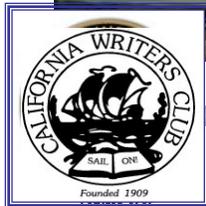


The Write News

A Mo

A Monthly Newsletter

September 2011



The California Writers Club-Mount Diablo Branch

Presents:

Victoria Zackheim, MA



Saturday, September 10, 2011

From Sex to Senility: In Anthologies, Anything Goes!

Ever have ideas about stories that should be collected into an anthology? Why not work toward *your stories* being published in anthologies? Victoria will share her knowledge on writing and how to pursue an anthology publisher.

Comments about Victoria's talks:

"She had so much useful information for a writer and not a word was wasted."

"She is an excellent, no-nonsense communicator."

Victoria wrote the historical fiction novel: *The Bone Weaver*

And Screen Plays:

More Than A Poet's Daughter: The Story of Ada Byron Lovelace

Where Birds Never Sang: Sachsenhausen and Ravensbruck Concentration Camps (airing on PBS in 2012)

She teaches creative nonfiction in the UCLA Writers' Program

"My job is to encourage my students to dip into that well of emotions and memories, opinions and beliefs, and whether poignant or sad, hilarious or ironic, find the most satisfying way to express the story. And when it's written? That's the beginning! We form and edit, mold and create, until our voices emerge and the message is delivered. When the work is done, we can determine where to send it for publication."

Victoria was named a 2010 San Francisco Library Laureate

She has edited 5 anthologies with stories by the authors named:

- *The Other Woman*: Jane Smiley, Diana Abu Jaber, Connie May Fowler

- *For Keeps*: Carrie Kabak, Christine O'Hagan, Caroline Leavitt

- *The Face in the Mirror*: Malachy McCourt, Beverly Donofrio, Alan Dershowitz

- *He Said What?*: Joyce Maynard, Ellen Sussman, Amy Ferris

- (Due 2012) *Exit Laughing: How We Use Humor to Take the Sting Out of Death*: Jacquelyn Mitchard, Michael Tucker, Joshua Braff

To attend this lively talk with Victoria Zachheim

Contact: Jean at jeaniepops@comcast.net or leave a message at: (925) 934-5677

Meeting Details on Page 2

The Jack London *Distinguished Service Award*



Bob Garfinkle, State President of CWC Presenting The Jack London Award to David George

David George was presented with the distinguished Jack London Award at a CWC ceremony on July 23, 2011. David is the recent Mt. Diablo Branch past-president of the California Writers Club and is serving his third year as Vice President of the State CWC organization. David has continuously served the CWC since 2004, including as Branch Representative, NorCal Group representative, Vice President, and President, and as a State CWC Director.

September 10 Meeting Details – check-in begins at 11:30 am

Menu: Zio Fraedo's sumptuous buffet.

Reservations: Reservations are required and must be received no later than noon on **Wednesday, September 7**

To make a reservation, contact Jean Georgakopoulos, via e-mail at jeaniegpopps@comcast.net, or by phone at (925) 934-5677. Expect confirmation only when you e-mail your reservation.

Please Note: In accordance with our contractual agreement with Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, the club is charged for every reservation confirmed on the day before the meeting. If you are not able to attend this meeting, or if you do not cancel your reservation prior to noon on the Friday before the meeting, you will be asked to remit a \$20 "no-show" payment.

Publishing Pathways - Coming Soon ***Presenting a New Benefit to our Members***

CWC will launch *Publishing Pathways* in mid-October with a mentor at Mt. Diablo Branch

What is the purpose of the Publishing Pathways Committee?

The sole purpose of Publishing Pathways is to support CWC members in their effort to publish their writing.

How does Publishing Pathways support CWC members who want to publish their writing pieces?

The committee has created several support resources:

- Our website, maintained by a web team, is a primary source for up-to-date information about publishing.
- An Expert Speakers' list of people who have had personal experience in the publishing process.
- A Skills Bank consisting of individuals with expertise in adjunct aspects of publishing such as: creating platforms, marketing, query letter writing.

How do I get help from the Publishing Pathways Committee?

The Publishing Pathways Committee has a team of trained mentors whom branch members can consult about publishing. Most branches have from one to five mentors on our team. The Mentor Team is the heart of our program.

