



Scribbles

California Writers Club - Central Coast Writers Branch

www.centralcoastwriters.org

March 2014

March 18: Screenwriter David Congalton's 25-year Odyssey



By Dorothy Vriend

At our CCW March meeting, author and screenwriter David Congalton takes us behind the scenes of his soon-to-be-released movie comedy, *Authors Anonymous*, about a dysfunctional writing group. The feature film, starring Kaley Cuoco and Chris Klein, hits theaters in April. David plans to discuss his 25-year odyssey of chasing a dream and having it finally come true. He also draws on his experience as a freelance writer, radio talk show host, newspaper columnist and writers' conference director.

Get ready to Gather at Good Old Days

By Laurie Sheehan

On Saturday and Sunday, April 5th and 6th, Pacific Grove will host its 57th Good Old Days Celebration. The small town shows off its giant spirit at this annual event, which includes the county's largest arts and crafts show. Booths will line the streets of downtown Pacific Grove. Local artists shine at this affair, and Central Coast Writers (CCW) will have a booth! Published authors are invited to sign up for a time slot and sell books. All members are welcome to man the booth and extol the virtues of membership in our fantastic organization!

CCW will also be making a splash as we participate in the Saturday morning parade. Join us in a show of numbers as we walk with our "writerly" props—a pad and pen, a marked-up manuscript, an old-fashioned newspaper reporter visor, a quill and scroll, an iPad, a CCW t-shirt, a little red wagon full of books or whatever creative idea you can think up!

Contact Laurie Sheehan (erudite@mac.com) to sign up for booth time, Judy Marquart (624-0110) or Leslie Patiño (lnpatino@comcast.net) to volunteer for the parade. More details to follow at the March CCW meeting and via email.

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2013 Good Old Days



The President's Message

By Janet Tezak

To Journal or Not to Journal

The poet Mary Oliver writes every morning or nearly every morning while "standing outside my door, with my notebook open" and on this particular day:

...a wren in the privet began to sing.
He was positively drenched in enthusiasm,
I don't know why. And yet, why not.
I wouldn't persuade you from whatever you believe
Or whatever you don't. That's your business.
But I thought, of the wren's singing, what could this be
If it isn't a prayer?
So I just listened, my pen in the air.

Writers are advised to write every day no matter how they feel. I have tried this, and, sometimes, it is true: after a while, I might have a *pen in the air* moment. But I have also written a lot of dribble. Lately, I have heard of several ideas for journals. One is called a *gratitude journal* in which one writes down thoughts of gratitude every morning upon arising, and every evening before retiring, listing four or five things that happened that day for which one is grateful. A second idea comes from Father Richard Rohr, a Franciscan priest, founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and author of over twenty books. He recently wrote a book called *Falling Upwards* accompanied by *A Companion Journal* in which he would include a quote at the top of each page that the writer would then comment on, such as the following: "Think about your childhood faith. What do you remember believing? What was important to you? How has your childhood faith changed?" I was thinking of a spinoff idea in which a person could come up with his or her own quotes from poetry, books, or even newspapers. A third idea is to keep a *dream journal*. Some think that dreams might be a conduit to creativity and, surprisingly, keeping a pen and paper by one's bedside is all the suggestion that the subconscious mind needs to remember one's dreams.

Where am I with all these thoughts of journals? In a comedy sketch, Jack Benny, the famous "cheapskate" comedian, was asked, "Your money or your life." He replied, "I'm thinking, I'm thinking."

Writers' Open Mike Is Back (Maybe)!

Renovations to the East Village Coffee Lounge, 498 Washington Street, Monterey, are supposed to be completed in time for the March 11, 5-7 pm Open Mike. **Check with Pat Hanson or East Village a few days prior to March 11 to confirm.**

Come hear our featured reader, Aimee Suzara. In Aimee's newly released novel, *Souvenir*, a Filipino-American woman encounters narratives of her history from the "living exhibits" of Filipinos in the 1904 World's Fair to the migration of her family across seas and continents to the Wild West.

As before the renovations, Open Mike will be held the second Tuesday of each month. For more information contact Pat Hanson at phanson@csumb.edu or (831) 601-9195.

