



Scribbles

California Writers Club - Central Coast Writers Branch
www.centralcoastwriters.org
April 2014

Tuesday, April 15:

Juliette Wade on Building Your Story World



Juliette Wade is an author of science fiction and fantasy who loves language and its cultural consequences. She will talk about building your story world -- a fundamental skill for a writer of any genre. She will discuss how characters act as ambassadors for their worlds, and how to use them to convey key information to the reader. Juliette's fiction appears in *Analog* and other short fiction magazines.

You can find Juliette online at <http://talktoyouuniverse.blogspot.com>.



Looking Forward to Seeing You at Good Old Days

We're getting excited about taking part in Pacific Grove's Good Old Days on April 5th and 6th. The more CCW members who take part, the better! See page 2 for ways you can volunteer.

Hats off to Joyce Krieg for coming up with these car decorations for the Good Old Days Parade!



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Janet's View

By CCW President Janet Tezak

This and That

In this month's president's message, I would like to invite your increased participation in Central Coast Writers' activities. For example, as mentioned in Jonathan Shoemaker's article in the March *Scribbles* issue, there are two existing CCW-affiliated writing groups that meet at Juice and Java in Pacific Grove: the poetry group, which meets on the Saturday before our general meeting and the prose group which meets on the Saturday after our general meeting. Please contact Harold Grice at ookaayy@sbcglobal.net for more information. Also, there is the Pacific Grove Pretty Good Poetry Group (PGPGPG) which meets at the Sally Griffin Center, 700 Jewel Avenue on the fourth Thursday of each month, 2:00 - 3:30. Do you know of other writing groups that are open to new members or are there some CCW members who would like to start a new group? If you are interested in starting a new group, please email me at jrtszak@hotmail.com, and I will announce it at our next meeting.

Another way you might become more involved is to join the CCW board. In our next calendar year, starting in July, we need a treasurer. Please email me if you might be interested in this position. We meet once a month on a Saturday morning. We work hard but have a good time! Also, we could use a volunteer or two to help with the raffle every month at our general meeting.

Lastly, I would like to survey member interest in organizing a workshop next fall. Please let me know what types of workshops you're interested in supporting: screenwriting or social media are two examples.

I am grateful for the energy and enthusiasm of our CCW membership, and I want to continue to meet the needs of our members. Please notify me about any of the above topics or about any other concerns or suggestions you might have that will help make us an even better organization!

Some Ways You Can Volunteer with CCW at Good Old Days

- Help set up the CCW booth, 6:30 a.m.-8:00 a.m., Saturday, April 5th. At press time, we didn't know the exact location of the booth on Lighthouse.
- Sell your book at the booth. Authors must be present for book sales.
- Help man the booth from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Saturday and/or Sunday.
- Walk in the parade. Walkers are encouraged to wear either a CCW T-shirt or red, white and blue and also to carry props (note pads, pencils). Report to the intersection of Pine and Alder no later than 9:15 Saturday morning. Walkers must be able to walk the parade distance and get to and from their car. Count on about two hours, possibly a little more.

If you'd like to help, contact Laurie Sheehan (erudite@me.com) about the booth or Leslie Patiño (lnpatino@comcast.net) about the parade.

Script Writing: Congalton Succeeds With Comedy on Writers



By Dorothy Vriend

David Congalton, whose movie *Authors Anonymous* hits theaters in April, made his way to success despite crushing obstacles: serial rejection and no financing to make the dream come true.

His first failed attempts at being a screenwriter were with such titles as *Unleashed*, about a dog who turns into a man, and *Trouble Brewing*, about a college fraternity that goes sideways. Then he wrote something closer to home. *Authors Anonymous* is a comedy that focuses on a writer's critique group.

However difficult writing the script was, it turned out to be the easy part. He spent four years "chasing money around the world" and rewriting the lead character to please potential investors. Promises came up empty, and he returned to the starting block again and again. He did all this in addition to a full time career as a radio talk show host, organizing the annual writers conference at Cuesta College, and writing a couple of non-fiction books.

