



Scribbles

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



May 20: Jo Haraf and Timely Transitions— When Characters Turn To The Past

In her blog, "Life as an MFA Coed" (www.joharaf.com), Jo Haraf writes, "The transformation of a lifelong geek into a born-again fiction writer is a messy, but satisfying, endeavor."

After decades of publishing on business and technology, Haraf traded non-fiction for historical fiction. Her work-in-progress has her immersed in jazz and bathtub gin while she writes about the headline-making events in New York during the 1920s viewed through the lives of average folks whose names never made it to the newspapers.

At the May meeting Haraf will explore timely transitions. In fiction and non-fiction, characters revisit their pasts to explain their present. Through excerpts from novels, short stories and memoirs, we'll consider how authors go beyond white space and chapter breaks to craft engaging leaps through time in scene and backstory.



CCW regrets the passing of one of our early and faithful members, Josephine "Jo" Kale, who passed away March 14, 2014. Her obituary in the Carmel Pine Cone can be found at:
http://www.recordnet.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20140328/A_NEWS21/3032899_96/-1/OPED03.

May-June Scribbles Submissions

For all submissions, announcements, notices, etc. for *Scribbles* during May 6-June 17, contact Laura Emerson (noturavg@sbcglobal.net). To find out why, see "The Last Word" on page 11.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Announcements	1,2,5
As the Pen Flows	6
Contests and Workshops	9
"If the Shoe Fits"	10
April Meeting	3
Member Profile	7
Janet's View	2
Parade Events	4, 5
The Last Word	11
The Poetry Corner	8



Janet's View

By CCW President Janet Tezak

Being a Part of Something Bigger Than Yourself

On April 5, 2014, a bright and sunny Saturday morning, Central Coast Writers (CCW) was a part of the Pacific Grove Good Old Days parade. CCW also sponsored a booth for the entire weekend where various members took turns selling their books and sharing information about CCW with the community. When being a part of Good Old Days was first proposed in our Executive Committee, I was afraid it would be a tremendous amount of work. It was indeed a lot of work, but several of our members really stepped up to the plate, and the rest of us contributed as best we could. The effort was truly remarkable, both on an individual level for me and for the promotion of the club as a whole.

Those of us who were riding or walking in the parade were told to be at the corner of Pine and Alder by 9:15 a.m. I had to deliver some informational postcards to the booth, and so I got there at around 8:30 a.m. Laurie Sheehan, our vice president and publicity chair, with the help of some of our board members, already had the booth up and running, festooned with madras scarves, flowers, CCW informational pamphlets and the books of the members who were working the first shift.

At the parade, I had the fun privilege of riding in our vice president's two-seater. Laurie has named her 1992 hand-built Mazda Miata "Sofia," and it did indeed feel like the cherry red convertible had a life of its own. All I had to do was sit back literally and figuratively and enjoy the ride. When the parade was ready to start, Cheri Love, our secretary, who also owns a shiny silver Honda S2000 convertible, lined up next to Laurie and me. In front of us were our walkers, and in front of them a jazz band. Our walkers carried banners that Joyce Krieg, CCW's representative on the State Central Board, had the vision to create. She culled the sayings from many writing mottos, such as "Be careful or you will end up in my novel," and "I love the smell of ink in the morning." My job was to wave at the hundreds and hundreds of onlookers—men, women, children, dogs—all waving and smiling back, some sitting on the curb, some on portable chairs, many standing, on both sides of Pine Street as far as I could see.

During the course of my time in the CCW booth located at 17th Street and Lighthouse Avenue, countless people stopped by to chat and pick up literature about the club. I discovered that there are many people who have either the kernel of an idea for a book, have one half written or one almost finished. I was also surprised at how many people did not know there is a writing group on the Peninsula.

I self-published my book, *Do I Dare?*, in 2007. When two strangers and a friend bought copies, I felt newly energized about writing. Maybe, I'll do something about my second work that's been more or less finished, but languishing in a drawer. Good Old Days was a great promotion for our club, a great way for our members to get acquainted with each other and a great way for our members to sell their books. Now, we're hoping to do an even better job next year!