NoViolet Bulawayo's Novel: A Response to Political Turmoil



By Dorothy Vriend

The sight of a child sitting atop her family's bulldozed home in Zimbabwe; the reported discovery of the body of a disappeared man; the Facebook image of a countryman on his knees engulfed in flame: these are the kind of haunting images behind NoViolet Bulawayo's first novel, *We Need New Names*.

At the February 18th CCW meeting, Bulawayo told us that her work was response to the politically charged atmosphere in President Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe in the first decade of this century. Mugabe came to power as a freedom fighter in 1979, and remains the country's only leader since independence from Britain. He presided over an economic boon that later crumbled over forced land reforms and political violence that left the country broken.

Bulawayo's tale comes to us through the voice of a child growing up amidst the chaos. A Wallace Stegner Fellow at Stanford, Bulawayo explained how the main character of Darling came to replace the elderly "Mother of Bones" once the novel was already well underway.

Taking a break from the writing, a girl in the band of children at the margins of the story, suddenly demanded the leading role. Opening herself up to the idea of switching protagonists, Bulawayo retold the story from the point of view of innocence, rather than experience. She chose a first person narrative because she understood it as one of her strengths, having come to writing through first person.

With the child Darling as protagonist, Bulawayo found she was having fun writing and she wanted to transfer that to the reader. "I believe in reading for pleasure," she said. She created a band of children as a place for Darling to escape to, where in spite of the things she had to endure, the child in her could come out.

Bulawayo doesn't work in a linear fashion. She writes as the inspiration comes to her and then cobbles the narrative together. "You encounter images over time that come to you at the right moment," she said.

She first learned story telling through her ancestors' oral tradition, before she could read or write. Writing in English was a choice she had to make—as a child in Zimbabwe, English was a language you left at school, she said. Bulawayo, 32, now plans to divide her time between Africa and the United States.



Davyd Morris gives the five-minute reading



NoViolet Bulawayo speaks to CCW



Rub-a-dub-dub, four writers in a tub!

From left: Margie Yee Webb, Sacramento branch, state vice-president; Lisa Hahn, Inland Empire branch; our own Joyce Krieg (also the state secretary) and California Writers Club President David George, who comes from the Mt. Diablo branch.

Fun-and-Games at "The State"

By Joyce Krieg, State Central Board Representative

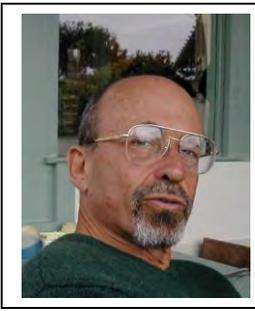
OK, it really *wasn't* all fun-and-games at the California Writers Club Central Board meeting up in Oakland on January 26! As your Central Board representative for CCW, I can assure you our semi-annual board meetings are strictly business. We are, after all, a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit corporation, so our meetings are seven hours of budgets, committee reports, IRS issues and gavel-banging, all conducted with dignity and decorum under *Roberts Rules of Order*.

One major accomplishment at the meeting was the decision to bring back the *CWC Bulletin*, an 8-page newsletter, sent via USPS to every member. The publication has been on hiatus since 2010 for various reasons, most of them financial. I am very happy to report *The Bulletin* will be coming back – very happy, because I was the editor, and will be once again! Watch for *The Bulletin* to hit your mailbox toward the end of April.

Other than that, we spent a good deal of time going over a contract for our new webmaster, hearing a report from our insurance people on liability issues when members use their personal automobiles for club business, and getting updated on the *CWC Literary Review*, the Friends of Joaquin Miller Park, and Publishing Pathways, among many other issues.

So . . . about that picture in the bathtub. Our new state president, David George, thought it would be wonderful to host a wine-and-hors d'oeuvre reception the evening before the board meeting. For some reason, we couldn't use the hotel's meeting rooms and ended up in a suite . . . a suite that just happened to have a Jacuzzi tub right out there in public. The "photo op" proved to be too tempting to pass up!





