



The Write News

May 2025

A Monthly Newsletter
Denis Hoye, Editor

Mt. Diablo Branch

May 10th 2025 Allison Landa



Allison Landa is a writer of memoir and fiction. Her book *BEARDED LADY* is an account of living with Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia, but it's really about what makes you feel weird in the world. Her work has been featured in venues including *Business Insider*, *Parents Magazine*, *GoodRx*, *The Guardian US*, and *The Washington Post*.

She has held artist residencies at MacDowell, Writers Colony at Dairy Hollow, WordSpace, Playa Summer Lake, Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts, and The Julia and David White Artists' Colony. Allison earned her MFA in creative writing from St. Mary's College of California and writes, teaches, and coaches from her home in Berkeley, where she lives with her husband, son, and manic dog. Stalk her at allisonlanda.com.

Please Register for this Meeting

If you register after 9:00 a.m. on May 7th, the cost will be \$40.00 for everyone.

What Can We Learn About Writing from Reality TV?

Gordon Ramsay. The Kardashians. And ... you? As preposterous as it may sound (and it does!), we can learn about our craft by watching reality television. Join us to learn more!

Takeaways

- Strong character development makes the reader feel personally connected to your story.
- High stakes help drive the narrative.
- Humor is huge!

Scheduled for May 10th, 2024

- 10:30 am Sign-in table opens
- 10:45 am Buck-a-Book
- 11:15 am Writer's Table
- 12:00 pm Buffet Lunch
- 12:35 pm Business Meeting
- 1:00 pm Main Presentation

Location

Zio Fraedo's Restaurant
611 Gregory Lane
Pleasant Hill, California

Cost

\$30 Members and \$35 Non-Members.

Includes a buffet luncheon. Pay at the door or online with PayPal when registering.

***BUCK-A-BOOK** is like spring cleaning for your bookshelves! Scour your shelves and bring favorite books to sell for \$1.00. Proceeds go to the Young Writers Contest. Unsold books will be donated to Friends of the Library.

President's Message

I heard people say that a change is as good as a rest. Is that really true? I am currently putting that saying to the test. I have finished the first draft of a historical novel that's also part fantasy and partly a murder mystery. Giving this story a suitable single genre label may take me as much time as drafting this version of the story.



So, I decided it was time for a rest. However, the creative juices flowed, and I didn't want to lose momentum. It was time for that change.

After attending the Short Story Group last week, I was inspired to give short story writing a more consistent try. For some reason, these types of stories never appealed to me. Despite that, I produced a decent story for last week's meeting. Looking for a follow-up story, I recalled one strange incident when I was a young man.

I wrote a reasonable account of the event. I thought the tale complete, but it was too short. My mind kept floating back to the story, leaving me feeling unsatisfied. It dawned on me that this accurate account lacked any attention-grabbing action. I needed to fictionalize it.

I reviewed the heart of the story and found I needed to reverse the final outcome. Doing so, I added tension and another couple of paragraphs. That led me to wonder how the new outcome came about. It generated more dialogue and a deepening of the storyline. I am now considering introducing another character to fill in the backstory and weave a tighter storyline. These changes will suffice, and I'll be ready for next month's meeting.

As I have been playing with this piece in my mind, another idea has started to gain my attention. This thought has bounced around for many years, but I have never given it any time or focus until now. I have started writing my own eulogy. What a blast. I can tell the stories that I want told at my celebration of life. My family won't need to think about it as it will be ready to be read. Don't worry, I intend to serve the rest of my time as President.

Sometimes, the prospect of writing in a different style or genre might feel intimidating. From my experience of doing so, I suggest we try to move out of our comfort zone. It could create hesitancy, even self-judgment, but it can be fulfilling and rewarding. Give yourself time and relax. If you are stuck, that's alright, because you have taken a break from your main project, which you can return to with renewed enthusiasm.

Write on!

Barry

CWC Mt. Diablo Branch

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Mt. Diablo Branch Mission

Educating writers of all levels of expertise in the craft of writing and in the marketing of their work.

