



The Write News

California Writers Club – Mount Diablo Branch

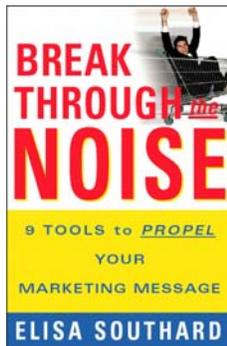
A Monthly Publication

January 2008

January Speaker and Meeting Information

The California Writers Club, Mount Diablo Branch, Presents

Elisa Southard



Elisa Southard, APR, Accredited by the Public Relations Society of America, says “You can do it. You can be your own best marketer — without being a marketing expert.”

On Saturday, January 12th, Elisa will be discussing ideas from her Amazon #1 Marketing and Sales Bestseller, *BREAK THROUGH THE NOISE: 9 Tools to Propel Your Marketing Message.*”

Jack Canfield, Co-Creator, *Chicken Soup for the Soul* says, “Don’t delay success another minute. If you want to turn your personal skills into marketing talent, read [Break Through the Noise.](#)”

From WBZ in Boston to the San Francisco Bay Area’s KFRC, Elisa is a frequent media guest. She is past chair of the Walnut Creek Chamber of Commerce and the Walnut Creek YMCA, recipient of the prestigious YMCA Spirit Award, and the former television host of the cable show "Make It Your Business."

www.BreakThroughTheNoise.com

Please join us at the Hungry Hunter Restaurant, 3201 Mount Diablo Boulevard, in Lafayette, on Saturday, January 12. You will find meeting details below. All are welcome to come, learn, and network with local writers. The California Writers Club, Mount Diablo Branch web address is: <http://www.mtdiablownriters.org>

January Meeting Details

Date & Time: Saturday, January 12, 2008, at 11:30 a.m.

Location: The Hungry Hunter Restaurant, 3201 Mount Diablo Boulevard, Lafayette (at the corner of Pleasant Hill Road and Highway 24).

Cost: \$20 for CWC members, and \$25 for non-members.

Menu Choices: Top sirloin with rice pilaf, roasted salmon, forest mushroom chicken with whiskey peppercorn and sautéed mushrooms, turkey croissant sandwich, or veggie pasta.

Reservations: Reservations are required, and must be received no later than noon on Wednesday, January 9. To make reservations, contact Betty Iverson, with your menu choice, via e-mail at bjiverson@comcast.net, or by phone at (925) 376-3631. Expect confirmation only if you e-mail your reservation.

Upcoming Speakers for 2007- 2008

- February 9: Hailey Lind, Mystery Novelist

President's Message

By Jack Russ



Beginning a new year would be a good time to explore the opportunities available to you to evaluate your writing. I'm referring to contests. A winning submission may return modest financial gain, but perhaps more significant, it will serve you well in your bio submitted to an agent and/or publisher. Then there's that intangible glow that comes with being a winner, and the realization that others believe you to be the exceptional writer you know you are.

Here's a way to find contest opportunities. There is a web resource you may not know about that publishes daily data on writing contests all over the country. It's a great place to get early warning of an opportunity you can't afford to pass up. Subscription is free. Entries cover all genres and include either details of the contest or info on how to explore the contest further. Log on to CRWROPPS-B@yahogroups.com.

And to tell the world of those successes, Al Garrotto has introduced a new page on our branch website that lists members' contest successes. If you have a contest success, contact Al, at algarotto@comcast.net, with the details and share your good news.

Toot Your Cyber-Horn

by Al Garrotto, Website Coordinator

We are continually upgrading our branch website (www.mtdiablownriters.org) to help promote our members' work and successes. In the past month, we have added a **Members' Honors** page, with photos of our contest and award winners. If you have won a writing/contest award, be sure to pass that information to us, and we'll add you to the list on the website.

Another addition to the website is the display of published members' book covers (or other visuals) to the **Members' Books** page. It's your website and we want to help promote your successes and career. And if you've had a book published that isn't yet listed on the website, we would like to know about it. And there's more . . . do you have a website that isn't listed on the **Members' Websites** page yet. Send us the URL. We'd like to link to it.

Finally, not all of our members are publishing books. We're open to suggestions on how we can promote your work, other than or in addition to the *Sales & Salutes* section of our monthly newsletter.

