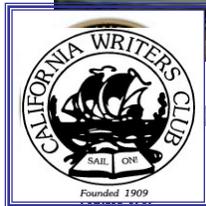


The Write News

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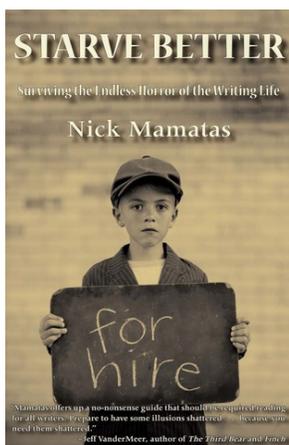
A Monthly Newsletter

November 2012

The California Writers Club-Mount Diablo Branch

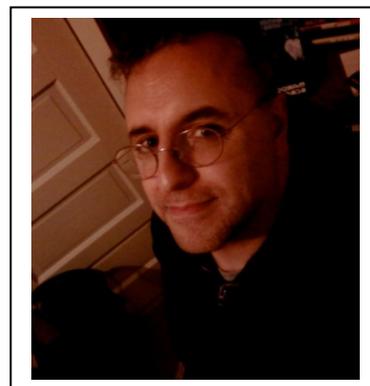
WORKSHOP & FULL BREAKFAST

Saturday, November 10, 2012; 8:30am to 12:30pm
“Beginnings and Endings for Fiction and Non-fiction”



- learn the difference between hooking a reader and tantalizing the reader
- what editors look for in the very first paragraph
- how to write a conclusion that stays with a reader
- always remember: never preach!
- bring paper and pen for exercises

Nick Mamatas is the author of four novels, more than eighty short stories, and hundreds of articles on writing and editing. When not writing or teaching writing, Nick is the editor of *Haikasoru* magazine.



Sign-in is 8:30 – 9 am, breakfast 9 – 9:30, and workshop 9:30 – 12:30 at Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill, CA. Member registration is \$35, or \$40 for non-CWC members; contact Jean at jeaniegpopps@comcast.net or leave a message at: (925) 934-5677.

Meeting Details on Page 2

President's Message

By *Elisabeth Tuck*



Do you sometimes want to strangle someone who is inconsiderate in a meeting? CWC members are usually tactful. Two outside instances sparked thoughts about etiquette with authors.

My book club invited a new author to speak about her memoir. She had a fascinating childhood as an ethnic Chinese living in India and experiencing an Indo-Chinese conflict. The room was mesmerized. Then one member raised her hand, took the floor, and told a too-long story about Japanese internment in California. The author's spell was broken.

Another time I stood in line in the beating sun waiting to buy an author's book and have him sign it. It seemed that people ahead of me were attempting to engage the author in long conversations. Did everyone behind me wait or were sales lost?

Both situations frustrated me and I wondered if I was alone in feeling that way. My critique group pointed me to some online etiquette regarding visiting authors. CWC meetings and signings generally go smoothly but some points bear remembering:

- Do some research on the author and their works. Relevant questions during an author's talk are appropriate and the audience appreciates the information gleaned. If you save your question to ask one-on-one, the audience misses out
- Remember that there are people in line behind you at the signing. If you have personal stories or questions, stand at the back of the line
- Respect the author's time. Mt. Diablo pays our speakers so little that book sales really do help
- Only offer information about your work if asked
- If you need many books signed, consider others behind you

If we practice these points at our meetings and other signings, all concerned will have an enjoyable time.

November 10, 2012 Workshop Details

Sign-in is from 8:30 – 9 am, full breakfast 9 – 9:30, and workshop 9:30 – 12:30.

Reservations are required and must be received no later than noon on **Wednesday, November 7th**. **Cost: \$35 for CWC members; \$40 for guests.**

To make a reservation, contact Jean Georgakopoulos, via e-mail at jeaniegops@comcast.net, or by phone at (925) 934-5677. 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 or \$25 "no-show" payment according to your membership.