Upcoming Events

- May 9, 2025, 3 pm, Friday: Sit in on a Zoom Board Meeting
- May 10, 2025, 10:30 am to 2:00 pm, Saturday: Mt. Diablo Monthly Meeting, Allison Landa, What Can We Learn About Writing from Reality TV?
- May 14, 2025, 7 pm to 9 pm, Wednesday: Open Mic on Zoom, 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm
- May 16, 2025, 12 pm, What's Your Story: Walnut Creek Library, Las Trampus Room
- May 17, 2025, 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm, Art Embraces Words
- May 28, 2025 12 pm to 1:30 pm, Wednesday: Writers Connection, Chicken Pie Shop
- June 14, 2025, Brian Copeland — (See Page 12)

Writer's Helping Writers Fundraising

CWC's motto is "Writers Helping Writers." We know that a struggling writer occasionally needs a little help. Our WHW fund is available to any member who needs help with paying for a meeting or workshop, or with membership costs. Just visit our website and complete this form <https://cwcmt Diablo.org/whw-form/>

Our WHW committee will discreetly review your request. When approved, you will receive a coupon code to use when renewing your membership or registering for a meeting or workshop. Your information is not shared anywhere.

CWC Fundraising

As we approach the end of our fiscal year (7/1/2024-6/30/2025), we wish to acknowledge our generous donors to one (or both) of our established funds.

Writers Helping Writers supports writers who may need financial help to attend meetings or pay for membership. We thank the following members for their donations to this worthy cause: Al Garrotto, Ann O'Connell-Nye, Bob Lane, Jerry Blair, John Schembra, Linda Hartman, Marianne McBride, Nancy Chan, Patricia Northlich, and William Yarborough.

Young Writers Contest supports Contra Costa County middle school students with cash prizes in short story, poetry, essay/personal narrative, and humor. Contest submissions are free. We will celebrate and present awards in May and thank the following members for their donations: Al Garrotto, Ann O'Connell-Nye, Bob Lane, Jerry Blair, John Schembra, Linda Hartman, Marianne McBride, Nancy Chan, Patricia Northlich, and William Yarborough.

Please consider donating to one of our funds either at a meeting or via our website at

<https://cwcmt Diablo.org/donate-to-the-young-writers-contest>

California Writers Club is an IRS 501-3c designated non-profit educational organization. The Mt. Diablo Branch EIN Number is: 94-3068331. Please consult your tax advisor for the deductibility of your donation.

Thank You To All Who Support These Important Programs

Young Writer's Contest is Nearing the Finish Line

The 2025 Young Writers Contest (YWC) is nearing the finish line. The winners for the YWC have been selected and notified. Our dedicated volunteers are preparing for the upcoming Awards Ceremony on Saturday, May 17th in Walnut Creek. This is our 30th annual Young Writers Contest Co-Chaired by Quynh-Uyen Trinh and AnneMarie Mazotti Gouveia.

Below is a list of our Judges and other volunteers who make this contest happen. We are grateful for all of them! Check back next month for the list of winners.

***Denotes Team Captain**

<u>Short Story 6th Grade</u> Cecilia Pugh* Lyn Roberts Cindy Leonard Kristen Bodie Nicole Wind <u>Short Story 7th Grade</u> Jill Hedgecock* Barry Hampshire Denis Hoyer John Schembra <u>Short Story 8th Grade</u> Chloe Laube* Richard Black Phyllis Wachob <u>Humor All Grades</u> Chloe Laube* Josephine (Jo) Mele Susan Lawson	<u>Personal Narrative 6th Grade</u> David George* Cheryl Spanos <u>Personal Narrative 7th Grade</u> Marjorie Witt* Ken Kerkhoff Dita Basu <u>Personal Narrative 8th Grade</u> Linda Hartmann* Suzy Orpin Chandler Kirkman Elizabeth Leary <u>Poetry 6th, 7th, and 8th Grades</u> AnneMarie Mazotti Gouveia* Lori Lynne Armstrong Al Garrotto Elisabeth Tuck Quynh-Uyen Trinh
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(Continued on page 5)

With heartfelt thanks to the YWC Donors, Members and Board of Directors of CWC-Mt. Diablo who not only volunteered their time as this year's judges, but also provided the support necessary to make this year's contest and awards ceremony possible.

