

THE BULLETIN

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Contact Your Branch Membership Chair

OUR MISSION

Educating writers of all levels of expertise in the craft of writing and in the marketing of their work.

CWC's Centennial: Much More Than Pins, Pens and Tote Bags

By Donna McCrohan Rosenthal, Centennial Chair

We launched the California Writers Club centennial in January with press releases, some logo items, and not merely the suggestion but emphatically the very earnest appeal that branches add their bells and whistles to the bandwagon.

Some branches either immediately answered the challenge, or had their magic already in the works. The San Francisco / Peninsula Branch will offer the two-day Jack London Writers Conference October 10-11 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Foster City, and the Redwood Branch designed programs to take to schools, and will present the Redwood Writers Conference October 23-24 at

the Flamingo Hotel and Resort, Santa Rosa.

High Desert has entered the planning stages for a celebration with a promotion at the neighborhood bookstore. My own branch, East Sierra, watched eBay for items to dress up our usual annual October library display, and snagged a 1917 edition of *Harper's Magazine* with Mark Twain depicted on the cover.

Have no doubt that the CWC can and will do more at the state level. We've announced greatly reduced dues for Centennial Life Membership together with a special "rocker tab" to affix to membership pins.

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San Fernando Valley: We're Back!



CWC President Casey Wilson (right) came to watch as the San Fernando Valley branch re-invented its 23-year-old self. The branch has 30 members and a new slate of officers, from left: Cara Alston, secretary; Judy Presnall, treasurer; Glenn Wood, vice president and Webmaster; Ethel Ann Pemberton, president. *Photo by Carol Wood*

The Good Old Days -- Oh, Really?

For those of us trying to make it as professional writers, these are definitely the best of times and the worst of times. On the one hand, we're surrounded by an explosion of new media options: live chat and Twitter and blogs – oh my! On the other hand, it's hard

JOYCE'S VOICE



By Joyce Krieg
Central Coast Branch

not to be consumed by the overwhelming negativity: newspapers dying, magazines folding, and the traditional book publishing industry collapsing around us.

We more mature writers may be forgiven if we look back at the commercial literary world of 20, 30 or 40 years ago with a degree of longing and nostalgia. But were those really “the good old days?”

I spent my personal “good old days” – from Watergate to the dawn of the World Wide Web – in the Sacramento area. If I wanted a bookstore, my choices were basically the B. Dalton or Waldenbooks down at the mall. The stores were hardly larger than an airport newsstand; the offerings strayed little beyond the current bestsellers. Okay, we also had Tower Books, a hopelessly funky and disorganized offshoot of the Tower Records mega-chain. But still. A quarter century ago, unless you lived in a large city or a university town, your only bookstore was the B. Dalton or Waldenbooks at the mall.

**Next CWC
Central Board
Meeting**
Sunday, July 19
8:30 a.m.
La Quinta Hotel,
Oakland Airport

Today? Yeah, I loathe those hideous big box shopping sprawls as much as you do, but I have to admit to adoring Borders and Barnes & Noble. I mean, just look around. They're bursting with books, acres of books. Someone is writing all these books, and it might as well be you and me.

Not to mention magazines! Row after row, representing every special interest from knitting to long board surfing. We sure as heck didn't have this wondrous variety back in the “good old days.” The downside: today's magazines, for the most part, don't print short fiction. They're looking for how-to pieces, bullets of information. And, of course, celebrity gossip.

As to newspapers . . . no question, they're in the ICU and I have a bad feeling someone just signed a “do not resuscitate” order. If your life's dream is to be the next Dave Barry or a crusading investigative reporter, then, yeah, these are the worst of times.

Inspiration: Storefront Churches

By Clarence L. Hammonds, South Bay

I am Clarence L. Hammonds, Jr. In 1930 the Hammonds family moved from Raleigh, North Carolina to Baltimore, Maryland. 1936, is the year, I witnessed the beginning of the Storefront Churches in Baltimore.

My dad was Clarence, Sr., a young minister of the Gospel, who wanted to pastor, but had no church. During those years, Baltimore was a city of Storefront Churches and my dad decided to build a little church. I will describe this kind of church.