Stay Tuned for more information - coming soon to our Branch

President's Message

By *Lee Paulson*



Is it too early to say "Happy New Year?" September starts our 2011-2012 CWC programs.

The California Writers Club was founded in 1909 by Jack London, Joaquin Miller and others, and is the oldest writing club west of Washington, DC. The club has grown to eighteen branches and over 1,500 members throughout the state. Last year, two regional groups were formed: NorCal and SoCal.

During the past six months there has been a major statewide initiative to improve the value of membership and share the best ideas among branches. Thanks to the involvement of Mt. Diablo board members like David George, Judith Marshall, and others at the state and regional level, our branch will greatly benefit from these efforts.

Your Mt. Diablo Branch of the California Writers Club was formed in 1987 by seven dedicated writers. It has grown to over 150 members, over half of whom are published writers. Associate members are aspiring writers, and many who help writers achieve the highest quality possible.

Mt. Diablo is well-served by a dedicated group of volunteers who "make things happen." Who are our board members and what do they do?

This year will feature three writing workshops and a bevy of top-notch speakers put together by *Elisabeth Tuck* and *Don Maker*. Elisabeth also serves as Vice President.

Thanks to the efforts of Editor *Lyn Roberts* the branch newsletter, *The Write News*, is chock full of interesting information and new features. *Aline Soules* redesigned our website and moved it to a new, expanded platform that improves info and support for our writers. She manages the website and will be surveying our members for feedback and suggestions.

Catherine Accardi, Membership Chair, offers a friendly greeting to new members and is revising our membership packet and expanding our member Bio information.

Barbara Bentley serves as Secretary and all around problem solver to keep things humming along.

Publicity is in the capable hands of **Ann Damaschino**. She spreads the word about CWC to local area publications and organizations.

Liz Koehler-Pentacoff is the guiding light and bundle of energy behind the highly-successful Young Writers Contest that garnered over 511 entries from middle school students in Contra Costa Country last May. She and her team help future creative writers flourish.

(Board Members continued)

Danard Emanuelson handles all of our facility arrangements, including meeting location, restaurant meals and drinks, seating arrangements, sound, and other meeting-related issues.

David George serves as our Treasurer, and has taken over the member check-in duties at our monthly meeting, replacing **Joanne Brown** who has moved to Nevada City.

Judith Marshall has joined the board as our CWC NorCal representative as well as *Publication Pathways* mentor.

Fran Wojnar makes door prizes materialize and keeps the branch archives.

Other board members such as **Al Garrotto**, **Nannette Carrol**, **Joanne Brown** and **Betty Iverson** serve on various committees and provide wise counsel and advice. **Jody Denison** is one of our official greeters for members and guests. **Jean Georgakopoulos**, with great adroitness, manages reservations. If I've omitted anyone, my sincere apologies.

Board meetings are held before or after our monthly member meetings depending on the program and are open to any Mt. Diablo member who would like to sit in on a session. Just let me know ahead of time of your interest. We welcome input and assistance from any and all CWC members. Take a moment and chat with board members, they welcome the opportunity to talk about their area and Mt. Diablo branch activities.

The CWC - Mount Diablo Branch Critique Group *By Ted Wells, Critique Group Chair*

Dear CWC Critiquers,

As usual, we will meet at the Pleasant Hill Zio Fraedo's Restaurant in the bar area at 9:30 a.m., prior to the general meeting. The CWC Critique Group meets the second Saturday of each month except for July and August (The Mount Diablo branch of CWC does not meet those months). We will not meet if there is a morning workshop. We will end by 11:00 to sign in and find a seat for the luncheon.

There is no critique membership criteria. We operate on a drop-in basis. We will introduce ourselves and our genre specialties at each meeting, have a short topic of special interest for group discussion (this time, Editing the First Page) and then do critiques. Please check *The Write News* prior to each month we meet for new topics.

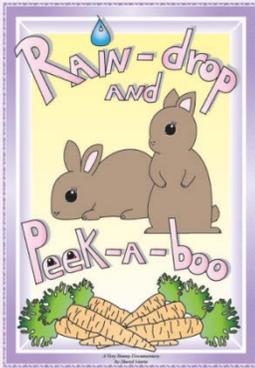
I look forward to 5-10 typed pages of your manuscripts on any genre, fiction, or nonfiction, for someone to critique. See you Saturday, September 10.

