

The Write News

A Mo



A Monthly Newsletter

November 2011

The California Writers Club-Mount Diablo Branch

Workshop and Luncheon

Saturday, November 12, 2011

Jessica Inclán Will Highlight –

Who's Telling the Story and When?

With a Focus on Point-of-View and Tense

In This Workshop, You Will Learn To:



Jessica Inclán

- ❖ *Work with at least three different 'voices'*
- ❖ *Determine who should be telling what*
- ❖ *Utilize tense to play with time in your story*

Bring paper and pen!

Jessica Inclán is a multiple prize winner, and was a 2002 recipient of the CAC Artist's Fellowship in Literature. **Jessica teaches composition, creative writing, mythology, and women's literature** at Diablo Valley College in Pleasant Hill, California, and online novel writing courses for UCLA Extension. She is a very experienced and successful writing workshop teacher.

Jessica has degrees in sociology and English literature from CSU Stanislaus and a Master's degree in English literature from SFSU. She is the author of twelve traditionally published novels, including the best-selling *Her Daughter's Eyes*, *The Matter of Grace*, and *When You Believe*. She has also published six ebooks, short stories, poems, and a women's studies textbook, *Diverse Voices of Women*. Her work has been translated into Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, and Czech.

Workshop Registration

Sign-in is 9 – 9:30 am, workshop 9:30 – 12:15, and lunch from 12:30 – 1:30 at Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill, CA.

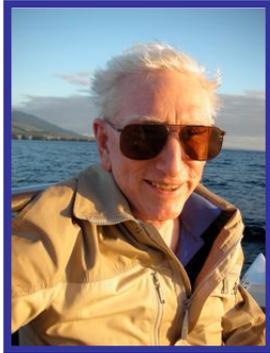
Member registration is \$35, or \$40 for non-CWC members

Contact: Betty Iverson at bjiverson@comcast.net or phone 925-376-3631

Workshop Details on Page 3

President's Message

By Lee Paulson



Member Survey Report

A special thanks to all Mt. Diablo members who responded to the Member Survey. Of our 147 members, 73 filled out the questionnaire — a very high number, according to experienced “survey savvy” people. Recapping members’ responses:

Q 1: Topics Most Relevant to Writing. All five topics (plotting, character, editing, agents, ePublishing) had responses ranging between 54.9% - 66.2%.

Q 2: Type of program. Speakers came in first with 80%, followed by Workshops 69%, then Panels 31%, and Focus Tables 24%.

Q 3: December Meeting “3 of our own.” 80% responded “yes.”

Q 4: If “no” to previous question, what would you like instead? Workshops 60%, Program 40%.

Q 5: When to meet: Saturday 87%.

Q 6: Time to meet: Midday, as now. 59%, morning 37%.

Q 7: Lunch or not: Buffet lunch 75%, No lunch 25%.

Member Comments. We received many thoughtful comments and suggestions.

- Topics of interest: critique, queries, proposals, publishing, and how to use Social Media.
- Finding time and motivation for writing.
- More information on present members via short Bios. *This is already being addressed through our Newsletter.*

- Opportunities for members to read, discuss their books, and share common interests.
- Recognition of guests and new members. *We do this periodically, but made a special effort to do this at our October meeting and will continue to do this at future meetings.*
- More notice on coming attractions, better descriptions of what members can get from workshops and speakers.
- Complaints that speakers don't follow up on promises made at the meeting.
- Make members more aware of the Back Fence.

Be assured that the board members have reviewed and discussed all comments to help guide future programs and format. The goal is to increase the value of your membership to you as a writer. Any survey is a point in time. Chatting with board members and sharing your ideas and comments is an ongoing process that helps us steer the good ship, Mt. Diablo.

Workshop Details

November 12 - Workshop Details - Check-in begins at 9:00 am, **Workshop** at 9:30, lunch at 12:30.

Menu: Zio Fraedo's sumptuous buffet

Reservations: Reservations are required and must be received no later than noon on **Wednesday, November 9.**

Cost: \$35 for CWC members; \$40 for guests

To make a reservation, contact Betty Iverson, via e-mail at bjiverson@comcast.net, or by phone at (925) 376-3631. 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.

Value Added Column

In our continued effort to add value to your CWC membership, you will begin to see a "Value Added" signature attached to specific columns in the Newsletter. We hope you will find these columns useful in your writing and publishing efforts. Don't miss the 'value added' column below.

