over lunch if you wish)

<https://cwcmt Diablo.org/contact-us/>

12:00 pm - 2:00 pm PDT

Chicken Pie Shop

1251 Arroyo Way, Walnut Creek, CA 94596

(Parking along the east side of the bldg or paid street parking in front.)



Things to Do (Cont'd)

Read and judge for The Scholastic Art and Writing Awards

Contact Quynh Trinh at <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/contact-us/> to read and judge for **The Scholastic Art and Writing Awards**, in late Dec 2023-early January 2024. The club earns a substantial amount if we have 15-20 judges of teen writing in the following **categories**:



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

It's interesting and eye-opening to see what young people around the country are writing.

Sit in on a Zoom board meeting

Meet the people who make this branch run. Ask questions.

Make suggestions. Next meeting: October 13, 2 pm

Contact branch President Barry Hampshire for the agenda and link:

<https://cwcmt Diablo.org/contact-us/>



Join the Fun with OPEN MIC on Zoom

Each reader has five minutes to introduce and read their piece then there are two minutes for questions and answers. Feedback is all positive; what you liked about the piece, what resonated, or what you enjoyed. It is a fun and exciting way to practice reading aloud and to hear some feedback.

The next gathering is: Wednesday, November 15th, from 7-8 pm.

To register to get the Zoom link: <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/event/open-mic-on-zoom-nov-15-2023/>

Consider using dialogue as a place to add **scene**, *he said, noticing the vibrant art work on the brick wall behind her*, or **character**, *she said checking her watch for third time, he said straightening his posture, etc., etc.*)

Don't just have talking heads with he said, she said back and forth. Use dialogue to show the senses: she said smelling the baking brownies; he said fingering the rough edge of the wooden table; she said hearing the crow squawk yet again; he tasted the dark, bitter coffee realizing it was the perfect metaphor for the news he had to deliver.

A "lede" is the introductory paragraph of a news story,

A "lead" is the main idea or point of the story.

Mail to: CWC Mt. Diablo Branch P.O. Box 606, Alamo, CA 94507 Attn: Young Writers Contest

Writers Helping Writers 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 practical assistance to writers. Your tax-deductible gift to CWC Mt. Diablo, a branch under the CWC 501(c)(3) tax exemption will appear in the Mount Diablo CWC newsletter every month in the year you donate. You may remain anonymous if you prefer!

DONATIONS as of August 2023:

J.K.ROWLINGS STAIRCASE CIRCLE (\$1000 +)

Lilly Gwilliam

GEORGE ORWELL'S FUTURE FORUM (\$750 – \$999)

ROBERT HEINLEIN'S UNIVERSE (\$500 - \$749)

HARPER LEE'S SYMBOLS (\$250 - \$499)

TONI MORRISON'S MEMORIES BAND (\$100 - \$249)

DEAN KOONTZ THRILLER TEAM (\$50 - \$99)

Bob Poirier

MARK TWAIN'S ADVENTURES PARTY (\$25 - \$49)

Sandra Hall, Sherida Bush, June Gatewood, Dita Basu

RICHARD WRIGHT'S UNDERGROUND SUPPORTERS (up to \$24)

AGATHA CHRISTIE'S MYSTERIOUS ANONYMOUS SQUAD (any amount)

Squad Member One (\$765)

All program expenses are supported by individual donations to date.

Check our branch website for details: <https://cwcmtdiablo.org/writers-helping-writers/>

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/writers-helping-writers/>

Or make a check payable to: CWC Mt. Diablo Branch.

And mail to: CWC Mt. Diablo Branch
P.O. Box 606,
Alamo, CA 94507
Attention: Writers Helping Writers

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO SUPPORT THIS IMPORTANT FUND!

In Memoriam

Danard Emanuelson

May 26, 1927 – November 8, 2022

Danard Emanuelson, engineer, author, artist, and golf enthusiast died peacefully in Walnut Creek. He was 95. A Californian, he was born in San Mateo and grew up in San Francisco where he graduated from Lowell High School in 1945. After a short term in the Navy at the end of WWII he attended the University of California, Berkeley graduating in 1951 as a mechanical engineer. He began his engineering career at the Avon Refinery in Martinez, with Tidewater Associated in 1951 and worked in various departments until retiring in 1983 as Refinery Engineering Manager for TOSCO.