To our great works

Member Profile

By Catherine Accardi

Member Profile: *Sheryl Marie*



Sheryl Marie is a California Bay Area native who has always been an artist at heart. She is a musician who often plays the bassoon in the Diablo Symphony and the Contra Costa Chamber Orchestra. However, writing has been one of her secret passions for most of her life. Sheryl had been drafting stories, plots and scenes for her own personal amusement for many years. Only after she adopted two adorable bunnies, did she finally submerge herself into the writing community.

"My bunnies are such crazy characters. I'd share stories of their latest mischief and everyone would tell me the same thing, they'd say that I should write a book about them. What they didn't know was that I loved to write. So I took the passion that I had for my little bunnies and turned it into a story book."

As she worked on the book, she ended up joining a small poetry group. That's when her first poem "Touching Trees" was published by the Arts and Cultural Commission of Contra Costa County in their May issue at <http://www.ac5.org/events-programs/poem-touching-trees>. Her next poem "Sad Song" was published as well and can be viewed at <http://www.ac5.org/events-programs/crossroads-poem-sad-song>.

Sheryl said that her mother was her biggest inspiration when it came to finishing the book. "She had the utmost faith in me and that's what pushed me to strive for the finished product."

Rain-drop and Peek-a-boo, A Very Bunny Documentary, was self-published in September 2010. She decided to self-publish so that she could design the artwork for the book. "I wanted a unique format where the stories and pictures would stand out for the child. That's why I created a storybook that rhyme and has bright borders with carrots to mark the story page. The clichés and play on words are entertaining and fun for the parents as well."

Her most recent book signing was on August 28, for "Our Kids Love" a Non-Profit Organization. To view the flyer for that event, go to <http://dl.dropbox.com/u/16143098/OKLFlyerFinal.pdf>.

Currently, Sheryl Marie's focus is as a children's author in the genre of story/picture books. Her website www.bysherylmarie.com has poetry, artwork and free coloring pages.



Bunny Hat

Every day when I got home from work I'd rush to see, how playful my little bunny rabbits would be. Then one afternoon my bunnies surprised me as a matter of fact, when Rain-drop had Peek-a-boo on her head, pretending that Peek-a-boo was a pretty bunny hat.

Peek-a-boo had no look of concern on her face, perched high on Rain-drop's head, barely balancing in place.

I hoped I could catch a picture of the amazingly balanced bunny. I was sure my family would laugh and think the rabbits were quite funny.

I tried to step slowly out of sight, to grab the camera on my desk, but then to my fright, Rain-drop flung Peek-a-boo clear across the cage. Peek-a-boo landed loudly in a thud, but thankfully she was all right!



Member Events, News and Salutes



Joaquin Miller & Yone Noguchi

Nina Egert's book entitled *Noguchi's California* has been expanded into an exhibit entitled *Yone Noguchi, a Japanese Poet Among Oakland's Famed Writers*. The exhibit will open Thurs. Sept. 8, 2011 with a fund-raiser and book-signing for the Oakland Asian Cultural Center, 388 9th St, Oakland from 4:30-6pm.

Workshops will be offered in sasho-style calligraphy and the Ikebana art of flower arrangements and ceramics. The exhibit will begin September 8, 2011 – January 2012.

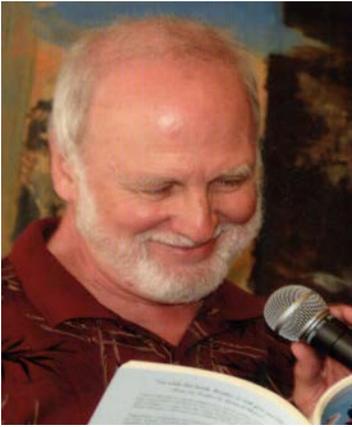


Cheryl Spanos' Sock Monster story has been accepted for publication in *Stories for Children Magazine*, a monthly Ezine for children ages 3 -12. *Sock Monster*, a humorous mystery for young readers, is slated to appear in the 2011 Holiday issue.