Meet One of Our Mount Diablo Branch Members

Member Profile: *Ken Kerkhoff*



Ken Kerkhoff lives in Walnut Creek, California, where he recently retired from a career in finance and accounting. Ken was born in Minnesota, lived on his parents' farm and attended local schools. He then attended the University of Minnesota and Saint Cloud State University.

After working with the American Peace Corps in India for three plus years, he returned to the U.S., where he received a Masters in Business Administration from Golden Gate University in San Francisco.

Several years in industrial and governmental accounting could not dull the desire for travel. Ken and his wife moved to Cameroon, Africa, where he worked for an international credit union organization.

Ken became interested in writing during his youth. At the age of ten he won third prize in a statewide short story contest. Encouraged with this success he developed a love for communicating through written words. As a Peace Corps volunteer in India, he became an unintentional correspondent to his local newspaper. Ken's letters home drew interest from his home community and became a weekly feature in the *Morgan Messenger*.

Travel and people have greatly influenced his writing. While living in India and Cameroon for eight years, Ken observed distinctive cultures and met many wonderful and interesting characters. Travels through Europe and Asia added a wider perspective to Ken's view of the world. He is currently working with an Indian writer to get the writer's memoirs published in the United States.

Ken's career in finance put food on the table, but distracted him from creative writing. The experience of writing audit reports, instructional manuals and operational guides has been interesting, but does not allow the expression of personal observations and feelings. Ken says, "Now that I have left the business world to others I can concentrate on my love for creative writing." Ken wants to write both fiction and non-fiction.

"My first serious effort is a non-fiction book about India. I am the narrator of a close friend's stories. Through his stories, Pejathaya helps me understand his people. I hope to complete the work in early 2013."

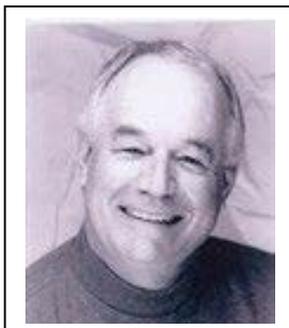
***New writing challenge and submission idea can be found on
Page 6.***

Don't miss this one!

P.S. – 'Little Darlings' begins on Page 8



Member Events, News and Salutes



From J.D. Blair: "Success can be fickle but persistence pays off. My short story *High Frequency* has been picked up by the *Conium Review*. Question: If you were having trouble sleeping would you go to your dentist? Probably not. After going to his dentist Randall Tims solved his sleep problems and at the same time developed some very unique communication avenues.

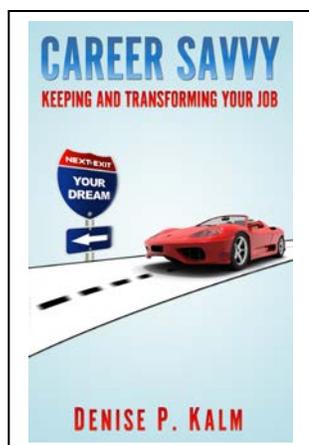


Member and novelist **Mary Lou Peters Schram** will read from and sign her new novel *Molly's Leap* at Book Passage Bookstore in the San Francisco Ferry Building on November 12, at 6:30 p.m.

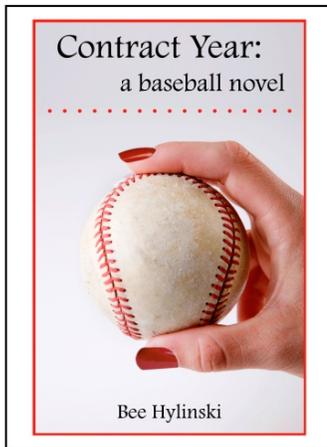
Molly's Leap is a look behind the headlines of the very recent past. The real estate boom and bust did not just happen on the front pages, it also happened to many innocent people drawn in before they knew what the game was.

Member Muriel James said: ..."a brilliant comic diagnosis of a young woman finding herself in the business world while juggling two lovers and two children."

