California Writers Club ~ Mount Diablo Branch
Saturday, March 14, 2009
welcomes
Stephanie Chandler

“Building an Online Platform to Sell More Books”

Just about every agent and editor asks an author: “What’s your platform?” Why? Because the wider and deeper our potential market is, the more books we can sell. The Internet has become one of the most powerful marketing tools for authors. Whether we already have one or twenty books to our credit or are just now venturing into publishing, a strong online presence is essential to success. Our March speaker’s practical guide, The Author’s Guide to Building an Online Platform (Quill Driver Books), details ways to dramatically increase our publishing success. By following these simple strategies, we can access a world of opportunity.

Stephanie will share with us how she built her own platform online and what she learned along the way. She will show us how to:

• Develop an online platform that impresses editors and agents
• Create an effective web site and reach a global audience
• Drive traffic to our sites
• Implement online sales
• Establish ourselves as experts in our field
• Stand out against the competition
• Build a long-term career in publishing

With so much competition in the publishing field, it is critical to find new, innovative ways to promote our work. Don’t miss the March meeting!

Please join us for this informative session to be held at Zio Fraedo's Restaurant on March 14. You will find meeting details on page two. 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.mtdiablowriters.org.
March Meeting Details

**Date & Time:** Saturday, March 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:** A sumptuous luncheon buffet.

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

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**Coming Attractions ~ Upcoming Speakers for 2009**

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**April 11:** Priscilla Royal ~ Medieval History Mystery Writer

**May 9:** Young Writers Banquet with mystery author Camille Minichino and poet/publisher David Alpaugh

**June 13:** Verna Driesbach of Driesbach Literary Management

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**President’s Message**

By David George

Would you consider a Life Membership in the California Writers Club? The statewide organization has several dozen authors who have purchased lifetime memberships, including the current state president Casey Wilson and past president Barbara Truax. The Berkeley branch alone has seven “Lifers”, but I am sorry to say that our own Mount Diablo branch has none. Did you know that such a special membership category existed?

If you are reasonably sure that you’ll keep your membership in the CWC for many years, a Life Membership makes sense. Instead of paying $45 per year forever, you would normally pay $675 once then pay no dues for the rest of your life. All other membership benefits would be yours also for the rest of your days.

To celebrate the centennial of our Club’s formation in 1909, the state organization has decided to offer all members a discount off the normal Life Member dues. If purchased this year only, a Life membership will cost $599. Doing the math, this membership category will pay for itself in 13 years. Plus, you will be given one of our new centennial logo pins with a special “rocker tab” of ribbon below it designating you as a Lifetime Member of the CWC.

This is a special program of mine, since I am also the state organization membership chairman. I would love for several Mount Diablo branch members to step forward and convert themselves to a Lifetime Member of the Club. Plus, if one or more of you steps forward, I will convert my own membership to Lifetime status. I wouldn’t want you to feel lonely!

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**Celebrate Our 100th Anniversary**

You can celebrate the California Writers Club 100th anniversary by purchasing a CWC pin and/or tote bag. Both anniversary items are a bargain at $5.00 each. You may purchase them at our monthly CWC meetings. The April edition of The Write News will feature photographs of our special pin and tote bag.
Message from our Mount Diablo Branch Archivist
By Fran Wojnar

If you have newspaper, magazine or program information that highlights or advertises your books, we can include it in the CWC archives. Please give your material to me, your Branch archivist, at our next CWC meeting. If you have questions or need additional information, please email me at franned@sbcglobal.net, or contact me by phone at (925) 933-9248.

CWC Member's Author Events

Author event with Nina Egert -
CWC member, Nina Egert, will be talking about her recently published book, *Tracing Anza's Trail: A Photographer's Journey*, at Orinda Books, on Saturday, March 28 at 1 p.m. She will also give a PowerPoint presentation on this topic at the Hayward Area History Museum, located at 22710 Main Street, on Thursday, March 26 at 6 p.m. Nina will be at the Dublin Library on Saturday, April 4 at 1 p.m. Come join her and learn about a rarely discussed chapter of Contra Costa County's early history.

Author event with Frances Bries Wojnar -
Please join Orinda Books as they welcome Fran Wojnar, author of *Eliza, an Iowa Pioneer* for the release of her new book, *Magdalena's Conflict*. This event will take place on Thursday, March 26, at 4:00 p.m. at the Orinda Book Store, 276 Village Square in Orinda.

