



Scribbles

California Writers Club - Central Coast Writers Branch
www.centralcoastwriters.org
October 2013

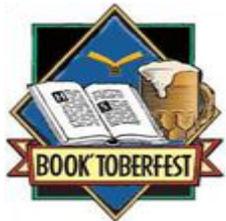
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Crime Pays:

**How to Write a Mystery
& Get It Published**

**Workshop on November 16.
Only \$20 for CCW members!
See details on page five.**



BOOKTOBERFEST October 15

CCW's Booktoberfest is a chance to celebrate the culmination of long years of writing! Plan to read from your recently published work at our October meeting. Member readings of published work will take the place of a scheduled speaker. Time will be limited to five to eight minutes, based on the number of people presenting. Listen to Jeanne Olin, with her just published book, "Dear Jude;" Marina Romani, as she shares her published poems; Marcia Rosen, as she treats us to a taste of "My Memoir Workbook," with many tips on memoir writing; others.

If you have a recently published work you'd like to showcase at our October meeting, email Dorothy Vriend (dvriend@me.com) to participate, preferably before October. 5. Please note: this is also an opportunity to sell your book.

Plan to join us at the Point Pinos Grill, located at 79 Asilomar Boulevard, Pacific Grove, on October 15. Dinner begins at 5:30, business meeting at 6:30, readings at 7:00!



We've Only Just Begun

By Janet Tezak, Vice-President

For the better part of 2012, we were looking for a new meeting place for our Central Coast Writing (CCW) club. Now we have found a beautiful home at Point Pinos Grille at the Pacific Grove Golf Course. Also, our speakers may be even more exciting, if that's possible. On September 17, 2013, we had just that type of charismatic speaker. Sincerity and passion were the dominant themes of Michael Santos' talk. Mr. Santos was arrested for drug trafficking at the age of twenty-three, served twenty-six years in prison, and completed his parole in August. While in prison, he didn't give up on his life or become a hardened criminal. Instead, he earned multiple degrees, contributed to academic books about the prison system and then began publishing his own books, all while incarcerated. Ten years ago, he reconnected with a high school acquaintance, and they married. Both attended our September meeting. Read more about Mr. Santos in Dawn Henderson's write-up on page three.

People should know there are many reasons to join our local writing club. First and foremost is to meet people who have a similar interest in writing, whatever point they are at, such as thinking about writing, wanting to be inspired, or wanting to hear about how to get published.. Wherever writers are on the writing spectrum, they are welcome to join CCW. People join to get discounts on our wonderful workshops, like "Crime Pays" which former CCW President and mystery author Joyce Krieg will lead on November 16, 2013, in the Sam Karas room at Monterey Peninsula College. (You can find a flyer with details about Joyce's workshop on page five.) Or people come to join our small writer groups for poetry and prose. Finally, people join because they love to share a meal and hear our interesting speakers. Whatever the reason, everyone should feel welcome to join our CCW branch.

We have an intriguing program for our CCW members and guests this month. We hold our annual Booktoberfest in which members read from their published works. The works already lined up are as varied as our authors: an adventure novel, poetry and a how-to book. If you have a recently published work and are interested in reading, contact Dorothy Vriend, dvriend@me.com.

Please tell all your friends to come to our next program on Tuesday, October 15, 2013, at 6:30 p.m., at Point Pinos Grille. And come for dinner between 5:30 and 6:30. Have a great meal, perhaps, a glass of wine and enjoy pleasant conversation. To quote our former President Cheri Love, "We want CCW to be a life-long home for you, like hanging out in the coffee house with your best writing buds." What better way to spend a Tuesday evening in mid-October. Come and stay for a lifetime.

Central Coast Writers' September Meeting



Above, left to right: Vice President Janet Tezak led the meeting, Joyce Krieg announced the November 16th workshop, Pat Hansen was the featured reader and Jack Erickson announced the publication of his new book, *Thirteen Days in Milan*. See a photo of our dynamic speaker, Michael Santos on the next page.