New Tool Available for Members

As part of the new *Publishing Pathways* project, the NorCal Group has created a new website to assist CWC members with publishing and marketing their work. The website www.publishingpathways.com contains current information regarding publishers, agents, ebooks and the publishing process. It also provides information on how to market your work and how to create platforms. Finally, it lists valuable resources and people who can assist you with marketing/publishing.

Members who wish to access this information may do so in two ways: they may access the website directly, or they may contact a Publishing Pathways Mentor for assistance. The Mt. Diablo Publishing Pathways Mentors are Judith Marshall, Judith.Marshall@att.net, Polly Benson, shop@bighatpress.com, and Andrew Kinane, andrewkinane@hotmail.com

Members can also offer their services as editors, speakers on marketing/publishing, marketing/publishing consultants, or providers of other services related to marketing/publishing. Members who wish to offer their services via the website should forward their request to one of the mentors to pass on to the webmaster. Requests to post services are only accepted if routed through a Publishing Pathways Mentor.

Note: This website is a work in progress and will continue to grow based on member input.

News from CWC Central***PLEA FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE!***

The California Writers Club has leveraged **Jack London's** name for the better part of 100 years. The CWC began as informal gatherings of London and his friends. We cite these stellar origins constantly. Now California State Parks has initiated closure proceedings for Jack London State Park.

If we as writers have a voice, we might want to use it now. If we do, we stand to benefit right along with Jack. So here we have a unique opportunity. Published and unpublished members alike can attract an editor's eye, or a search engine, by writing about state park closures. The fact that California will shut down 70 state parks constitutes a hot topic.

For more information, see

<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/02/fall-of-the-wild/>,

<http://jacklondonpark.com/> and http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=712. If you place an article, please let us know.

Good luck and sail on!

Highlighting One of Our Members

By Catherine Accardi
Branch Membership Chair

Member Profile: *Jeryl Abelmann*

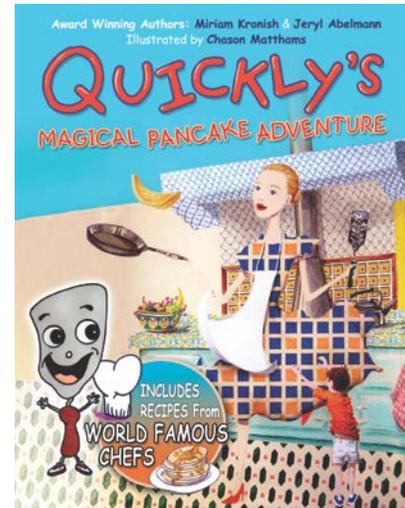


Jeryl Abelmann was born and raised in Santa Rosa, California. She graduated from UCLA with a degree in Elementary Education. She and her husband live in Alamo. They have two sons and four adorable grandchildren.

Jeryl taught elementary school in California and Massachusetts. She was a fifth grade teacher at Green Valley Elementary School in Danville for almost twenty years. She was the recipient of Teacher of the Year for the San Ramon Valley Unified School District. Jeryl is a member of The Carmel Bach Festival Board of Directors and the Screen Actors Guild.

She has fond memories of being read to by her mother – Jeryl's dream was to write a children's book. *Quickly* a spatula and beloved fixture in the family kitchen became the inspiration for her children's book. It is a story about how a simple object can be the source of joy as it evokes memories of family and growing up. *Quickly* is a story for all ages.

Quickly: The Magic Spatula is a collaboration between Jeryl and her longtime friend, principal, and mentor, Miriam Kronish, and New York illustrator Chason Matthams. The Authors' book *Quickly: The Magic Spatula* is the 2011 "Children's Books Winner" of the Hollywood Book Festival. *Quickly* is also honored as the Gold Medal Winner - "Moonbeam Spirit Children's Book Award" and Best Children's Picture Book from the Bay Area Independent Publishers Association.



The sequel to *Quickly* entitled *Quickly's Magical Pancake Adventure* will be released this month. In this tale Quickly's wish is to have a magical pancake adventure – to go out into the world in search of the best pancake recipes far and wide. The authors' book blends Quickly's adventure with pancake recipes from world famous chefs. Jacques Pépin endorsed the book with a wonderful quote, "My grandchild will love this book."

