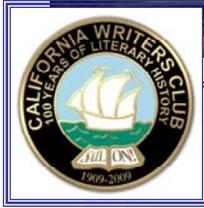




The Write News

A Monthly Newsletter

August 2010



Summer Edition

The California Writers Club-Mount Diablo Branch

Presents

Malena Watrous

on

September 11, 2010



Malena Watrous grew up in the Sunset, spent her high school years in Eugene, Oregon, with her family, then attended Barnard College in New York City, majoring in English. After graduation, and a year of several types of jobs including restaurant critic for *Time Out New York*, she was placed by the Japan Exchange and Teaching program in Shika-Machi, a small, coastal, nuclear power plant town.

Her debut novel, *If You Follow Me*, set in Shika, won the Michener-Copernicus Award, and a prize in the Pirate's Alley/Faulkner contest. Malena won a Glimmer Train Fiction Open prize in 2001. After two years in rural Japan, Malena attended the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop on a Truman Capote Fellowship where she received her MFA and taught. In 2002, she received a Wallace Stegner Fellowship at Stanford University, followed by a Jones Lectureship. She now teaches in Stanford's Online Writer's Workshop.

Malena's nonfiction work has appeared in *Allure*, Salon.com, *The Believer*, *GlimmerTrain*, *The Kyoto Journal*, *Conde Nast Traveler*, and *The Massachusetts Review*. Her short stories have been published in such literary journals as *StoryQuarterly*, *TriQuarterly*, and *The Alaska Quarterly Review*. She writes book reviews for the *San Francisco Chronicle* and *The New York Times*.

This is our first meeting of the 2010-2011 season. Don't miss it. Please join us for this informative session to be held at Zio Fraedo's Restaurant. Everyone is welcomed to come, learn, and network with local writers. The CWC, Mount Diablo Branch website address is www.mtdiablownriters.org.

September Meeting Details

Date & Time: Saturday, September 11, 2010, with sign-in at 11:30 a.m.

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

Cost: \$20 for CWC members; \$25 for guests **Menu:** Zio Fraedo's sumptuous buffet.

Reservations: Reservations are required and must be received no later than noon on Wednesday, September 8. To make a reservation, contact Jean Georgakopoulos, via e-mail at, jeaniegpop@comcast.net, or by phone at (925) 934-5677. Expect confirmation only if 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 either 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.

Coming Attractions ~ Upcoming Speakers for 2010

**October 9: Second Annual Jack London Lecture ~ *Robert Dugoni*,
Best-selling author of legal thrillers (*Wrongful Death*)**

November 13: Workshop (details to be announced in an upcoming newsletter)

December 11: "Three of Our Own"

Deborah Davis

Beverly Lauderdale

TBD

Mount Diablo Branch Board Members for 2010-2011

Officers

President: William Stong
Vice President: Elisabeth Tuck
Secretary: Barbara Bentley
Treasurer: Joanne Brown

Program Chairs

Newsletter Editor: Catherine Accardi
Publicity: Ann Damaschino
Membership: Jody Denison
Event Logistics: Danard Emanuelson
Central Board Rep: David George
Critique Group: Peter Hjersman
Barnes & Noble Fundraiser: Camille Minichino

Workshops: Don Maker
Young Writers Contest: Elizabeth Koehler-Pentacoff
Central Board Rep (Alt.): Jack Russ
Website: Aline Soules
Historian/Door Prizes: Fran Wojnar

Advisory Board

Nannette Rundle Carroll
Betty Iverson
Lee Paulson
Jack Russ

Come Meet Your Board Members

Several board members have kindly provided the following bios.



Barbara Bentley, Secretary

Barbara Bentley is a lifelong resident of Contra Costa County who didn't find her passion for writing until she was forty-six years old. A shocking event in her life begged to be chronicled in a book to help others and her passion didn't wane as she spent fourteen years to get it right. She was blessed to sign with a major New York literary agency and her book "A Dance with the Devil: A True Story of Marriage to a Psychopath" sold to Berkley Books in four days. The book was released in November 2008 and she was featured on Dateline NBC in June 2009. She's just finished her second book and is looking forward to writing a historical novel. She has served as secretary for the Mt. Diablo Branch since 2008.

www.adancewiththedevil.com

Barbara@adancewiththedevil.com

(Bios are continued on page three.)

Joanne Brown, Treasurer



Joanne has served as Treasurer of the Mt. Diablo Branch for 2-1/2 years. Her responsibilities include preparing monthly financial reports, manning the check-in table at meetings, and managing the Club's income and expenses. In prior incarnations, she was a dental office manager, a kindergarten/first grade teacher, and a stay-at-home mother.

