

The Write News

California Writers Club ~ Mount Diablo Branch

A Monthly Newsletter

September 2009

Celebrating 100 Years **The California Writers Club ~ Mount Diablo Branch** **Presents** ***Janis Bell***

*Different from or different than?
We need to determine if . . . or, We need to determine whether . . . ?
I only have eyes for you . . . or, I have eyes only for you?*



On Saturday, September 12, Janis Bell, author of *Clean, Well-lighted Sentences, A Guide to Avoiding the Most Common Errors in Grammar and Punctuation* will answer these questions (and many others). Bell has been teaching writing in universities, private industry, and government agencies for over three decades. This highly interactive presentation offers writers a chance to get answers to questions about the sentences they (and others) write. If you are wondering about issues related to grammar, usage, or punctuation, pack them up and bring them to the September meeting for a big dose of clarity and satisfaction. This informative and lively presentation will be both practical and entertaining—not your everyday English class. Visit our speaker online at <http://www.janisbell.com>.

September Meeting Details

Date & Time: Saturday, September 12, 2009, from 12:00 to 2:30 p.m.

Sign-in begins at 11:30 a.m.

Location: Zio Fraedo's Restaurant at 611 Gregory Lane (near the corner of Pleasant Hill Road and Gregory Lane). Parking is available both in front and behind the restaurant. The restaurant's phone number is (925) 933-9091.

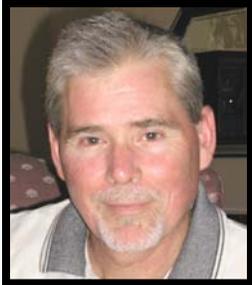
Cost: \$20 for members, \$25 for non-members

Menu: A sumptuous luncheon buffet by Zio Fraedo's.

Reservations: Reservations are required and must be received no later than noon on Wednesday, September 9. To make reservations, contact Veronica Rossi, via e-mail at verossi@aol.com, or by phone at (925) 743-1886. Expect confirmation only if you e-mail your reservation.

President's Message

By David George



Welcome to our CWC Centennial Celebration Year. Before we start with the many special events planned for this year, I wanted to take a moment to review our accomplishments this past year. I've put together a bullet list of those achievements:

- Successful transition to 3 new branch officers
- Successful transition to new meeting location and facilities
- Successful November workshop with over 60 in attendance
- Successful YWC fund raising event and donation drive
- Highly successful Young Writers Contest banquet with over 150 attending
- Outstanding quality on monthly newsletters
- Promotion of 2 members to Active category
- Designation of 3 members to Life category
- Highest average overall attendance ever for monthly meetings
- Great quality speakers all year with very favorable member comments
- Achievement of an overall balanced financial budget
- Successful community outreach with 2 young writers workshops
- Overall positive comments from members about meetings, facilities, programs

That's quite a list! In addition, we attracted enough new members to replace the folks we lost and grew to 160 strong – the second largest branch in the CWC. Thanks again to everyone who made my personal role so manageable. And my special thanks to our wonderful Board of Directors and Board of Advisors. The best in the Club. The Goal for This Year? ***Let's Celebrate!***

CWC Centennial



On the left is the newly approved colorized, stylized version of the California Writers Club Centennial logo. On the right is a photograph of the Life Member combination of pin and "rocker tab." The pin is available for purchase at our monthly meetings. The rocker tab is available for Active members who pay the Life membership fee of \$599. Those members will receive both items as a gift.



The date for the May 2010 Young Writers Banquet has been changed from May 8 to May 15.

Sales and Salutes

Sale ~

Elizabeth Koehler-Pentacoff sold the following articles to *Children's Book Insider*: Author Pamela Turner Tells Captivating Life "Story" Sticking to the Facts, Make Your Submission Stand Out with a Strong Synopsis, Golden Book Editor Diane Muldrow, and one essay to the *San Francisco Chronicle* called Body Bargaining: Discounting the Dear Departed.

Salute and Award ~

Provided by **Barbara Bentley**: Little did I ever imagine that this would happen. God had been directing my journey for me to help others ever since I decided to write my book and I just keep plodding along. My award falls under Legal Reform and honors the work I did not only in changing the divorce law of California, but in writing the story to help other women. I am donating half of my prize to Community Violence Solutions (formerly known as The Rape Crisis Center) in honor of my friend Sheryl, who sits on the board and is the one who nominated me.