Jeryl says, "The hardest part of the process is receiving rejection letters." *Quickly: The Magic Spatula* took four years ... and now *Quickly* is having another adventure. Hurray for FastPencil, Inc.! Her advice to all the members of the California Writers Club is to 'Believe in Yourself' and Never give up!

Jeryl also loves book signings. "... I meet wonderful people and love to listen to their family stories. It seems that everyone has a *Quickly*!"

A special thank you to our President Lee Paulson:

It is because of his email to all members reminding us of the Hollywood Book Festival that was the impetus for me to apply for the Children's Book Award. *Quickly: The Magic Spatula* won!



Member Events, News and Salutes



Catherine Accardi has written a total of three books for Arcadia Publishing, the publisher of local history books headquartered in Chicago and North Carolina. Her two San Francisco books, *San Francisco's North Beach and Telegraph Hill* and *San Francisco Landmarks*, are part of the Images of America series, which has won this year's prestigious William C. Ralston Award for "Arcadia Publishing's extraordinary contribution to San Francisco history." The awards ceremony will be held at the Mark Hopkins Hotel on November 14.

San Francisco Landmarks will be released in the Winter of 2012, and will contain over 200 vintage images, and accompanying text of the City's amazing historic landmarks.



Judith Kajiwara doing Butoh by pond in Joaquin Miller

In connection with the currently running exhibit featuring **Nina Egert's**, *Yone Noguchi in California: A Japanese Poet Among Oakland's Famous Writers*, the Oakland Asian Cultural Center will present an afternoon of dance and poetry on Sunday, November 13, 2 pm.

KNEEL TO YOU LIKE A SIGH: A COLLABORATIVE DANCE/POETRY PERFORMANCE

Oakland Asian Cultural Center

388 9th St. www.oacc.cc

With Butoh dancer, Judith Kajiwara, (Oakland Asian Cultural Center Artist-in-Residence) musicians, Roy and P.J. Hirabayashi, (founders of San Jose Taiko) saxophonist, Steve Nakano and featuring dancer/restaurateur, Yoshie Akiba

BRINGING THE OUTSIDE IN: A Chabana/Haiku Workshop

with B. Stevens Strauss and Nina Egert

Sunday, November 6, 1-3 pm.



Marlene Dotterer has a short story published in the anthology, *Pagan Writers Presents Samhain*. Her science fiction story is titled "Webs" and is about a future celebration of the pagan holiday of Samhain (Halloween) aboard an asteroid spaceship.

The anthology is available at [Pagan Writers Press](http://PaganWritersPress.com) and as an ebook at [Smashwords](http://Smashwords.com).

Value Added***How to Write Effective Queries*****By Ted Wells****I. Definition of a Query**

A query is a written advertisement to sell a writer's story and himself to an agent, editor, or publisher. It's a sales pitch about a great idea and an author who is qualified to write about it. There is only a 2% acceptance rate, so it must be clearly superior writing. An effective query "ain't" easy to write.

II. Parts of a Query**A. Lead or Hook**

A lead or hook grabs the reader's attention immediately in the first sentence. It may be identical to the first sentence in your book or story.

B. Body**1. Premise**

The central idea that makes people *want* to read the book in one to three sentences. Example: Premise of 1906, a novel by James Dalessandro: "The destruction of San Francisco in 1906 by earthquake and fire could have been prevented."

2. Details

Brief details about the basic underlying story told with punch lines – teasers, taglines, slogans, great voice and style, in your very best writing which cuts your book apart from the herd. Read and study best seller book covers in your genre for how to describe details.

3. Credentials

Provide your published works in the same genre. What makes you the best qualified author to write this book? Optionally, you may send a resume as a second attachment.

C. Closing

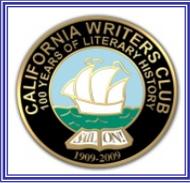
1. Thank you for your consideration.
2. Request to ask if you might send what's asked for in agent/publisher's guidelines.
 - 2a. Non-fiction: proposal, outline, sample chapters, or complete manuscript.
 - 2b. Fiction: Plot Synopsis, story-concept sheets, sample chapters or complete manuscript.

