



# Scribbles

California Writers Club - Central Coast Writers Branch  
[www.centralcoastwriters.org](http://www.centralcoastwriters.org)  
March 2013

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## Special Tribute

in this issue to  
Central Coast Writers  
founding member  
**Walter Gourlay (1921-2013)**  
Pages 4-9.



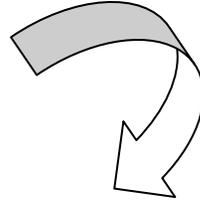
## Learn about "Shameless Self-Promotion" at our March meeting!

Writers who live by their words know that marketing is crucial, and not just in selling the completed work but in getting assignments, endorsements, agents, publishers, speaking engagements and readers. Yet we're often reluctant to boast about and boost ourselves and our work. Judith Horstman, award winning journalist and author, will explore using today's tools of the trade to overcome those blocks at our March meeting. She is author of the popular Scientific American brain books, including *The Scientific American Healthy Aging Brain*, which was named by the Wall Street Journal as one of the best guides to later life. She lives in Sacramento. Visit her website at [judithhorstman.com](http://judithhorstman.com).

*Call Me Madame*, by Cheri Love



I don't really have much to discuss this month, but do want you all to think about coming to our New Members' Mixer, which occurs later this month, so I've devoted my space to the following . . .



## **NEW MEMBERS' MIXER**

*Come learn about what's happening with Central Coast Writers!*

Sunset Center, Carmel (Chapman Room)

**Saturday, March 23, 10:00 to 12:00**

*Refreshments will be provided, and attendees will receive a free book from Writers Digest publications.*



What is a new member? First a definition, then the kicker: Let's say a new member is anyone who has joined CCW in the last couple of years, or just isn't too sure what we're about. The kicker? This is a social event, so truly, everyone is invited!

Too often, when you join a group, you don't actually talk to too many people, and it seems like all of the decisions are being made by some "in-group." After a while it just isn't fun anymore. We want CCW to be a life-long home for you, like hanging out in the coffee house with your best writing buds.

Everyone will have the chance to tell a little about themselves and what they're writing, or thinking about writing. Find out how the Executive Committee operates, and how we develop ideas for our monthly programs and workshops. (By the way, we have a some great meetings and workshops scheduled!)

To RSVP, or ask questions, write [ccwprez@comcast.net](mailto:ccwprez@comcast.net).

***See you there!***



## Cara Black's Paris Research

By Dorothy Vriend



February brought us Cara Black with her new novel, *Murder Below Montparnasse*, which is expected to be released next month. Black, the author of 13 mysteries starring the private investigator Aimee Leduc, came to talk about the research behind the series.

For her this means twice yearly trips to Paris. Her protagonist, after all, has crimes to solve in that city, and Black means to get the details right. This could mean going out drinking with police, hanging out with a cafe owner or getting an invite to someone's home. Either way she is looking for opportunities to get behind the scenes.

"I want to show you a darker side of the City of Light," Black said.

Of the 20 Paris neighborhoods -- or arrondissements -- Black has so far used 13 of them as the prime location for a story. Discovering tunnels where French Gestapo tortured people during WWII and ancient catacombs that still exist are examples of discovered tidbits that inspire Black's work.

"A lot of times the place will suggest a story line," she said.

In her visits abroad Black aims to soak up the sounds, flavors and textures around her. She will go so far as to record random conversations on a bus, water trickling through a park, the sweep of a broom on pavement or the clamor of a street corner. When she is back home working on her computer, she can play the tape and transport herself back to that moment in time.

Not all of her research makes it into the novel she is working on, but she believes the knowledge adds to her work nonetheless. And precious discoveries not used in one story may find their way into another. "You don't have to kill those darlings," she said. "You just put them in another file on your computer."

## Accolades!

To **Michelle Smith**, who had another article published in the latest issue of *Health Matters* (February issue), a *Monterey Herald* publication. It's titled "New Frontiers For Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital Heart Patients" (on p. 8) and discusses a couple of new cutting-edge procedures in the treatment of cardiac patients. See Michelle's entire article at: [www.montereyherald.com/specialsections](http://www.montereyherald.com/specialsections).