Volunteer Opportunity

The Harden (Salinas) Middle School yearbook is off to the printer, leaving the yearbook class with little to do until school ends May 29. Teacher and long-time CCW member, Beth Roybal is 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 Beth as soon as possible. She love to have her students benefit from YOUR expertise!

Beth Roybal, beth.roybal@salinasuhd.org or beth.roybal@gmail.com, 831-236-1951 (cell phone) or 831-796-7300 (Harden Middle School)

Sci-Fi Writer Juliette Wade—on Building Your Story World

By Dorothy Vriend



Most cultures have shared values and rules of behavior that are constantly evolving. Within that culture co-existing sub-cultures overlap and compete with each other. As a writer, how do you create an imaginary world as complex as the one we know? This is the question science fiction and fantasy writer Juliette Wade focused on in her presentation to CCW in April.

Addressing her comments to writers of all genres, she suggested thinking of characters as ambassadors of their worlds. They make their world comprehensible to an outsider—the reader—through dialogue or other means. One of the best avenues the writer has to accomplish this is through the character's (or narrator's) judgment, Wade said.

She used Jane Austen's narrator in *Emma* as an example. "*The real evils, indeed, of Emma's situation were the power of having rather too much her own way, and a disposition to think a little too well of herself. . .*" Austen writes.

The use of adverbs of attitude such as *probably, likely, and unfortunately* help to express a character's judgment. The use of modal verbs such as *could, should, and would, does* the same, Wade said.

Metaphorical language can also express culture. Wade cited writer Dario Ciriello who has the following line in his unpublished travel memoir, *Aegean Dream*: "*This time, I was staring at a sudden, unanticipated off-ramp on the freeway of our frantic life.*" His word choice suggests the hectic California life-style where the narrator lives.

Wade also described how science fiction relates to the real world. "Science fiction is about discovery, exploration and coping with change," she said. "People's concerns are reflected metaphorically in the science fiction of their time."

Wade's stories have appeared in Analog, Clarkesworld magazine, and other publications. At her website, <http://talktoyouiverse.blogspot.com>, she blogs about language and culture and invites us to dive into the world of wordbuilding through her entertaining and informative video hangouts.



Susan Scott gives the April five-minute reading.



Juliette Wade talks about building your story world.

CCW's Good Old Days Photos

Courtesy of Dick Guthrie, Patricia Hamilton, Ken Jones and Mark McDonald





WE LOVE A PARADE!

By Joyce Kreig

We had so much fun at Good Old Days . . . and we've already got signs, t-shirts and a banner . . . so let's do it again!

Seriously, those of us who represented CCW in the Pacific Grove Good Old Days parade on Saturday, April 5 had such a fabulous time that we just cannot wait another year to do it again. So we're planning to march in the Monterey Fourth of July parade on – when else? – Friday, July 4! Once again, we'll be wearing our CCW t-shirts, carrying our beautiful orange, pink, yellow and black banner, and toting signs with witty sayings about writing and the literary life. Since this is a celebration of the American spirit, we'll also make signs showing our support, as writers, of freedom of the press.

The Monterey parade begins at 10 a.m., lasts around an hour, and runs in a loop—down Alvarado Street, around Franklin, and up Calle Principal—a distance of roughly six city blocks.

Lest you think this is just way too much walking for you, take it from those of us who marched down Pine Street at Good Old Days. The time simply flies by and you don't even notice the distance. There's magic in the air when the crowds on the sidewalk are cheering you on, applauding and waving. Of course, it didn't hurt that we were marching right behind the Monterey Jazz Festival youth band, who kept our feet tapping and our signs bobbing with their sprightly Dixieland beat.

If you need more incentive, keep in mind that there's a fabulous lawn party in front of Colton Hall immediately after the parade. Nothing's official yet, but don't be surprised if your writers club throws a picnic lunch or other special treat for those of you who participate in the parade.