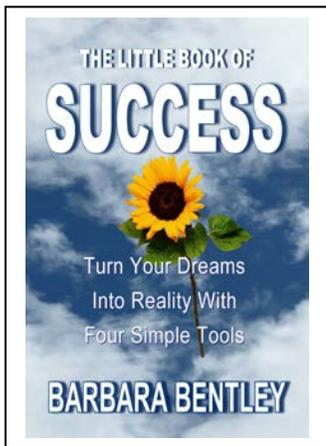
"A thoroughly modern tale of struggle and redemption...against the timely backdrop of the up and down West Coast real estate market...a pleasurable page turner." Marilyn Davin, columnist, Rossmoor News.



Denise P. Kalm is proud to announce publication of *Career Savvy - Keeping & Transforming Your Job*. This guide helps you learn how to stay employed during a time of economic unrest and massive downsizing, then shows you how to reinvent your job into one that makes you love going to work. "Keep it, change it, love it." Now available as an ebook; paperback coming soon. Contact denise@dpkcoaching for more information or check it out on Amazon.com



Bee Hylinski is pleased to announce that her novel, *Contract Year: a baseball novel*, is now available as an ebook in both Kindle and iBooks formats. They are available as downloads from her website: www.contractyearnovel.com, as well as on Amazon (Kindle).



ANNOUNCING BARBARA BENTLEY'S SECOND BOOK:

"I am pleased to announce that my second book *The Little Book of Success: Turn Your Dreams into Reality with Four Simple Tools* is now available in print and electronic formats. While writing my first book I discovered that I had used four simple tools throughout my life to create success after success. Lessons learned are lessons to be shared. Using four everyday examples from my life, I created a book that illustrates how passion, planning, patience, and persistence turned my dreams into reality. This little book will help you do the same. Each chapter is followed by questions to prompt the reader into applying that section's principles. Also, the printed book includes lined pages following the questions so readers can jot down any thoughts prompted by the questions.



Susan Pace-Koch Events:

(Nov) Susan Pace-Koch, Creative Director of *Get Out Books*, will be the featured Guest Speaker for the Lioness Club in November, for members only, with the topic "Making Magic," the Magic of Picture Books.

(Dec) *Get Out Books* will be joining the vendors at Highland Elementary School, sponsored by the PTA, in Concord, to support a fundraiser for the school's expenses for classroom supplies, field trips and student activities. Her award-winning book *Get Out Of My Head, I Should Go To Bed* will be one of the raffle prizes.

Editor's Note:

Share your good news, upcoming event or new book. We would like to celebrate with you!

Submissions are published in the order they are received. The newsletter deadline each month is the 3rd Wednesday of the previous month. The December newsletter deadline will be November 21st.

Please send a short paragraph and .jpg photo of you or your book cover to Lyn Roberts at editingonline@astound.net.



Members - We've Gone and Done It!

Thanks to you, members of the Mount Diablo Branch, we have achieved a membership renewal rate of 90% for the 2012-2013 membership year. We now have a total of 138 members in our CWC branch and that makes us one of the largest in the state.

I contacted our Central Branch Membership Chair and she confirmed that our branch has the highest renewal rate of all branches in the state. Now that deserves *Congratulations* because you (and I, of course) made that happen. Here's to a happy and productive year for all of our members.

A NEW CHALLENGE

We are tossing another writing idea your way. So far, we have asked for submissions for **First Lines**, **Last Lines**, and **Little Darlings** (exquisite sentences) on Page 8. The range and quality of writing was truly inspiring. The submissions demonstrated the exceptional depth of ability represented by our Mt. Diablo writers. It was heartening to read. Thank you all for 'putting yourself out there' to show us your writing talent.

SO ON TO A NEW CHALLENGE. We are asking you to **SELL US YOUR STORY**: You know – that 30 second elevator speech. It goes like this: you step into an elevator with the first printing of your new book. You are beaming! Someone asks, "What is your story about?" You have 30 seconds to captivate the listener with a concise and interesting description, enticing him to read the book. Or, you are at a Writers' Workshop and you have 30 seconds in front of an agent – convince him to read your manuscript. Easy!

Sell us your story – practice on us, your fellow writers. We understand how hard this is to pull off – but very important to perfect. Remember, this should be short, only a few sentences. Practice – read it out loud and time yourself. Send your 30-second elevator speech to Lyn Roberts, newsletter editor, at editingonline@astound.net. Deadline for the December newsletter is November 21st.