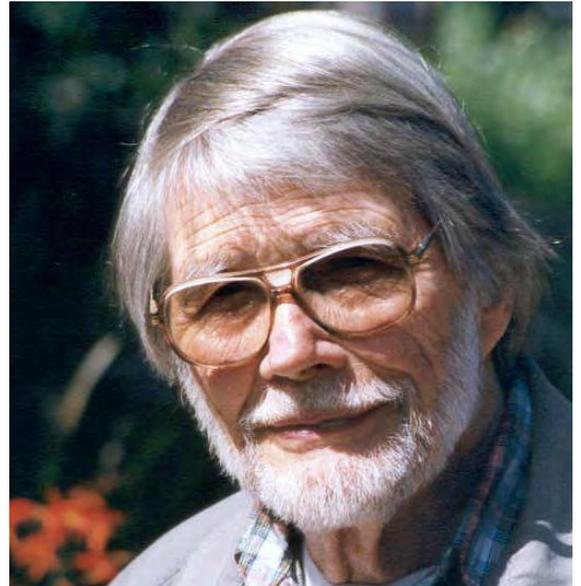
To CCW president **Cheri Love** for her February 14 article in the *Monterrey Herald*, "Aimeé Leduc author Cara Black speaks for Central Coast Writers group in Pacific Grove."

To **Cheri Love**, former CCW president **Harold Grice** and member **Leslie Patiño** who attended the San Francisco Writers Conference, February 14-17. Leslie participated in Speed Dating with the Agents which resulted in three agents requesting to see part or all of her novel manuscript, *Monterrey Brewing Company*.

# Walter Gourlay

*July, 2, 1921-February 6, 2013*

*A Long Life, Well Lived*



Central Coast Writers is mourning the loss of founding member Walter E. Gourlay, who passed away Feb. 6, 2013, at CHOMP.

Born July 2, 1921, in Long Island, NY, Walter showed a keen interest in writing and current affairs from an early age. As a child, he hand-lettered his own newspaper, and as a teen, he was an award-winning member of his high school Debating Club. After graduation, he worked in at the Sperry Gyroscope Company, where he organized the workers into a union. Drafted into the Army during World War II, he served in North Africa and Italy and earned two battle medals.

Following the war, Walter went back to school, earning a bachelor's degree from Queens College and a master's from Harvard University. Like many of his generation, he spent several years "sidetracked" in the Beat scene in Greenwich Village in the 1950s, managing a concert hall and editing a men's magazine.

Walter returned to Harvard and earned a PhD in Modern Chinese History. He received a Fulbright Research Grant, which enabled him to travel to London, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Walter taught Chinese and World History at Michigan State University until his retirement in 1988.

Walter's wife Adele, who preceded him in death by more than a decade, had family in California and wanted to return, which is how Walter ended up on the Monterey Peninsula. He kept very busy in his retirement, teaching part-time at Cabrillo College, the Monterey Institute of International Studies, the Naval Postgraduate School, and Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo. His volunteer activities included the Monterey Dunes Natural History Association, Carmel Residents Association, Veterans for Peace, and the National Writers Union.

Most significantly for CCW, Walter re-kindled his old love of writing. In the late 1990s, he joined a critique group called Pebbles that was meeting at the old Thunderbird Bookshop in Carmel. He and several other Pebbles members were eager to grow the gathering beyond just a critique group. They'd heard of California Writers Club, and decided to form a chapter to serve writers in the Monterey-Salinas-Santa Cruz area. Thus was born Central Coast Writers in July of 2001.

*(Continued on page 5)*

*(Continued from page 4)*

Walter was a true pillar of CCW during the Club's early years. He served as Program Chair for three years, bringing in a variety of excellent speakers who drew potential new members and helped raise our awareness in the local literary community. Our parent organization, California Writers Club, recognized Walter's service by honoring him with the Jack London Award in 2007.

Walter remained actively involved in writing almost to the very end, going so far as to take his laptop with him on his final trip to CHOMP. His projects included a scholarly history of the Chinese revolution, and a memoir of his World War II experiences.

At his request, no formal services were held.