YWC Committee	Assistants to the YWC
<u>Judging Coordinators:</u> · Chloe Laube · Lyn Roberts	<u>Anthology Cover Design:</u> · AnneMarie Mazotti Gouveia · Andrew Benzie
<u>Screeners:</u> · AnneMarie Mazotti Gouveia · Cecilia Pugh · Cindy Leonard · Marjorie Witt · Quynh-Uyen Trinh	<u>Award Ceremony Committee:</u> · Cecilia Pugh · Cindy Leonard
	<u>Technical Advisor:</u> · Marlene Dotterer

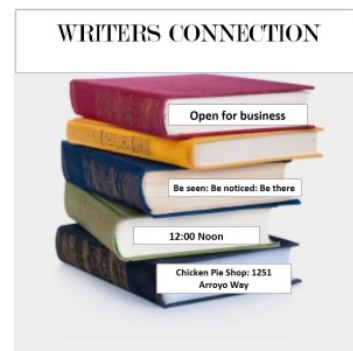
The Writer's Connection

Wednesday, May 28th, 2025

Come share what is happening in your life as a writer: the successes, the rejections, anything goes. Want to read something, wonderful, bring it along. Let us know about any book or story you are reading, like it or not, share it with us. Had a rejection that meant something, tell us about it. Want to give a book away, do so. From 12:00 Noon to 1:30 pm. Be seen, Be noticed, Be there!

Join us at:

The Chicken Pie Shop
1251 Arroyo Way
Walnut Creek, California 94523



Resources for Writers

Click above to find a team to help!

It takes a team to bring a writer's career to greater heights.

Looking for a place to submit your writing?

The following resources come from: [Authors Publish.com](http://AuthorsPublish.com)

Lessons From a Writer and Her Rejections

3 lessons from 100 rejections as a writer.

56 Children's Book Publishers Seeking Submissions (No Agent Required)

All of the publishers on this list publish children's books. Some just publish picture books, some publish only middle-grade fiction, and some publish a wide variety of genres aimed at adults as well. Some are looking for educational work, others are open to anything. A number of these publishers are large and established. Others are...

How to Play The Subtext Game With Your Dialogue

How subtext-rich dialogue is the key to great storytelling.

Folklore Review—Now Seeking Submissions

Now seeking fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and visual art.

26 Approachable Literary Journals

If you are just starting to submit your work to literary journals, or perhaps you just want to avoid rejection, this list is for you.

All of the literary journals in this list accept a high percentage of the work submitted to them, so the odds of your work being accepted just went up...

Reservations Now Open for Special Luncheon with Brian Copeland

WALNUT CREEK, CALIF—April 22, 2025

Reservations are now open for a limited-seat event with Brian Copeland, Bay Area author, comedian, and actor.

Brian Coppeland will be featured at the Saturday, June 14 meeting of the California Writers Club Mt. Diablo Branch. The public is invited. The meeting will be held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill.

Reservations are required. The Cost is \$30 and includes a buffet lunch.

Make your reservations (no walk-ins) at:

<https://cwcmtdiablo.org/june-meeting-with-brian-copeland/>.

Pay online or at the door; cash or checks only. We do not accept credit cards at the door.

Scammers Preying on Writers is on the Rise by Tish Davidson from the CWC Fremont Area Branch

There has been an uptick in scammers preying on self-published and aspiring writers. Most of these scams are based overseas leaving little recourse to writers who have been scammed and lost money. Before you sign anything or pay anyone money to publish your book, represent you to agents, publicize your book, or sign you to a contract, check Scam Alerts at authorsguild.org/resource/publishing-scam-alerts/. This site is maintained by the Authors Guild. The website is accessible to all, even if you're not a Guild member.

