

The Write News

California Writers Club – Mount Diablo Branch

A Monthly Publication

February 2009

California Writers Club Mount Diablo & Berkeley Branches Joint Meeting Saturday, February 14, 2009

Robert G. Pimm, Attorney at Law “Legal Aspects of Writing and Publishing”

We are pleased to feature San Francisco literary and arts attorney Robert G. Pimm as our guest speaker for February. With more than 20 years experience, he has extensive expertise in all aspects of the book publishing industry. He will share his valuable firsthand knowledge of retailing and distribution, small press publishing, and author representation. Robert has worked with both major and small press publishers and with booksellers throughout the U.S., from giant chains to independents.

Bob received his Doctor of Law degree from the University of San Francisco. He now serves on the Board of Directors and as a Panel Attorney for California Lawyers for the Arts (www.calawyersforthearts.org). He is Book Publishing Program Chair of the American Bar Association's Forum on the Entertainment and Sports Industries. From 2002-2007, Bob served as Editor-in-Chief of *Entertainment and Sports Lawyer*, the Forum's quarterly publication. He is an author in his own right of books, chapters, and numerous articles on legal and business aspects of the industry. He is knowledgeable about new publishing technologies and the emerging eBook industry. Visit his informative website at www.rgpimm.com.

Please join us for this informative session to be held at Zio Fraedo's Restaurant on February 14. You will find meeting details below. All are welcome to come, learn, and network with local writers. Bring pen and paper to participate in hands-on exercises. The California Writers Club, Mount Diablo Branch web address is: <http://www.mtdiablownriters.org>.

February Meeting Details

Date & Time: Saturday, February 14, 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: Petrale sole Dore, chicken parmigiana, spaghetti and meat balls, or pasta primavera.

Reservations: Reservations are required, and must be received no later than noon on Wednesday, February 11. To make reservations, contact Betty Iverson, via e-mail at bjiverson@comcast.net, or by phone at (925) 376-3631. Expect confirmation only if you e-mail your reservation. Make certain to include your menu choice with your reservation.

Coming Attractions ~ Upcoming Speakers for 2009

March 14: Stephanie Chandler ~ "How Authors Can Build an Online Platform"

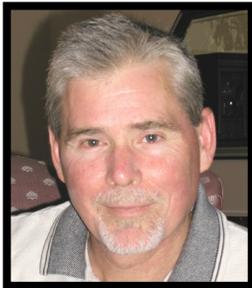
April 11: Priscilla Royal ~ Medieval History Mystery Writer

May 9: Young Writers Banquet

June 13: Verna Driesbach of Driesbach Literary Management

President's Message

David George



Are you ready to serve? Watching newly inaugurated Barack Obama's acceptance speech, I heard loud and clear the importance of volunteer service to our communities. A novel Starbucks ad that played several times during the inauguration coverage reinforced this message. Of course, volunteerism is the fuel that drives our writers club programs each year.

As with many other non-profit organizations, a limited group of dedicated volunteers tend to step up to the plate year after year. The rest of the membership benefits from their hard work. But life circumstances and energy levels change as time marches forward. Each year, the Club loses the service of one or more generous individuals who have just had enough.

Although I have not been informed of any departures yet, I expect we'll need to replace the services of several longtime, dedicated folks. That's why I am asking for YOUR help running the Club next year. I know how busy we have all become, but the Mount Diablo board is very active and does great work on behalf of the membership and the general community.

We always have interesting, but not too challenging, tasks to share with new board members. You don't need to be a branch officer to help out. Ten or so board positions are non-elected roles and are very important and fun. If you have recently joined the Mount Diablo branch and have a few hours a month to lend, or if you are a long-time member and are ready to step up and help out, we'd love your assistance. You'll realize how rewarding it can be.

Come join us at our next board meeting just prior to the general membership meeting on Saturday, February 14, beginning at 10 a.m. Share your new ideas and energy, and enjoy the camaraderie of the board.

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.



The Tip Bucket

As reported in the December 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 February's tip.