**CCW members Joyce Krieg, Wanda Sue Parrott, Ken Jones and Pat Hanson remember Walter Gourlay at the February meeting.**

## *Our Legacy*

So, what is this all for? Grouped together, like comrades in arms, we carry on. We close ranks and move on with a common purpose. When one of us has left his place among us, we are still inspired by his talent, integrity and determination.

And what is our common purpose but to use our talents to show to those who join us and those who come after us what is possible, what is true, what is magnificent. From a small band of dedicated friends, we have grown to be an impressive organization of playwrights, poets, columnists, novelists and more. We follow the example of a century of California Writers Club and a decade of our own dear leaders, bringing more enthusiastic members into the fold.

A fulfilled life is when we fulfill our own expectations and when we fulfill others' needs. This is indeed the example that we have before us today. Charter member Walter Gourlay contacted Barbara Truax of the California Writers Club, and a few other people who wanted to be members, and suggested the name "Central Coast Writers" for the group. As Program Chairman, he organized many of the programs we enjoy today. A dedicated writer and active participant, he took part in many activities and several critique groups. We have his example before us and our fellow members to support us.

Isaac Newton wrote, "If I have seen farther it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." It is the legacy of those who have gone before us, and what we pass on to those who come after, that affords writers the opportunity to achieve success. It is what we accomplish with those who are with us now that affords us the opportunity to benefit humanity with those talents that we must not waste nor ignore.



## *Perhaps He Hears My Voice*

I say farewell to my dear friend.  
Perhaps he hears my voice as clearly  
as if he never left.

As if he didn't drift into the world beyond,  
from whence a gentle smile sends forth  
delicious memories  
to soothe the hearts  
of friends he left behind.

Perhaps the memory of his voice,  
the precious light within his eyes,  
can touch the souls of those who still  
remain;  
Can spin a tale within our hearts  
that will remind us of the times,  
and bring a smile.

I say "Good-by" to my dear friend,  
and yet I'll never let him go.  
I'll always have a piece of him,  
just as he took a piece of me  
and tore it from my life.

**Be well,  
do good work,  
and sail on!**

**Jonathan**

# "REUNION"

by Walter E. Gourlay

(Condensed from *Monterey Shorts*, 2002, by Wanda Sue Parrott)

On a crisp, fall day, Dr. John J. Ackerman, Emeritus Professor of Anthropology at Michigan State, intended to stop at the Faculty Club and have a couple of drinks. Instead, he went to California.

He was thinking of the empty house, so on impulse he drove to the Interstate with no conscious destination in mind. The most impulsive thing he'd done since before he married Harriet.

He remembered ranching in Big Sur, then hitchhiking back to Manhattan. His draft board zonked him. *Greetings. Classified 1-A. Fit for combat.*

After his discharge, complete with a Purple Heart, he'd entered Columbia on the G.I. Bill. He entered Harriet at about the same time.

Impelled by some inner directive he couldn't name, he took back roads through the Sierras into California . . . then on the freeway through to Monterey. He'd been stationed at Fort Ord in fall of 1943. . . . A couple of years ago he'd opened a link mentioning that Ord had been closed down and Stilwell Hall, which he'd known as the Soldiers' Club, was on the brink of demolition. *Was it still standing?* He turned off Highway 1 at Marina . . . yes, there it was. Two stories high, California Spanish in architecture, with a terra cotta roof . . . an enlisted man's palace.

Memories opened up. Terry. Tall, redheaded with blue-indigo eyes. He pulled over to the shoulder to rest a bit.

He awoke to the sound of his radio. Tommy Dorsey's orchestra playing *Boogie Woogie*. Directly in front of him, he saw the Club strangely ablaze with yellow lights, music and the sound of voices. *This is a crazy dream.*

He found himself walking toward the entrance. In uniform . . . the warm touch of dog tags on his chest. A band was playing *The Last Time I Saw Paris*. He thought he recognized several men from his platoon. Terry was there. She seemed to have expected him.

"Johnny! You're here," she called.

He took her hand.

"Do you remember what I said when I walked over to you that night?"

"Yes," he said. "Tell me, Johnny. Can you rumba?"