For more information on this award, go to the Foundation for the Improvement of Justice, Inc. website at www.justiceawards.com. The following is taken from this website:

AWARDS PROGRAM

The Foundation encourages improvement by recognizing and rewarding accomplishment in the following categories:

1. Legal reform
2. Crime prevention
3. Child protection
4. Speeding the process
5. Effecting restitution
6. Crime victims' rights
7. Alternative sentencing
8. Reducing recidivism
9. Lowering the cost
10. Other significant efforts

The Foundation recognizes and awards up to seven nominees on an annual basis with an awards package which includes: the Paul H. Chapman medal, a check for \$10,000, a commendation bar pin, a certificate of appreciation, and an invitation to an awards banquet in Atlanta, Georgia.

Members – Would You Like To Be Saluted?

We would like to salute you in *The Write News*. Please let newsletter Editor Catherine Accardi know if you have been published recently. Your name and writing achievement will be highlighted in the "Sales and Salutes" section of the newsletter. Send along a photograph of yourself and we shall include it as well. You may contact Catherine at caacat@comcast.net.

Member Profile

By Jody Denison

Profile: Jack Drori



Lunch with CWC is always inspiring. How can it not be when you have eight imaginations around the table? Those imaginations inspire each other as the conversations go from one subject to another. Such was the case while sitting with Jack Drori during the May meeting.

The Boston transplant says that he first heard his muse “whisper” when he was about fifteen, but silenced it, for the most part, during his career, and instead published scientific articles. Jack established a neurology practice in Walnut Creek and Concord. He also taught in the hospital. This left little if any time for creative writing.

Jack does say that as his fascination with the wonders and intricacies of the human brain grew, he became intrigued by the similarities in the architecture and functions of cetacean (whales, dolphins) brains. He took a three month hiatus from his busy schedule and tried his hand at a science fantasy, *Mr. Bluefin*. It is about the adventures of a marine biologist and a blue whale. The book is dedicated to his three daughters. Jack has also spent five years on a novel that he says is ready for publication. It is based on his life experiences. He spent two and a half years working with a free lance editor before he joined CWC. At the California Writers Club, Jack has discovered that he learned more of the “art and craft” of writing from the interaction with fellow writers in the critique group than any other forum.

Workshop

Carla King and Lisa Alpine are teaching a self-publishing workshop at Fort Mason in San Francisco on October 4. They are offering CWC members a \$10 discount and will give a \$10 donation to CWC for every member that signs up for the \$85 fee. Workshop details can be found below.

Self-Publish Your Book with Lisa Alpine and Carla King

Location: Fort Mason Center in San Francisco

Date & Time: Sunday, October 4, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Cost: \$85

In this workshop, *Authors at the Crossroads: Turn Toward Self-Publishing*, you will learn:

- * Printing strategies for offset, print-on-demand, and eBooks
- * How to effectively market and publicize your book
- * How to construct a realistic timeline, budget, and what to outsource
- * How to create your platform and assert your brand
- * Low-cost and no-cost author and publisher services companies
- * How to make the most of your website and social media tools

[Lisa](#) and [Carla](#) are longtime self-published authors, coaches, consultants, and high-energy workshop leaders with clients from first-time authors to multi-book stars. For more details, visit www.CarlaKing.com/workshops/crossroads, or phone Lisa at (415) 887-8820, or email writing@LisaAlpine.com.

Conference

The 18th annual 2009 Jack London Writers Conference will be held on October 10 and 11, 2009, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Foster City. The San Francisco-Peninsula Branch of the California Writers Club organizes the annual Jack London Writers Conference. The inaugural conference was held in 1988 as a fund-raiser to help restore the famed author's cottage in the Jack London State Park. Detailed information on the this conference can be found at www.cwc-peninsula.org/conference/index.html.



Tip Bucket



As reported in the December 2008 edition of *The Write News*, the Back Fence has a new feature called the Tip Bucket. Future editions of *The Write News* will feature excerpts from the Tip Bucket. Below is the tip for September.

Sell A Manuscript - Book Proposal

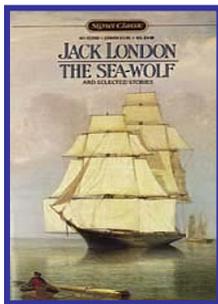
For non-fiction books or articles, a book proposal is a document with many sections that describes your book idea in order to sell it to a publisher. A thorough proposal presents the subject of your book, introduces your qualifications for writing it, analyzes the market, compares your book to the competition, and offers promotion ideas. It also explains length, delivery and format, and contains a detailed outline and sample chapters.