Send book and award information and cover graphics to algarotto@comcast.net. And send your ideas for a **Members' (your suggestion)** page, too (keeping in mind that we cannot take outright business advertising, not even writing services, except by linking to your web page).

Website Review

By B. Lynn Goodwin

SFWA—A Treasure Trove of Resources

<http://www.sfw.org/>

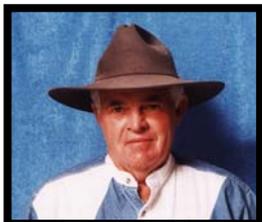
Do futuristic worlds open the doors of your imagination? Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America, Inc, <http://www.sfw.org/>, is an excellent place to expand your knowledge. Whether you are a beginner or a professional, a science fiction writer or pursuing other genres, you'll find valuable resources here. Most of them are available whether you are a member of the organization or not.

At the bottom of the Home Page, you'll find seventeen links. Want the latest news about the Sci-Fi Fantasy World? Click on The Bulletin. Want to read work published in the genre? Click on Members' Fiction. Want to improve your writing skills? Click on Writing. Inside each of these pages you'll find straight forward articles packed with facts and inspiration. Looking for a writing group? Find them inside Links.

If you want to dig further into the genre, explore Members' Pages, Reading, Press Book, and Nebula Awards. For expert tips on the business of writing, visit Contracts and Writers Beware. To stimulate your imagination, explore all that is offered in Links. This page goes beyond what you might expect on a writer's site. Expand your knowledge at <http://www.sfw.org/>. This thoroughly professional site offers something for every writer.

Meet Our Member

By Jody Denison



PROFILE: Frank Thornburgh

Frank Thornburgh is a writer with a remarkably rich drawer of writing prompts. The first item in the drawer is poetry. He wrote poetry as a way to handle teen age angst. Unfortunately none of these “dark pieces,” as he described them, have survived.

He joined a southern California police department when he was twenty two. Frank says the clerk typists who transcribed his reports (written in block capital letters) took pity on a young police officer who skimped by in hated English classes. All this changed in 1980 when volunteering in numerous emergency-disaster organizations like the Red Cross, city and county agencies and FEMA where he had to write plans, instructions, and studies. Evidently this inspired him to take a few Junior College classes and diversify into full time University work in Physics, Math and foreign languages. His peripatetic trip into higher learning covered eight colleges in eight years.

During this time he was also active in the Army Reserves. Frank transferred into Special Forces and went to airborne school at Fort Benning. He actually spent the next forty four years in seven Reserve units. Veterans Day really means something to him.

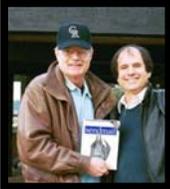
Finally in 2003, suffering from a severe bite of the writing bug, he sent a story off and when it was published the infection was firmly implanted. He has produced two hundred or more anecdotes, vignettes, short stories, newspaper pieces and anthologies. Frank's talent doesn't stop there.

He has “evolved” into doing humorous pieces on stage and in costume with his own CD's in the works. We were able to enjoy his wit and talent at the December meeting. We'll look forward to more either in print or on the stage.

Sales and Salutes



J.D. (Jerry) Blair's short story, *Polynesian Gardens*, has been purchased by **O'Brien's Literary Speculator**. It should appear in the premier edition of that magazine.



George Jansen is one of the authors of a technical book about the computer program called "sendmail." The book is titled *Sendmail, 4th Edition*. It was published in October by O'Reilly, a major publisher of technical books. The photograph at the left is of George, co-author Bryan Costales, and their book.

Conferences

* The 2008 San Francisco Writers Conference

This is the place to be when you are ready to write and publish your best work.

On February 15-17, 2008, bestselling authors, respected literary agents and top editors from major publishing houses, nearly 100 of them, will gather to share their experience with just 300 attendees at the Mark Hopkins Hotel. Meet publishers and editors from St. Martin's Press, Random House, Simon & Schuster, and others. Imagine writing workshops taught by bestselling authors and social events where you can network with the presenters and other writers. Learn cutting edge information on publishing and self-publishing your work, book marketing, industry trends and more. For complete event information, visit <http://www.SFWriters.org> or call 1-866-862-7392.