They began to rumba. "I wish I could do this forever," he said. "Be with you forever."

"You can, Johnny. Do you remember what we did that night?"

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

Oh yes, he remembered telling her they would be shipping out the next morning, remembered taking her out where the dunes began. Remembered returning, sand on their clothes and in her hair.

"What is this? Some kind of a time warp?"

"You could think of it like that."

"How should I think of it?"

"It's reunion time. Your class going-away party. Our anniversary." She kissed him. "Please Johnny, please make love to me again."

He took her out to the dunes. Then they walked back, hand in warm hand. "They're all gone now," he said, waving at the shadowy dunes.

"Now? When is now?" she said. "Even when the Club is gone, we'll be here and we'll be now."

"If this is some kind of mixed-up dream," he said, "I don't ever want to wake up."

"It's the way it was meant to be. I've come back looking for you every year."

"You do this every year?"

"On the anniversary of the battalion's going away party."

"I'll get us a beer," he said. Carrying a pitcher and two glasses, he bumped into Tommy Goodson, beaming and full of spirits. *Tommy. Screaming when his guts were blown out at Okinawa.*

Terry reached out. "C'mon, Johnny. Let's dance." They held each other close. He looked about the room. All were here, he supposed, the 500 men of his battalion.

It was a shock to recognize Sergeant Lacey, whose head would be ripped off, spattering Johnny with blood just as he himself was hit by shrapnel. Here was Hennessy, who would be killed by a land mine.

"Not everybody's here."

"They'll come when they're invited."

"How come I wasn't here before?"

"You have to be invited."

"And tonight I was invited?"

"Oh yes, Johnny. You were invited."

The evening was winding down. "Terry, can we stay together tonight?"

"Oh Johnny. This is all we'll ever have. The last one to arrive is the last to leave."

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

Then suddenly she was gone. The vast ruined hall was a silent dark and empty vault. The floor was buckled, and the sea roared closer beyond the dunes. There was a louder roaring in his ears, and now, finally, he understood it all.

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*From the Monterey County Herald*

### **PROFESSOR FOUND DEAD BY STILWELL HALL**

The victim of an apparent heart attack, Dr. John Ackerman, a retired Professor of Anthropology at Michigan State University, was found dead in his car at 7:30 a.m. near Stilwell Hall on the site of the former Fort Ord. A university spokesman in East Lansing, Michigan said they were not aware that Ackerman had gone to California.

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Johnny walked up the path to the Soldiers' Club, lively again with light, laughter and music. He was in uniform. Young. Vigorous. Happy. He knew he'd see Terry again. And again. And again. Even if the Club slid into the sea. She'd always be here in October 1943.

To read a more complete version of "Reunion" by Walter E. Gourlay, please visit the Members Only Announcements on the CCW website.

## **WANTED**

- **Greeters**, to chat with visitors at our monthly meetings.
- Another **Raffle Gift Shopper**, to find writing-related items to raffle at meetings. (Reimbursement provided.)
- **President**, for next year (starting in July).
- **Membership Chair**, for next year.

*Call Cheri Love, at 656-1220, for more info.*

## **For Your Information**

Amazon.com allows its "Prime" members to borrow certain Kindle books for free.

Available now: *Hooked: Write Fiction That Grabs Readers at Page One & Never Lets Them Go.*

If you're reading this on your computer, you can just click on the book title to get to the web page.

Irish poet Rory Gleeson is one of the youngest poets that I have featured. He was born in 1990 and his father is Brendan Gleeson, a former teacher who has starred in such movies such as *The General*, *Braveheart*, *Cold Mountain*, *Gangs of New York* and *28 Days Later*. He lives in Dublin, Ireland.

Rory could very well blossom into a major Irish poet/writer of the future. This poem gives him a wonderful beginning.

### "Emotions"

I am a volcano, ready to erupt,  
 I am a three year old child at a Shakespeare play,  
 I am a caged bird, kept away from the world,  
 I am a squirrel in a field of nuts,  
 I am a child, at his first day of school,  
 I am a dog, trying to learn algebra,  
 I am all these emotions bundled in one, but most importantly,  
 I am a person trying to finish this poem  
 Before the teacher kills me.