*A Modest Proposal**

By David L. Book

*With apologies to Jonathan Swift (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Modest_Proposal)

Though much of the scientific opposition to the Moon–Mars project appears to be principled, I believe that a moment's consideration will reveal that it is solely a matter of money. Few if any scientists would oppose manned exploration of space if we could be sure that NASA's future budgets will suffice to pay for it without degrading research and eliminating *unmanned* exploration. Sending humans to Mars and bringing them back safely, however, may well cost hundreds of billions of dollars. There are already signs that such expenditures could result in the curtailment of unmanned space missions.

But there is a way for humans to explore Mars without incurring this gigantic expense.

The amount of fuel needed to send a manned probe to Mars and land there is actually *less* than was used under the Apollo program to send a spacecraft to the Moon, land a lunar module on the surface, lift it off and reunite it with the command module, and return to earth. This seems paradoxical, but the saving results from an important change in the definition of the mission: the Mars explorers would not be coming back.

There would be no need to transport fuel all the way to Mars to power the return flight because there would be no return flight. Eliminating it would also allow other savings. For example, the designers of the spacecraft could skimp on radiation protection or perhaps even dispense with it entirely. Food and drinking water would need to be provided only for the journey to Mars and the time required to complete the scientific tasks of the mission. In fact, all the costs of the mission would be a fraction of those presently contemplated. When these savings are accounted for it is possible that the whole program might cost less than the Apollo program did a third of a century ago.

Of course, the Mars astronauts would have to be volunteers, but that might not be as big a problem as it seems. For almost any cause people can be found who are willing to die. (We need look no farther than the Middle East for proof of that.) There are enthusiasts out there – intelligent, educated, apparently rational individuals – who say they are ready to make the journey, knowing that they will never leave Mars. I've met some, and they seem sincere. Of course, they would still need to have the right technical background and training, and this might winnow out most of the candidates. It is my belief, however, that there are enough qualified volunteers to man all missions of extraterrestrial exploration likely to be launched.

As an added benefit, a serendipitous side-effect as it were, the list of qualified volunteers might conceivably include all the individuals who are most stridently vocal in favor of manned spaceflight and are pushing hardest to promote it.

David Book, who received his BA from Yale and PhD from Princeton, both in physics, is retired from a career in research and teaching. His NRL Plasma Formulary has gone through nine editions with over 60,000 copies printed.

MEMBER PROFILE

By Michelle Smith

Just Do It Don Dugdale



At the end of his high school junior year, Don Dugdale's English teacher wrote a prophetic message in his yearbook: "Best of luck to a writer."

"You might say my life's course was pretty well set at that point," Don says. "Just before starting my sophomore year in college, I changed majors from engineering to journalism."

A former Air Force captain, Don earned a B.A. in journalism from San Jose State College (now SJSU) where he cut his "writing teeth" at the *Spartan Daily*. One year later he obtained an M.A. in communication from Stanford University.

During the 1970's, Don wrote news stories for daily newspapers, including the *Salinas Californian* for which he also wrote editorials. He subsequently wrote and edited for technical periodicals that covered the computer and electronics industry in Silicon Valley. But after twenty years of technical writing, Don returned to the dailies as a page producer, performing page layout and copy editing for *Star-News* in Wilmington, North Carolina.

Now retired, Don has been writing historical fiction for the last six years in his home office located in the center of the house he shares with his wife, Stephanie, also retired. He prefers to write in the mornings but has been known to pen major sections of his book in the middle of a sleepless night.

In April of last year, Don self-published a novel titled *We May Choose* that spans 1850 to 1900 and focuses on the lives and families of immigrants to the Santa Clara Valley. Currently working on a sequel, Don, who is grateful for the input he's received from fellow writers, spends much of his time marketing his novels.

"I want to thank everybody in CCW who has supported my book and especially those who have offered feedback and criticism of my writing," Don says. "I have a lot to learn as a fiction writer and really appreciate those who help me improve."

Like the ad slogan for a well-known athletic company, Don says the best way to excel at writing is "Just do it—as much as possible and as often as possible. Then seek out and listen to criticism."

More information about Don's novel can be found at www.wemaychoose.com. He also maintains a website on California history at www.californiahistorysource.com.



