

The Write News

California Writers Club~Mount Diablo Branch

A Monthly Newsletter

October 2009

Join the Mount Diablo Branch in Celebrating the California Writers Club Centennial Celebration “One Hundred Years of Excellence in Writing” (1909 – 2009)

**Jack London Luncheon and Lecture
Saturday, October 17, 2009**

**“Making Things Up: Why One Becomes a Writer”
Featuring Guest Speaker**



Ron Hansen

**Distinguished California Author
Gerard Manley Hopkins Professor, Santa Clara University**

We are delighted and proud to welcome Ron Hansen to the Mount Diablo Branch's CWC centennial celebration. Hansen's 1996 novel, *Atticus*, about the bond of love between a father and a son, was a finalist for both the National Book Award and the PEN/Faulkner Award. Mr. Hansen has also authored the popular novels, *Desperadoes* (1979), *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford* (1983, Motion Picture in 2007), *Mariette in Ecstasy* (1991), *Hitler's Niece* (1999), and *Exiles* (2008).

CWC members and the general public are invited to attend this special event.

We advise you to make your reservations early.

Detailed meeting and reservation information can be found on page two.

October Meeting Details

Date & Time: Saturday, October 17, 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 in Pleasant Hill). 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: Zio Fraedo's sumptuous luncheon buffet.

Reservations: Reservations are required and must be received no later than noon on Wednesday, October 14. To make reservations, contact Veronica Rossi, via e-mail at verorossi@aol.com, or by phone at (925) 743-1886. Expect confirmation only if you e-mail your reservation.



PRESS RELEASE

From: Marty Sorensen [mailto:marty@martysorensen.com]

Sent: Saturday, September 26, 2009 12:56 PM

Subject: Jack London Conference Cancelled

It is with a heavy heart that the San Francisco/Peninsula Branch of the California Writers Club must announce the cancellation of its October 10 and 11 writers' conference, *Call of the Wild Mind*.

"The economy caught up with us," club president Tory Hartmann said. "The Jack London Writers Conference has always been a bargain—and still is—but we are victims of the recession. We can't put the club's treasury in jeopardy. We're devastated, but facts are facts. It was impossible to proceed without a crushing loss."

The Jack London Writers' Conference has been going on for twenty years. Usually a one day event, the club decided to put on a two day conference in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the California Writers' Club. High-powered speakers had been booked, including Dan Millman, Sister Helen Prejean, Dr. Fred Wolf (aka Dr. Quantum) as well as a private interview with Natalie Goldberg.

"In any other year," Hartmann said, "this conference would be a madhouse. But many people backed away because they were either unemployed or under-employed."

A highly successful Los Angeles agent said, "This is a tough economy. Publishers are not buying and haven't been for months. It would be tragic for me to listen to a pitch and then say, "I'm sorry.....I'm currently closed for submissions."

The California Writers Club began 100 years ago when several authors including Jack London and Joaquin Miller, met and discussed their projects. The tradition of writers meeting and discussing the craft has persisted down through the decades.

Refunds to registrants will be sent out over the next two weeks.

~ *Coming Attractions* ~ *Upcoming Speakers for 2009-2010*

November 14: Writing Workshop – Leader Janice Cooke Newman

December 12: “Three of Our Own”

Catherine Accardi ~ Writing for Hire

Lynn Goodwin ~ *Writing for Caregivers*, WriterAdvice.com

(Third speaker to be determined)

January 9: Veronica Chater, Memoirist ~ *Waiting for the Apocalypse: A Memoir of Faith and Family*

February 13: Speaker to be announced

March 13: Nik C. Colyer, Grit-Lit Novelist, Poet, author of the *Biker Bob* series

April 10: Writing Workshop – Leader to be announced

May 8: Young Writers Banquet – Speaker to be announced

June 12: Speaker to be announced

Please join us for these informative sessions to be held at Zio Fraedo's Restaurant. All are welcome to come, learn, and network with local writers. The CWC, Mount Diablo Branch web address is www.mtdiablownriters.org.