Writer Beware offers another list of publishing scammers at writerbeware.blog/scam-archive. Writer Beware also maintains a separate agent impersonation list. This is a particularly noxious form of scamming, because it hurts both the writer and legitimate literary agents. The list can be found here writerbeware.blog/2024/03/15/the-impersonation-list/.

Remember: There are legitimate businesses that help writers self-publish, and there are legitimate public relations companies that will promote your book for a fee. But, if it sounds too good to be true, look before you leap, and your bank account will thank you.

Public Domain News for 2025

Copyright provides protection for creatives, but it does not last forever. On January 1, 2025, many familiar books, plays, art, and music first published in 1929 lost copyright protection. This leaves authors free to quote from these books and use the artwork or music without permission of the publisher. Some of the works losing copyright in 2025 include William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, Hemmingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, the character Popeye, musical compositions like *Singin' in the Rain* (but not the movie), Gershwin's *An American in Paris* and many art works. There are some caveats. Characters are only out of copyright as they were portrayed in 1929. Popeye, for example, can be portrayed with super strength, but you will have to wait until 1931 to use his super spinach eating. Other considerations include the fact that the work must be published, not just created, in 1929 to become copyright-free. Art works created in 1929 but not publicly exhibited (the equivalent of publishing art) are still protected. And many character names and some images continue to be protected by trademark laws even after they are out of copyright.

Yes, it's complicated, but a good resource on what works lost copyright protection in 2025 and the nuances of copyright law is available to from the Duke University Law Center for the Study of Public Domain at web.law.duke.edu/cspd/publicdomainday/2025/. Note that the information Duke Law provides is applicable only to versions of works copyrighted in the US. Even if you never plan to use any of the copyright-free material, the site is interesting reading and provides a wealth of information about copyright law.

If you do decide to use material that may or may not be copyrighted, make sure to do your due diligence. The last thing anyone wants to face is a lawsuit for copyright violation.

*Tish Davidson is the Chairperson
Social Write-in Host Speakers Program & Publicity
CWC Fremont Area Branch.*

CWC Mt. Diablo Open Mic on Zoom

Wednesday, May 14, 2025 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM — Online event

Details: Join us for Open Mic Night!

Sign up to read a five-minute segment from something you've written, a work-in-progress, something already published, or that sheaf of poems you hid under the bed for the last year. Share it with writers and readers at our 90-minute Read Fest!

Not ready to read your work to a crowd? That's okay, we need an audience, too. Come and hear what others have to say. 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. This event is open to the public. Please bring your friends!

Note: Your RSVP on Meetup does not register you for this event. Register online at:

<https://cwcmt Diablo.org/event/open-mic-on-zoom-3/>



Our Novel has been Accepted, after 15 rejections, Yay!

What's Your Story Come, read and enjoy listening...

Place: Walnut Creek Library, the Las Trampas Room: 1644 N. Broadway, W/Creek.

Come, read and enjoy listening ... Bring your own lunch!

When: 12 pm, May 21, 2025, the third Friday of each month.

News from Michael Barrington

Here is a link to my short story, “The Shannike” which was read in full by Linda Gould on her podcast. Press this link. <https://www.kaidankaistories.com/april-2025/april-9-2025>

To listen to the podcast reading of the Shannike by Linda Gould, press [Shannike Podcast.mp3](#). In addition I had three articles published this month:

Magic at Pendle Hill: CafeLit Magazine (UK)

My Time as a Hermit: Braided Way Journal (Canada)

The Little Girl who Loved Me: Masiticaadores Magazine (USA)

Prompts for the Writer’s Connection Meeting on May 28th

- 1) There is an urban legend floating around about a taxi that doesn’t take you where you want to go, but other where you need to go. Write about a character that gets into this taxi. Where do they go and why?
- 2) Your character committed a murder decades ago. It was investigated but went cold after a couple of years. Suddenly a detective shows up at your door asking some questions.