We know that many of you will be out-of-town or have other commitments on Fourth of July weekend. But if you're going to be around anyway, why not plan to hang out with your writers club for a few hours? After all, how often are you able to post on Facebook or write in your holiday newsletter that you were in a parade?

Watch for details in the June issue of *Scribbles* and on www.centralcoastwriters.org.

Writers' Open Mike

On Tuesday, May 13, 6:00-8:00 p.m., join us for Writers' Open Mike at the newly renovated and revitalized East Village Coffee Lounge, 498 Washington Street, Monterey. Come early and order supper from their new kitchen! There's no featured reader in May, so there's lots of time to hear your own words applauded in this "no critique" setting.

Open Mike is a free monthly event open to the public every second Tuesday. Come early & sign up for a five to seven minute reading from any genre: prose, screenplay, poetry and essay that usually follows fifteen to twenty minutes from a featured local published reader. For more information or to sign up to be featured, contact Pat Hanson at phanson@csumb.edu or (831) 601-9195.



Gomers

By Larry Grouse

The Dean was a gentle, bearded man, a pipe-smoking neurologist. He was a far-seeing person, not given to anger. The failures, large and small, of his medical students were duly noted, but the Dean always saw past these failures to the future successes of his embryo physicians. The only time I ever saw the Dean angry was when he heard someone using the term “gomer.”

Many say that this term is an acronym for “Get out of my emergency room,” a phrase frequently yelled at gomers by emergency-room physicians. Gomer always had every possible complication, and treating them was terribly frustrating. They were the alcoholics, the addicts, and the senile, raging geriatrics. The term was ubiquitous among the students and house staff at the hospitals in our university system. The gomers themselves were down-and-outers.

On the pediatric service a few years later, I supervised the care of a four-year-old boy named Allan, dying of hepatic failure. The medical details aren’t relevant, but it would be difficult to imagine a more depressing case. Bleeding complications rather than hepatic coma threatened to become the terminal event, and the child was in pain.

I noticed that the house staff always became paradoxically whimsical as we discussed Allan’s case. They indulged in what I considered to be “medical fantasy,” that is, going off on tangents related to remote and horrendous complications that might occur. I knew that this behavior was not malicious. Individually, they were as upset about the illness and their inability to affect it as I was. It reminded me of the way we had talked about gomers during training and that disturbed me.

One particularly grim day we made rounds on Allan the morning after a serious hemorrhage. His parents had finally gone home to rest, and he was sitting alone on his hospital bed. As we were leaving the room he suddenly asked, “Will you read me for a few whiles?”

Our silence was deafening, and the looks of sheer panic on the faces of my colleagues surprised me. They immediately left for their day’s duties. I thought about our reaction to Allan’s question, and I suddenly realized that the inappropriate hilarity, the medical fantasy, and the talk of gomers among the house staff were defenses against the terrible fear of failure and death. I realized how I had also hidden behind the jesting, cynical demeanor and brusque, busy professionalism. It dawned on me that all those years of gomer talk simply revealed the callow inexperience and inhumanity in me and in my colleagues.

I sat down with Allan. I read to him *The Cat in the Hat*, followed by *The Golden Book of Dinosaurs* and was about a third of the way into *Selected Mother Goose* when my little patient fell asleep.

Larry works with the World Health Organization, the EU, and the US National Institutes of Health on improving global patient outcomes but is determined to finish his new novel before Christmas.

MEMBER PROFILE

By Michelle Smith

Looking for a Few Good Writers

Jack Erickson



Though recently retired (May 2011) from a career in wealth management, Jack Erickson is not about to roll over and settle down. After selling his home in Burlingame and giving away his automobiles, he's now spending summers in Europe, winters in Australia, and he mixes in visits with his grandchildren who live in Modesto and Tucson. In addition, Jack just received the paperback version of his first international thriller *Thirteen Days in Milan* that he plans to promote through book reviewers and in local book stores and libraries this June.