President's Message

By David George



Let's Celebrate! This month marks our founding as a small club of dedicated writers one hundred years ago. Jack London, and his friends, first named it the Alameda Press Club in 1909. The name was changed in 1913 to the California Writers Club, with the goal of becoming more inclusive. That goal has definitely been reached, with over 1,200 professional and aspiring writers in eighteen branches throughout the state. Did you know we have a CWC branch in Ridgecrest? Do you know where Ridgecrest is located? I didn't, and had to look it up in my Rand McNally. We now count 900 members in Northern California alone!

Many celebrated authors have joined our ranks, and hundreds of aspiring writers have grown in their craft and have gone on to become published. On October 17, we will not only honor our past, but also embrace our present, a vibrant and growing affiliation of fascinating storytellers and wisdom sharers. The front page of our newsletter is full of great information about our celebration luncheon on October 17, featuring award-winning novelist, Ron Hansen. If you attend nearly all of our monthly meetings, you'll notice many special differences about this one. And, if you don't regularly attend, this will be one meeting you won't want to miss! Bring your spouses, children, and friends. We are openly encouraging the public to join us also, so make your reservation early. Help us launch our second hundred years together.



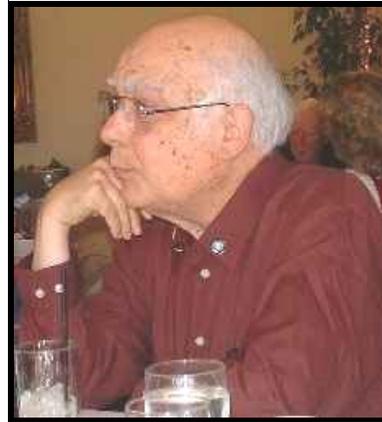
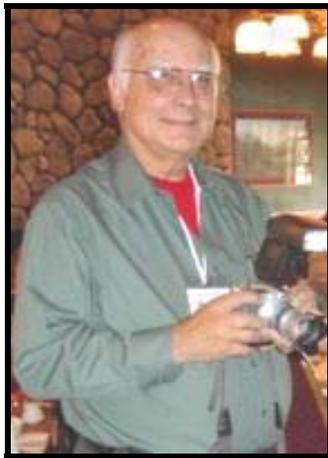
Gone but not forgotten

Hunter Anderson (1931-2009),
a long time member of CWC, passed away this summer.
He is survived by one daughter, Denise.

Hunter was a Marine photographer during the Korean War. He lost much of his hearing by riding in the tail section of airplanes and photographing beaches as part of his duty. After the war, he was a manager for the Ritz Camera and Wolf Camera franchises in the Bay Area. He took the photos for our website for years.

He researched religions, visiting various churches
and talking to ministers and friends. He also loved telling stories
that kept me on the edge of my seat.

A true gentleman, Hunter is at peace now with his late wife . . .
and he can HEAR everything.



Hunter is seated at the left with the band.

California Writers Week

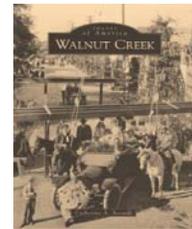
On September 4, 2003, the California State Assembly officially declared the third week in October of each year, as California Writers Week. This proclamation was Members Resolution No. 2170. This year, this extraordinary week begins on October 11. How do you plan to celebrate this special week? I have two ideas to offer: 1) On Saturday, October 17, join the Mount Diablo Branch in celebrating the 100-year anniversary of CWC by attending our speaker and luncheon event with Ron Hansen. Event details can be found on pages one and two; 2) ask a friend to take you, their favorite writer, out to lunch. Choose a nice restaurant and *Sail On!*

CWC Member's Author News and Events

Virgie V. Jones, a founding member of the CWC Mount Diablo Branch, was featured in the September 2009 issue of the AAUW newsletter, *The Advocate*, Women's History Section. The half page article mentions her four published books on California history, on the San Ramon Valley, and Contra Costa County.