Winners of the Holiday Flash Poetry Contest

Poetry 1st Prize Untitled

by Al Garrotto

*T’was the day after Christmas and, all through my house,
the mess was atrocious. I felt like a louse.*

I gave not a gift, not a card to my kids, or even my spouse.

No sign of Santa, neither tree nor a wreath.

Had I morphed into Scrooge, a wretched old geezer like dour Ebenezer?

I crawled back in bed, now a frigid old freezer....

My door flung wide open! A kiddie invasion.

“Merry Christmas, Daddy! Let’s open our gifts!

Come— See what we got you! We do hope it fits.”

Winners of the Holiday Flash Poetry Contest

Poetry 2nd Prize Christmas in the Emerald Isle

by Phil Scimonelli

I have traveled from afar,

To an enchanted land.

Greeted with open arms,

And a Guinness in my hand.

The Christmas Eve spirit does abound,

As from pub to pub,

I bounce around.

To eat and drink,

To drink and eat,

Only God knows,

How I'm still on my feet!

They say, "your man," "your one," "lovely and indeed".

I'm eating again, potatoes and ham.

The Christmas pudding lit,

An Irish coffee in my hand.

So, on this day of Christmas Cheer,

I wish my Irish friends...

Nollaig Shona,

And Happy New Year.

Winners of the Holiday Flash Poetry Contest

Poetry 3rd Prize First Christmas

by Ceci Pugh

*Colorful cellophane lined with black tape covered our windows like stained glass,
casting multi-hues with the afternoon sun. A tiny artificial tree sparkled with dollar-store bulbs.*

*Married after college, we lived in a cheap apartment in Oakland, existing on a student loan
and part-time jobs. Mac and Cheese was a staple food.*

*Inexpensive hand-typed recipes bound with construction paper and string titled,
"Pauper's Cookbook," presents for the family.*

*Like, "The Little Drummer Boy," song, we had nothing to give.
Christmas was about you, me, God, and love. The only gift that truly mattered.*

Winners of the Holiday Flash Prose Contest

Prose 1st Prize The Perfect Present

by Kristen Bodie

Christmas Eve. All three children tucked in, almost asleep. I crept downstairs to assemble my son's heart's desire. I opened the box and smoothed out the instructions. Not in English, but there were drawings. I squinted at the pictures. What piece attaches to what? Every connection required a different tool: wrench, Phillips, needle nose pliers.

4 a.m. The Big Wheels was assembled! I shoved the tools under the sofa, stuck a bow on the handlebars and fell asleep on the floor. Sunrise dawned to pounding feet, squeals, hollers. "Santa brought it!" my son exulted. His face was my perfect Present.

Winners of the Holiday Flash Prose Contest

Prose 2nd Prize A Tree for Arnie

by Margie Witt

Rose rocks her chair in front of the fireplace, admiring the seven-foot, fully decorated artificial Christmas tree purchased on a whim from Costco. No more traipsing through icy snow with Arnie, squabbling over firs and spruces, flocked or not.

She lights a pine-scented candle and stirs the holiday potpourri. The aroma fills the room. She hears the key in the lock. Will he notice?

Arnie blinks in surprise at the bright lights and takes a deep inhale. "Nothing like the scent of a fresh Douglas fir," he says.

Rose smiles, anticipating the day he tries to burn it.

Prose 3rd Prize Fun at the Town Holiday Frolic

by Sherida Bush

The wide-eyed toddler hurtled toward April, down the holiday ice slide. As she reached out, the little darling launched a kick to April's knees, sending her tottering into Santa's behind. He was launched headlong into the fake presents below the resplendent Christmas tree.

The Jolly Old Elf sputtered a string of expletives as he swam in the sea of presents. The toddler leaped onto his back. Santa thrashed, twisted and sat up with the urchin on his lap.

He looked into the glowing eyes of the instrument of destruction and said, "Dear child, have you been good this year?"

Prose 4th Prize The-Christmas-Present

by Josephine Mele

One Christmas Eve I saw a hungry looking cat on my back deck. I poured a bowl of milk, slid it out, and backed away.