My father rented a small vacant store for 10 or 12 dollars a week. A larger store would cost him 15 or 20 dollars, a week, dad could not pay that much money. He purchased a stove which burned wood and coal, for the winter. The floor was covered with linoleum.

He rented a piano; of course, there was no one to play it. He was relying on his prayers that someone would come by and play the piano. At times it happened. Dad taught himself to play the guitar, which he played before he became a minister. The songs we sang were choruses; we had no hymnals; he could play the choruses.

Lumber was bought to make benches and someone had a few wooden chairs he could use. My dad was a carpenter and bricklayer and with some of the lumber he built,

So we adapt. We write that how-to for *Crochet World*, but we inject a little creative wordplay and a hint of a story in the step-by-step. We start a blog, just like Arianna Huffington and Perez Hilton did. We explore the new social networking options for building a platform and promoting our work.


Because no matter what, people need stories. It's hard-wired into our DNA, a desire as urgent as that for food and sleep. Whether the stories are conveyed via ink on a wood pulp product, or shimmering on a computer screen, or – if the predictions of the coming apocalypse prove true – told around the flickering flames of a camp fire, it doesn't really matter.

What does matter is this: the world will always need stories – and storytellers. And from that, we wordsmiths can take a grain of comfort in these strange and turbulent times. 

a pulpit stand and platform. He proceeded to cover the large windows with wallpaper to keep people from gazing into the building. Also, he used Bon Ami Soap, which was chalky white; it was a good covering for the windows. I loved it; this was church to me winter and summer. Many larger, Negro churches, came by the way of the Storefront Church.

Since, most of the people who attended the Storefront Churches were poor, my dad's sermons were centered on heaven being a better place for us. He preached about Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Daniel and other Biblical characters. I loved to hear those stories. Most of the ministers, of that time, had no seminar training; they knew the Bible stories, that was important.

I have been in ministry for more than 60 years and it all began with my parents taking me to the Storefront Churches that my father pastored in Baltimore, Maryland, in the 1930s. I am now 84 years old but I still remember those years. In those times, life was very simple. Everyone, in the Storefront Churches, shared what they had with each other. The Storefront Churches were the common denominator.

Rev. Clarence L. Hammonds, Jr., is the author of My Decades of Endurance and Survival. 

Exploring our Legacy at the Bancroft

I recently delved into the history of the California Writers Club for historical information about our corporate logo. The venture led me to the archives of the Bancroft Library on the UC Berkeley campus accompanied by Donna McCrohan Rosenthal (East Sierra) and Linda Brown (Berkeley).

I also carried a stack of anthologies from our branches to add to the CWC collection at the library. Steven Black, the acquisitions director for the library, was grateful for the donation. Black added that any historical documents, including newsletters, personal letters from members, and virtually any historical document regarding our organization are always welcome additions.

A couple words of warning are in order. Never having visited UC Berkeley before, I was not aware of (1) how difficult it is just

navigating to the campus and (2) that visitor parking on the campus is limited to 20 minutes. I dropped Donna off at the library and went searching for off-campus parking. An hour later, I had left my car in a public garage on Hearst St. and hiked back across the campus to our meeting with Black. One more (3) make sure you have a few \$5 and \$1 bills — in spite of the directions posted on the parking permit dispenser, it does not even HAVE a slot to accept your credit card.

The Bancroft Library moved to a new building this year. I wish I had had time to explore

but having already lost an hour to parking and faced with a seven to eight hour drive after the visit we went directly to the archives.

After signing in at the security desk with picture ID and receiving visitor badges, we

went to the archives section. Following another ID check and registration form, we were treated to an indoctrination of the archives “dos” and “don’ts.” No pens, computers, cameras, cell phones, scanners, guns, explosives, etc. The library allows you to take in your own notepaper and pencils, but they will provide those if you ask.

Then came the scary part! After all we had been through, the person doing the indoctrination said, “Some of the collection you are interested in might be stored in another area and could take a week to bring over.”

Perhaps, because of all we had been through — piloting through Berkeley, no parking, two registrations — our guardian angels lent a helping hand. Our primary material was in the local archives. Else ways, we would have had to request it and come back another day.

The moral here is take time to scan the archives at the library to see if you need to prearrange the stuff you want to be transferred to the main site. The library is online at <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu>.