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



An Adventure in Self-Publishing

By D. S. Kane (David Spiselman)

I've been repped by a lit agent for three years, but she's been unable to sell my technothrillers to a trade publisher. Reason? There isn't enough difference between what I write and what my established competitors write, and the pubs have already spent great wads of cash on establishing them. Why build another competitor?

My choices? Give up or DIY. So, I'm off on the road to self-pubbing my first three books in the series this year, *Bloodridge* on June 15, *DeathByte* on July 15, and *Swiftshadow* on August 15. I'll get them out for Kindle, Nook and CreateSpace.

First step was to create a schedule and a budget. I crafted an Excel spreadsheet for these, and for those of you who know how to use Excel, you can download it from my website (<http://dskane.com>). The spreadsheet gave me a budget of \$24,000 for the three books in all three formats. Ouch, but that's what it will take to do this well. The other side of the equation is how much revenue I can generate, and the answer is, I'll be out of pocket by about \$15,000. This, I can barely afford.

When I started to operate the plan, on January 1, I estimated copyediting to be \$1,000 per book, and, that's exactly what it's taking. I estimated cover design at \$1,000 per book, and haven't yet decided which designer to select, but the quotes go from \$250 to \$1,200 per book for both ebook and CreateSpace soft cover graphics. I've estimated publicity to cost about \$6,000 per book and the bids I've received range from \$400 a month for nine months, to a total of \$38,000 (for a total web site redesign at \$8,000, plus learning social media for selling books for \$3,000, plus \$3,000 per month for nine months for the social media work I'd otherwise have to learn and then do). What I'm leaning toward for publicity is redoing the website, taking the social media coursework, and using a publicist who estimated their charges at \$1,000 per month, for a total of \$20,000. The grand total of my revised budget will be \$26,000. So far, I'm good to go.

But, I'm now about two weeks behind schedule after six weeks of work. Where can I catch this up? I'll have to make the June 15 target date to have my books available as summer reads. Right now, this is my first problem and I'm sure there will be more.

While he worked as a management consultant focused in global banking and economics, David Spiselman also worked for a decade for an intelligence service of the U. S. government, using his real life as his cover. He now writes technothrillers under the name D. S. Kane.

Book Publishing 1-2-3

Monday, March 10, 5:30-6:30
Bookworks, 667 Lighthouse Avenue, Pacific Grove
Cost: \$15.00, no pre-registration needed

Come hear longtime professional editor and CCW member Laurie Gibson about publishing options in today's dynamic book business. For more information, contact Laurie at (831) 646-4507 or wordworker1@earthlink.net

THE POETRY CORNER

By Nancy Jacobs

Paris Salon: Social Butterfly

Gertrude Stein



In her own words: Picasso painted a portrait of Gertrude Stein and the portrait to most people appears to be somewhat gloomy but Gertrude said: "I was and still am satisfied with my portrait, for me it is I, and it is the only reproduction of me which is always I, for me."

One of the more interesting characters, Gertrude Stein lived from 1874 to 1946. Strong willed and self confident, Gertrude described herself as the most important literary thinker of that era in her *Geographical History of America*, circa 1935. She was a literary experimentalist...often experimenting with form and language, stunning people with the new and unexpected ways that she was communicating.

She often stated that Paris was her home town even though she was born in Allegheny, Pennsylvania. Her Paris address at 27 Rue de Fleurus became "the address to be at" for an assortment of talented and bright artists, writers and intellectuals. Gertrude herself fit in the super-talented category. She was an intellectual who believed in simple common sense and yet experimented with language. She was a fearless woman. Gertrude called all her friends at the salon the "lost generation." On her walls hung paintings by some of her closest friends, Picasso, Henri Matisse and André Derain.

She was the driving force for many of these artists, pushing them to do better, supporting their experiments with warm companionship, a cup of tea and a warm room. Many famous writers hung out at the salon including Ezra Pound, Thornton Wilder and Ernest Hemingway.

Gertrude's most popular work is a book of poetry called *Tender Buttons* published in 1914. The book is organized by Objects, Food and Rooms. Gertrude's lifelong companion was known as Alice B. Toklas, and they lived through both World Wars. Those times were horrifying but she faced them with great courage. Gertrude Stein died shortly after WWII ended in 1946.