Sales and Salutes

Beverly Lauderdale recently signed a contract with Oak Tree Press (after winning their national contest) for her ghost story novel, "In Franklin's House." Publication date is early 2010. *AOPA Flight Training* bought, "In a Hurry to Get Home." *Romantic Homes* accepted an essay, "Ode to a Fancy Ending," and *Bibliophilos* assigned a book review for its Summer Issue.

Members – Would You Like To Be Saluted? Do You Have an Author Event?

We would like to salute you in *The Write News*. We would also like to share any author events/book signings you have coming up in the next few months. Please let newsletter Editor Catherine Accardi know if you have been published recently, or if we can join you at one of your events. Your name and writing achievement, event date, and location, will be highlighted in “Sales and Salutes” or in the new "Member's Author Events" section of upcoming editions of our newsletter. Send along a photograph of yourself, or of your book cover, if you wish, and we shall include them as well. You may contact Catherine at caacat@comcast.net.
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, The Write News. In addition, all donations are tax-deductible.

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. Contest submissions are free and must be received on or before April 1, 2009. Winners are notified in May and presented with their awards at an awards luncheon on Saturday, May 14, 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.
Thank You California Young Writers Contest Donors for 2009!

Jack London Founder’s Circle                    Paula Siegel               For Liz Pentacoff
John Muir Member Club                         Richard E. Tenney        In Memory of Betty Tenney
Ina Coolbrith Laureate Club                     Barbara Bentley
Ina Coolbrith Laureate Club                       Liz Pentacoff                     In Memory of Sue Tasker
Mary Austin Writers Club                          Julie Dowling
Mary Austin Writers Club                          Karen Tenney                   In Memory of Betty Tenney

Thank YOU California Writers Club volunteers and shoppers for helping us raise $686.38 at our Barnes and Noble fundraiser last November for our Young Writers Contest.

Young Writers Workshops

This year, the Young Writers Program held two middle school workshops taught by Sarah Wilson and Elizabeth Koehler-Pentacoff. On Saturday, January 31, the first workshop was held at the Concord Library with high school student assistant Alesha Heinz, a previous workshop attendee, and 27 middle school students. The following week, 42 students came to the Ygnacio Valley Library where Sarah and Elizabeth conducted the same workshop, featuring writing humor and suspense. Below are two photographs of the workshop participants.

Please help spread the word about our contest to any middle school student, teacher, librarian or parent that you know. Guidelines may be found on our Mount Diablo Branch website at www.mtdiablowriters.org/youngWriters.html. Deadline for all short stories, poems and personal narrative/essays is April 1, 2009.
The Tip Bucket

As reported in the December 2008 edition of The Write News, the Back Fence has a new feature called the Tip Bucket. Below is an excerpt. Please note the cute new clipart on the left, courtesy of Barbara Bentley. Thank you Barbara!

**Tips to Create Your Manuscript - Getting the Words Down**

Writing starts out as a craft and develops into an art. You must learn the mechanics of good writing to produce a product that will sell.

- Know your genre and follow the rules. Society is constantly in flux and genre requirements may have changed since the last time you checked them out.
- Join critique groups and writing clubs. Attend writing workshops and conferences. Take a creative writing class. Read books on creative writing.
- In general, non-fiction work must have an outline and several chapters written before taking the next step to publishing.

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 website at [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/CWCBackFence/](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.

Meet Our Member

By Jody Denison

**Profile: Bee Hylinski**

The first question I ask the person I am profiling is: "When did you start writing?" The answers are usually general, but Bee gave a very specific answer: “The summer of 2006.” She had signed up for Oakland-Feather River Art Camp with the intention of doing Gourd Art. We don’t know what happened to the gourds, but we do know she also took an evening writing workshop from Clive Matson, author of *Let the Crazy Child Write!* Bee wrote a story about an Oakland A’s pitcher.

Clive Matson found himself with a new student when camp was over. He was so impressed with the short story that he told Bee her main character needed a novel. Thus was born *Pitcher Larry Gordon and Contract Year*. Originally from New Canaan, Connecticut, Bee is the daughter of a “Dollar a Year” man. As a result, she lived not only in Washington D.C. but in Kansas City around the time the Athletics left Philadelphia for Kansas City. That is when Major League Baseball became a passion for her.