We want to support you and your writing!

How to Deal With Writer's Block

A few years ago, before I became a member of the Mt. Diablo Branch of CWC, I attended one of their workshops featuring Dr. Jane Anne Staw, author of "Unstuck" and Donna Levin of Levin Editorial Services. Whenever I find myself blocked in any part of the writing process, I refer back to some of the suggestions presented. Here are the highlights:

Writer's block can strike at any time in the process – when you can't finish a book or when you can't send it out into the world. According to Dr. Staw, anxiety is at the root of writer's block. To remove some of the obstacles to writing, Dr. Staw suggests: 1) Ask your inner critics to leave 2) Don't think too big (i.e. thinking about the whole novel or casting the movie) 3) Write on a regular basis, so you don't have to keep starting over 4) Think small – pick a moment and write about it for 15-20 minutes. The best writing is small – the details are essential. 5) Remember, writing is about revision: 1st stage – get it down, 2nd stage – flesh it out, 3rd stage – check the flow, 4th stage – polish and fine tune (word choice and syntax), 5th stage – punctuation and line editing, 6th stage – self-dialog.

Donna Levin suggests when you have nothing to write about, begin a paragraph with "I remember..." and just keep going. Another tactic is to write down five things you observed in the past couple of days: a frazzled mother, a battered car, etc. Use other senses, too: reconstruct a conversation you overheard, think of the way different places you visited smelled. When you're stuck on your novel, pick a scene that's coming later in the novel and write that or write a scene that involves characters in the novel but is not intended for the book. When all else fails, write something completely different for a while – you know, the "other" novel that you have just realized will be the easy one to write.

Both presenters offered some interesting insight into what causes writer's block and helpful ideas on how to get through it. Now, if one of them would just volunteer to finish my novel.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Marshall

Author of *Husbands May Come and Go, but Friends are Forever* and *Staying Afloat*

Editor's Note:

What wisdom have you learned about the Craft of Writing? Please send your ideas and share with our fellow members. Try to keep it to one page. Send to newsletter editor, Lyn Roberts at editingonline@astound.net.

Editor's Note:

I am pleased to present submissions for "Little Darlings" – those exquisite sentences tucked into our writings. For the sake of fairness, they are listed in the order in which they were received.

Little Darlings

She fell backwards, living long enough to bring her bloody hands in front of her face, and count the cost charged to her account.

Marlene Dotterer – from: *The Time Travel Journals: Bridgebuilder*

Life never turns out the way you think it will and that point of view becomes clearer and clearer as you get older; change is the only constant in life, and it can rapidly rearrange your landscape into an unfamiliar terrain that can leave you reeling and feeling lost, consumed by emotions hitherto unknown to your soul.

Don W. Bowyer – from *Skin Cream*

I gazed across the blue expanse and was soon lost in nostalgia for a dream not realized, a life not lived.

Suddenly, like a tiger breaking out of its cage, my voice burst forth to smash through stonewalls of time to the Lvov train station, my parent's last address, their burial place.

A lifeless stillness squatted down in the room.

Jack Drori – from: *Ancient Stones*

I stared into the eerie blindness of the mist and wondered, not for the first time, why I didn't love my husband.

Judith Ingram – from: *Bridge to the Past:*

He was on it like a chicken on a Cheeto.

Casey Terminello

(Continued Next Page)

"It is so good to see you." Such a simple statement, Mr. Jones thought, and yet hearing it felt like licking honey from a sharp knife: sweet, but menacing.

John Marvin – from: *Sales*

Maybe not a lot, but change is change and you know what happens if you a throw a little rock in a muddy pond and the ripples hit the lily pads on the far side: all the frogs jump.

John Marvin – from: *The Fall Fiesta Revolt of 1967*

"That evening I didn't recognize that the FBI standing on my porch was the beginning of what I now call my Crazy Year, a time when unusual events gnawed away at my sanity, leaving me feeling confused and unsure of myself, when all I wanted was a loving and financially stable marriage."