Joanne and her husband, Ken, divide their time between Alamo and Nevada City in the Sierra foothills. They have three adult sons and a female black lab - the closest they could get to having a daughter. The "boys" are fourth generation native Californians. The "girl's" ancestry is unknown.

Writing middle grade novels is Joanne's passion. She is currently polishing her latest manuscript, *Pig and Hog*, and hopes to begin the query process this fall. She is also an essayist and blogger. You are invited to visit her at www.jayellebee.wordpress.com.

Jody Denison, Membership Chair

I joined CWC in 1999. I have been Membership Chair since 2007. My fifteen years as a Medical Bookkeeper and Insurance Processor gave me all the experience I'd need to deal with the forms this job entails. I also write a monthly Profile for the Write News. This way we can put a name on the faces we see but once a month at the meetings.

My writing has been mainly short pieces that are printed in the Valley papers periodically. They deal with life in general highlighting events, both good and bad, that effect us all. I am currently working on a novel about an ancestor from Iceland. It will mix fact with fiction and honor a remarkable man.

Elizabeth Koehler-Pentacoff, Young Writers Contest Chair



As a past president of this branch, I've been an active member since 1990. I enjoyed being Speaker Chair for 13 years, Director of California Authors Night, and now have graduated to the Young Writers Contest, although I've been involved since its inception in 1995.

A former elementary and middle school teacher, my published books include *Jackson and Bud's Bumpy Ride*, *The ABCs of Writing for Children*, *Louise the One and Only*, and several others.

Previously I was *Byline Magazine's* "Writing for Children" columnist and I freelanced humor and opinion articles for the *San Francisco Examiner*. Other credits of mine include *Writer's Digest*, *Parents Magazine*, and *Children's Book Insider*.

I taught part-time through CSU East Bay Extension for ten years, and also through UC Santa Cruz Extension. Now I present author assemblies and writing workshops to schools and write full-time. My passions? Books, dogs, dreams, and desserts!

lizbooks@aol.com website: www.lizbooks.com

Jack Russ, Central Board Representative



I explored CWC Mt. Diablo Branch's luncheon in the fall of 1999 and two weeks later was Membership Chair. That assignment lasted for seven years. I concurrently served as board member, a year as Vice President, then relinquished membership to serve three years as President. Now, I am an advisory board member and the alternate branch representative to the Central Board.

My extensive writing experience was exclusively non-fiction through thirty years as a Navy pilot, fourteen years with the Lawrence Livermore National Lab, and a nine-year consulting gig. After I published one non-fiction book on computing, the urge to try fiction called me. An adventure novel based on my Navy experience awaits publication, and its follow-on is underway. I hold a MA in Management.

Aline Soules, Website Chair

Aline Soules' poetry, essays, and short stories have appeared in print and online in publications such as *Literature of the Expanding Frontier*, *The Size of the World*, *Poetry Midwest*, *Kenyon Review*, and the *Houston Literary Review*. She has an M.A. in English, an MFA in Creative Writing, and an M.S.L.S. in Library Science. She is a librarian and professor at California State University, East Bay, teaching information literacy, conducting research, and helping people with information needs. In addition, she conducts workshops and readings in creative writing, engages in editorial work and professional voice work (reading and singing), and is a member of the Board and Website Chair for the California Writers Club Mt. Diablo Branch. Her complete list of credits can be viewed at <http://sites.google.com/site/alinesoules/creative-resume> and her writing blog is at <http://alinesoules.wordpress.com>



Hot Topics

From The Editor's Desk

By Catherine Accardi

Beginning with the September edition of *The Write News*, I will highlight topics of interest to authors. A number of subjects are emerging of timely importance to those of us who write and those of us who just enjoy reading and the world of writing. Some of these topics will include:

- * Copyright - What's the deal with copyrights? Do you really need to do this?
- * Internet Safety - How can you go wrong, and how to prevent bad things from happening.
- * Collaboration - Are you ready, willing, and able to play nice?
- * Accessibility - Are you ready for the world to find you?

Check "From the Editor's Desk" in September for more on **Hot Topics**.

President's Message

By William Stong

Hello, Mt. Diablo branch!

I trust that your summer is going well. So far, the weather has definitely been cooperating.