Bee’s true calling was Art. Before taking up writing, she worked with 3D art: fused glass, metal working, paper art, gourd art and fiber art. As it happens, unfortunately, arthritis decided to take her hands. Nevertheless, while recouping from hand surgery, she found she was still able to type, and so we have a novel. Bee is in the process of her second major rewrite and hopes to venture into the publishing world shortly. Bee’s education is impressive. She has a B.A. from Vassar, and a Law degree and M.B.A. from Golden Gate University. She has also done graduate work in Land Use Planning at M.I.T. Bee raised a daughter who teaches high school English in San Ramon. Bee’s husband, Ralph, is a retired physician. They have two grandchildren. We welcome Bee to CWC.
A Website Review
By B. Lynn Goodwin

Be An Expert Who Cares – Help a Reporter

Are you an expert on economic woes, parenting, recycling, feng shui, outdoor sports, global travel, technology or eldercare? Whatever your specialty, reporters need your help. They need quotes from experts for their stories, so they rely on Peter Shankman’s Haro – Help A Reporter Out, www.helpareporter.com/. Marketing guru Peter Shankman says, “This list was originally conceived on Facebook, but since Facebook caps group emails at 1,200 people, this is the next incarnation.”

The URL will take you to Shankman’s “I am a source” page. Simply sign up, add Peter Shankman to your address book, and his e-mails, filled with reporters needs, will come straight to your inbox. Skim the queries. If you see a request that you can fill, scroll down and read the specifics. Then contact the reporter. Shankman only asks that you “promise not to email a reporter with an answer that doesn't match what they're looking for.” Don’t waste a reporter's time simply to promote yourself.

Towards the end of his welcome letter, Shankman adds, “Wanna do me a favor? Give your PR buddies this link: www.helpareporter.com , and give your reporter/editor/journalism buddies this link: www.helpareporter.com/press.” This review answers that request. Take advantage of this win-win opportunity. When you help a reporter, you build your platform, to say nothing of your karma. Enjoy the role of expert.

CWC Membership Renewal Time
By Jody Denison

REMINDER: For all members, your membership expires on June 30, 2009. Dues for the upcoming 2009/2010 year are $45.00 payable to CWC-Mt. Diablo Branch. Mail your check and membership renewal form below to: Membership, CWC Mt. Diablo Branch, P.O. 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

You have probably heard that question we are all asked at one time or another, "If you could have lunch with any author in the world, who would you choose?" Well, you really do need to come up with an answer. Why? Because your wish could come true someday. It did for me. My answer was Joe Gores. On Saturday, February 21, 2009, I had lunch with Joe Gores. We "broke bread." Of course there were over 50 other people in the room, but I skillfully blocked them from my consciousness focusing on the man sitting across from me. Our conversation was about Mr. Gores' work with the Dashiell Hammett family and the process of writing his new novel *Spade & Archer: The Prequel to Dashiell Hammett's "The Maltese Falcon."*

The occasion was the celebration of Joe Gores' February 14 book release of *Spade & Archer* at San Francisco's historic John's Grill where, as the story goes, Sam Spade enjoyed a meal of lamb chops and tomatoes. The event was sponsored by Mystery Writers of America.

You too will become part of historic literary noir when you read *Spade and Archer*. Mr. Gores carefully researches the original book, *The Maltese Falcon*, explores the original characters, and then, in his distinctive writing style, expands on the legendary characters of Sam Spade and Miles Archer. Joe's presentation was awesome in the truest sense of the word. He was delightful, enlighting, and completely Gores: charming and intelligent. I could have listened for hours. Affirmation of my years of walking the foggy streets of San Francisco alone came during his presentation because my walks were not alone. Joe was there, Hammett was there, and I have the autographed books to prove it.

*It was an honor Mr. Gores.*

### About the Author:
Joe Gores was formerly a private eye. He is the author of sixteen top novels, including *Hammett*, which was made into the film of the same name, produced by Frances Ford Coppola. Mr. Gores has received three Edgar Awards and is one of only two authors to win an award in three categories: Best First Novel, Best Short Story and Best Episode in a TV Series.

**Novels by Joe Gores (partial list):**
- *Dead Skip* (1972)
- *Final Notice* (1973)
- *Hammett* (1975)
- *Come Morning* (1986)

**Screenplays:**
- *Deadfall* (1976)
- *Hammett* (1977)
- *Paradise Road* (1978)
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Sail On