Your poetry editor, Nancy Jacobs



## Looking for a Critique Group?

CCW encourages participation in these groups.

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

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

**Poetry and Prose** meet at Juice & Java, 599 Lighthouse Avenue, Pacific Grove. For more information, contact Harold Grice at [Oookaayy@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Oookaayy@sbcglobal.net).

**Memoir:** 1st Sunday of the month, 1:00 to 3:00 at Crema Espresso Bar, 481 Lighthouse, Pacific Grove. For more information contact Kris Kissman at [kkissman42@yahoo.com](mailto:kkissman42@yahoo.com).

## Writers Open Mike

March 21, 5:30-7:30, East Village Coffee Lounge, 498 Washington St., Monterey. March features Anne Ylvisaker, author of the novels *Button Down*, *The Luck of the Buttons*, *Little Klein*, and *Dear Papa*, as well as 19 non-fiction books for young readers and an award-winning board book. The ideas for Anne's novels come from family letters, photos, and art images. Anne will share some of these artifacts and will read from the corresponding work.

Anne was the 2005 recipient of the McKnight Artist Fellowship in children's literature, and her novels have garnered awards and been named to several best-of lists. Betsy Bird, book blogger for School Library Journal says in her review of *The Luck of the Buttons*, "... it's Ylvisaker's writing that keeps everything moving at a rapid clip. It's catchy with a beat you can dance to, but there's also an essential friendliness beneath it all." [www.annelyvisaker.com](http://www.annelyvisaker.com)

Central Coast Writers Presents

# Put Your Life on Paper: From Idea to Essay in One Day with Victoria Zackheim!

Victoria Zackheim wowed us at the January meeting of CCW. Just imagine spending an entire day with this dynamic and inspiring writing teacher! In her upcoming workshop, she'll help you take an acorn of an idea and nurture it into a mighty oak – a creative personal essay.



Whether you're working on a memoir, or writing short pieces based on personal experiences, this is the workshop for you! Victoria will show you how to take those ideas that have been tumbling around in your mind and actually get them down on paper into a creative personal essay. You'll leave the workshop with a first draft – and plenty of inspiration to keep you going on your project!

Victoria Zackheim teaches the art of the personal essay through the UCLA Extension. See is the editor of five anthologies, the latest being *Exit Laughing: How Humor Takes the Sting out of Death*. She is the author of the novel *The Bone Weaver* and the screenplay *Maidstone*, in pre-production with Identity Films, and writes book reviews for the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

**WHEN:** Saturday, April 6 – 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Doors open at 9:30 a.m.

**WHERE:** Sunset Cultural Center – Babcock Room.  
Sunset Center is located between 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, Mission and San Carlos in Carmel. Plenty of free parking.

**WHAT TO BRING:**

- Sack lunch (morning coffee and light snacks will be provided)
- Laptop or notepaper and pens

**COST:** Early-bird special by April 2: Calif. Writers Club Members \$60, Non-members \$80  
Late registration – Calif. Writers Club Members \$70, Non-members \$90

Space is  
limited –  
sign up now!

✂ -----

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Before 4/2/13: \_\_\_\$60 CWC Member \_\_\_\$80 Non-Member

After 4/2/13: \_\_\_\$70 CWC Member \_\_\_\$90 Non-Member

Make checks payable to "CCW Branch of CWC"

Mail to: Central Coast Writers, P.O. Box 997 Pacific Grove, CA 93950



## MEMBER PROFILE

# Lilian Surkova

by Michelle Smith

A linguist by training, Lilian Surkova admits to a love-hate relationship with words.

"Languages, words, sentences are my companions," says Lilian, a CCW member since early 2012. "Words become your currency and your treasure at the same time. . . . What I know for sure [is that they] don't appear on their own on the white sheet of paper, they don't grow on trees."

An assistant professor of Russian at the Defense Language Institute, Lilian holds a dual major in Spanish and English from the University of Foreign Languages in Irkutsk, Russia. But it was at age 10 that she wrote her first opus. "I picked up a pen and felt an urge to write, some kind of itch in the tips of my fingers," Lilian says of her fascination back then with writing instruments.

