

The Write News

California Writers Club – Mount Diablo Branch

A Monthly Publication

January 2009

January Speaker and Meeting Information

California Writers Club

Mount Diablo & Tri-Valley Branches Joint Meeting

Saturday, January 10, 2009

“The Long and the Short of Writing an Award-Winning Novel”

How long does it take to write an award-winning novel? One year? Ten? Alice Wilson-Fried spent seven years crafting her debut novel, *Outside Child*. Laurel Anne Hill wrote her award-winning *Heroes Arise* in seven months. Were these authors' successful approaches to writing different, or the same?



LAUREL ANN HILL grew up in San Francisco, with more dreams of adventure than good sense or money. Her close brushes with death, love of family, respect for honor and belief in a higher power continue to influence her writing and her life. KOMENAR Publishing released *Heroes Arise*, Laurel's debut parable, in October 2007. *ForeWord Magazine* selected it for a Book of the Year Award for 2007 (bronze, science fiction category). In August 2008, *Heroes Arise* headed the trade paperback top seller list at Borderlands Books in San Francisco. Laurel is a member of CWC San Francisco/Peninsula Branch and has served on their executive board for five years. She also is a member of the Women's National Book Association and Women Writing the West.



ALICE WILSON-FRIED grew up in the Magnolia Housing Project in New Orleans. After attending Grambling College and Tulane University, she worked in public relations at the Delta Queen Steamboat Company. For the past sixteen years, Alice has lived in California with her husband, Frank. She is a mother of two, stepmother of three, and grandmother of eight. While *Outside Child* is Alice's first published novel, she is also the author of a nonfiction book entitled *Menopause, Sisterhood, and Tennis*.

Come and join Laurel and Alice on January 10, 2009, as they share their expertise about creating believable characters, creating a believable story world that has relevance, maintaining strong forward momentum, and other related topics. You will find meeting details on page two. All are welcome to come, learn, and network with local writers. The California Writers Club, Mount Diablo Branch web address is: <http://www.mtidiablowriters.org>.

January Meeting Details

Date & Time: Saturday, January 10, 2009, from 12:00 to 2:30 p.m. Sign-in begins at 11:30 a.m.

Location: The Brass Door Restaurant at 2154 San Ramon Valley Boulevard, San Ramon.

(You can view a map at <http://411.yellowpages.com/info-LMS69427009/Brass-Door/maps>.)

Parking is available behind the restaurant. The phone number for The Brass Door is (925) 837-2501.

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

Menu: London broil, salmon, chicken picatta, or veggie pasta. Salad, bread, coffee or tea are included. House wine is \$6.50 per glass. Soft drinks are \$2.00. These beverages require payment in cash.

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

Coming Attractions ~ Upcoming Speakers for 2009

February 14: Robert G. Pimm, Attorney at Law ~ Literary Property Law

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

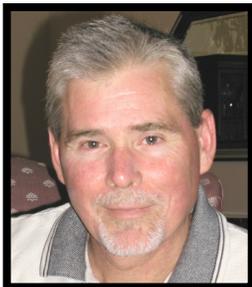
April 11: Priscilla Royal ~ Medieval History Mystery Writer

May 9: Young Writers Banquet

June 13: Verna Driesbach of Driesbach Literary Management

President's Message

By David George



Happy New Year to all! The George family has been in turmoil the past couple of weeks after the sudden loss of my wife's mother just before Christmas. We are definitely looking forward to a brighter 2009 than this past year has been.

For the New Year, I have made a resolution for myself to write at least five days per week. You should all write as much as you are able. What better way to celebrate our Club's centennial in 2009 than to sit down and write the next great American novel or memoir!

At the December meeting, I was struck by how much talent exists in our Club. Barbara Bentley, Katie Vecchio, and Gary Gwilliam's stirring comments about their struggles and achievements convinced me. We will have another opportunity to listen to more talent from our own Club at the January meeting. Peninsula branch member Laurel Ann Hill, and Berkeley branch member Alice Wilson-Fried will join us for the speaker portion. Both have been recently published and have interesting stories to share about their struggles and triumphs.

As always, if you have any ideas you'd like to share with me about how to improve our member experience and value, please email me at davegeorge7@comcast.net. Or better yet, join me and the board at our next board meeting to be held at The Brass Door Restaurant in San Ramon, beginning at 10 a.m. on Saturday, January 10. Sail on!



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 the tip for January.

Tips to Maintain Business Records

You may not plan to be a published author but there is always the possibility of being paid for your work. It makes financial sense to be prepared to take allowable tax write-offs. Once you receive the first payment for your written work, you have established a writing business.

- Organize financial data associated with your writing in an easily retrievable media.
- Use a separate calendar for events and expenses connected to your writing.
- Record mileage for trips tied to your writing. This could include an excursion to the office supply store, a writer's club meeting, a writer's conference, or a book signing.
- Use a separate credit card for business expenses.
- Keep a running tab on your expenses with an Excel spreadsheet. The spreadsheet allows you to sort and compile the data for report summaries for your tax person.

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.