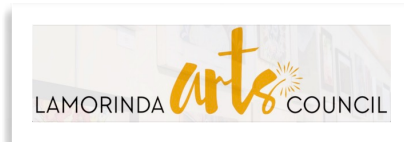
The skinny cat drank and left.

Christmas morning, she was there again. I set out a dish of tuna. She ate, left, and returned with a kitten hanging from her mouth.

When I looked out again, there were two kittens on the deck, and the bedraggled mom made her way toward me, with another.

A triffecta.

My grandkids were delighted to see what Santa had brought me for Christmas.



Art Embraces Words

Lafayette Library, Art and Science Room

3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Lafayette, CA 94549

2:00 – 3:30 PM with reception following in courtyard

2025 DATES:

- Saturday May 10 Honoring Every Kind of Mother
- Saturday July 12 Open Call
- Saturday October 25 Costumed Halloween Event

<https://lamorindaarts.org/art-embraces-words/>

Art Embraces Poetry

Town Hall Theater

3535 School St.

Lafayette, CA 94549

1:30 – 3:30 PM with reception following

with a 3-minute Open Mic session from 2:30-3:30 PM!

2025 DATES:

- Saturday, August 26rd TBD

<https://lamorindaarts.org/art-embraces-poetry/>

Poetry For The Ages

Town Hall Theater

3535 School St.

Lafayette, CA 94549

12:00 Noon – 1:30 PM Enjoy complimentary coffee, tea, and cookies

2025 DATES:

- Tuesday, October 7th “All Hallow’s Eve”

Short Story by Robert Poirier

The Sitka Eagle

Paul Baker, a Sitka firefighter/EMT, was walking with his retired sled dog, Willie, along a gravel road near his home close to Starrigavan Creek on the outskirts of Sitka, Alaska. As always, he carried a Ruger Security-Six .357 magnum revolver in a hip holster. The pistol had two CCI Big 4 shotshells in the first two cylinders. Perfect for the snowshoe hares that frequented the road. The remaining four cylinders had Federal hard cast 180-grain bullets, suitable for big-game hunting, including bear.

Several months before, Paul found a wing-damaged juvenile bald eagle, wrapped it in his jacket, and delivered it to the Alaska Raptor Center. The bird imprinted on Paul and would screech whenever Paul was not around. The staff named the bird “Osalgaaw,” the Tlingit word for overly loud. Paul spent the next four weeks nursing “Gaaw” back to health, and when the bird was healthy, took part in a Tlingit ceremony at the Raptor Center, where Paul released the bird into the wild. Gaaw would occasionally fly over him and drop a snowshoe hare at his feet.

Paul heard an air horn sound three times and immediately called 911. “We might have a bear encounter near the first bend of Starrigavan Creek off the gravel road.” He checked the load of the Ruger, settled it back in the holster, and hurried to the air horn sound.

Paul arrived at the encounter location to see a trim, bearded man holding a can of bear spray and wearing waders, a fly-fishing chest pack, and a cross-body creel.

“That might be a little premature,” Paul said. “It looks like it is busy gnawing on a crossbow bolt in its shoulder, so I don’t believe it will attack us immediately. Toss the creel toward the bear and we’ll slowly back away.”

At the movement, the bear stopped gnawing at the bolt, stood, and let out a terrible roar. Then it went to all fours and slowly advanced toward them. Paul pulled his pistol and fired two shots at the ground in front of the bear.

Willie appeared behind the bear and distracted it by barking ferociously and nipping at its rear. Then, a screeching eagle appeared above the bear, swooped down, and dropped a snowshoe hare in front of it. The dog and eagle continued to harass the bear, who had finished devouring the hare and was tearing apart the creel and wolfing the trout inside.

Hampered by the waders, they walked slowly away from the stream toward the gravel road. When the bear saw they were leaving, it let out another roar and charged them. Paul stood between the charging bear and the man, aiming for a headshot but hoping the bear would break off the charge. He was about to pull the trigger when the bear slowed, staggered, and then collapsed.