Michael Santos

Writing has no barriers—real or imaginary

By Dawn Henderson, guest columnist

Michael Santos, a former federal penitentiary inmate and author of published academic books on the perils of the judicial system, gave a wonderful speech at our September meeting about his tenure as an inmate, in which he explained how his incarceration inspired him to pursue an advanced education. After being indicted on drug trafficking charges, Mr. Santos was sentenced to forty-five years in prison.

At once he decided that his goal was to prove to society and to his family that he was genuinely repentant and to prepare himself to be a law-abiding citizen by doing three things: educating himself, contributing to society by giving back, and building a support network for his success upon release. He earned a B.A. degree and, after being denied the opportunity to attend law school, earned his Master's Degree. He started work on a Ph.D. After a new prison warden denied him the opportunity to finish, he decided that he needed another positive outlet. He decided to write.

His first book, which was an indictment of the prison system in America, was published and is used as a college textbook. He has written other books, which are also currently used to educate university students about the \$75 billion dollar penitentiary system and how it has failed to work as a method of recidivism. He has started a nonprofit foundation to assist prisoners with educational aspirations.

Mr. Santos's inspirational story reminds us that we all have the ability to overcome adversity. To learn more about him or purchase an autographed book, visit www.michaelsantos.com.

General Announcements



September Guest Speaker Michael Santos explains a point.

WANTED

CCW members' submissions for *Scribbles*. Send one page of your creative writing—short story, poetry, non-fiction or fiction excerpt—to Editor Leslie Patiño at lnpatino@comcast.net. *Scribbles* will publish up to two member pieces per month, space permitting. Work sent before the 21st will be considered for the following month. See this month's guest submission by Dick Guthrie on page six!

Writers' Open Mike October 17

A free monthly event open to the public, held every third Thursday, 5:30-7:30 p.m., at East Village Coffee Lounge, 498 Washington Street, Monterey. Come early and sign up for a five- to seven-minute reading that follows a featured reader. Readings may be any genre: prose, screenplay, poetry or essay.

This month features **Kathleen Founds**, who has an undergraduate degree from Stanford and an MFA in Fiction from Syracuse University. She wrote the featured fiction in the literary magazine, *The Sun*. She teaches English at Cabrillo College and, in her spare time, writes and illustrates children's books about angst-ridden animals. Her comics, fiction, and children's books can be found at kathleenfounds.com.

For more information contact **Pat Hanson** at phanson@csumb.edu.

Critique Groups

CCW encourages participation in these groups, which meet at Juice & Java, 599 Lighthouse Avenue, Pacific Grove. For more information, contact **Harold Grice** at ookayy@sbcglobal.net.

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

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

Crime Pays:

How to Write a Mystery & Get It Published

A fun, fast-paced, fact-filled workshop sponsored by Central Coast Writers
Presented by our very own Joyce Krieg!

- Mystery vs. Suspense/Thriller
- 5 Essential Qualities of Today's Fictional Detective
- Getting a Clue
- The Usual Suspects: Victims, Villains, Sidekicks
- The Detective as Super Hero
- The Scene of the Crime
- Opening Gambits
- Coming to a Bad End
- Getting a Grip on POV
- Rules of the Road
- Publishing 101
- Writer Beware!
- Resources for Mystery Writers
- Oodles of Helpful Hand-outs
- And Much More!

JOYCE KRIEG is the author of three mysteries – *Murder Off Mike*, *Slip Cue*, *Riding Gain* – published by St. Martin's Press. She is the winner of the St. Martin's Press "Best First Traditional Mystery" contest and an Agatha nominee. The workshop Joyce is presenting for CCW is a condensed version of the 12-hour class she has taught through the UC-Santa Cruz extension.



This workshop is suitable for writers of all levels – whether you've got a finished manuscript ready to shop around, or you've just always wanted to write a mystery and have only a vague clue as to where or how to begin.

WHEN: Saturday, Nov. 16, 2013, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. **WHERE:** Sam Karas Room, Monterey Peninsula College
Doors open at 9:00 a.m. Plenty of free parking!