Sock Monster discloses what happens to all those missing socks. Hannah's kid brother thinks the sock monster eats them, but Hannah knows better. She sets out to solve mystery of the missing socks, unwittingly providing the real culprit with the perfect opportunity to reveal himself. *Stories for Children Magazine* can be found at www.storiesforchildrenmagazine.org.



Five authors from our CWC Mt. Diablo branch will participate in a panel discussion called "*So You Want to Write a Book*" at the Clayton Library on Monday, Oct. 3, 2011 at 7:00 pm. Barbara Bentley, Nannette Rundle Carroll, Jon Cory, Al Garrotto and Judith Marshall will discuss their writing journeys and offer tips for aspiring writers.



David Alpaugh recently discovered that his reading of his poem *STRIP TASE!* is being sold on the internet for 99¢ and is being used by hundreds of men and women as their "ringtone!" David's poem originally appeared in *RATTLE's* Visual Poetry Issue and they subsequently posted an MP3 of his reading at their website. Evidently several entrepreneurs thought it fair game to copy and use for commercial purposes. David decided to weigh in with his own video production on YouTube (with background music by his brother Lewis). You can find it, along with more of David's "Tubes" by typing in "alpaughsongs" in the YouTube search box.



Updates to Our Web Site

(<http://cwcmtdiablowriters.wordpress.com>)

by Aline Soules, Online Coordinator

This summer, our Web site saw a few additions and changes:

- a new header
- new pages promoting our members' work
 - one for new media publications
 - one for short stories, articles, and poetry
- the beginning process of providing a link from our members' recent books to *one* sales site (like Amazon)
- blog posts about our members' "summer successes" and pictures of our Jack London award winner David George receiving his award (one with CWC President Bob Garfinkle and one with our own chapter President, Lee Paulson)

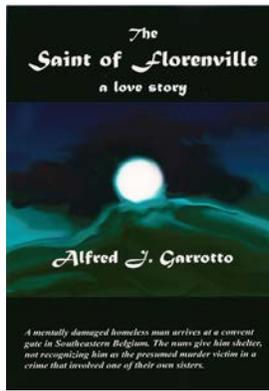
Check it out!

If you have contributions for these pages or stories that would make a good blog post, send them along (soulesa@yahoo.com). I can't promise to use them all, but I will use as many as possible.

I also plan to issue a blog post about "fall successes" and will issue a call on the *CWC Back Fence* sometime in mid-to late-November, so if you have your work published this fall, get ready to let me know the details when I send the email.

We (your CWC Board) want the Web site to reflect our amazing accomplishments and be a useful tool for your writing, as well as a way to let you know about upcoming programs and special events.

(Editor's note: Speaking of accomplishments – on the next page you will find a column from Al Garrotto, as he shares his experience while exploring digital and self-publishing avenues.)



Adventures in Self- and E-Publishing by Al Garrotto

All across America, teachers are assigning essays on the topic, "How I Spent My Summer." In that back-to-school spirit, let me share my recent experience with do-it-yourself print and ebook publishing and what it takes to get the job done without (further) loss of hair and sanity.

When I foresaw a July slowdown in my work schedule (I have a flex-hours "day" job), I determined to spend a solid week publishing my newly completed novel, [*The Saint of Florenville: A Love Story*](#). CWC workshops I had attended during the past year empowered me to take a stab at doing it myself. It was a tough decision. Like all of you, I was convinced that my book was good enough to be bought by a royalty publisher, as three of my other novels had been. The final push to self-publishing came when I learned that my tight and trim 60k-word manuscript was too short for commercial consideration. As one workshop leader put it, the gap between 40k (novella) and 70k+ (novel) is the agent's/publisher's dead zone (my words).

I made the decision to publish *SOF* as a trade paperback through [Lulu.com](#) and in [Amazon Kindle](#) format, as well as in all other ebook formats via [Smashwords.com](#) (which I also learned about in one of our workshops). This meant formatting the book for three separate file upload processes. I anticipated a learning curve, but how hard could it be? I was determined to do by myself what the faint-of-heart pay others to do. Before tackling the Smashwords process, I read (twice) Mark Coker's excellent [Smashwords Style Guide: How to Format Your Ebook](#) (a free download).