Tips to Create Your Manuscript

Some authors write to fulfill a passion but never plan to publish. However, if you are an author who wants to sell your manuscript, short story, poem, magazine article or other written work, you need to do some homework.

- Research if your topic fits the current market. Publishing is a flexible business and many times there are identifiable trends that may save you time and energy if you pay attention to them.
- Observe the media you want to enter.
- Determine if there is a market for your idea or a special niche in the market.
- Join the Mt. Diablo Club's "Back Fence" to interface with other members when you have a question.

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 The Back Fence 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.

A Website Review

By B. Lynn Goodwin

Allbooks Review Promotes All Kinds of Books

"First we would like to congratulate you on your book, *You Want Me to Do What*. Let us introduce Allbooks Review," read an e-mail I received in January. Though the book title is not accurately punctuated, I was curious.

On the home page, I read that Allbooks Review, <http://www.allbooks.com> is "Proud to be Voted 1 of 101 Best Websites for writers two years in a row by *Writer's Digest*." They review both traditional and POD publishers, do not charge for reviews, and offer extensive coverage for 12 months if you purchase a promotional package, which costs less than \$50.

The home page targets potential customers. Apart from the featured books, the reviews, which are mostly positive, are buried in "Review Showcase." Those who purchase the package are promised reviews on Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and "various publications and websites (plus) our column syndicated to 21 chronicles including *California Chronicle* and *World News*."

Managing Editor Shirley Roe is a prolific writer and skilled businesswoman, but the emphasis on sales promotion packages and other services diminishes the impact of this reviewing site. I had to think twice, though, when I considered the site's traffic and the *Writer's Digest* ranking. Clearly, she is providing a service to many authors.

Everyone is different. If you are with a small or POD publisher and want more publicity for your book, visit www.allbooksreviews.com and decide for yourself if they meet your needs.

Meet Our Member

By Jody Denison

Member Profile: *Marlene Dotterer*



Inspiration comes from many places. In Marlene Dotterer's case it was a treadmill. Two years ago she was walking her treadmill and watching "Titanic" for the tenth time when she focused on the builder of the Titanic. A little research and bingo! She had the beginning of a science fiction series on time travel titled *The Time Travel Journals: Shipbuilder*.

Her California adventure began in 1990, when she moved from Arizona with her five children in the back of her station wagon. She has accomplished much in the years since she arrived. Her five children were raised successfully while she worked full time and also went to school. In 1997 Marlene earned a Bachelor of Science in Geology from California State University. She has been "joyfully married" to her soul mate for seven years. (He reads Science Fiction.)

Marlene is also a personal chef. The name of her business is "Meals by Marlene Personal Chef Service". She says her fondness for local, sustainable food and gardens works its way into her writing. Marlene has at least one character that cooks for everyone or has a garden, thus "Write what you know." She belongs to the Online Writer's Workshop for Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror. She gets help from a myriad of published authors in that genre and recommends them highly. Last year, Marlene entered her story, *No Way Home*, in the 2008 L. Ron Hubbard Writers of the Future contest and won Honorable Mention. With her talent for time management and production, we can expect to see her published in many places before very long.

Marlene's website information is as follows: She has a blog on writing and life at <http://mardott.livejournal.com>. Her blog on food is at <http://mealsbymarlene.blogspot.com>. And, her MySpace is at <http://www.myspace.com/marlenecooksandwrites>.

Announcements

The California Writers Club, Sacramento Branch, has announced its 2009 Flash Fiction Contest. Membership in the California Writers Club is not required. Prizes include \$100 for first place. There is an entry fee of \$10 for each submission. Entries must be postmarked no later than March 31, 2009. For more information contact contest Chair Evelyn Luscher at elusher@sbcglobal.net. Submit entries to: Evelyn at CWC, Sacramento Branch Writing Contest, P.O. Box 1157, Citrus Heights, CA 95611-1157

The Tom Howard/John H. Reid Short Story Contest is in its sixteenth year. They seek short stories, essays and other works of prose. Fourteen cash prizes total \$5,250. The postmark deadline is March 31, 2009. For more information go to www.winningwriters.com.