- First send a query letter to the agent or editor but don't send it out until your book proposal is almost finished. You don't want a long lag time between the request and the delivery.
- When asked, send the book proposal and include an SASE (self-addressed, stamped envelope) if you want to get it back. Otherwise it will be destroyed if the agent or editor is not interested.
- Although memoir is considered non-fiction, in most cases, you will need to complete the manuscript before sending out your query letter and book proposal.

For the complete text of this, and other helpful tips, check out the Tip Bucket at the Back Fence. Members of The Back Fence can visit this site at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/CWCBackFence/>. Click on "Files" at the left of your screen. Topics of interest to writers are arranged in order as you work your way through the publishing process. Do you have any tips to share under the main topics? Do you have another topic you feel needs to be addressed? Members who want to add their tips can open a folder and easily add a file. If you haven't yet joined the Back Fence go to the link above and follow the simple sign-up process.

From the Editor's Desk

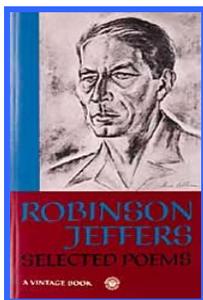
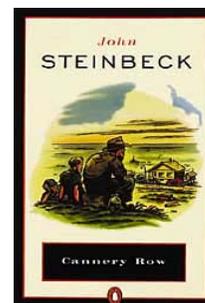
By Catherine Accardi



100 Years of Literary History

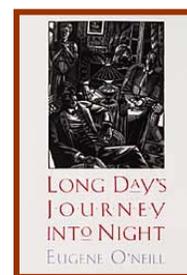
I have touched upon several of San Francisco's literary landmarks in past issues of *The Write News*. Now I am "literally" expanding on that subject. Beginning with California's literary gold up north, we have Jack London's Wolf House. Located in Glen Ellen, Sonoma County, Wolf House was almost completed by late July of 1913. London and his wife were just about to move in when the \$80,000 dwelling burned to the ground. It was never rebuilt. The house is now a collection of charred walls among a grove of trees. The remains of Wolf House are part of Jack London State Park. For visitor information you may contact 707-938-5216, or visit the website at www.parks.sonoma.net/JLPark.html. Bring a copy of *The Sea-Wolf* and read it amongst the ruins. You might just hear the *Call of the Wild*.

Next wander down the California coast to Monterey Bay and visit Cannery Row. Although the Cannery Row I remember from thirty years ago is a place of the past, you can still find remnants of John Steinbeck at Doc Ricketts's Lab. Ed Ricketts established his laboratory next to the sardine canneries, brothels, and flophouses of Cannery Row, and that was where he met John Steinbeck. Steinbeck often said of Ricketts, "he was part of my brain," and was certainly his muse as Steinbeck wrote *Sweet Thursday* and *Cannery Row*. Doc's lab is open for public tours. For more information contact the Cannery Row Foundation at 831-372-8512. Afterwards, head over to the Salinas Valley and visit the National Steinbeck Center in Salinas. Information on John Steinbeck and the Center can be found at www.steinbeck.org.



While in the area, check out Robinson Jeffers's Tor House in Carmel. Jeffers arrived in Carmel in 1914 to find a delightful spot where the land and ocean met to form a tor, or craggy hill. This was the site of Tor House, built from the rocks of Carmel Point. The house is open for tours and visitors can view the stone tower, and a secret stairway to a second floor sanctuary, where Jeffers might have written poems like *The Measure* and *The Condor*. For more Tor House information, go to www.torhouse.org, or phone 831-624-1813.

When it's time to head back north to the Bay Area, don't forget to stop at Eugene O'Neill's Tao House in Danville. O'Neill's interest in Eastern philosophy and Oriental art influenced the design of the house and surrounding property with elements of Taoism. The house is open for tours which include Eugene's second floor study where he wrote his final plays, *Long Day's Journey into Night* and *The Iceman Cometh*. Information on Tao House is available by calling 925-838-9249.



Coming up in the October edition of *From the Editor's Desk*, I absolutely must take us back to the literary landmarks of San Francisco. I just can't help myself! I have discovered a map outlining all the literary landmarks and resources of the City by the Bay. Until then, I shall be at the City Lights Bookstore reading Lawrence Ferlinghetti's *Coney Island of the Mind*.



California Writers Club ~ Mount Diablo Branch

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Sail On!