III. Attributes of an Effective Query

- A. Perfect spelling, grammar, and punctuation
- B. Neat, appealing format
Example: New Times Roman 12, double-spaced with at least one-inch margins
- C. Length: Short, one page preferred, never more than a page and one-half
- D. Compelling story idea and writing
- E. Mystery or problem to solve
- F. Give **exactly** what's asked for in agent/publisher/writer's guidelines
- G. Critiqued by several published authors including those in your genre

IV. Sample teasers, taglines, and slogans by category

- A. Fun: Discover eclectic travel and extended living and working abroad.
- B. Money: It's not what you earn, but what you save, invest, and negotiate.
- C. Job: Find and keep a golden straw in the haystack.
- D. Peace: Speak gently, walk slowly, light and easy on life's road.
- E. Health: Live old, think young.
- F. Faith: Life's greatest gifts of life itself and love through Him.
- G. Character: Be a 21st Century Renaissance man.
- H. Exploration: Set your internal compass to roam mode.



Membership News

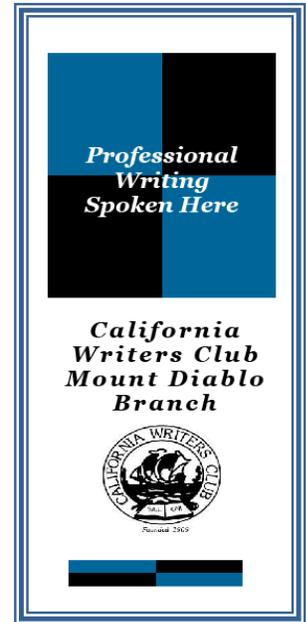
By Catherine Accardi
Branch Membership Chair

Now that we are settling nicely into our new 2011-2012 membership year, it is my goal to share the California Writers Club experience with as many people as possible. We want writers, readers, and just general folks to join our Mount Diablo branch.

The new membership brochures are being distributed around the Contra Costa area. Please feel free to request copies from me, at either our meetings, or by contacting me at caacat@comcast.net. Let's make our terrific membership benefits available to as many people as possible.

Our newest member is *Marcia Davis*. Let us welcome her to our Branch. Marcia, we are happy to have you in CWC! Make our new members feel welcomed as they join us in upcoming meetings.

As of October 2011, the Mount Diablo branch has a total of 147 members, and we are one of the largest CWC branches in the State. Let's continue to promote our illustrious club and add to that grand total.



Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.

~ Elizabeth Andrew



Call For Volunteers

Would You Like To Be A Volunteer For Your Writers Club?

Would you not want to further the mission of our writers club? Our mission, as defined on our statewide club website is: *"Educating writers of all abilities in the craft of writing and in the marketing of their work"*. Sounds like a good plan to me. Our writers club runs smoothly thanks to our talented and dedicated volunteers. For more information about what opportunities are available to you, contact Membership Chair, Catherine Accardi, at caacat@comcast.net

Writer's Markets Column

SUBMISSIONS, OPPORTUNITIES AND MORE By B. Lynn Goodwin



What are you writing? Could it be better? Are you ready to send your piece out into the world?

If your answer to the last question is no, maybe you could use a Manuscript Consultation. Of course you might say, “Yes, I’m ready to send my work out.” If so, check out the sites listed below.

1. **WRITER ADVICE**, www.writeradvice.com has a new set of opportunities listed in the fall issue. Click on Contests & Markets to see what we’ve collected and be sure to read the no-fee, no-prize opportunity listed on the Home Page.

Deadline: December 10, 2011

Guidelines: www.writeradvice.com

2. BREATHE

Deadline: Ongoing

Guidelines & Submissions Info: <http://www.readbreathe.com/contributors-guidelines/>

3. **CRATE Literary Magazine** is looking for fiction, non-fiction, poetry and short dramatic works.

Deadline: January 1, 2012.

Guidelines & Submissions: <http://crateliterarymagazine.submishmash.com/submit>

More information: www.crate.ucr.edu & cratelit.wordpress.com

4. ELECTRIC LITERATURE

Deadline: Ongoing

Guidelines & Submissions: <http://electricliterature.submishmash.com/submit>

5. FOX & QUILL

Deadline: Ongoing

Guidelines: <http://www.foxandquill.com/>**6. MILITARY OFFICER**

Deadline: Ongoing

Guidelines: http://www.moaa.org/pubs/pubs_mom/pubs_guidelines.htm**7. PAVEMENT SAW: Poetry Chapbook Contest**

Deadline: December 31, 2011

Guidelines & Submissions: <http://www.pavementsaw.org/pages/chapcontest.htm>**8. THE STILLWATER REVIEW**

Deadline: November 15th, 2011

Guidelines & Submissions: Electronic submissions only:

<poetrycenter(at)sussex.edu> (replace (at) with @ in sending e-mail)

9. Are you looking for a **WRITING GRANT** rather than a submissions opportunity? Check the information at <http://www.fundsforwriters.com/grants.htm>.