CWC member and newsletter editor, **Catherine Accardi**, will be speaking and signing books at Clayton Books, in Clayton, on Sunday, November 29 at 2:00 p.m. Catherine will give a PowerPoint presentation of her book, *Images of America-Walnut Walnut Creek*. Clayton Book store owner, Joel Harris, will also give a presentation on his book *Images of America-Concord*.



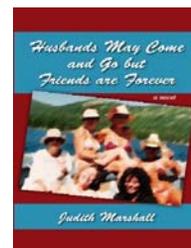
An interview with **Barbara Bentley** is on the home page of the winter issue of *Writer Advice*, www.writeradvice.com. While you're there, click on the buttons in the left-hand column to read reviews, contests, and market opportunities, and the Honorable Mentions in this year's contest on the Fash page.

Sales and Salutes

Jeryl Abelman's *Quickly: The Magic Spatula*, has been nominated in the 2009 Moonbeam Children's Awards Semi-Finalist Results in the category for the Moonbeam Spirit Award. This award is given for dedication to children's literacy and inspired writing, illustrating and publishing.

Myrtle Archer's short story, *The Bridge's Siren Song*, has been accepted by *Adventures for the Average Woman* magazine.

Judith Marshall's new novel, *Husbands May Come and Go but Friends are Forever*, was released in September by Kelso Books. A donation will be made to the Susan G. Koman Breast Cancer Fund for every book purchased on Amazon on October 28, 2009.



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.

Member Profile

By Jody Denison

Profile: *Jeryl Abelmann*



One of our newest members, Jeryl Abelmann, brings an energy to CWC that is truly remarkable. She was an elementary school teacher and we all know how much energy that takes. Never the less, she and a friend, Miriam Kronish, co-authored a monograph for teachers, *Focus on Fine Arts: Elementary*, published by the National Education Association. Her dedication to her profession, and the children it serves, earned her Teacher of the Year for the San Ramon Valley Unified School District for 1994-1995.

Not content to rest on her laurels when she retired, Jeryl was free to indulge her love of writing and to bring to reality her dream of writing a children's book. She again joined forces with her former collaborator and long time mentor, Miriam Kronish, and *Quickly: the Magic Spatula* was born. It is tribute to Jeryl's mother and based on the special family stories that we all love to share. Jeryl says that getting *Quickly* published was the most difficult goal she ever set for herself. She says, "It took four years, fifty-six drafts, and incredible co-author, an amazing illustrator and a publisher who believed in them." The first round of submissions resulted in rejections, but they soldiered on and a new illustrator brought them rave reviews but still no contract. Finally, after much persistence, they found their publisher and *Quickly* came to fruition.

This native Californian grew up in Santa Rosa and graduated from UCLA where she met her husband, Ron. They have two sons and "three adorable grandchildren." Not quite busy enough, Jeryl belongs to the Screen Actors Guild and is on the Board of Directors of the Carmel Bach Festival.

Contest

Nominations are now being accepted for the fourth **William Saroyan International Prize** for Writing. This award, given by Stanford University Libraries in partnership with the William Saroyan Foundation, recognizes newly published works of fiction and non-fiction with a \$5,000 award for the winner in each category. For official entry forms, contest rules, and other information on the prize, visit the Saroyan Prize website at <http://library.stanford.edu/saroyan/>. Entries must be received by January 31, 2010. More contest information is also available by contacting (Ms.) Sam Petersen, Stanford University Libraries, at (650) 854-5575 or via email at sampetersen@sbcglobal.net.

William Saroyan, an American writer and playwright, was a Pulitzer Prize and Academy Award winner, best known for his short stories about humorous experiences of immigrant families and children in California. Much of Saroyan's other work is autobiographical, although similar in style and technique to fiction. He rose to literary prominence in the early 1930s when national magazines began publishing his short stories, most notably *The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze*. Published collections of those stories include, *My Name Is Aram*, *Inhale & Exhale*, *Three Times Three*, and *Peace, It's Wonderful*. Saroyan also had success as a playwright on Broadway and a writer of screenplays in Hollywood. His notable successes include: *My Heart's in the Highlands*, *The Time of Your Life*, *The Beautiful People*, and *The Human Comedy*. *The Time of Your Life* was awarded the Pulitzer Prize.