We spent an enjoyable few hours at the library and in the end collected everything I needed and more. It was spooky sometimes to handle and read things written by the people who conceived this great organization we have today and left all these memorable pieces of our legacy to ponder over.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



By Casey Wilson
CWC President

CWC Centennial

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We'll follow up with a time capsule, a literary map, and more information on the website about California writers. But the best way to spread our name throughout California and the most direct routes to local communities is through you, the branches.

You still have time before October and California Writers Week (the third full week in October) to develop a branch project. Such as:

- Getting a proclamation from your city hall, honoring California Writers Week.
- Declaring a “Write California Day” where you live, and spreading word through newspapers, radio, TV and cyberspace urging folks to join in writing about the Golden State (or pride in California writers and in being a California writer, or a theme or your choice) during one 24-hour period.
- Having a booth at a community event or county fair.

- Having a library display.
- Partnering with a nearby branch and doing something together.
- Sending CWC speakers to schools in your area.
- Having your branch schedule a speaker, program or panel appropriate to California Writers Week and the Centennial.

Yes, the centennial means a whole lot more than pens, pins and tote bags. (We also have business card holders and four-port USB hubs with logos....) Yet more than any of these, it's about spotlighting how our branches have distinguished themselves.

So get something off the ground. Then send out media releases. Use copy from our website, adapt it as you see fit, or write your own....

Let us know your plans so that we can include them in our media releases. Contact: cwccent2009@yahoo.com.

And, in the immortal words of Joaquin Miller, *sail on!*



CWC Bulletin 2009 Schedule

September-October 2009

Deadline: August 28, 2009

November-December 2009

Deadline: October 30, 2009

EDITOR

Joyce Krieg (Central Coast)

PROOFREADER

Deanne Gwinn (Central Coast)

CIRCULATION

Dave George (Mt. Diablo)

PRINTER

Spectrum Graphics, Ridgecrest CA

Submissions: CWC members are invited to submit articles related to writing and the writing life via e-mail to Editor Joyce Krieg. Be sure to indicate “CWC Bulletin” in the subject field. Submissions are subject to editing for length and grammar. Sorry, we are unable to print news of members' sales and publications.



San Francisco/ Peninsula California Writers Club Jack London Writers Conference



Oct 10-11, 2009
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Foster City

Two Incredible Days with Successful Authors and Teachers!

The Jack London Writers Conference is organized by the San Francisco Peninsula Branch of the California Writers Club. The inaugural conference was held in 1988 as a fund-raiser to help restore the famed author's cottage in Jack London State Historic Park.

HEADLINERS



"The Spirit of Writing"
by DAN MILLMAN



"Answering the Call"
by SISTER HELEN PREJEAN



"What the Bleep!"
by FRED ALAN WOLF
a.k.a. DR. QUANTUM

Plus panels, agent appointments, a writing contest, a tribute to Jack London, social events, and much more!

www.jacklondonwritersconference.org



Redwood Branch 2009 Conference

October 24, 2009 (7:30 am - 6:00 pm)

Join the Redwood Writers at the Flamingo Hotel and Resort in Santa Rosa. Share the joy of writing with fellow writers, agents, and editors in a relaxed and friendly, wine country setting.

Headliners: Poet Al Young, Steve Hockensmith, author of the "Holmes on the Range" mystery series, and Tamim Ansary, author of *West of Kabul, East of New York*.

Includes Friday night pre-conference dinner, one-on-one editorial consultations, panels, speakers, and a writing contest. Discount rates at the conference hotel available.

www.redwoodwriters.org/conference.html

Adventures in Comparative Linguistics

By David Mathew Gray, Berkeley

Let's start with a two-question pop quiz. On a separate sheet of paper match each word with the language in which it is used. All lists are alphabetical. Answers are at the end of this article.

1. Latin FENESTRA means "window." Here are seven variants and their languages:
a. FENSTER b. FFENSTR c. FENETRE
d. FEREA STRA e. FINESTRA
f. PRENEASTR g. VENSTER

Breton, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Romanian, Welsh

2. Latin STRATUM means "layer," while VIA STRATA means "layered way." The Roman road was similar to a modern gravel road. Here are nine variants.

a. ESTRADA b. ESTRADE c. SIRAT d. SRAID
e. STRAAT f. STRADA g. STRASSE
h. STREET i. STRYD

Arabic, Dutch, English, French, German, Irish, Italian, Spanish, Welsh Note: The Arabic variant is metaphoric, road to wisdom.