If you receive a grant or have a piece published as a result of something you read here, please let CWC—Mt. Diablo know or e-mail me directly at Lgood67334@comcast.net.

Enjoy your writing, editing, and successes. Remember, everyone has great stories, poems, essays, articles, blogs, plays, screenplays, and more to share.

Take a look at <http://www.writeradvice.com/manuscriptconsultation.html> and if you want to know more, please contact me at Lgood67334@comcast.net with your needs and a 500-word writing sample. You may be eligible for a special rate. If we don't offer what you need, maybe I can help you find a service that will work for you.

For the Fun of It**TEST YOUR EDITING SKILLS**

To quote the Fullerton College of Communications, "Let's face it, everyone's first draft stinks." Acclaimed author Veronica Rossi, CWC's October's speaker, attributed part of her novel's success to her emphasis on constant rewriting and revising.

Mt. Diablo Branch's theme is Writers helping Writers. In that spirit, and also having a little fun, we are posting a two-part editing test for you. This month features an example of unedited writing titled *The Mississippi Ham*. Okay, it is bad writing, full of errors. Next month, three of our members known for their editing skills will identify the errors. You can see how many errors you found and score yourself. **See story below.**

The Mississippi Ham

Topelo is basically famous for being the birthplace of Elvis Presley, but I remember it as it being the town where I was exposed to smoked-salt cured ham of local fame. My reason for flying on the airplane from San Francisco had been to visit a fabric plant that I did a annual review on their computer systems.

Mr. Tadford, the plant President, did not like having corporate visitors for anywhere north of Mississippi or west of the Sabine river. Damnyankee was one word to him. "I dropped out of the fourth grade and never suffered for it, He boasted. Living as a rich man in a poor state allowed him the latitude to say such nonsense. I watched him during my visit one morning swiftly open the mail. He steadily put bills due on the left side of his desk and checks received on the right side.

"Long as the two stacks are equal, I'm doing OK" he said. "I hate to admit it but my people say you ain't like those ivy leaguers. "That's because I'm from Indiana and worked with the Cajuns in Louisiana."

"I had a heart attack a year ago and the bored of directors send me a get-well card that said. "Dear Mr. Tadford, we wish you a speedy recovery by a vote of six to five." We shared a laugh.

Mr. Tadford picked up his pen and wrote directions to a local hog farmer who cured the best country ham for miles around. "Its a present. On the way to airport, stop by and he has a whole ham waiting for you. My present to you all paid for. Southern Hospitality."

I pull in to the farmer's yard past a hand lettered sign Country Hams for Sale. The farmer presented me with the best smelling whole ham I had ever smelled. He offered to ship it to my home in California by the Greyhound Express. Knowing that that wouldn't work, I worked on him and we wrapped it up in a large black plastic trash bag and duck taped it tight.

Going through security at the airport, the screener shouted for his supervisor. There on the display of my carryon bag was the x-ray of a large leg bone. What had he found? An axe murderer? Two armed guards unwrapped the black plastic with stern looks. They finally understood when I said. "Its a country ham".

"Sure smells good," one said.

"I'm hungry," said the other.

Rushing to catch my flight, I trailed delightful aromas behind me through the gate area.

Tune in next month and see who catches which errors, mistakes, misstatements, incorrect usage, abysmal grammar and just plain bad writing. Can this story be saved?

2012 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 for this fiscal year. 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, 2011, to the present:

Foundation Donors

The Leroe Family Foundation

The Jack London Founder's Circle

Christine Sunderland

The John Muir Member Club

The Mary Austin Writers Club

David George in memory of Joan Brennan

The John Steinbeck Society

Barbara Bentley

The Ina Coolbrith Laureate Club

Elizabeth Koehler-Pentacoff in memory of Joan Brennan

Lee Paulson

Kathy Urban

The Helen Hunt Jackson Group

The Gertrude Atherton Guild

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 John Muir Member Club - \$150-\$249

~ The Ina Coolbrith Laureate Club - \$100-\$149

~ The Mary Austin Writers Club - \$50-\$99

~ The Gertrude Atherton Guild - \$10-\$24

~ 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 November 12, at 9:00 am, in Pleasant Hill.**

For detailed workshop 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.