As I look forward over the next year, I am both pleased with the prospects and excited about the challenges. Before anything, though, I wanted to thank the prior Board members and everyone who has helped to make the CWC Mount Diablo branch what it is today. My job as president is going to be so much easier because of all the great work already done for the branch. I especially want to thank David George, who now proudly uses the "Past President" title, for his help in the transition and his retaining all the CWC state and NORCAL responsibilities.

We appreciate the membership for their excellent level of response to our spring "Membership Pulse": you have been very helpful with feedback and suggestions for the branch. The new Leadership Team has been provided with the results and comments. We are using these to drive our planning for next year. Definitely stay tuned!

I look forward to working closely with you for a great next year, and will use this column to introduce your Mount Diablo Leadership Team. In the meantime, have a great summer!

See you in September at our first meeting of the new year, at Zio Fraedo's on September 11.

All the best,
Bill

Member Profile

By Jody Denison



Profile: William Stong

Our new Club President, Bill Stong, brings an international background to the job. The son of an executive in the automobile industry he has lived in some pretty interesting places. His story begins in Northville, Michigan that he describes as "forested," where he wrote Civil War scenes as if the war was happening there. Sadly, none of those manuscripts survive.

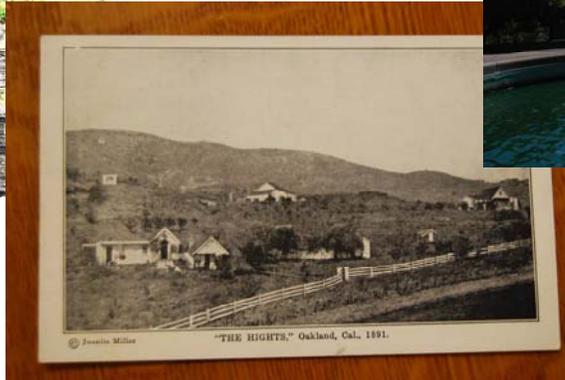
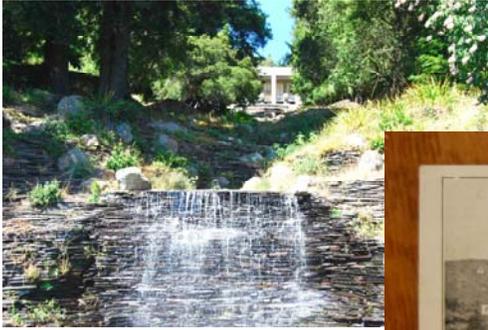
In Caracas, Venezuela, he attended high school at Colegio Americano. His term paper covered the Biafran War and the Nigerian Civil War--heavy subjects for so young a person. He says that he ended up "using four different typewriters, and hand drew all the illustrations and maps," with the final edition weighing in at 100 pages. The best part of living in Caracas was visiting the American Bookstore where he met Jules Verne and H.G. Wells. Bill enjoyed going through the maze of book-stuffed rooms in the house-turned bookstore.

After the Venezuelan adventure, the family lived in South Africa and finally in Tokyo, Japan. Schooling, however, sent Bill to the U.S. and the University of Michigan. He returned to Tokyo with a degree in Business Administration (Finance & Marketing). In Tokyo, he began working as a Communications Consultant and an English Teacher. He met his wife, Keiko, there and they moved to the East Coast where he worked for the Bank of America in New York City.

Bill was eventually transferred to San Francisco and he and Keiko have raised three children in Pleasant Hill. They will soon be grandparents.

CWC Picnic at Joaquin Miller Park

Nina Egert submitted the three photographs below for inclusion in *The Write News*. Nina took the two current photos at the July 10 CWC picnic at Joaquin Miller Park in Oakland. The 1891 vintage image is of the area before Miller and the California Writers Club began planting trees on the site.



Writing Contests

Numerous websites list upcoming writing contests. This month's featured site is: www.freelancewriting.com. Several contests are listed below.

Memoirs Ink is looking for original, well-written personal essays, memoirs, or stories that are based on autobiographical experiences. The narrative must be in first person, other than that, the contest is open to any type, genre, or style of story. First Prize: \$1,000. For more information, go to www.memoirsink.com.

Benjamin Saltman Poetry Award

Established in 1998, in honor of the poet Benjamin Saltman (1927-1999), this award is for a previously unpublished original collection of poetry. Award is \$3,000 and publication of the awarded collection by Red Hen Press. Entry fee is \$25.00. For more information, go to www.redhen.org.

Festivals and Conferences

Many events of interest to writers are available to us. This month's featured website listing upcoming events is: www.writing.shawguides.com. Several are listed below.