Excerpt from Stein's "If I Told Him, A Completed Portrait of Picasso"

If I told him would he like it. Would he like it if I told him.
Would he like it would Napoleon would Napoleon would would he like it.
If Napoleon if I told him if I told him if Napoleon. Would he like it if I told him if I told him if Napoleon. Would he like it if
Napoleon if
Napoleon if I told him. If I told him if Napoleon if Napoleon if I told him. If I told him would he like it would he like it if I told
him.
Now.
Not now.
And now.
Now.
Exactly as as kings.
Feeling full for it.
Exactitude as kings.
So to beseech you as full as for it.
Exactly or as kings.
Shutters shut and open so do queens. Shutters shut and shutters and so shutters shut and shutters and so and so shutters

Read the entire poem at: <http://www.english.upenn.edu/~jenglish/Courses/Spring02/104/steinpicasso.html>

CONTESTS AND WORKSHOPS

By Diana Paul



CONTESTS

1) SF/Peninsula Branch of California Writers Short Story contest

Fee: \$15

Deadline: August 1, 2014

Website: <http://cwc-peninsula.submittable.com/submit> . (Scroll down to the Contest category.)

2) CA Writers Club, Sacramento Branch 1st Short, Short Story Writing Contest

Fee: \$10

Deadline: March 31, 2014

Website:

<http://www.cwcsacramentowriters.org/2014/01/19/cwc-sacramento-2014-short-short-story-writing-contest/>

3) Women's National Book Association, San Francisco Chapter's 11th Annual Pitch-O-Rama Contest

Fee: \$65 WNBA member, \$75, nonmembers

Date: Saturday, March 29, 8:00 am -12:30 pm

Location: Women's Building, 3543 18th Street, San Francisco, 94110

Website: www.wnba-sfchapter.org

WORKSHOPS/CONFERENCES

1) Redwood Writers "From Pen to Published"

Date: April 26, 2014 8:00 am-5:30 pm

Location: Bertolini Student Center at Santa Rosa Junior College, Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa

Early bird deadline: March 15 (\$30 savings)

Cost (after March 15): \$155 for California Writers Club (CWC) \$185 for nonmembers

Website: <http://redwoodwriters.org/registration-from-pen-to-published/>

2) "World Enough & Time: On Creativity and Slowing Down," Christian McEwen, facilitator

Date: April 6-10, 2014

Location: Big Sur Lodge, 47225 Highway One Big Sur, CA 93920.

Website: <http://slowworkshop.wordpress.com/register>

See website for fees and further information.

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

IF THE SHOE FITS . . .

By Jonathan Shoemaker

More Than Meets the Eye



Why did you join this chapter of California Writers Club? Are you coming to learn from the speakers and to take advantage of the services provided by fellow members? There are CCW members who give workshops on a regular basis. Have you attended these and other workshops that our club provides? We are here to support you. Skim through *Scribbles* and count the names of those who dedicate their time to keep us afloat. And there are a few more behind the scenes who contribute generously. You, too, might find it beneficial and exhilarating to become more active in club activities.

If you are not more active in club functions because you spend every spare moment in your busy life writing your own masterpiece, good! We are here to support you. Several of our members professionally proofread, critique and publish members' work. We are lucky to have people like Patricia Hamilton, Laurie Gibson (see ad on page 7), Pat Hanson, Michelle Smith and David Rasch. Ask them about their special skills.

Some of our poets attend the Pacific Grove Pretty Good Poetry Group (PGPGPG) where they read their work simply to share and enjoy. It keeps the ink flowing because they feel the need to write every month in anticipation of the next meeting.

The PGPGPG meets at the Sally Griffin Center, 700 Jewel Avenue on the fourth Thursday of each month, 2:00 - 3:30. They have five poems to bring: three topics chosen by the group and one free choice topic, all their own work, -- plus one poem written by someone else. This is neither a class nor a critique group. Appreciative comments are often made but attempting to teach or

critique is prohibited. They gather to share poems among friends.

When the California Writers Club was founded in 1909 in the Bay Area, they got together and shared in their common passion. Most of them became revered by the reading public. Names like Jack London, George Sterling, Herman Whitaker, John Muir and Joaquin Miller may be remembered for centuries. We have chosen to follow their example. The greatest blessing I have experienced in getting together with my literary friends has been from small group sessions, critiquing, discussing and just sharing ideas.