What kept him going? He believed screenwriting was what he was meant to do. The fit felt right. He didn't want to be a failure.

Finally with a commitment from actress Kaley Cuoco to play the lead, Congalton got a chunk of money from a family in Louisiana who adored her and the film was on its way.

Congalton says the most important thing is never giving up on your dream. "You can't let others define for you what you are capable or not capable of doing," he said.

Some final tips for screenwriters: "Collaborate and compromise." Congalton said being a Hollywood writer gets you about the same amount of recognition as a caterer. You need to be flexible to survive.

He didn't make a windfall on the movie, just enough to take his wife Charlotte to Kauai for a week. But the joy of catching the dream and seeing his work on the big screen made it worth the pain.

Congalton has a second script in the works. *Seven Sisters* is derived from his love of hiking. And now, he feels right in his own shoes.



Laura Emerson gives the Five-Minute Reading. Guest speaker David Congalton addresses CCW Members.



White Bread

By Christine Sleeter



"How can I not know who I am?"

Jessica stared at her image in the mirror. Her image stared back.

Her inner voice protested, I know my name, I know where I live, when and where I was born, who I'm married to, where I went to school. . . The reflected dark eyes bored into her own. The brow, usually smooth alabaster, pleated creases between thin umber brows.

"Who are you, Jessica?" Esteban's question continued to haunt her. Or rather, what haunted was her inability to answer.

Last Wednesday, as Milford Elementary School was commencing for the year, fifth-grade teacher Esteban had given an informal presentation in the library to his colleagues -- all white -- about cultural identity and the fact that half their kids could scarcely find anyone like themselves in the curriculum. Holding up a reading book, a science book, and a social studies book, he recited in less than a minute their references to Mexican Americans. Then he suggested what teachers could include.

A teacher remarked, "These kids are all Americans, or at least that's what their families want them to become. Wouldn't we do them a disservice by teaching them to be Mexican rather than American?" Jessica wondered the same thing.

Esteban replied, "Mexican-American *is* American. My family, for example, was born here. We're Americans. But we aren't white Americans, we aren't Black Americans, we're Mexican Americans."

At that point Jessica, sitting in a corner, looked up from her cell phone where she was surreptitiously playing solitaire. She raised her hand. "Esteban, you might be teaching what you're familiar with, but don't expect us to teach things we don't know. I'm just plain white bread American, that's what I know and that's what I teach."

He studied her, then asked, "White bread American? What's that? Who are you, Jessica?"

The room fell silent. Then grandmotherly Marge, all graying hair and tortoise-shell glasses, stood. "Well, I guess I'm white bread, too. You can teach the way you want, Esteban, but I'm not you and don't see why I should try to be." The meeting concluding, she left.

As the rest filed from the library like children eager for recess, Esteban offered to loan Jessica a few books she could try out in her classroom, "just to see how the kids respond," he said.

The thing was, Jessica couldn't say no to him. Not only did her eyes glue themselves to his gorgeous face and trim body, but he also exuded a sense of self Jessica craved.

And that was the crux of it. In this school where half the children claimed European ancestry and the other half Mexican, in this hodgepodge of a community that had no obvious majority, Esteban knew who he was. Jessica (and her husband Tim, for that matter) knew themselves through facts describing their existence rather than connections weaving their belonging.

Was Wonder Bread the best image of herself she could conjure?

Christine Sleeter is Professor Emerita in the College of Professional Studies at California State University Monterey Bay, where she was a founding faculty member. A widely published academic author, she is currently writing her first novel.

Tales to Sell

By Laurie Sheehan



March 23rd *Monterey Herald* photo of Laurie Sheehan at Left Coast Crime Conference.

Louise Penny hugged me... and it was wonderful. The hug in question was my penultimate experience at **Left Coast Crime (LLC)**, an annual crime novelists' conference, and was brought about because a photo of me was splashed across the cover of the *Sunday Herald* under the title "Tales To Sell." I timidly said, "Maybe it's a sign?" Ms. Penny robustly replied, in her cultured, mellifluous voice, "It is absolutely a sign." So there we have it folks, I have tales to sell - as long as I find the time to get them on paper, edit them, find an agent, get them sold, published, publicized... you get the picture. However, I'll not let the work ahead detract from my current state of Nirvana. I'm thrilled with this writing thing, and attending LLC was just the banging together of stones that I needed to reignite the spark.