Two Alaska Wildlife Troopers from the Sitka post of the Southeast Region approached the bear, further sedated it, and put it in restraints.

“Some idiot hunter shot it with a crossbow,” the senior trooper told Paul. “Our techs will remove the bolt. Your decisions saved the bear. Thank you.” Paul heard screeching and looked up to see Gaaw circling above. The eagle swooped down, missing Paul’s head by a few inches, then soared off, landing on the upper branches of a Sitka spruce where it watched Paul protectively.

Writers Helping Writers

Michael Barrington

As a writer, I have learned the importance of editorial feedback. I have friends who have consulted with writers' groups, critique groups or writer friends and have become confused because they receive such a variety of opinions. The conflicting viewpoints ended up paralyzing them, and they stopped writing.

Whether you're a budding or more experienced writer, choose people who not only like your work but who understand the choices you've made; people whom you're in synch with; people who are smart and constructive, whether they're fellow writers or not; and people who don't trigger your anxiety. You don't want to share your work with anyone who can make you doubt its value or even doubt yourself as a writer. It's difficult enough staying centered and confident about our work without getting confused by too many differing opinions or feeling like a failure.

Most people don't know how to give feedback. They're not careful with their choice of words, or they let their emotions take over. When feedback hurts, it's difficult to see the good in it that might help you grow. The part that feels so damn shitty dominates. Feedback should never be about what a person does or doesn't like, but about what's working or not working.

The most frustrating feedback I've received on my writing was "I loved it." It gave me no information about the actual writing. While positive reactions are lovely for a review, as feedback, they're worthless because they don't give you a way to improve. Even the most hurtful, mean feedback can be useful if it gives you a way to produce a better next draft.

Response or reaction: what's the difference? A reaction is automatic. It's based on emotion. A response is the result of careful thinking that best supports what the writer needs. If you have an emotional reaction to feedback, take a deep breath. Remember that feedback on your work is not personal to you. It's easy to want to explain to your readers what they didn't understand or why you made a particular choice. Instead, listen and evaluate. Why did your readers respond the way they did? Can you change something in the writing to create a different response?

Purely positive feedback is great for your ego, but it does nothing to improve your writing. Positive feedback is worthless if it doesn't help you know what to do next. What's great? What did you like? What did you learn? Why did you like it? Purely negative feedback is completely empty, although it may not feel that way. It just makes you feel shitty. It's easy to take it to heart, but the reality is, "This sucks," is as useless and empty as "This is great." Neither expression gives you any information about the writing, they only tell you the opinion of the reader.

You can always say No to feedback. As long as you carefully consider what is offered, if it doesn't work for you, you don't have to use it.

Personal attacks on you and your writing aren't about you. They are ALWAYS about the person giving it. The key to healthy feedback is finding the right people to give it. People whom you respect and trust.

Sharing something as precious as your most intimate feelings and emotions, even expressed through your characters, is trusting your readers to hold a precious piece of china in their hands..and praying they will not drop it.

Register as Early As You Can For The June 14th General Meeting

Featuring An Afternoon with Brian Copeland Bay Area Author, Comedian, and Actor

June 14, 2025

11:00 am — 2:00pm



Brian Copeland is an award-winning actor, comedian, author, playwright, television and radio talk show host based in the San Francisco Bay Area. His one-man play, “*Not a Genuine Black Man*,” went on to become the longest-running solo show in San Francisco theatrical history, recently celebrating its 1,000th performance.

His debut thriller, *Outraged*, was released in April 2024. The second Topher Davis thriller, *Shadows of Justice*, will be published on April 29, 2025.

An Afternoon with Brian Copeland

Come and hear Brian discuss his multifaceted career, his writings and his new thriller, detective novels: *Outrage* and recently published *Shadow of Justice* with two more to follow. Enjoy this afternoon at:

Zio Fraedo’s Restaurant
611 Gregory Lane
Pleasant Hill, CA

[Register For it Now](#)