I estimated that this triple process for *SOF* would gobble up one full July week. But then I decided to take an even deeper plunge. I had four other books (three novels and one nonfiction) for which I owned the publishing rights. Why not make all of them available on both Kindle and Smashwords? Since two of them were out of print and no longer available from their original royalty publishers, I set out to create trade paperback editions for them as well. In all, I ended up formatting and publishing the equivalent of fourteen books! I completed the task on July 31, working 16/7 (with time out for meals, Oakland A's baseball, fitful sleep, and church on Sundays).

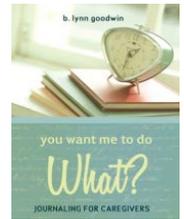
Tips: (1) Attend our branch's writing workshops during the coming year! I've learned a lot. (2) The Kindle upload process is pretty easy, if you're starting with a clean MS Word file. Go for it. (3) This was my third publishing venture with Lulu. Their free and instant print edition upload is complex, but doable (with only moderate cause for swear words). (4) Smashwords's Meatgrinder conversion software (that's what they call it) never seemed to be satisfied with my offerings, but I stayed with it, correction/reload after correction/reload. Can't beat their distribution. (5) If you are publishing one book on Smashwords, it might be smarter to pay someone to format it for you. Working with multiple books, I had to consider the total cost and opted for doing it myself. Did I mention that I'm also a control freak? (6) See #1 above.

The gratification of knowing that my books, especially those that had been out of print, are now available both in paperback and ebook editions makes the effort worthwhile. So, that's how I spent a big chunk of my summer.

Writer's Markets Column

Researching Markets

By B. Lynn Goodwin



Welcome or welcome back to CWC's monthly newsletter. This column gives you new information about contests and markets each month.

How do you know which publications are right for you? Read the guidelines. Read the magazines. Take a risk. Honor your work by sharing it.

Because I run Writer Advice, I encourage you to check our Contests and Markets page: <http://www.writeradvice.com/markets.html>. We change the content quarterly and I'm always interested in finding new people to research additional opportunities. Write me at Lgood67334@comcast.net if you'd like to contribute.

There's a huge, eclectic list of opportunities in Writers Weekly, http://www.writersweekly.com/markets_and_jobs.php. Skim it to see who is looking for something you can provide.

Writers Digest holds a dozen competitions for a dozen different genres. Check out what they want and what they offer at <http://www.writersdigest.com/>.

If you write poetry, literary fiction, or creative non-fiction, you'll find a wealth of opportunities at <http://www.pw.org/grants>. Their listings are organized by date and they run extensive content.

Editors' tastes vary. Keep trying until you find a publication whose needs match your work.

As you search, remember the advice I give people when I comment on their writing: "Keep only what is useful and disregard the rest." It applies here, too.

If you know of a contest, market, or publishing opportunity that you'd like to share with the world, please send information to Lgood67334@comcast.net.

Membership News

By Catherine Accardi
Branch Membership Chair



If you have not renewed your membership yet, you are tardy!

Membership dues were due on June 30.

If you have not renewed by October 1, your membership in the California Writers Club will expire and the cost to rejoin would then be \$65. You really don't want that on your conscience now do you? Take a look at the *Benefits of Membership* below. For just \$45, you can continue to receive benefits and continue to support one of the largest CWC branches in the state. Take a moment to complete the renewal form below and mail in your payment.

Benefits of Membership

Our club invites authors, publishers, editors, and agents to speak at our monthly meetings. They discuss writing, querying, publishing and marketing your work. Additional benefits include:

- Networking opportunities with other members that will provide additional exposure and further develop your writing career
- Discounted price on monthly meeting luncheons and seminars
- Information on writing contests (including those sponsored by other organizations)
- Workshops for developing your writing skills
- Your own web information posted on the CWC-Mt. Diablo Branch website
- Critique group that meets every month prior to the regular meeting
- *The Write News*, the branch's newsletter with writing tips, upcoming events and a column celebrating the latest publishing successes of our members
- Copies of *The Bulletin*, CWC's statewide newsletter
- Periodic emails, called TidBits, updating you on time-sensitive writing opportunities, conferences, statewide events, etc.
- Opportunity to join The Back Fence, the Mt. Diablo Branch online Yahoo group.
- Opportunity to participate in the Publishing Pathways program that may provide assistance towards publication of your writing.