Although all of these words are of Latin origin, no two are alike and each conforms to the patterns found throughout its language. There are many logical reasons why

A Poet's Declaration

By Frances H. Kakugawa, Sacramento

I am a star
In the Milky Way.
I am the crest
On emerald waves.
I am a dewdrop, crystal clear,
Capturing sunbeams in the morning mist.
I am that dust
On butterfly wings.
I am that song
Of a thousand strings.
I am that teardrop
You have kissed.
I am a poet!
I am! I am!
I am that rage
In the thunderstorm,
I am that image
Of a thousand forms.
I am magic on each page.
I am a poet!
I am! I am!



Indo-European, which was probably first spoken in Central Asia, evolved into dozens of languages. People who moved away from each other had to deal with different physical environments, had different histories, developed different belief systems and lifestyles. and so on. However, some features of language are idiosyncratic and not necessarily logical. The only explanation for why people do some things rather than others is habit formation.

German has many words which have [S] where other Germanic languages have [T]. BETTER BESSER, EAT ESSEN, VAT FASS, WATER WASSER. When Jews began speaking Yiddish, which is a German dialect, they made the same change in words that they adapted from Hebrew. BAAL HABAT [BAHL he BAHT] BALABUS [bah lah BUS] "boss." The Hebrew phrase means "master of the house." EMET EMISS "truth," SHABAT [sha BHAT] "Sabbath."

Using words to mean their exact opposite is often a sign of sarcasm. Someone makes a colossal mistake and people call him "genius." However, some French words have been changed to mean their opposite, which is understood as literal. PAS [PAH] means "step." NE PAS is an idiom which means "not a bit." Now PAS by itself means "not," as in PAS DU TOUT "not at all" and PAS MAL "not bad." NE PERSONNE means "not a person" or "nobody." Now PERSONNE can mean "nobody." NE RIEN means "not a thing" or "nothing." Now RIEN can mean "nothing." NE JAMAIS [zha MEH] means "not ever" or "never." Now JAMAIS means "never." Spanish JAMAS [ha MAHS] was adapted from French and also means "never."

The consonant [R] can be softened to [L]. Latin ARBOR, CARCER, ROBUR. Spanish ARBOL, CARCEL, ROBLE. English TREE, PRISON, OAK. Related English words include ARBORETUM, INCARCERATE and ROBUST (strong as an oak). The consonant [L] can be hardened to [R]. Latin MOLA, SAL, SOL. Romanian MOARE [moh AH ray], SARE [SAH ray], SOARE [soh AH ray]. English MILL, SALT, SUN. Spanish has some curious words in which both processes occur simultaneously. Latin MIRACULUM, PERICULUM. Spanish

MILAGRO, PELIGRO. English MIRACLE, PERIL. English noun ALGERIAN Spanish ARGELINO.

People do not always behave rationally and this is reflected in how we use language.

One peculiarity of our language is Germanic redundancy. Two obvious examples, which are used on the East Coast are CODFISH and TUNAFISH. There is no need to remind people that cod and tuna are fish. Some redundancies are not recognized as

such because they were added in Old English.

ELBOW comes from the Old English ELN plus BOGA "bend."

Variants with and without the suffix are Latin ULNA, Irish UILEAN, German ELLENBOGEN and Dutch ELLEBOOG

HUNDRED comes from Old English HUND plus RED. The latter is a verb which is an earlier form of READ. This originally meant "tell," but in this case means "count." Variants include Latin CENTUM, French CENT, Welsh CANT, Dutch, HONDERT, German HUNDERT and Icelandic HUNDRATH.

WOMAN comes from Old English WIF plus MAN. English WIFEMAN may sound silly, but the meanings of words sometimes change. WIF is a variant of German WEIB, which means female person, while MAN is generic for "person," rather than just male person. Icelandic makes greater use of redundancies than English. Its word for "bee" is BIFLUGA, "bee-fly" and its word for "rice" is HRISGRJON. "rice-grain."