Barbara Bentley – from: *A Dance with the Devil: a True Story of Marriage to a Psychopath*

Writer's Markets Column

Magazines and More Seeking Writers by B. Lynn Goodwin



You don't lose until you quit trying according to my husband. It makes sense, especially where writing is concerned. I admire my fellow writers who write and rewrite. I also admire those who take a chance and send their work out into the world. The best writers do both.

You have a story to tell. You've written, rewritten, shared, revised again, and now you're ready to find the right publisher.

Why not try one of these?

(See next page)

(Writer's Markets Column continued)

Ashland Creek Press open for submissions

Ashland Creek Press is currently accepting submissions of book-length fiction and nonfiction on the themes of travel, the environment, animal protection, ecology, and wildlife—above all, we're looking for exceptional, well-written, engaging stories. We are open to many genres (young adult, mystery, literary fiction) as long as the stories are relevant to the themes listed above. At this time, however, we are not reading submissions for children's books.

Submissions MUST be made online using the service Submittable. Visit www.ashlandcreekpress.com for full submission details.

Gulf Stream Magazine is now accepting submissions of poetry, short stories, and creative nonfiction through November 15. Read and submit at www.gulfstreamlitmag.com.

NANO Fiction is currently accepting previously unpublished works of fiction 300 words or fewer. Please visit nanofiction.org for details.

Embodied Effigies

Online submission deadline: November 15, 2012

We are seeking creative nonfiction writing for our second issue. Send us your truths, your lies, and everything in that muddled-up grey area. We like experimental work as much as the straightforward memoir, but most of all we want the "truth," whatever that may be. For more information and to submit, please visit us at effigiesmag.com. Questions? Send us a note: embodied.effigies@gmail.com.

LUMINA

Online submission deadline: November 1, 2012

LUMINA is currently accepting poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and visual art submissions for Volume XII. *LUMINA*, established in 2000, is the annual print publication of the Sarah Lawrence College Graduate Writing Program, and has featured such authors as Rick Moody, Mark Doty, Phillip Lopate, Dorothy Alison, Stephen Dobyns, Amy Hempel, Kimiko Hahn, Cathy Park Hong, and Jenny Boully. Visit lumina.submittable.com/submit for submission guidelines.

Meat for Tea: The Valley Review is now accepting submissions for the next issue with a November 15th deadline. Guidelines are listed on our [webpage](#). We seek art, recipes, poems, short fiction, rants, and essays. The theme of the next issue is "Sweet" and it will be released December 15th.

All of these listing came from <http://www.newpages.com/classifieds/calls/>. You'll find much more there.

If you have a son or daughter interested in reading and writing, check out http://www.newpages.com/npguides/young_authors_guide.htm. It's an impressive collection. NewPages.com is a wonderful resource for independent and emerging writers.

If you try one of these places, please write and let me know about your experience at Lgood67334@comcast.net. Or write and let me know what you'd like me to research for the next issue. Or write and tell me how this led you to sites you never knew about. In other words, I'd love to hear what you're thinking.

2013 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, 2012, to the present:

<p>Foundation Donors <i>The Leroe Family Foundation</i></p>	<p>The John Steinbeck Society</p>
<p>The John Muir Member Club <i>Barbara Bentley</i></p> <p>The Mary Austin Writers Club <i>Kathy Urban</i> <i>In memory of Nancy O'Connell</i></p> <p><i>Betty Iverson – in honor of all the young writers</i></p> <p><i>David George – in honor of Elizabeth Pentacoff's years of generous time contributions to the success of the program.</i></p>	<p>The Ina Coolbrith Laureate Club</p> <p><i>Sara Wilson – in honor of Elizabeth Pentacoff for her continued support of Young Writers</i></p> <p><i>Elizabeth Koehler-Pentacoff – in memory of Al and Elmer Koehler</i></p> <p><i>Rick Reed – by donating proceeds from book sales after speaking at Mt. Diablo Branch</i></p>

The 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.

~ 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 9450

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 2012 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 2013 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 Workshop
is on November 10, 2012 at 9:00 am, in Pleasant Hill.**

For detailed meeting 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.