



The Write News

California Writers Club ~ Mount Diablo Branch

A Monthly Publication

April 2008

April Speaker and Meeting Information

The California Writers Club ~ Mount Diablo Branch, Presents

North Atlantic Books Editor Emily Boyd Set to Discuss Publishing from A to Z



Emily Boyd will explain the publishing process, from submission through publication. She will also discuss the importance of researching potential publishers to be certain **YOUR** manuscript fits in with their mission and subjects.

As Senior Project Editor/Acquisitions Assistant at a leading publisher of alternative health, martial arts, and spiritual titles, Ms. Boyd knows first-hand what an editor looks for in a manuscript and how authors should go about submitting their work.

You do not need an agent to become a published author! North Atlantic Books publishes in a wide variety of areas and works closely with authors to make the best books possible.

Please join us at the Hungry Hunter Restaurant, on Saturday, April 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.mtdiablowriters.org>

April Meeting Details

Date & Time: Saturday, April 12, 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: Choose one of the following when contacting Betty Iverson for reservations.

- Baby Back Ribs--A half slab of fall off the bone tender ribs, basted with smoky barbecue sauce and baked. Served with French fries.
- Roasted Salmon -- A filet of Norwegian salmon brushed with a blend of basil, mustard seed, garlic and lemon. Served with rice pilaf.
- Grilled Chicken Salad -- A boldly seasoned charbroiled chicken breast served atop a bed of mixed greens including mushrooms, cabbage, carrots and croutons.
- Turkey Croissant Sandwich -- Served with French fries.
- Veggie Pasta

Reservations: Reservations are required, and must be received no later than noon on Wednesday, April 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 2008

May 16 - Young Authors Banquet ~ Leslie Griffith, Speaker

June 14 - Martha Engber ~ Great Characters from the Ground Up

July & August - Club does not meet in July or August

September 13 - To Be Determined

October 11 - Darryl Brock, Novelist

President's Message

By Jack Russ



The advent of Spring brings a number of writer enticements, some you might otherwise miss. This newsletter, our website, and our TidBits, sent to members with email accounts, offer sometimes overlooked features we believe are of interest to Mt. Diablo Branch members. For example, in January I told you of one of the best listings of contests for writers, www.CRWROPPS-B@yahoogroups.com. Some members have recently learned of their contest writing successes. As we move further into the summer and early Fall writers conferences proliferate. For example, the renowned East of Eden conference will be conducted by the South Bay Branch in Salinas, CA the first weekend of September. Many of our members have enjoyed past sessions of this conference series, some coming away with awards, others with successful agent and publisher contacts.

In the near future we look forward to our annual Young Writers Contest for Middle School Students of Contra Costa County. On Friday, May 16, 2008, the Branch presents the cash awards and hosts the young winners and their parents at the presentation banquet. ALL Mt. Diablo Branch members are encouraged to attend to enjoy the festivities and hear our guest speaker Leslie Griffith former KTVU-2 (Oakland) anchor woman, the bay area's most award winning female journalist.

To stay on top of these changing events it's important that we be able to contact you. Membership renewals are due now with the form attached to this newsletter. Be sure your information is current. And yes, the "free lunch" drawing will be conducted at our June meeting for those who have renewed their membership by May 31st. We realize some members move, change phone numbers or e-mail addresses, especially during the spring and summer. Please help us stay in touch with you by ensuring we have the correct information on how to reach you.

Sales & Salutes



Robert Haus will have his latest article, *The Snake in the Cockpit*, published in the June issue of **Flight Journal Magazine**. In addition, the December issue of the **California Transportation Journal** printed Robert's article on the highway maze rebuild.

Jerry Blair has had his poem, *The Children's Hour*, selected for publication in the 2009 **Pear Magazine Anthology**.

Thank You to **Dave George**, who has volunteered to prepare follow up letters to our speakers. Also, a big thank you to those of you who have volunteered as back up letter writers.

A Website Review

By B. Lynn Goodwin

Read and Hear THE WRITER'S ALMANAC with Garrison Keillor

Poetry rocks. It can also intimidate. Exposure helps.

Poets, potential poets, and the rest of us can have a new poem delivered by e-mail seven days a week. Simply subscribe to The Writer's Almanac with Garrison Keillor at <http://writersalmanac.publicradio.org/>. Visit the webpage and click on Newsletters. Then enter your information and scroll down to click on The Writer's Almanac.