The High Desert Branch of CWC is announcing a writer's conference that will take place in Apple Valley on Saturday, September 25, 2010. Their goal is "to put on the best presentations possible, the best catered continental breakfast and lunch, the best value for an event of this type-- ever! For more information, go to <http://hdcwc.org/HowlAtTheMoon.aspx> and www.hdcwc.org.

The 2010 East of Eden Writers Conference will take place from September 24 - 26, in Steinbeck Country, Salinas, California. The conference is a CWC Club-sponsored event. For more conference details, visit www.southbaywriters.com.



Sales and Salutes

Melanie Denman's piece, *All There Is To It*, won first prize, "Why We Ride" Nonfiction Award, from the San Mateo County Fair Literary Arts Division.

Liz Koehler-Pentacoff sold an article interviewing an editor and an author from Sylvan Dell Publishing to *Children's Writer*. Liz's book, *Jackson and Bud's Bumpy Ride*, won The 2010 Sharp Writ Best Children's Book Award. The book is also on Arizona's 2011 Grand Canyon Reader Award List.

Cheryl Spanos' short story, *Bones in the Cellar*, has been published in the Spring 2010 issue of *Hunger Mountain*, the journal of the Vermont College of Fine Arts. The story appears in their YA/children's section and can be found on-line at <http://www.hungermtn.org/young-adults-and-childrens-literature/>.

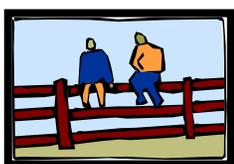
Catherine Accardi's new book, *Images of America-San Francisco's North Beach and Telegraph Hill*, will be released this fall. This book includes over 200 vintage images revealing one of San Francisco's most beloved neighborhoods.



Calling All Members!

Would You Like To Be Saluted?

We would like to salute you in *The Write News*. We want you to share your good news! Have you had a sale, have an upcoming author event, or have you been published recently (whether paid or not)? If so, we would like to share your good news. Let your newsletter Editor know by providing your name and news, along with a photo if you would like. Contact Catherine at caacat@comcast.net.



The Back Fence

Don't forget to hang out at our **Back Fence**. That would be our Mount Diablo branch site at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/CWCBackFence/>.

At The Fence you will find topics of interest to writers. You can also sign-up for Back Fence e-mails. 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.

CWC Membership Renewal Time

By Jody Denison

If you have not already renewed your membership ***you are late*** and your membership expired on June 30, 2010, so renew ***now!*** Dues for the upcoming 2010/2011 year are \$45.00. Mail your check and membership renewal form below to: Membership, CWC Mount Diablo Branch, P.O. Box 606, Alamo CA, 94507.



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.

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:

(Continued on the next page.)

Young Writers Contest donors from July 1, 2010 to the present *(continued)*

The Jack London Founder’s Circle

The John Steinbeck Society

The John Muir Member Club

The Ina Coolbrith Laureate Club

The Mary Austin Writers Club
Sarah Wilson in memory of Sue Tasker

The Helen Hunt Jackson Group

The Gertrude Atherton Guild
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 in May 2011, 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 John Muir Member Club - \$150 - \$249
- ~ The Ina Coolbrith Laureate Club - \$100 - \$149
- ~ The Mary Austin Writers Club - \$50 - \$99
- ~ The Helen Hunt Jackson Group - \$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 _____

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

Mail 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!

Thank you to all our members who generously donated to the 2010 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 2011 contest. They are depending on you!

Mount Diablo Branch Members Literary Submissions

At our June 12 meeting, outgoing President, David George, announced a call for literary submissions for the August edition of *The Write News*. Nine submissions were received and all nine are featured below.

Vineyard

By

Barbara Bentley

Gnarled trunk twists from deep-set roots,
Yellow mustard crushes under worker's boots.
Trellised canes welcome the Sonoma sun.
Buds swell. My senses stir. Latest vintage has begun.

Buds burst. Lanky shoots propel into the sky,
Tender leaves unfold. It's a natural high.
Opposite the leaves, flower clusters appear.
Winds blow. My senses stir. Fruit is almost here.

Flowers release their cap, white sprinkles ground.
Fruit clusters set in a scrawny airy mound.
Roots suck spring water to the fruit's delight.
Berries swell. My senses stir. Each cluster now is tight.

Thick canopy trimmed, extra fruit dropped.
Night fog cools the vines, summer sun is hot.
Check grapes and harvest at desired brix.
Berries crushed. My senses stir. Vintner gets his kicks.