Announcements

The California Writers Club, Sacramento Branch, has announced its 2009 Flash Fiction Contest. The contest is open to all writers. Membership in the California Writers Club is not required. Prizes include \$100 for first place, \$50 for second place, and \$25 for third place. There is an entry fee of \$10 for each submission. Entries must be postmarked no later than March 31, 2009. Winners will be announced in the June 2009 branch newsletter and honored at the June 20, 2009, Sacramento Branch meeting. For more information you may contact contest Chair Evelyn Luscher at elusher@sbcglobal.net. Submit entries to:
Evelyn Luscher

CWC, Sacramento Branch Writing Contest
P.O. Box 1157, Citrus Heights, CA 95611-1157

The Southern California Writers Conference will take place February 13-16, 2009, in San Diego. Founded and run by professional writers, the conference offers novice and experienced writers extensive feedback on their work. For more information, contact Michael Steven Gregory at (619) 303-8185, or via email at msg@writersconference.com. The conference website is www.writersconference.com.

The Creativity Workshop will take place in Carmel-by-the-Sea from January 15-20, 2009. This workshop is designed to boost your level of productivity and increase your writing motivation by tapping into your creativity and imagination. For more information contact the workshop's office (located in New York) at (212) 767-9815, via email at questions@creativityworkshop.com. The workshop website is www.creativityworkshop.com.

A Website Review

By B. Lynn Goodwin

Planning for 2009? Try a Conference

Making plans for 2009? Excellent. Planning helps. Not sure where to start? Pick one of the following: This year I will

- a) start my book
- b) finish my book
- c) polish my book
- d) sell my book
- e) promote my book
- f) stretch my writing skills
- g) switch my genre
- h) all of the above/other

Whatever your goals for 2009, you may need a jump-start to move your career forward. If so, check out the wealth of workshops and conferences listed at Shaw Guides, <http://writing.shawguides.com/>.

If you haven't visited the site recently, it's time to take another look. The first line divides the conferences and workshops by genres, and that's new. They even have a section devoted to marketing. You can also look for conferences in a particular month or in a specific state.

I clicked on California and found over 100 conferences and workshops. The list has grown, and the San Francisco Writers Conference, which will be held in February, was #2. Click and explore. You'll find brief information about each program as well as a URL for the specific website. You never know what will trigger new ideas. You can even search for a specific genre, in a particular month, in the state of your choice. I tried "January California Memoir" and found twenty-one possibilities.

"Shaw Guides is recommended by the leading national, international, and travel publications, including The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Forbes, Business Week, Fortune, U.S. News & World Report, and USA Today," according to the site. Let them help you plan your next steps.

Found other websites that have helped your writing career? I'd love to review them. Please send the URL to Lgood67334@comcast.net. Thanks.

Sales and Salutes

Lee Paulson's novel, *A Plague of Scoundrels* (Jon Cory), has been awarded Honorable Mention at the London Book Festival.



Meet Our Member

By Jody Denison

Member Profile: *George Smith*

Members of the “Greatest Generation” always surprise me when I sit down to profile one of them. The one constant is that of persistence. George Smith is no exception. George is a native San Franciscan. He joined the Navy two weeks after Pearl Harbor and served in a PBY Squadron as a combat air crewman. His duties carried him from the North Pacific to the South Pacific. George was discharged in 1946. He went to school to obtain a degree in Electronic Engineering—a long way from English Literature, he notes.

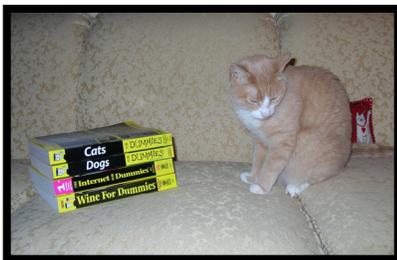
Unfortunately, economic down turns forced his employer to close their doors. With a family to support, he became a sales representative for the California State Automobile Association. He retired from there in 1985. George was widowed after forty four years of marriage and has since remarried. He has two adult children, three grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

George has written articles for the *Elks National Magazine* and the *Contra Costa Times*, but his “serious” writing began about six years ago. He has completed a novel about the Tuskegee airmen. He has just returned the proofs to iUniverse for the final printing process.

Unfortunately, you won't see George at our monthly meetings now, since he is in another combat situation. This time the enemy is Pulmonary Fibrosis which keeps him tethered to supplemental oxygen 24/7. It has not affected his sharp mind or curtailed his courageous persistence to see his novel in print. We wish George fair winds and calm seas.

From the Editor's Desk

By Catherine Accardi



I deal with holiday stress by giving. I give to myself, to my husband, to my friends, to charities, and even to my cat. My gifts of choice are books. This year's kitty gift book was *Cats for Dummies* from the always appropriate "Dummies" series. This gifting is pictured on the left.

A favorite holiday pastime is to give new and used books to libraries, club raffles, and charities such as ARF (Animal Rescue Foundation) for the ARF Thrift Store. As you wade through the stacks of books in your home, remember you can always donate books throughout the year, not just at Christmas. Consider the donation a form of recycling and you will be "green" with joy.



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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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