For further information regarding membership contact me, Catherine Accardi, your Membership Chair, via email at caacat@comcast.net, or by phone at (925) 934-9015.



It Is Annual Membership Renewal Time

Please complete this form, and include it with your check for \$45. We are updating our member database and we want to make certain we have correct information about you. Please PRINT clearly!

Last Name _____ First Name _____
 Street Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone Number _____ Email _____

_____ Active _____ Associate _____ Supporting _____ Dual Branch _____ Youth Affiliate

Principal Genre _____ Additional Genre(s) _____

Security Note: Membership information is not made public at any time. Make your \$45 check payable to "CWC-Mt. Diablo Branch." Mail your check and this form to "CWC-Membership, P.O. Box 606, Alamo, CA-94507. If you have questions, contact Catherine Accardi via email at caacat@comcast.net, or by phone at (925) 934-9015.

2011 Annual Young Writers Contest

Sponsored by the California Writers Club, Mount Diablo Branch

The Mount 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 Mount Diablo CWC newsletter. In addition, all donations are tax-deductible. The Young Writers Contest Committee and the Mt. Diablo Board of Directors wish to thank the following donors to the Young Writers Contest from July 1, 2010, to the present:

Foundation Donors

The Leroe Family Foundation

The Jack London Founder's Circle

Christine Sunderland

The John Muir Member Club

Beverley Lauderdale, in memory of Betty Tenney

The Mary Austin Writers Club

*Sarah Wilson, in memory of Sue Tasker
Edward Stanislawski
David George, in memory of Virgie Jones*

The John Steinbeck Society

Barbara Bentley

The Ina Coolbrith Laureate Club

*Joanne Brown
Nina Egert
B. Lynn Goodwin
Elizabeth Koehler-Pentacoff, in memory of Al and Elmer Koehler
Karen Tenney, in memory of Betty Tenney*

The Helen Hunt Jackson Group

Betty Iverson

The Gertrude Atherton Guild

*Vicky Berry
Ann Damaschino
Nanette Cooper McGuinness*

This annual Young Writers Contest for middle school students of Contra Costa County awards cash prizes for excellence in short story, poetry, and essay/personal narrative categories. Winners are notified in May and presented with their awards at an awards luncheon, at a local restaurant. All expenses of the program are supported by individual donations and grants. Please join us in this unique program for encouraging our youth toward creative writing.

~ The Jack London Founder's Circle - \$500

- ~ The John Steinbeck Society - \$250-\$499
- ~ The Ina Coolbrith Laureate Club - \$100-\$149
- ~ The Gertrude Atherton Guild - \$10-\$24
- ~ The John Muir Member Club - \$150-\$249
- ~ The Mary Austin Writers Club - \$50-\$99
- ~ The Helen Hunt Jackson Group - \$25-\$49

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 _____

Make your check payable to: *CWC-Mt. Diablo Branch* Mail check to:

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

Please consider joining a Donor Club in support of our Annual Young Writers Contest. Your gift furthers our mission to provide support and encouragement not only to our adult writers, but also to identify and reward excellence among Contra Costa County middle school students. Your gift enables our club to continue and to expand our outreach to young writers. You can designate a gift in honor of or in memory of a friend or loved one. Your gift is fully tax deductible. Thank you to all our members who generously donated to the 2011 Young Writers Contest. It was the best ever! Please consider joining one of our Donor Clubs again this year to support the next generation of California writers who look forward to entering the 2012 contest. They are depending on you!



California Writers Club~Mount Diablo Branch
Post Office Box 606
Alamo, CA 94507

California Writers Club ~ Mount Diablo Branch

~ The California Writers Club is a designated 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation. ~

Join Us!

**Our next CWC-Mt. Diablo Branch Meeting
is on September 10, 2011, at 11:30, in Pleasant Hill.**

For detailed meeting information, go to

<http://cwcmtdiablowriters.wordpress.com>

The California Writer's Club (CWC) shall foster professionalism in writing, promote networking of writers with the writing community, mentor new writers, and provide the literary support for writers and the writing community as is appropriate through education and leadership. All items in this newsletter are the opinions of the author(s) and do not in any way represent the views or official position of CWC.