In addition to a poem, each e-mail includes Literary and Historical Notes for the day. To hear Garrison Keillor read the notes and poem, click back to the Home Page and subscribe to Podcast or click on Real Audio when you get your e-mail. Keillor's voice enhances meaning and his pacing brings out subtle nuances.

Want to know more about the poet's craft? Click on Bookshelf and select a poet. You'll read highlights of an interview focusing on inspiration and technique.

The Writer's Almanac houses an amazing library of contemporary poets and their predecessors in Archives. Records go back to 1995. Let The Writer's Almanac, <http://writersalmanac.publicradio.org/>, broaden your imagination and enhance your appreciation of poetry. Reading or listening to The Writer's Almanac will enhance your day.

Meet Our Member

By Jody Denison



Profile: *Jil Plummer*

An only child has the advantage of uninterrupted solitude wherein imagination has free rein. Such is the case with new member Jil Plummer. As soon as she could write the stories she imagined they found life on paper. Jil is Canadian by birth and attended private boarding schools. Finishing school was in England where she focused on Horsemanship. She also learned how to curtsy to the Queen—a useful tool she was told.

She is presently keeping a promise to herself to use her experiences as fodder for her fiction. Those experiences cover a wide range: working with horses in England—show jumping, hunting and racing over fences, then acting in Toronto and New York, secretary on a banana plantation in Jamaica, working for a clown on a children's TV show in Hollywood. When she arrived in Lafayette she took up long distance running and competed with her Border collies in Canine Agility Trials.

Now this sounds like Jil's plate was pretty full, but wait! For twenty years she also taught English as a second language in Acalanes Adult School. Jil has been writing continuously, stating that it was much more pleasant to write a story and then start another instead of trying to go through the stress of trying to get them published. She has six or more novels completed, and with the discovery of the California Writers Club, she is bracing to get on the road to finding an agent and a publisher. She summed up her writing with this wonderful phrase: "For me, writing a short story is a love affair, writing a novel is a marriage." Haven't heard it said any better than that!

California Writers Club ~ Mount Diablo Branch
Annual Young Writers Contest 2008 Donations

Thank you to the following members for the Young Writers Contest 2008 Donations.
We couldn't hold the contest without you!

California Writers Donor Club

Table with 3 columns: Donor Name, Donor Club, and In Memory of. Includes names like Barbara Bentley, Maureen Biro, Sherida Bush, etc.

The Mt. Diablo Branch of the California Writers Club invites you to support the young writers of today by honoring the great California writers of the past. Please consider joining one of the following Donor Clubs. Your gift will be acknowledged in the Young Writers Contest program and in the Mt. Diablo CWC Newsletter.

- The Jack London Founder's Circle ~ \$250
The John Muir Member Club ~ \$150 - \$249
The Ina Coolbrith Laureate Club ~ \$100 - \$149
The Mary Austin Writers Club ~ \$50 - \$99
The George Sterling Society ~ \$25 - \$49
The Gertrude Atherton Guild ~ \$10 - \$24

Please list my membership in the following Donor Club: _____

Name _____ Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____ (checks or cash only, please)

Acknowledge my gift in honor of/in memory of _____

Please make your check payable to: CWC-Mt. Diablo Branch *

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

* The California Writers Club is a non-profit organization. Your gift is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Conferences

*** Pride in Publishing ~ Northern California Publishers & Authors Conference**

April 26, 2008 ~ 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the Red Lion Hotel, 1401 Arden Way in Sacramento. This all day conference will have speakers, expert panels, information on modern publishing, marketing, distribution, copy editing and lay-out. For more information, check the website at www.norcalpa.org, e-mail info@norcalpa.org, or phone (916) 733-1655.

*** The 2008 East of Eden Writer's Conference**, sponsored by the CWC-South Bay Branch, will be held on September 5-7, 2008. For more information send e-mail to EOE-List-subscribe@southbaywriters.com.

Contests

*** The Third Annual Portia Steele Award for Poetry & Prose** has announced its awards competition for writers. The awards are for Excellence in Poetry and Excellence in Prose for women 50 years of age or older. For complete information, visit their website at www.portiasteeleaward.org.

*** The 2008 Writers Digest Contest** deadline is May 15, 2008. Visit the Writers Digest website for more details at www.writersdigest.com/contests/annual/77th.