We have two genre critique groups from 9:30 till "11ish" at Juice and Java in P G, open to all who wish to come; poetry meets the Saturday before the monthly CCW meeting and prose the Saturday after. They are quite exciting, stimulating and beneficial. There are also small private groups who meet to share and critique. They might be open to accept new members. Seek them out.

Read *Scribbles*. Enter the contests that are advertised there. You may win money—and be published. Contribute to "As the Pen Flows". If I can write one per month, you could surely do it once a year. Read at the "Open Mike". It's fun! Join someone in a commute to a conference.

Join, attend, support, participate, share, help, commiserate, motivate . . . whatever!

Be well, partake, enjoy, 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

What Would Steinbeck Say?



February was a busy, crazy month chock full of opportunities to grow and learn about writing. Now I'm assembling the March *Scribbles* and wondering what old John Steinbeck would say about the novel-writing world in 2014 America.

Two weekends ago, I took part in an online *Writer's Digest* boot camp. We listened to a lecture on Friday, submitted our rewritten first ten pages on Saturday, had a three-hour chat on Sunday and rewrote the ten pages again. Before the chat was over, one virtual classmate had started a Scene One private Facebook group. I joined and posted that I was going to San Francisco Writers Conference. All of a sudden, Inder in Houston and I were exchanging phone numbers.

Five days and a couple of texts later, my new best writing friend and I found each other in the very crowded lobby of the Mark Hopkins. The SFWC speakers confirmed everything we hear these days. An online presence for aspiring writers is more important than ever; indie publishing (the latest term for self-publishing) is growing, growing, growing; and of all the social media sites, they were swearing by Twitter as #1 these days. I'm not so sure about tweeting a minimum of four times a day. Do you really want to read that I rewrote those first ten pages for the three hundredth time? I did chat with David Spiselman and felt humbled. (See his piece in this issue.)

My favorite February activity was a Donald Maass workshop yesterday in Sunnyvale. I'd heard great things about the man and his advice, but it was Joyce Krieg's praise in particular that got me to finally read Maass's *The Fire in Fiction* and then attend the workshop. The man is amazing, not to mention extremely intelligent. In the end, his solid advice boils down to how to write a page-turner. I could so picture Maass and Steinbeck slinging back a few cold ones and having a brilliant conversation I'd love to observe.

During a break in the workshop, I checked email and found a message from a very excited friend in Monterrey, Mexico. On Friday, she sealed a deal with a Penguin Random House to publish her novel. On Tuesday, she flies to Mexico City to sign the contract, no agent ever involved. She shakes her head at how complicated publication has become in the States. I think Steinbeck would agree. I sure do.

CENTRAL COAST WRITERS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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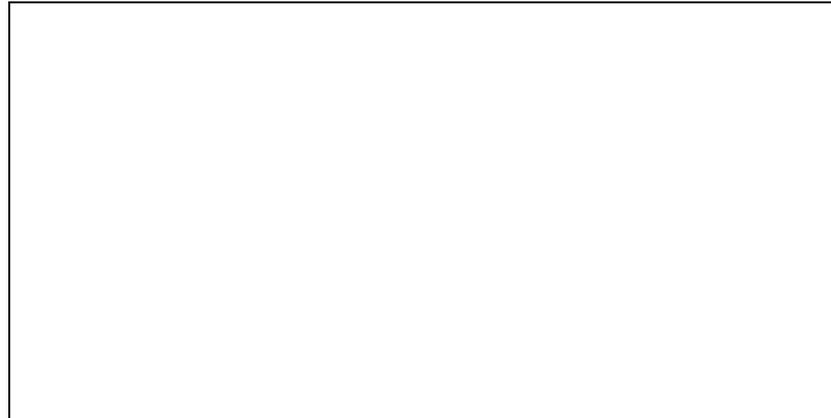
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Not a member of CCW?

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



David Congalton

March 18

5:30 pm - DINNER

6:30 pm - MEETING

Point Pinos Grill

79 Asilomar Boulevard

Pacific Grove