5 Reasons Why You Should Write a Mystery!

1. A proven path for the newbie writer to break in to traditional, New York publishing.
2. Readers gobble up new mysteries like candy.
3. A literary structure for exploring the issues, causes, and concerns that you're passionate about.
4. Share your profession, hobbies, and life experiences with readers.
5. They're easy and fun to write!

Only \$20 for CCW members – don't pass up this incredible bargain!

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Pay in advance by check (\$20 CCW members, \$30 non-members) payable to: "CCW Branch of CWC"

Mail to: CCW Mystery Writing Workshop, P.O. Box 997, Pacific Grove, CA 93950

Gone to Soldiers, Every One

By Richard Guthrie



During the summer of 1967, Dick Guthrie took command of B Company, 1/50th Infantry (180 men) at Fort Hood, Texas. Weeks later, the battalion shipped out for Vietnam, arriving in plenty of time for the Têt Offensive. Thirty years later, he retired to Monterey and decided to write about his time with B Company. To credibly portray events, he needed to return to Binh Dinh Province. In 1998, along two other members of B Company, he went.

This vignette took place outside a rustic restaurant along Route #1.

After lunch, as we headed across the restaurant's unpaved parking lot for our van, Brian peeled the wrapper from a Power Bar and muttered about the food. He was grumbling about the inconclusive answers our guide gave him about just what was in the egg rolls. Feeling mischievous, I said:

"Yeah, y'know, it tasted a little like the dog meat I ate in Colombia one time." Since it was no secret that the Vietnamese do consume dog meat regularly, Brian didn't appreciate my humor.

Just then, a car pulled in from Highway 1, and the driver jumped out to start an animated conversation with our guide. He was, Mr. Ngoi translated, a judge from the High Court at Phu My District. Jabbering energetically, the man came towards us and shook our hands warmly. And then he gave us his profile and proudly pointed at a ragged scar alongside one eye and another under his chin. And then he pointed at us. He was, Ngoi said, a fifteen-year-old Vietcong soldier back when we operated there. Finding myself face to face with a former enemy soldier at first unhinged me. In an instant, I saw again our many men who'd been maimed or killed by all the VC booby traps. I wanted to hate this man, to fall on him with kicks and punches. Then, he nodded his head towards a nearby hill mass. The wounds came from a fight with the Americans up there. B Company had scoured that area more than once. Astounded, I cried out:

"Hey guys, he might have gotten those scars in a scrap with us!" Turning to the guide, I said: "Translate that!"

The judge nodded, smiled, and shook our hands again. "We should be glad all that is finished," he said. Then he told Ngoi to be sure to contact him if we had any trouble getting permission to visit the destinations we had come there to see.

Now I felt a compelling urge to drop everything and just go off with the man. I could imagine us installing ourselves somewhere in the shade where, over a cold beer or two, we might while away a whole day just trading stories.

During the quarter-mile drive to what had been Landing Zone Uplift, the three of us fell silent. The judge's warm-heartedness towards us had been genuine, and he was right: the war *had* been over for more than three decades. Certainly, keeping alive those old animosities would accomplish nothing. I wondered why I hadn't figured this out, years before.

MEMBER PROFILE

By Michelle Smith

To Live Again *Richard Burns*



A CCW member for five years, Richard Burns has never felt more alive than during the decades leading to the publication of his first book, *Live or Die – A Stroke of Good Luck*. Declared dead from a hemorrhagic stroke at the tender age of thirty-eight, Richard says he's proof there is life after death.

After proclaiming Richard's demise, his doctors covered his body with a sheet and advised his wife to write his obituary.

"My brain was totally destroyed, and I was declared dead," Richard says, poignantly recalling a long, dark tunnel and the light at its end. He says he never made it to the end of that tunnel.

"Next morning arrived, and so did the patient. Me."