Quiet vineyard, jeweled leaves glow.
Drop to earth under a screeching crow.
Naked vines slumber in wet winter's cold.
Wood pruned. My senses stir. A process very old.

Copyright of Barbara Bentley, All Rights Reserved

Paddle, Dammit. Paddle!

Circumstance sent me day-tripping in a canoe with a neighbor/acquaintance years ago. We spent the warm summer day enjoying the companionship of mutual friends, the luxury of time off, and a picnic lunch.

The Russian River treated us to a gauntlet of experiences. It ran deep and narrow in places, propelling us and our graceful craft with ease. We navigated bends and avoided banks overgrown with thorny bushes by working as a team. A memorable couple in our group spent hours that day ricocheting off first one shore and then the other, all the while screaming at each other, "Paddle, dammit. Paddle!"

At one point, the riverbed contained mere inches of water trickling across course gravel. We waded, pushing and scraping the hull over rocks, before re-boarding. Our reward for working through the challenges? Stretches of calm, scenic beauty set us up for the miniature rapids, mid-stream boulders, and sunken logs ahead. Heightened adrenaline levels alternated with rest and relaxation most of the day.

(continued)

The river widened at the end of our voyage, causing the current to slacken. Fatigued muscles worked extra hard in the face of an afternoon wind. At length, the morning's starting point and our patient cars came into view.

Forty-two years later, I realize that day foretold much of what marriage to my canoeing partner held in store for us. We have had times when it was necessary to get out and push before continuing on. There have been many long days when we labored as a team to arrive at our goals. We always seem closest when we navigate the tough spots, but the clear sailing through calm waters makes it all worthwhile.

Perhaps every couple should take the canoe test. Can they work together? Or will they end up screaming, "Paddle, dammit. Paddle!"

- Joanne Brown

HOPE

J. B. Drori

The wind in our sails is hope.
It blew on the rivers of Babel,
Along the ice floes of the Potomac,
And at Waterloo, Gettysburg, and Flanders.

No cyclone can disperse it.
No mountain can block it.
No ocean can drown it.
And no serpent can poison it.

For we are of eternal matter
From the dust of exploded super-novas,
Ignited by the Master's breath,
Forever renewed by the sun at dawn.

Yet death and destruction
Stalk our homes, kill our children,
Bring on wars between brothers.
Strife and corruption inhabit our cities.

Oh, Lord of Hosts,
Tranquility eludes us, peace betrays.
We beseech you.
Let hope die.
Yet, to You, rose the anguished cry
Of our firefighters
In the billowing flames
Of the Twin Towers.

And did You hear the terminal whimper
Of a three month old baby,
One of your children chosen for the
'Special' showers at Buchenwald?

(continued)

Oh, Rock of Ages,
 How much longer?
 How many more millennia
 Of suffering and depravation?

A sudden thunder shook the earth.
 The firmament turned a midnight black as
 A golden fire kindled the horizon,
 Spreading around the globe.

It formed fluorescent stars of giant letters.
 They circled the globe, lighting up the sky,
 And boomed forth in tympanic thunder,
 "You will suffer until you heed the mark of Cain."

End

Sunset
 Sun-splashed western porch,
 The old man tends his bonsai.
 Still. His golden hour.

Landscapes
 Measure your friends,
 Hoard them like fine gold
 Or they will slip through your fingers,
 Grains of sand;
 I stand in a desert.

Harlan Hague

THOUGHTS ON A GRAPPLING Hook (for boats) A Message for Writers

*Hook the Reader
 Anchor him to your pages
 Weigh him down with your characters' woes.
 And set him asail to a New World.*

*You're his helmsman now.
 Steer him through raging storms and narrow shoals.
 Let him fear the angry, roiling waves or bask in a blazing sunrise
 Bring him finally into port,
 bruised, defeated or exultant*

*Whatever his state,
 never let the Reader
 Off the hook.*

- Susan Lawson

Pelicans

I fell in love with the pelican race in Santa Cruz. New to the coast, I didn't know them yet. Waiting on sea-weedy sand for a family party, this workaholic had nothing to do. Pounding surf soon wiped away why I was there, and I shielded my eyes from southwest rays to see what else could be making so much noise.

Piercing through nature's orchestral background music, a bluesy percussive pattern of calls and cries rose from a huge flock of pelicans. Fellow beachgoers, if not plugged into electronics, followed along. We became the front-row congregation to their chorus, which was not only audible, but also vividly rhythmical, as the whole flock swayed back and forth across us in unison. Evidently pelicans hear a metronome that is species-set for several-second bars. The whole group flew just above the waves, then – on the downbeat – all swiveled, as if on cue from an unseen jazzercise instructor, and returned in the opposite direction! Rapt by birds stalking their prey I remained mesmerized for I-don't-know-how long.