Lilian's favorite authors include Charles Dickens, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Jules Verne and Jack London. Early in her writing career, however, she was at a loss when it came to claiming a genre, until a murder mystery "poured" out of her.

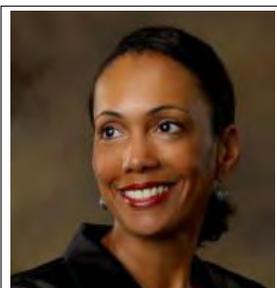
Lilian's characters sometimes place her in situations from which she knows no escape. "I walk around for a few days almost afraid to continue, because I simply don't know where and how to proceed," she says. "Then I calm down, listen to the sounds of my novel, and words appear. It's magic." Though not fond of preparing outlines, Lilian recommends that writers begin projects by defining their goals. "I start writing, and my characters start living . . . independently of me," she says. "The rest is a mystery."

Writing mostly on weekends and in the evenings, Lilian shares writing space with her feline "co-writer," Don Pepas. But when she's in need of human interaction "other than [from] my characters who drive me insane with too much noise in my head," she packs up her computer and heads to the nearest coffee shop with Wi-Fi. During a two week vacation in Costa Rica where her goal was to finish her first novel, Lilian availed herself of an idyllic setting: "Get up at 7 am, have your morning run along the beach, shower, breakfast, then a luxurious day of writing. Loved every moment of it."

Lately, Lilian has been earning a small income as a self-publisher. "Having been a part of Silicon Valley, I found the convincing statistics of books going hi-tech very true," she says, reflecting upon a presentation by Smashwords.com founder and CCW featured speaker, Mark Coker. "I designed my own cover, formatted the book the way the site wanted it, and I published it with createspace.com. . . . Now my book

is available on Amazon and all major sites through the Smashwords.com distribution."

Lilian's blog is <http://liliansurkova.blogspot.com>.



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

## CONTESTS

By Diana Paul

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

### 1) "Love on the Road 2013"

**Deadline:** March 31

**Entry Fee:** \$10

**Website:** [www.loveontheroad2013.com](http://www.loveontheroad2013.com)

An anthology of stories about making connections, from heartfelt ones ending in weddings, to less high-minded ones ending in beds (or wherever). Half the stories will be about travelers meeting people far from home, and the other half about people meeting travelers passing through (maximum 5000 words).

The 12 best stories will be sent to our panel of judges, which includes writers and literary agents.

### 2) Prairie Schooner Book Prize

**Deadline:** March 15, 2013

**Entry Fee:** \$25

**Website:** <http://prairieschooner.unl.edu>

**E-mail address:** [prairieschooner@unl.edu](mailto:prairieschooner@unl.edu)

Two prizes of \$3,000 each and publication by University of Nebraska Press are given annually for collections of poetry and short fiction. Submit a manuscript of at least 50 pages of poetry or 150 pages of fiction with a \$25 entry fee by March 15. Send an SASE, call, e-mail, or visit the website for complete guidelines.

University of Nebraska Press, Prairie Schooner Book Prizes, 123 Andrews Hall, P.O. Box 880334, Lincoln, NE 68588-0334. (800) 715-2387. Marianne Kunkel, Managing Editor.

### 3) Bellingham Review Literary Awards

**Deadline:** March 15, 2013

**Entry Fee:** \$18

**Website:** <http://www.bhreview.org>

Three prizes of \$1,000 each and publication in *Bellingham Review* are given annually for works of poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. The 49th Parallel Poetry Award is given for a poem or group of poems of any style or length; Kevin Clark will judge. The Tobias Wolff Award for Fiction is given for a short story; Marjorie Sander will judge. The Annie Dillard Award for Creative Nonfiction is given for an essay; Dinah Lenney will judge. Submit up to three poems or a story or essay of up to 6,000 words with an \$18 entry fee (\$10 for each additional entry), which includes a subscription to *Bellingham Review*, by March 15. *Bellingham Review*, Literary Awards, Cashier's Office, Mail Stop 9004-Old Main 245, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA 98225-9004. Tyler Koshakow, Managing Editor.