CWC Centennial



On the left is the newly approved colorized, stylized version of the California Writers Club Centennial logo. On the right is a photograph of the Life Member combination of pin and "rocker tab." The pin is available for purchase at our monthly meetings. The rocker tab is available for Active members who pay the Life membership fee of \$599. Those members will receive both items as a gift.



Tip Bucket



As reported in the December 2008 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 September.

Publish A Manuscript Traditionally

Once you've sold the manuscript to a traditional publisher, whether on your own or through your agent, you'll begin to work with an editor assigned to you by the publisher.

DO:

- Establish a relationship by emailing/calling the editor and expressing your enthusiasm about working with her/him.
- Be the most cooperative author she has ever had! Be open to suggestions; choose your battles wisely, as far as holding on to something in spite of her suggestions.
- Meet or exceed expectations as far as responding quickly, meeting any deadlines, even when they seem inconvenient.

DON'T:

- Tell her how busy you are with your day job.
- Say how hectic your personal life has been.
- Share that you haven't been feeling well.
- Discuss contracts, deadlines, and business with your editor unless you don't have an agent.

Most editors let themselves think that you are there to write the books they have asked for. (This is not unlike teachers who thought their homework was all you had to do.) They don't want to be reminded that you have a life, that you might not be able to make a living simply from the advance and royalties, that you do anything else not connected to the books. This doesn't mean they aren't nice, caring people – it's simply unprofessional to inform them otherwise.

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 this site 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.

From the Editor's Desk

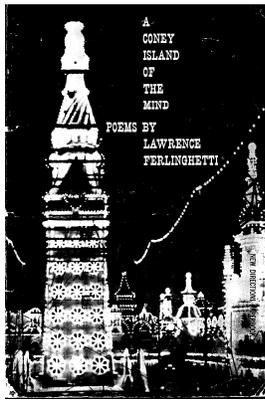
By Catherine Accardi

100 Years of Literary History

As I was saying in my September "From the Editor's Desk," this month I am visiting the first of several literary landmarks in San Francisco. I shall begin with the City Lights bookstore at 261 Columbus Avenue in North Beach.

The City Lights website reads as follows:

"Founded in 1953 by poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Peter D. Marin, City Lights is one of the few truly great independent bookstores in the United States, a place where book lovers come to browse, read, and just soak in the ambiance of alternative culture's only "Literary Landmark."



The City Lights masthead says "A Literary Meeting place since 1953." I have been exploring the City Lights bookstore for 44 years. Here is my take. It is not a place for people that are easily offended. When one carefully descends the precipice called a staircase, into the cavern that is called the basement, and enters a subterranean cubicle, the space seems cramped. It did to me the first time. Then, when I sat and read an author I had never heard of, the cramped spaces disappeared. Later, the climb back up the stairs was no longer cautious and suspicious. I had found a literary landmark filled with new ideas, opinions, and experiences. City Lights has books you might not find anywhere else, literally.

Oliver Everett designed this historic building in 1907. The famous North Beach, Italian bookstore, A. Cavalli and Company, originally occupied the storefront that is now City Lights. The photograph on the right is of A. Cavalli in the early 1900s. Below is the bookstore as it appears today.



City Lights Bookstore can be reached at 415-362-8193, or at www.citylights.com. This landmark is open every day at 261 Columbus Avenue. When you walk in, be certain to read the inscriptions over the doorways, one of which reads, "Abandon all despair, ye who enter here."

In the November edition of "From the Editor's Desk," I will exit City Lights, make a right turn past Via Ferlinghetti, and visit *Vesuvio*.



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.

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 14, 2010. Winners are notified in May and presented with their awards at an awards luncheon on Saturday, May 12, 2010, 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.

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!

California Writers Club ~ Mount Diablo Branch

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Sail On!