Just when I imagined myself the conductor controlling the universe, every pelican dove diagonally into the bay and disappeared for a few seconds, some longer. What originally performed in a group now regressed into a mob – a free for all! Immediately, pilfering seagulls swooped in and scooped fish out of any unsuspecting pelican's dripping, bucket-like beak as it surfaced for air.

“Aw, cut it out!” I yelled, but quickly recognized the refrain as part of the ongoing symphony of natural phenomena. I settled into this third movement of chaos, turning to contentment. Finally, one last surprise melody lifted above the tidal din and made my head turn to hear my name sung in sweet high tones by a beautiful little boy.

- Nancy Norris

GROWING UP ON A NEVADA RANCH

During the depression years of the thirties, my sister and I were in our growing up years of about eight and ten. Our family lived on a ranch about two miles from Wabuska, today a ghost town, but then a one-horse town in Nevada too small to even warrant a dot on a map, but it was the only town for many miles on a road through dry Nevada.

Doris and I were scared out of our wits along that road one dark night in 1934. We were the little kids trying to keep up with the big kids, our high school age siblings and friends on Halloween. The big kids knew how to do Halloween. They could tip over outhouses, soap windows, and all the other tricks that were the expected mysteries on a dark Halloween night.

We lost sight of the big kids somewhere between our ranch and Wabuska. We had already reached the road a mile east of the ranch and were still about a mile south of Wabuska when we knew we had lost the big kids, or that they had managed to lose us.

It was dark but we could see the outline of only house we knew to be along that road. It was set back from the road and was where Teddy Andreg lived with his grandfather. Everybody knew Mr. Andreg was mean. We could see him silhouetted in the light of his doorway with what was unmistakably a rifle in his hand. He must have thought he was about to be hassled by tricksters.

We were sure he would shoot if he saw us so we dove into the dry gully on the opposite side of the road from his house where we froze. We hoped he couldn't see us. We didn't move, tried not even to breathe as panic overtook us. We kept our eyes riveted on Mr. Andreg's silhouette with the rifle, wondering what to do, and too scared to do anything at all.

Then out of the dark and silent desert behind us, the bong of the school bell started pealing our doom!

- Alpha Quincy

One and Only One

Here's to one and only one,
and may that one be she,
Who loves but one and only one
And may that one be me.

Here's to one, my only one,
I pray that she will be
A beauty fair of golden hair
To steal me from the sea.

Here's to one whose love can still
The cold and stormy sea,
Whose smile will share the joy within
And show her love for me.

For in her eyes safe harbor lies.
Her trust will set me free.
I hope to grow to half the man
She sees me to be.

- Jack Russ

Sevilla, Espana 1617

She walked through the dark, narrow streets of Seville, careful not to twist her sprained ankle on the cobblestones yet to walk firmly with no hint of injury. Bending low, she looked around the edge of a building. The plaza in front of the cathedral was crowded with soldiers, their breastplates and helmets glistening in the moonlight as they milled about. She backtracked. It would be a longer route home tonight.

Clouds flitted across the narrow slivers of sky visible between the rows of buildings. Behind her, a faint shadow slipped around a corner. Alyson strolled along, looking up at the night sky and sighing from time to time. She wandered into a service alley, just wide enough for single-horse carts.

As soon as the corner hid her, she bounded forward and disappeared into a delivery port, her short-sword *wakizashi* already in her hand. She flattened herself against the wall.

Soft sounds betrayed bare feet at the mouth of the alley. The feet hesitated, sliding over the smooth stones. Alyson held her breath and picked up the lightest of shuffling. Fast padding...

Her arm shot out and grabbed a head of filthy, matted hair. She spun the little boy around and smashed his thin back against a wooden garbage bin. Faint light reflected off her blade as she wiggled it before laying its edge against the boy's throat.

The dirty urchin's eyes bulged out. He stretched his neck as high as he could to get away from the blade. Tears swelled out of the corners of his eyes. His breaths came quickly.

Alyson pinned him to the greasy wood with her sword arm elbow and opposite knee. His soft wheezing rasped through the night air.

Her face moved in close. "Who are you?" she hissed.

- William A. Stong



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 11, 2010, at 11:30, in Pleasant Hill.**

**For detailed meeting information, go to
www.mtdiablowlriters.org.**

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.