## WORKSHOPS

By Diana Paul

**1) Left Coast Crime Convention, March 21-24, 2013**, Colorado Springs. \$255.

Come hear the experts in mystery, crime, and thriller fiction. Attend multi-track panels on subjects from forensics to historical mysteries.

Website: [www.leftcoastcrime.org](http://www.leftcoastcrime.org)

**2) Big Sur Screenwriting Workshop, April 12-14, 2013**, Lodge at Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park,

See [www.bigsurscreenwriting.com](http://www.bigsurscreenwriting.com) for details and list of faculty speakers and screenwriters. Registration fee: \$50. Deadline: March 1, 2013

**3) ASW 2013: Writing Retreat and Literary Festival, June 16 - June 21**, Aspen.

Aspen Writers' Foundation

Website: [www.aspenwriters.org](http://www.aspenwriters.org)

Registration: January 1 - March 31, 2013

**4) Writing for Life Workshops**

Don't miss three great multiday workshops for writers in the South Bay area this summer and fall! Registration is now open and early bird rates are available. Space is limited, so register early.

a) "Next Level Fiction" with best-selling novelist and writing James Scott Bell (**June 28-30th**)

b) "Prose in Motion: Crafting Fiction for Commercial Success" with international best-selling novelist Davis Bunn (**September 13-14th**)

c) "Advanced Story Mastery" with Michael Hauge, Hollywood screenwriting consultant (**October 19-20th**)

These three workshops all take place in Newark, California, at the Courtyard Marriott Silicon Valley.

Website: [www.writingforlifeworkshops.com](http://www.writingforlifeworkshops.com)

**5) Workshops at CSUMB**

a) **July 1-14** "The Triple-Threat Writer: TV, Play, Screenplay," with guest artists film, television, and theater.

b) During the weeks of **July 15-28**, we offer a workshop in memoir writing and another in writing fantasy for children and teens (Bruce Coville is one of the guest artists for this workshop).

Each guest artist will do an evening lecture or reading that is open to the public.

Website: [csusummerarts.org](http://csusummerarts.org)



## *The Last Word*

Leslie Patiño, *Scribbles* Editor

## What I Did on My Valentine's Vacation

On February fourteenth, I kissed my husband good bye and headed north to the San Francisco Writers Conference along with Cheri Love, Harold Grice and several hundred other writers. I totally recommend the experience. During four days, we heard from over twenty agents and some fabulous keynote speakers like R.L Stein, author of the *Goosebumps* series and Bella André, one of the hottest e-authors today, who has sold over 1.8 million e-books.

There was a First Page-a-thon in which a panel of agents critiqued audience work and a Pitch-a-thon where attendees practiced pitching their work and received advice from agents. The Conference culminated with Speed Dating with the Agents on Sunday, where participants got to pitch their projects to agents. (Three asked to see more of my novel.)

The hardest part was choosing between all the offerings. There were presentations for people writing novels, romance, science fiction, descriptive and narrative non-fiction, YA, and children's books, screenplays, you name it. Other presenters focused on agent searches, query letters and pitches.

A major interest centered around the rapidly evolving industry due to technology. Platform (a base of fans and readers), as we hear all the time, is becoming more and more important. Plenty of presenters addressed how they have built their platforms and how others could do the same.

Held at the Mark Hopkins Hotel, SFWC comes with a price tag (\$675), but it's an incredible experience. Registration includes 4 meals, a wine and snack reception and terrific opportunities to network and meet new people.

### CENTRAL COAST WRITERS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: Cheri Love

Vice President: Janet Tezak

Secretary: Vanessa Smith

Treasurer: Patricia Covert

Programs Chair: Dorothy Vriend

Workshops: Judi Marquart and Joyce Krieg

Membership: Patricia Hamilton

Publicity: Laurrie Sheehan

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## ***Some of the Raffle Prizes for March 19***

- *The Secret Life of Words*, by Prof. Anne Curzan
- *How to Read and Understand Poetry*, by Prof. Willard Spiegelman
- *The Art of Fiction*, a *Writer Magazine* article
- *Self-Publishing Successful Tips*, a *Writer Magazine* article
- *Harmonica Playing Made Easy*, by Mississippi Harmonica and Book