As a youngster growing up in North Dakota, Jack was inspired to write by reading magazines like *Life*, *Look*, *National Geographic* and *The Saturday Evening Post*. When the *Washington Star* published a book review he submitted in 1974, he was bitten by the writing bug.

"They paid me twenty-five dollars and asked me to write more reviews," Jack remembers. "I was stunned—you could get paid for writing? It changed my life."

Eventually, Jack earned an M.A. in Russian Studies from Georgetown University and went on to become a Capitol Hill press secretary and Senate speechwriter. He was an Air Force intelligence officer, a congressional staffer and a financial advisor in Palo Alto. Later, he submitted freelance articles to newspapers and magazines.

When his guest room is unoccupied, Jack spends at least two hours each day in his makeshift study, writing and moving his story along. He devotes an additional two hours to reading and research. His genres are international thrillers, mysteries, romantic suspense and short mysteries, and he's currently working on projects in them all.

One of Jack's goals is to publish a novel, novella or two short stories every year. He's tried his hand at digital publishing and likens the industry to a "tsunami sweeping over the publishing world." If he sticks to his philosophy of "read, read, read, write, write, write," he's sure to make significant progress toward his goals.

A CCW member since 2012, Jack is searching for a writing critique group and a "good book club." His website can be found at www.jackerickson.com. His books can be found at Barnes and Noble, Amazon and iBookstore.



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

THE POETRY CORNER

By Nancy Jacobs



The Versatile Poet

John Donne

1572-1631

As chaplain and dean of Saint Paul's Cathedral, John Donne became famous for his entertaining sermons. One of his best-known, and most-quoted, phrases is, "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main." This also describes Donne's self-image.

During his lifetime, he struggled with an unresolved fear of death which was made worse when his wife died at the age of thirty-three during childbirth.

He is considered to be a metaphysical poet. Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy concerned with the study of the nature of being and beings, existence, time and space, and causality.

Death and religion are prevailing themes in his work. He portrays stunning, and at times disturbing, imagery like "rags of time," "the round earth's imagin'd corners," "our eye beams twisted," and "did thread our eyes upon one double string."

Donne's writing is versatile and eloquent in any form, including songs, translations from Latin, elegies and even epigrams. It displays startling extended metaphors, unusual syntax, inventive wordplay, clever and often indirect argument.

This versatility caused Samuel Taylor Coleridge to write:

With Donne, whose muse on dromedary trots,
Wreath iron pokers into true love knots;
Rhyme's study cripple, fancy's maze and clue,
Wit's forge and fire-blast, meaning's press and screw.

Donne's poem, "Song," portrays many symbols of the 17th Century. This poem is 400 years old but sounds as fresh as if it were written today. It is essentially a playful joke about never trusting a woman.

"Song" *By John Donne*

Go and catch a falling star,
Get with child a mandrake root,
Tell me where all past years are,
Or who cleft the devil's foot,
Teach me to hear mermaids singing,
Or to keep off envy's stinging,
And find
What wind
Serves to advance an honest mind.

If thou be'st born to strange sights,
Things invisible to see,
Ride ten thousand days and nights,
Till age snow white hairs on thee,
Thou, when thou return'st, wilt tell me,
All strange wonders that befell thee,
And swear,
No where
Lives a woman true, and fair.

If thou find'st one, let me know,
Such a pilgrimage were sweet;
Yet do not, I would not go,
Though at next door we might meet;
Though she were true, when you met her,
And last, till you write your letter,
Yet she
Will be
False, ere I come, to two, or three.

CONTESTS AND WORKSHOPS

By Diana Paul



CONTESTS

1) Carve Magazine

Raymond Carver Short Story Contest

Deadline: May 15, 2014

Entry Fee: \$15

Website: <http://www.carvezine.com/raymond-carver-contest>

A prize of \$1,000 and publication in *Carve Magazine* is given annually for a short story. Submit a story of up to 6,000 words with a \$15 entry fee (\$17 for electronic submissions) by May 15. The Raymond Carver contest attracts stories from around the world and is known to award top prizes to virtual unknowns and never-been-published writers. Many prize winners often credit placing in this contest as the springboard for their career as a writer.