This year's LLC was held in Monterey, which made it very convenient. The four-day event took place March 20-23, and I tacked on an extra day - a writer's workshop on the 19th. Workshops are always worthwhile, and the conference itself was a fabulous experience. Here are just a few of the more than a dozen panels I attended: The Character-Driven Mystery, Laughing at Murder: The Humorous Mystery, The Culture of Murder: Mysteries Set in Different Lands, When Murder Gets in the Way of a Good Romance and Sex, Death & Taxes... and a Lot of Champagne! It was the latter that produced that photo of me laughing so hard I cried.

Oh, and if anyone is wondering about my ultimate experience, using the word in its chronological sense, it was gracefully catching myself before I hit the floor after tripping on a rug. I righted myself and turned to see if anyone was snickering at me... no one was. Either my act of clumsiness went unnoticed, or, more likely everyone was simply gracious enough to avert their eyes. I wouldn't be surprised if it was the latter; all the attending authors were approachable and gracious... from Laurie R. King, Sue Grafton, Marcia Muller, Bill Pronzini and Rhys Bowen, to Catriona McPherson, Catherine Coulter, Donna Andrews, and, of course, Louise Penny. If I seem a bit star struck, it's because I am. I spent four days in, what I would call, the presence of greatness, and I'm better for the experience.

The Latest Lowdown on Self-Publishing

By Harold Grice

At this February's **San Francisco Writers Conference (SFWC)**, I focused on self-publishing. I especially enjoyed a panel discussion, "The New Mass Market Book: Breaking into Publishing with Ebooks," with Mark Coker, Brian Felsen and Christine Munroe.

Mark Coker, founder of Smashwords (www.smashwords.com), stated that good sales depend on the trust of readers; and a good way to get readers is to put the first chapter of your book on the site for free. In this manner you will gain readership and can then go on to pricing your work. Coker shared a graph that showed the total earned from sales of books priced at \$3.99 as being about the same as books priced at \$9.99. His point was that the writer asking \$3.99 sold double to triple the number of books, thus creating a larger fan base.

Coker also said that cover art is very important. One author whose sales were slow redid his cover from pink to blue and sales picked up greatly; so don't use pink. Also, while most authors who self-publish with Smashwords do not make a lot of money, there are exceptions—one sold over a million dollars of Young Adult novels of less than two hundred pages, pricing the books from \$3.00 to \$4.99. Mark invited everyone interested to go the website and download the free Smashwords submission guidelines and other info. (I did so, but to print, it has to be changed to a PDF file.)

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

Brian Felsen is the former president of Host Baby, CD Baby and BookBaby. He advised indie authors to submit to all services—Smashwords, BookBaby, Kobo, Amazon, Lulu, etc. If your first book sells well, you can use that track record to interest major publishers in your next book. He also noted that if they offer a contract, it will still be one to two years before the book is published, and it may go through a number of changes over which you have no control.

Brian also suggested having some hard copies printed through Lightning Source, as their list of published books goes to all the distribution users: libraries, bookstores and elsewhere. If you're not familiar with Lightning Source, find out more at: www.lightningsource.com.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Volunteer Opportunity

The Harden (Salinas) Middle School yearbook is off to the printer, leaving the yearbook class with little to do. I'm looking for fellow CCW members who are writers, editors, graphic designers, artists, photographers, marketing professionals, and publishers who would like to share their experiences with these seventh- and eighth-grade students between now and the end of the school year. Days, times, and topics are open (Harden has a rotating schedule, so the yearbook class time varies from day to day). If you're interested, please contact me as soon as possible. I'd love to have my students benefit from YOUR expertise!

Beth Roybal, MA, English and Yearbook Teacher
beth.roybal@salinasuhdsd.org
or beth.roybal@gmail.com
831-236-1951 (cell phone) or 831-796-7300 (Harden Middle School)

Have You Noticed?