He married Nancy Jean Harrison in San Francisco in 1947. They settled in Concord after graduation from Cal, moved to Pleasant Hill in 1955, and then Walnut Creek in 1978. His daughter Susan J. Ford predeceased Danard; he was survived by his wife, son Eric D. Emanuelson of La Conner, Washington, 5 grandchildren, and was a great grandfather. His brother Jerry B. Emanuelson lives in Alamo, CA.



Danard was a member of the original Pleasant Hill Civic Council. He campaigned vigorously for formation of the city of Pleasant Hill. He was a member of the Pleasant Hill Chamber of Commerce for a number of years, and a member of the Pleasant Hill Baseball Association. After he retired, he authored and published the suspense novel *Assault on the Crown*. In 2011 he published the original novel as an ebook under a new title *The Irish Assault* with pen name Garrison R. Dane. He served as Secretary, Treasurer, and Events Chairman for the Mt. Diablo Branch of the California Writers Club, and a recipient of the Jack London Award. Danard had a lifelong interest in art and was an avid golfer.

Danard was most recently our Mt. Diablo facilities director, where he built a deep relationship with the owner of Zio Fraedo's, Tony LoForte. But he also served for many years as our treasurer and secretary. He was my friend and I will miss him. David George.

Danard was a kind and funny man. I've missed his presence at our meetings and it's sad to know he has left us entirely. Marlene Dotterer

Just to follow up on Danard's passing... I was able to work with Danard and his Granddaughter to complete his book *Sex for the Ages: A Senior Comedy*. Danard was able to see a copy of the book while he was in hospice and it brought him great joy. Andrew Benzie



In Memoriam (cont'd)

Anthony Francis LoForte, Sr (aka Tony)

June 1938 - October 2023

Tony, the original owner of Zio Fraedos, began with his uncle Fred (Fraedo) October 12, 1975, Uncle Freddy (Zio Fraedo.) They began a little pizza and spaghetti joint, however when finished Zio Fraedo's was born. It is with great sadness that the LoForte Family announces the peaceful passing of their beloved Father Anthony LoForte Sr.



The following was published September 13, 2018 by KTVU FOX 2:

PLEASANT HILL, CA: A new Contra Costa County drug treatment center opened this month in Martinez to honor a Pleasant Hill man's late daughter who struggled with drug addiction.

Anthony LoForte Sr. and his daughter Katherine LoForte had an idea to transform her Alhambra Valley home into a rehab after she personally sought treatment, explored her own sobriety, and studied addiction at John F. Kennedy University in Pleasant Hill. The construction of her home was LoForte's way of giving back to addicts seeking treatment.

But Katherine didn't see the first patient come through the doors when [Alhambra Valley Retreat \(AVR\)](#) opened on Sept. 4. After deciding to devote her life to helping those who shared her struggles, she fell to her own battle on June 30, 2017 when she suffered a heart attack shortly after relapsing. She was 41 and had two young kids.

"Alhambra Valley Retreat keeps her alive," said Mr. LoForte. "Her spirit is alive. And as long as her spirit is alive, she lives."

The tragedy speaks to the non-discriminatory horrors of addiction. A type of insidiousness that doesn't care if you're rich, poor, educated or employed. "Katherine absolutely understood addiction intellectually, but she could not do it physically," said Kevin Robertson, Executive Director of AVR.

Before LoForte died, she and her father approached Timothy Fitzgerald – her former assessment counselor at MPI Treatment Services in Oakland – and pitched the idea of turning her 5,250 square foot home into a rehab. LoForte had a few years of sobriety at this point, Fitzgerald said. When LoForte died, and after learning her father decided to continue construction, Fitzgerald decided he, too, was all in.

"Anthony took a tragedy in life that wiped him out and turned it into a beautiful gift to help people with addiction," Fitzgerald said. "It's incredible."

Once LoForte Sr. brought on Fitzgerald and Robertson, who assisted with licensing procedures, he stepped aside to let the two experienced men handle staffing. "The people we've brought on, I've worked with them for years," Fitzgerald said. "They're wonderful people. We're going to save a lot of lives."

Addicts die daily in the United States. Last year, more than [72,000 people](#) suffered fatal overdoses. The folks at Alhambra Valley Retreat want to do their part in extending a branch to the still-suffering addict by mirroring Katherine LoForte's vision.

And they've done it. Her ideas were preserved in her father's pursuit to extend his daughter's name and the result is a beautiful facility slated to save lives. But there was an extra, non-original detail added before the grand opening. The final name on the logo reads: Alhambra Valley Retreat: Katherine's House.