The word for "letter of the alphabet" is BOC in Old English and BUCHSTABE in German. The meaning of the first was expanded to become English BOOK, while the latter literally means "book-staff." This is redundant because it originally referred to letters of the Norse alphabet, called runes, which were vertical lines with assorted horizontal and diagonal lines attached.

Answers

1. a. German b. Welsh c. French d. Romanian e. Italian f. Dutch g. Breton

2. a. Spanish b. French c. Arabic d. Irish e. Dutch f. Italian g. German h. English

i. Welsh



Berkeley is jumping into the world of digital media in a big way. As President Al Levenson reports, "Thanks to member Deborah Hymes, we now Twitter, (twitter.com/CWC_Berkeley), and the Berkeley Branch has its own blog under construction. Also, the branch has a page at Facebook (CWC Berkeley) that already has over a hundred friends. Browsing Twitter, we find that the people who 'follow' our Twitter offer an interesting pool of offbeat commentators. Some are twits, but all of them tweet."

Write Angles -
Al Levenson, Editor

Central Coast

Central Coast is celebrating CWC's centennial year with a unique writing contest: 100 words, must contain the phrase "100 years" and the prize is \$100. Entries will be accepted in short story and poetry. The plan is to announce the winners at the October meeting, and to invite the winners and runners-up to read their works aloud. This special contest is open only to members of the Central Coast branch; however, there is no reason why other branches cannot adapt this idea for their own centennial celebrations.

Scribbles - Joyce Krieg, Editor

East Sierra (Ridge Writers)

Ridge Writers reports that their youth writing contest in celebration of CWC's centennial was a resounding success. The event was held May 9 at the Ridgecrest Branch Library. In other activities in support of young writers, Ridge Writers President Curt Danhauser attended the graduation ceremony at Burrough's High School to award the branch's Allison Aubin Scholarship to Aaron Askew, whose literary activities include holding down a job as a sports reporter for the hometown daily newspaper.

Writers of the Purple Sage -
Liz Babcock, Editor

High Desert

Historical romance writer Marilyn Ramirez "told all" at the May High Desert meeting. Among her many tips: start a three-ring binder for your novel. Include sections on your major characters, your research, and your novel synopsis. When it comes to setting, Marilyn believes it's easier to make

Branching Out

"Nuggets from the Newsletters"

up a setting from scratch rather than placing your characters in a real city or town. That way, you don't need to fret over the exact physical details of the real town. She makes a map of her fictional town, and another map of the house (or mansion!) where her protag lives.

Ink Slinger - Naomi Ward, Editor



Inland Empire

President Kathryn Wilkens encountered a carved likeness of Seshat, the goddess of writing, on a vacation to Egypt and came away with fresh inspiration for writing. "We should wake up every morning and rejoice that we have not only the skill to reproduce the alphabet that we learned as children, but also the talent and freedom to put our creative ideas into words! We are like those long-ago humans who felt an impulse to record the tenets of their culture on stone, clay or papyrus. Just as the scribes of Ancient Egypt left written evidence for us to interpret, we will leave our words behind with the possibility for future people to know something about our lives."

Fresh Ink -
Laura Hoopes, Editor

Long Beach

Upcoming speakers at Long Beach include Catherine Kitcho, who speaks from experience when she talks about "Book Marketing for Savvy Authors" - she's published a novel, a cookbook, and several books on business topics, and has a unique outlook on how to survive as a writer in tough economic times. In August, Laurie Powers will

speak on "The Colorful World of Pulp Fiction." Long Beach meets on the first Tuesday of each month from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Los Altos branch library.

Allene Symons, Program Co-Chair

Marin

Marin is taking off for the summer, and will be back in the fall with a powerful trio of meetings. In September, their guest speaker will be Tanya Egan Gibson, a branch member whose novel *How to Buy a Love of Reading* was published in May by Dutton. In November, the Marin speaker will be Sandy Shepard, author of *Empowerment:*

A Guide to Unleashing Your Inner Bond Girl. And on October 18, Marin is planning a California Writers Week kickoff and CWC Centennial gala celebration.