Last fall, CCW member Laura Emerson suggested *Scribbles* include the Point Pinos Grill logo on the back page with the information about our next meeting. She volunteered to get permission.

We have a good relationship with the restaurant, so the idea made sense. Next, Point Pinos Grill started announcing CCW meetings on its Facebook page. If you feel so inclined, give the Grill's Facebook page a LIKE at <https://www.facebook.com/pointpinosgrill>.

Kudos to Laura and to Point Pinos Grill for the advertising!



Writers' Open Mike Is Back—With a New Location!

Please note: Due to the on-going renovations at the East Village Coffee Lounge, Open Mike will meet at the Union Bank Conference Room, 615 Abrego Street, Monterey, Tuesday, April 8, 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

Randy Peyser will read from her book, *Crappy to Happy: Small Steps to Big Happiness NOW!* that was featured in the movie, *Eat, Pray, Love*, starring Julia Roberts. She may also read from her forthcoming *Little Book of Big Epiphanies*, as well as earlier books: *The Power of Miracle Thinking* and *The Write-a-Book Program*. Peyser is CEO of Author One Stop, a national publishing consulting firm. She edits and ghostwrites books and pitches books to agents and publishers. Her website is: www.authoronestop.com.

MEMBER PROFILE

By Michelle Smith

A Vintage Tale

Trish Watson

An antiques and vintage collectibles dealer, Patricia (“Trish”) Watson was inspired to write by her grandmother.

“She told me anyone who read as much as I did ought to try her hand at writing,” Trish remembers.

At age twelve Trish saw the first publication of one of her poems; today, poetry continues to be a writing genre of choice along with dog stories and Steampunk, a form of Victorian era science fiction, says Trish who enjoys attending themed conventions and fairs in costume.

“I’ve been a member of the dog fancy for twenty years, showing, breeding, working with breed rescue and keeping Cairn Terriers,” Trish says. She even authored a filmography website www.cairnterriermovies.com that showcases films starring Cairn Terriers, including *The Wizard of Oz* and its famous star Toto.

“For a number of years I was an advisor to the San Jose City Animal Shelter,” Trish adds.

But Trish’s areas of expertise extend beyond terriers and antiques. After obtaining a B.A. from Duke University, she participated in genetic disease research and was credited in *JAMA (The Journal of the American Medical Association)* for her contribution to an article about genetics. For a brief spell in her youth, she competitively flew kites; she’s also worked as a sculptor, painter and figurative artist and was a newsletter editor for several organizations.

A CCW member for two years, Trish, who hopes to write entertaining fiction, believes writers should work at their craft each day. Though she enjoys works from a variety of genres and authors, she is fond of science fiction, poetry and murder mysteries.

In February Trish’s poem “Hope” was included in the literary anthology *Written Across the Genres* (published by Luminare Press).

Michelle Smith’s articles have been published in a variety of magazines. Her website is <http://theebonyquill.com>.



A Tip of the Hat!

To CCW Member Pat Hanson whose book, *Invisible Grandparenting*, won Honorable Mention in the 2014 Los Angeles Book Festival contest!

THE POETRY CORNER

By Nancy Jacobs

A Man of Principles

Sir William Watson



Sir William Watson, who was born August 2, 1858 in Burley, West Yorkshire, United Kingdom, was known for his controversial political views and for his traditional style of celebratory writing. Sir William saw himself as a lifelong enemy of tyranny and as a friend of liberty. When Alfred Lord Tennyson was losing his appeal as a writer, William Watson was there to defend him.

His reputation as a writer was established in 1891 with the publication of "Wordsworth's Grave." Because of his political views such as being against the Boer War and being steadfast against the Ottoman Empire, Sir William was passed over for the post of Poet Laureate by the Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury.

In 1894 Sir William was able to make a comeback with the publication of "Odes and Other Poems." In 1917, for various reasons, including his support of the Great War effort, he was made a knight.