* **The Clayton Community Library** is hosting Diane Lando, author of *The Bentwood Creek Chronicles*, and Brentwood's 2007 poet laureate. Ms. Lando will be presenting a program on writing fictionalized memoirs. The date is January 19 3:00 p.m. at the City Meeting Room of the Clayton Community Library, 6125 Clayton Road, Clayton. For more information phone (925) 673-0659.

Contests

* **The 2008 New York Book Festival** has issued a call for entries to it's annual program. This Book Festival will consider published, self-published and independent publisher non-fiction, fiction, children's books, science fiction, horror, photography/art, romance and biography/autobiography works. Regular registration deadline in each category must be postmarked by the close of business on May 25, 2008. To enter, check the New York Book Festival website at www.newyorkbookfestival.com, phone 323-665-8080, or e-mail NewYorkBookFest@aol.com, for more information.

* **The Third William Saroyan International Prize for Writing Award** nominations are now being accepted. This award, given by Stanford University Libraries, in partnership with the William Saroyan Foundation, recognizes newly published works of fiction and non-fiction, with a \$12,500 award for the winner in each category. The prize is designed to encourage new or emerging writers and honor the Saroyan literary legacy of originality, vitality and stylistic innovation. While normally biennial, this third round of the award is on a triennial schedule, having been timed to coincide with the Saroyan Centennial celebrations taking place in 2008. Entries must be received on or before January 31, 2008. For prize rules, entry forms, and more information on the prize, visit the Saroyan Prize website at <http://library.stanford.edu/saroyan/>.

From the Editor's Desk

By Catherine Accardi

Libraries are a wonderful thing, particularly so for avid writers and readers. The Mechanics' Institute building in San Francisco, houses the oldest library on the West Coast. This impressive 1910 building is located at 57 Post Street.



The first meeting of the Mechanics' Institute was held on December 11, 1854. In 1858, the Institute moved to a location on Montgomery Street between California and Pine Streets. At this time, there were 900 well used books in the library collection. In 1866 the Institute sold its California Street property, bought the site of its present home on Post Street, and erected a three-story building at a cost of \$79,750. By 1886, the Institute housed 135,000 volumes and had grown to 4,150 members. In January of that year, it absorbed the collections of art, literature, and rare editions held by the local Mercantile Library. This merger brought together the largely technical collection of the Mechanics' Institute with the strong humanities resources of the Mercantile Library. The magnificent collection amounted to approximately 200,000 books.



When San Francisco was leveled by the 1906 earthquake and fire, the collections and building were completely destroyed. The loss included the Institute's priceless files of California newspapers. Not to be deterred, the first day after the fire, it is reported by historians that the Head Librarian sent telegrams to libraries and book dealers throughout the United States requesting books for the library. Construction on a new building began on June 4, 1906. By July 1910, the new nine-story building, at 57 Post Street, was completed. By 1912 collections totaled 40,000 books. By 1955, collections amounted to 155,000 books and 5,000 members. Funds from James Lick's \$10,000 bequest to the Institute received from his estate were utilized for the purchase of technical and scientific books. James Lick is remembered today in a bronze plaque located in the lobby of the Institute building. This plaque, blackened but unharmed, was retrieved from the wall of the old Post Street building after the 1906 fire. Today, the Mechanics' Institute is a sound and respected institution with a proud California heritage. Many members describe the library as "an oasis amidst the crowded jungle of the San Francisco Financial District".

Members can find books on all aspects of life, the arts, and the sciences. Each month the Library adds approximately 300 new books, videotapes and audiocassettes to the collections. The stacks on the second, third, and mezzanine levels, and basement stacks today house noteworthy strength in the following areas: literature, fine arts, social sciences, applied sciences, biography, business, finance, philosophy, and history. Reference databases are provided for over five million books. The Contemporary Author database provides complete biographical, bibliographical information, and references, on more than 120,000 California, American and international authors. There are numerous other databases at the Mechanics' Institute Library providing a comprehensive resource for writers and readers. This lovely, and historic, 1910 gem is certainly worth a visit, not only for its important place in California history, but also for the vast resources it offers to the California writer. For more information about the Mechanics' Institute Library, check their website at www.millibrary.org.

Photographs courtesy of the Mechanics' Institute Library.

Happy New Year

California Writers Club - Mount Diablo Branch

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and do not necessarily represent the views of the California Writers Club.*

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*Some books leave us free
and some books make us free.
~ Ralph Waldo Emerson*