The 2010 edition of Novel and Short Story Writer's Market welcomes submissions for the next edition: The Writing Life, Craft and Techniques, Getting Published, For Mystery Writers, For Romance Writers, and For Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Writers. Check their website at www.novelandshortstory.com, for more information, or contact Alice Pope at nsswm@fwpubs.com.

The CWC Redwood Writers 2009 Conference will take place on October 24, 2009 from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. This conference takes place at the Flamingo Conference Resort in Santa Rosa. Steve Hockensmith is one of the keynote speakers for this all-day conference. For more information check www.redwoodwriters.or/conference.html, or phone Karen at (707) 795-45912.

From the Editor's Desk

By Catherine Accardi



The year 2009 is the 100th anniversary of the California Writers Club. One of the Statewide Club's projects to commemorate our first 100 years is a California Literary Landmarks Map. I was impressed with the sample. While we are awaiting the release of our CWC map, you might enjoy viewing and/or purchasing the San Francisco Literary Map. I discovered this item while on the Internet researching an article for the Telegraph Hill/North Beach Dwellers Association newsletter, the *Semaphore*.

Information regarding the map is available at www.826valencia.org. "826 Valencia is dedicated to supporting students ages 6-18 with their writing skills, and to help teachers get their students excited about the literary arts." I clicked on "Shop" and up came Publications including the San Francisco Literary Map. The \$7.00 price tag is quite reasonable as the map is beautifully illustrated and detailed. It includes a map of San Francisco of course, as well as lists of landmarks, Bay Area literary resources, annual literary events, East Bay landmarks, and a delightful literary history time line. The Writing Center is located at 826 Valencia as their website indicates. More information on the Center and map are available on their website and by telephoning (510) 642-5905.

After you read, say, Robert Frost's poems, you can visit the corresponding landmark at Robert Frost Plaza in San Francisco, located at California and Market. Or, enjoy some of Robert Louis Stevenson's works and then wander through Portsmouth Square and pause at the Robert Louis Stevenson monument. We have just created a Literary Walking Tour for our California Writers Club 100th anniversary! The poem below, by Joaquin Miller, is the origin of our CWC motto, ***Sail On!***

Columbus by Joaquin Miller

Behind him lay the gray Azores,
Behind the Gates of Hercules;
Before him not the ghost of shores,
Before him only shoreless seas.
The good mate said: "Now must we pray,
For lo! the very stars are gone.
Brave Adm'r'l, speak; what shall I say?"
"Why, say: 'Sail on! sail on! and on!'"

My men grow mutinous day by day;
My men grow ghastly wan and weak."
The stout mate thought of home;
a spray Of salt wave washed his swarthy cheek.
"What shall I say, brave Adm'r'l say,
If we sight naught but seas at dawn?"
"Why you shall say, at break of day:
'Sail on! sail on! and on!'"

They sailed and sailed, as winds might blow,
Until at last the blanched mate said:
"Why, now not even God would know
Should I and all my men fall dead.

These very winds forget their way,
For God from these dread seas is gone.
Now speak, brave Adm'r'l; speak and say"
He said: "Sail on! sail on!, and on!"

They sailed, they sailed, then spake the mate:
"This mad sea shows his teeth to-night;
He curls his lips, he lies in wait,
With lifted teeth, as if to bite:
Brave Adm'r'l, say but one good word;
What shall we do when hope is gone?"
The words leapt like a leaping sword:
"Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!"

Then, pale and worn, he kept his deck,
And peered through darkness.
Ah, that night Of all dark nights!
And then a speck --
A light! a light! a light! a light!
It grew, a starlit flag unfurled!
It grew to be Time's burst of dawn.
He gained a world; he gave that world
Its grandest lesson: "On! sail on."

California Writers Club ~ Mount Diablo Branch

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The ideas and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributing individuals and do not necessarily represent the views of the California Writers Club.

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Sail On