A group of literary men were about to recognize Sir William's accomplishments in the literary field when he died in August of 1935. Sadly, his fortunes had so dwindled that his wife had been working as a domestic maid.

"April" is one of his more whimsical and capricious poems.

April

by Sir William Watson

April, April,
Laugh thy girlish laughter;
Then, the moment after,
Weep thy girlish tears!
April, that mine ears
Like a lover greetest,
If I tell thee, sweetest,
All my hopes and fears,
April, April,
Laugh thy golden laughter;
But the moment after,
Weep thy golden tears!



Did You Know?

That April as National Poetry Month was introduced in 1996 by the American Academy of Poets with the goal of raising awareness and appreciation of poetry in the United States and Canada?

CONTESTS AND WORKSHOPS

By Diana Paul



CONTESTS

1) Academy of American Poets

James Laughlin Award

Deadline: May 15, 2014

Entry Fee: None

Website: www.poets.org/awards

Details: The James Laughlin Award is given to recognize and support a poet's second book. Only manuscripts already under contract with publishers are considered.

2) Ashland Poetry Press

Richard Snyder Publication Prize

Deadline: April 30, 2014

Entry Fee: \$25

Website: <http://www.ashlandpoetrypress.com/guidelines/snyder-prize>

Details: Original collection of poems of 50 to 80 pages.

3) Winning Writers

Tom Howard/John H. Reid Fiction and Essay Contest

Deadline: April 30, 2014

Entry Fee: \$16

Website: <https://winningwriters.com/our-contests/tom-howard-john-h-reid-fiction-essay-contest> **E-Details:** Both published and unpublished work may be submitted. 6000-word limit.

WORKSHOP

Antioch Writers Workshop

Event Date: July 12, 2014

Application Deadline: June 14, 2014

Tuition: \$610

Website: www.antiochwritersworkshop.com

Details:

The 29th annual Antioch Writers' Workshop will be held from July 12 -18 in Yellow Springs, Ohio. The conference features workshops in poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction, as well as readings, lectures, craft talks, and manuscript consultations. The faculty includes poets Chris DeWeese and Marly Youmans; fiction writers Gayle Brandeis, Andre Dubus III, Hallie Ephron, Erin Flanagan, Tara Ison, and Katrina Kittle; and creative nonfiction writer Matthew Goodman. Tuition is \$610 (\$550 for returning or local participants), and there is a nonrefundable \$125 registration fee. For workshop registration, submit up to 10 pages of poetry or 10 to 20 pages of prose by June 14.

Best of luck and share your Contest experiences with Scribbles, too!

IF THE SHOE FITS . . .

By Jonathan Shoemaker



Is Our Fiction Believable?

We might write about situations that the readers normally find themselves in. They identify with characters and are drawn into the action, judging the behavior of a protagonist by how they themselves would normally react or by what they would have done in that predicament. They agree or disagree with the behavior of various personalities in the day-to-day drama.

Judging from the popularity of reality shows and soap operas, this format draws a lot of readers.

Or, we can write mystery novels or fantasy stories, which appeal to readers looking for a break from their everyday world. The environment is different, but the people are basically the same.

Various genres attract certain readers and cause them to follow a preferred type of TV series or be tempted to pull a book from the shelf in search of entertainment.

No matter the genre, readers take pleasure in judging the principal characters using the same basic values that they use to judge themselves and others: empathy, understanding, honesty, bravery, selflessness and compassion. The degree to which the protagonists demonstrate these values, or an absence of them, will determine to what degree the readers will respect or dislike them. It is absolutely necessary for us to know each one of our protagonists well enough that we can keep them in character.

Martha Alderson, the "Plot Whisperer," gives us many ideas for keeping the plot moving in logical sequence,

with minor and major climaxes, by charting out the plot beforehand. In the same way, we need a way to remember each personality. It might be a good idea to make a list of strengths and flaws of each of our people in order to keep them from going out of character. Think about how you, or your siblings or best friends would react. Have a specific person in mind for each of your characters. Then you will know them well. When a turn in the plot causes a marked change in a personality it will be expected by the reader as logical growth. Karma sucks! – or bestows its blessing.