Barbara Truax, President

Mt. Diablo

Mt. Diablo is exploring a variety of exciting ideas to celebrate CWC's Centennial. Under chair Al Garratto, they have arranged to have bestselling author Ron Hansen to speak at the October meeting. Mt. Diablo is also considering a writing contest focusing on essays about California authors or short fiction with a California setting, plus a young writers workshop and a Centennial Book Club, in which they would read the work of a California author, each month choosing a different decade from CWC's 100 years.

The Write News -
Catherine Accardi, Editor

Orange County

Orange County members are discovering an intriguing new technique to help you become a better writer known as Dime Stories. The concept: to write a three-minute story and read it at an open mic event at a local bookstore. The best stories are being aired on NPR. As member Sonia March reports, "Preparing a three-minute 'dime story' forces you to write a short story from beginning to end." By listening to other writers do their readings, "I discovered how much I could learn from other writers and apply it to my own writing." For more information, go to <http://dimestories.org>.

Orange Ink - Cora Forestner, Editor

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Branching Out

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Peninsula

As an organization whose motto is "Sail on!" what could be a more appropriate branch activity than a sailing excursion? That's exactly what Peninsula is planning on Saturday, August 15 as they climb aboard a 64-foot yacht for an adventure on San Francisco Bay. Dale King, who's organizing the trip, says, "You can kick back as you glide silently through the waters, confident in the capable hands of Captain Josh, an old salt who, in a former life, was a pirate more treacherous than any that ever lived." Cost is \$40 and the event is open to all CWC members. For more information, contact Dale, Deking8@msn.com.

**The Peninsula Writer –
Linda Okerlund, Editor**

Redwood

Redwood has joined the social networking realm, Facebook and Twitter. They're using the sites to promote the 2009 Conference and other Redwood Writers' events. As of this writing, Redwood has 97 friends on Facebook and 100 followers on Twitter. Redwood's first conference in 20 years will be held at the Flamingo Hotel in Santa Rosa. President Karen Batchelor reports that the branch membership has more than doubled in two years, from around 40 in 2007 to the current 112, and that they average 45 to 50 people at their monthly meetings.

**The Redwood Writer –
R.K. Koslowsky, Editor**

Sacramento

Something new for the Sacramento branch – an open mic night on the second Friday of each month at the Barnes and Noble in Citrus Heights. The event starts at 7:00 p.m., with sign-ups taken at 6:45 p.m.

Write On – Julie Bauer, Editor

San Fernando Valley

This 23-old-branch is celebrating CWC's centennial by re-organizing and re-inventing itself. See details on the front page of The Bulletin.

Glenn Wood, President

South Bay

Lisa Eckstein tips us off on a new, high-tech way for writers to find freelance gigs.

On sites like Elance, Guru.com, oDesk and iFeelance.com, you can submit proposals and bid to win contracts for writing and editing projects. Most of the sites make their money by charging a commission for any contract that the writer may enter into, similar to the traditional literary agent commission structure. Lisa warns that many of the job postings offer ridiculously low pay, so you need to be prepared to plow through a lot of useless proposals to find the gigs that actually do offer reasonable compensation for well-written work.

Writers Talk – Dick Amyx, Editor

Tri-Valley

How to find writing time in the summer, now that the kids are home from school? "Coach" Cindy Luck reminds us, "Writing isn't all about putting pen to paper or fingers to keyboard, is it? It's about observation: observing how people act, what they say and how they say it. It's about gestures. It's about the barbecue flames licking the bottom of the pork chops under the grill, the odd way the cat turns upside down and bats a string of yarn, or how the dog groans and smiles when he scratches his ears on a hot summer evening . . . although you might not be able to write as often as you like, you can become more observant and present in your own life. Not only will you enjoy making wonderful new memories out of the 'small stuff,' you'll be honing in your skills as a writer, too.

**Write Around the Valley –
Kelly Pollard, Editor**

West Valley

Writing comedy is serious business. That was the take-away when comedy script expert Steve Mazur spoke at a recent West Valley meeting. "If you thought the characters and the jokes came first, you're dead wrong," Mazur told them. He emphasized that comedy is a clash between the real world and the wild world, and he encouraged writers to consider the Rule of Three: Funny equals expectation plus sudden surprise plus reaction.