CWC Membership Renewal Time

By Jody Denison

REMINDER: For all members, your membership expires on June 30, 2008. Dues for the upcoming 2008/2009 year are \$45.00 payable to CWC-Mt. Diablo Branch. Mail your check and membership renewal form below to: Membership, CWC Mt. Diablo Branch, PO Box 606, Alamo CA, 94507. *And don't forget*—one of the members who have renewed prior to May 31 will be selected in a drawing for a free lunch at our June meeting.



It's Annual Membership Renewal Time Again!

There really is such a thing as a FREE LUNCH! Renew your Membership by May 31st, and your name will be entered in our drawing for a FREE LUNCH at a future meeting of your choice. Don't wait. **RENEW TODAY!**

Please complete this form, and include it with your \$45 check. We're updating our member database and we want to make sure we have correct information about you. PLEASE print clearly!

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Initial ____ Nickname _____

Mailing Address _____ Main Phone (____) _____

City _____ State ____ ZIP _____ Other Phone (____) _____

E-Mail Addr. _____ FAX (____) _____

Active Member Associate Member Supporting Member Web Site _____

Principal Genre _____ Additional Genre(s) _____

Security Note: Membership information is not made public at any time.

Make your check for \$45 payable to "CWC-Mt. Diablo Branch". Mail this form with your check to : CWC-Membership, P.O. Box 606, Alamo CA 94507. If you have any questions call Jody at (925) 838-0058, or e-mail denisonjd@sbcglobal.net.

From the Editor's Desk

By Catherine Accardi

Hammett and Chandler ~ California Writers & Literary Noir Masters

Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler are considered by many as literary noir masters. A number of books and websites are devoted to the biographies and works of these two men. Two of those websites are www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/database/hammett_d.html, for Dashiell Hammett, and www.geocities.com/athens/parthenon/3224, for Raymond Chandler. Brief biographical facts are: Mr. Hammett was born in Maryland in 1894. His birth name was Samuel Dashiell Hammett. Hammett's paternal side were the Hammetts, and his maternal side were the Dashiells. Hammett died in 1961, in New York, at age 67, ravaged by tuberculosis, alcoholism, and cancer. Mr. Chandler was born in Illinois in 1888. His birth name was Raymond Thornton Chandler. Chandler died in 1959, in California, at age 71, ravaged by alcoholism and pneumonia. These two California writers are not famous for their statistics, but, rather, for their masterful literary noir.



Below is a portion of the eulogy by Hammett's long time companion, Lillian Hellman. "He was a man who respected words in books and suspected them in life: he believed that words sometimes took the place of thought and almost always took the place of action, and he deeply believed in both. He read enormously, sometimes five and six books a week, and anything that came to hand. He believed in man's right to dignity and never in all the years did he play anybody's game but his own. Blessed are thy, I hope, who leave good work behind."

In 1921 Hammett moved from Spokane to San Diego. He worked for the San Francisco branch of Pinkerton's Detective Agency, and began to sell detective stories to *The Black Mask* from 1923. After his success with *The Black Mask* short stories, came gems like: *The Dain Curse* (1929), *The Maltese Falcon* (1930), *The Glass Key* (1930), and *The Thin Man* (1934). We are fortunate Hammett was the screenwriter when Hollywood made many of his writings into iconic film noir.



I do not have an eloquent eulogy for Mr. Chandler. I have his own words from a letter of June 1957: "I have lived my whole life on the edge of nothing". Perhaps this interesting perspective of his own life is what motivated his extraordinary skill as a writer of human nature's dark side. How about this quote from *The Big Sleep*: "What did it matter where you lay once you were dead? In a dirty sump or in a marble tower on top of a hill? You were dead, you were sleeping the big sleep..." Those of you who might find this darkness unpleasant might want to read Raymond Chandler's *The High Window* (1942). I would describe *The High Window* as breathtaking in its raw honesty. Just as Hammett, Chandler found success in California, when Hollywood made many of his writings into the best of film noir.

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 Read the following if you care to explore masterful literary noir:

**Dashiell Hammett**  
 The Dain Curse - 1929  
 The Maltese Falcon - 1930  
 The Glass Key - 1930  
 The Thin Man - 1934

**Raymond Chandler**  
 The Big Sleep - 1939  
 Farewell My Lovely - 1940  
 The High Window - 1942  
 The Lady in the Lake - 1943

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## California Writers Club - Mount Diablo Branch

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*The ideas and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributing individuals  
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