2) Ploughshares Emerging Writer's Contest

Deadline: May 15, 2014

Entry Fee: \$24

Website: <http://www.pshares.org>

Three prizes of \$1,000 each and publication in *Ploughshares* are given annually for a poem or group of poems, a short story and an essay. Writers who have not published a book or chapbook are eligible. Submit three to five poems or up to 6,000 words of prose with a \$24 entry fee (there is no entry fee for current subscribers), which includes a subscription to *Ploughshares*, by May 15.

3) 2014 Golden Quill Awards

Categories: Short Story/Memoir – 1,000 word maximum; Poetry – 40 line maximum

Deadline: June 30, 2014

Entry Fee: \$15 per entry, multiple entries allowed in both categories

Website: www.slouthernwriters.org

Contest email: nightwriterscontest@gmail.com

Prizes: \$750 – First Prize, \$400 – Second Prize, for each category, plus Honorable Mentions. All writers are welcomed. Entries must include the words “Déjà vu” and depict the theme.

WORKSHOPS

Title: “8 Ways to Make All That Craft Work For You—A (Former) Publisher Finds the Magic In Your Writing”

Event Date: May 31, 2014, Saturday

Location: Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose

8:30 a.m. (registration) to 4:00 p.m. Includes continental breakfast & lunch

Fee: \$57 for CWC members; \$67 for nonmembers (early bird special until May 17)

Website: www.southbaywriters.com

Author Charlotte Cook returns by popular demand following her successful November, 2013 presentation on building story arc. Cook will share her expertise on how to weave the elements of craft into a story. Writers will learn how to bring character, dialog, viewpoint, scene, tension, and conflict into their plot.

IF THE SHOE FITS . . .

By Jonathan Shoemaker

Heal Yourself through Writing

(the ghost of Easter past.)



Editor's note: Jonathan has been writing this column continuously since *Scribbles* began. The following is *Shoe #75*, printed in September 2009.

Kahlil Gibran said, "If the other person injures you, you may forget the injury; but if you injure him, you will always remember."

What do we give when we forgive? What do we get when we forget?

We forgive our father for not being there with us when he had to be working. As reflective adults, we understand. The resentment we felt as a child no longer blocks our clear view of the situation, and we can see beyond that. We are free to remember and cherish the times that we did spend together. We are free to understand from an adult viewpoint and perhaps forgive ourselves for not being there when *he* needed *us*, and we had other commitments.

Those of us who say the Lord's Prayer daily beg to be forgiven our trespasses, just as we forgive those who trespass against us. Oh, really?

Oh, yes! If we are giving to them and forget what they have done to us, it is a blessing to us. We are releasing the resentment that we were carrying. In this way, justice is served.

Justice is also served when we determinedly refuse to forget and forgive injury done to us. We are poisoned with our own anger and resentment. If we doggedly hold onto the pain of the incident, we cannot enjoy the happy existence of a totally peaceful life.

It is possible to control this in our conscious mind by realizing the harm we are doing to ourselves, and let it go. Release the anger and resentment, the chains that hold us fast to the hurt.

But this is only the first step. As Gibran implies, this is the easy part. It is more unlikely, or more difficult, for us to forgive ourselves the harm we have done to others. Or even the harm that others might have suffered due to careless or inadvertent behavior on our part: *If I had only*

warned her ... but it was none of my business ... she might not have... Every time we see her, we feel a bit uncomfortable (or subconsciously guilty?) We might not remember the cause of the feeling, but we don't let go of the discomfort resulting from our possible responsibility.

Guilt is stronger, more subtle, than resentment. As we need to forgive others, we need to recognize conscious or subconscious feelings of guilt and forgive ourselves. In the same way that we maturely consider the source of resentment and consciously forgive those who have harmed us, we can do the same with guilt.