In Focus – Kathy Highcove, Editor

Writers of Kern

Want an easy, no-cost way to become a better writer? Read! But read with a critical eye. Marty Gorsching says, "a well written story or article can be as instructive as a grammar lesson; a poorly written one equally so. You simply have to dig a bit deeper for the lesson." If you liked – or disliked – a particular story, determine why: was it plot, characters, organization, grammar, voice, style? Marty tells us, "After doing this exercise a few times, it will become second nature. You'll learn, first, that the stories can be instructive for improving your writing. Second, you'll learn that you can't read anything without critiquing it. That's the downside of being a reading writer."

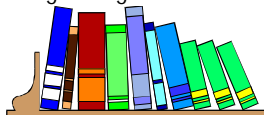
**The Write Way –
Marty Gorsching, Editor**



Our Members Announce

Chambers of Death, the sixth medieval mystery by Marin Branch member, Priscilla Royal, is scheduled for an August 2009 publication by Poisoned Pen Press.

USAToday calls Stan Goldberg's memoir, *Lessons for the Living: Stories of Forgiveness, Gratitude, and Courage at the End of Life*, "an inspiring and compassionate guide for all of us." Available at all bookstores and Amazon.com. Learn about Stan at stangoldbergwriter.com.



Put Your News Here!

"Our Members Announce" is a low-cost method to reach over 1,000 writers. Just \$20 buys an announcement of three or four lines (depending on spacing issues for web addresses) in *The Bulletin*. Just follow these easy steps:

1. Compose your announcement and send it to Sandy Moffett, sm@sandymoffett.com.
2. Make out a check for \$20, payable to **California Writers Club**.
3. Mail your check to Sandy Moffett, 3919 Noel Place, Bakersfield, CA 93306.

Deadline for the September-October issue: August 28, 2009.

Crossroads: Wisdom on a Piece of Cardboard

By J.D. Blair, Mt. Diablo

In my rear view mirror in the wake of a guilty conscience a solitary figure stood in the intersection holding a sign so I could see the petition scratched into it. The media was cardboard stained with the markings of the feral, homeless tribe sucking him to the broad, collective breast engulfing those less than average. The sign held long cursive strokes flourishing in red and white and blue that delicately swept across the pallet to nudge against a brashness of exclamation: "Will work for food!"

It was a candid statement aesthetic in its simplicity. With inventiveness spawned by poverty he brandished a masterpiece in oncoming traffic. In defiant pose, no defeat in his posture, his skin was tanned leather-like and his clothes had the sheen of wear. Woolen slacks, pale blue shirt, medium pin stripe, buttoned down collar buttoned to the top, the missing tie. A Herringbone sports coat with fraying sleeves strained at crucial seams. The garments pulled up as

he held the sign aloft exposing bare ankles that disappeared into road worn white and blue athletic shoes.


What brought him to this intersection? What decision made, or not? What fork taken, or not? Did he fall from Grace? Perhaps he fell out...was pushed out of a job and is unable to rekindle the flames that once burned in his paunch. With the flame of opportunity snuffed, he stands at the crossing, a man with great ability. He set no limits on what he will do for food. The man in the intersection we're to believe has done, can still do, all of it.

Could I do the same? Dig a ditch, trim tall trees, pave a street or plant a crop? Am I writing anything as substantial as his scrawled resume?

We're a lot alike he and I. With a minor shift in the cosmic plasma I could be on the street. With two ticks of the millennium clock I could drop below the average into the bosom of the great unwashed. A year


of sub par income can put me into his dirty sneakers.

Do my words pierce as cleanly as the prose he put in front of my windshield? In my rear view mirror the image diminished while my guilty conscience grew. Neither his prose nor mine is bearing fruit.

"Will write for food." 

Writing for *The Bulletin*

CWC members are always invited to submit their work for publication in *The Bulletin*. We're looking for short essays, inspiration, how-to, humor, poetry, even short-short fiction, as long as it has something to do with writing or the writing life. Submit as a Word doc attachment to Editor Joyce Krieg, joyce@joycek.com.

Please indicate "CWC Bulletin Submission" in the subject field. If Joyce's spam blocker bounces your message the first time you try, just hit "Reply" and it should go through the second time around. 



The Bulletin

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