We graph out the plot and weave the action into past, present and future events for a logical, believable flow of major and minor conflicts leading toward temporary results and the final resolution. We keep in mind the basic traits of each major and minor persona to make sure that they all stay in character. If they change in any way, which they should if we want to satisfy the classic dictum, the reader needs to see a reason for that change and an important outcome as a result of it. We can give our readers a chance to say, "Yes! I knew s/he would finally do that!" It is so satisfying that they will tell others about the book. Maybe even suggest it for their book club.

**Be well,
and do good work,
Jonathan**

Looking for a Critique Group?

PGPGPG, fourth Thursday of month, 2:00-3:30, Sally Griffin Center, 700 Jewel Avenue, Pacific Grove

Juice & Java Groups, **most** Saturdays at Juice & Java, 599 Lighthouse Avenue, Pacific Grove. To confirm meeting dates, contact Harold Grice at 594-2280 or ookaayy@sbcglobal.net.

Poetry: The Saturday before the CCW monthly meeting, 9:30 to 11'ish

Prose: The Saturday after the CCW monthly meeting, 9:30 to 11'ish

THE LAST WORD

Leslie Patiño

(Some) Dreams Do Come True



Remember when you first dreamed of writing a book and having a big published house snap it up? We all have our own war-stories about what happened after that.

In 2000, my Monterrey, Mexico friend Sofía Segovia signed up for a local writing workshop. When the instructor asked participants to summarize their books in the first class, Sofía had no idea what to say. Three years later, she had a pretty solid 223-page novel about a disparate bunch of people caught in a hurricane in Playa del Carmen. *Noche del Huracán* (*Night of the Hurricane*) was finally published in 2009 through a government program to promote the arts.

Meanwhile, Sofía kept writing and taking classes. She even started teaching a writing class. Last August, she finished “the nth” revision of her second novel. In Mexico, there are no literary agents. Having a website, a blog and a huge social media presence aren’t yet *de rigueur* for Mexican novelists.

Sofía started contacting publishing houses and developing a website and blog (web address). Fast forward through five months of what amounted to a slow courtship. On February 25, Sofía flew to Mexico City and signed with Penguin Random House, Grupo Latino América. (New York-based Penguin Random House is the largest U.S. publisher.) Sofía’s second novel comes out September 23.

Sometimes, writers’ dreams do come true, and stories like Sofía’s inspire the rest of us to keep writing.



Sofía Segovia and Leslie Patiño in Monterrey, Mexico

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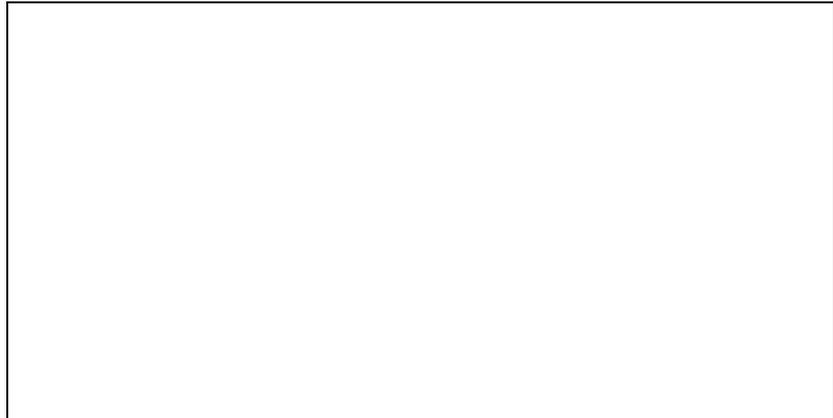
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Not a member of CCW?

You can join at a monthly meeting or online at:
centralcoastwriters.org
or contact Davyd Morris: meldrm@aol.com



California Writers Club
Central Coast Writers Branch
Post Office Box 997
Pacific Grove, CA 93950



Juliette Wade

April 15

5:30 pm - DINNER

6:30 pm - MEETING

Point Pinos Grill

79 Asilomar Boulevard

Pacific Grove