As writers, we explore situations and possibilities. We analyze cause and effect. If we picture ourselves in real situations of conflict and responsibility with those who have harmed us or whom we have harmed and create a story about fictional characters in that situation, we can resolve the problem for the protagonists and ease their guilt or resentment. We can do this because we are one step removed from it and we are in control, with no fear of consequences.

If we can do this, we can heal ourselves as efficiently as we can through the services of a professional analyst. And we have the satisfaction of knowing that we did it ourselves. We may even resolve problems that we are not aware of through this exercise.

We do not write this with the idea of selling it. It's not for others – rather a private writing exercise. But if it does turn out to be the seed of something that would help thousands of others, why not finish it and share something that could change the world?

"Let him that would move the world first move himself." Socrates

*Be well,
and do good work,
Jonathan*

THE LAST WORD

Leslie Patiño



Substitute Editors

When teachers need to miss a day of school, they call the sub office. When CCW editors need to miss a month of editing ... there's no sub office to call.

Truth is, in over two decades in the classroom, I always tried to line up a trustworthy sub before I officially called in the absence. Likewise, I've lined up a great editor sub for the June *Scribbles*. **For all submissions, announcements, notices, etc. for *Scribbles* during May 6-June 17, contact Laura Emerson (noturavg@sbcglobal.net).**

Laura proudly states that she is a charter member of CCW. Following her recent retirement, she resumed attending monthly CCW meetings where she heard me announce that we needed someone to help with mailing the print copies of *Scribbles*; Laura offered her assistance. She told me she was part of the group that named *Scribbles* and that she served as its first official editor.

Little did I know the caliber of the writer who said, "I can do that!" If you've noticed the newsletter looking a little more streamlined and shorter in the last half year, much of it is due to the many emails and conversations I've shared with Laura and, then, the Executive Committee.

Meanwhile, several members suggested I write something about what I'll be doing while I'm MIA. On May 6, I'll begin a journey that involves two planes, three shuttles, and 490 miles on foot before the return flights home.

I'll be attempting to walk the Camino de Santiago in northern Spain and carrying everything I take for forty-three days in a fifteen-pound backpack. (Hence, the arrow sign on page 1.)

With an iPad and wifi when it's available, I'm aiming to keep up my weekly blog (www.lesliepatinoauthor.com/blog) and post something short every few days on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/leslie.patino.585> or do a FB search for Leslie Patiño).

So, ¡hasta el desfile del 4 de julio! (See you at the 4th of July parade!)

CENTRAL COAST WRITERS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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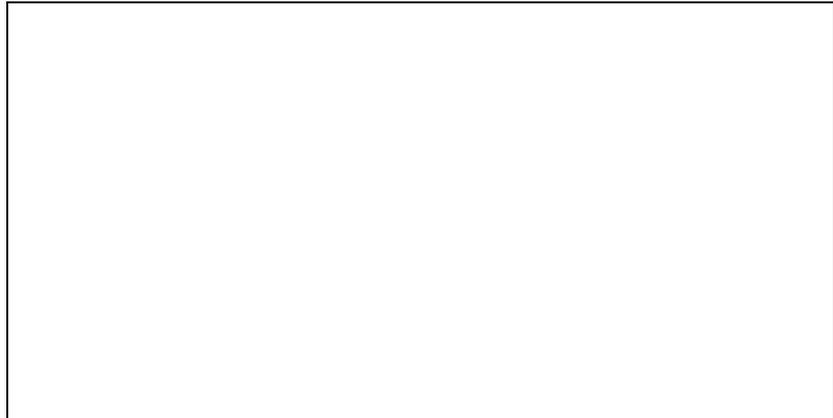
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Not a member of CCW?

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



Jo Haraf

May 20

5:30 p.m. - DINNER

6:30 p.m. - MEETING

Point Pinos Grill

79 Asilomar Boulevard

Pacific Grove