Upon regaining consciousness, Richard gradually awakened to a bevy of medical personnel and life-sustaining equipment within the unfamiliar confines of a hospital room, and struggled to communicate to hospital staff that he was, in fact, not dead. Determined to recover from his brush with death, he ultimately underwent an arduous and lengthy rehabilitation.

In the early 1970's, Richard wrote a diary about his recovery and turned it into a book that ended up being shelved until 2003. After much rewriting, California Writers Club selected the non-fiction piece for publication in 2008. A second edition was produced in 2010, and then a third in 2012, when *Live or Die* was published.

Before becoming a memoirist, Richard, who earned an A.B. degree in economics in 1952 from Stanford University, produced advertising copy for the tourism and travel safety industry, "putting that smile on the PSA airplanes," he says. During his forty year career, he produced copy for various consumer products and even developed the legendary Fruit of the Loom television characters. Richard also taught retail marketing and advertising as a management consultant. But it was during the 1990's that he learned to "live again," he says.

After recognizing and confronting problem areas in his life, Richard decided to challenge himself to be the best he could be in spite of his physical and mental limitations. Now retired and no longer writing, he spends much of his time on the road educating others about strokes, but outlines and partial manuscripts of three books wait "in the wings."

While acknowledging that reading, writing and rewriting are important habits for writers who want to hone their craft, Richard also advocates the pursuit of other life priorities. For him, these priorities include regular golf outings, even if they preclude his attendance at our monthly CCW meetings.

Richard's website is www.liveordieburns.com.

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



The Poetry Corner

By Nancy Jacobs



General Joseph Stillwell—Vinegar Joe

In his own words:

"Don't let the bastards get you down."

The very famous World War II General Joseph Stilwell had great ability as a poet, despite his nickname "Vinegar Joe," which had been earned at Fort Benning, Georgia for his caustic remarks when evaluating the troops. Stillwell, a four-star general and a graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, commanded the 7th Infantry Division at Fort Ord, California prior to World War II. During the war, he was assigned to the China-Burma-India Theater, one of the most difficult. There, he had to devise ways to command troops composed of American, British and Indian soldiers. Another of his duties was to train Chinese soldiers to fight against the Japanese. He performed magnificently during this period, and the Chinese loved him. After the war, Lt. Gen. Stilwell was appointed Commanding General, 6th Army, with headquarters at the Presidio of San Francisco. He died in 1946.

During his spare moments, Stillwell would write verse. His poetry reflects certain styles, from that of Rudyard Kipling to merely sentimental verse or that of longing. Chungking (today Chongqing) was Stillwell's inspiration for this portion of an untitled poem, which contrasts the beauty of springtime with the stark realities in a society that was still largely agrarian seventy years ago. The poem was published in the *Oxford Book of American Light Verse*, edited by William Harmon.

I welcome the Spring in romantic Chungking,
I walk in her beautiful bowers.
In the light of the moon, in the sunshine at noon
I savored the fragrance of flowers.
"(Not to speak of the slush, or the muck and the mush
that covers the streets and the alleys.
Or the reek of the swill, as it seeps down the hill,
or the odor of pig in the valleys.)
The sunset and dawn, and the dew on the lawn,
And the blossoms in color so rare.

A bit of trivia from member Howard Grice (who says he can't vouch for its authenticity or correctness):

During World War II, U.S. airplanes were armed with belts of bullets which they would shoot during dogfights and on strafing runs. These belts were folded into the wing compartments that fed their machine guns. These belts measured twenty-seven feet and contained hundreds of rounds of bullets. Often times, the pilots would return from their missions having expended all of their bullets on various targets. They would say, "I gave them the whole nine yards," meaning they used up all of their ammunition.

CONTESTS AND WORKSHOPS

Did you know?

One of the best places to find writing competitions is *Writer's Digest* magazine. On their website you can get the scoop on competitions in poetry, short story, screenwriting, self-publishing, creative writing and more. To learn more, visit: <http://www.writersdigest.com/competitions/writing-competitions>.

Catamaran Literary Reader is a new quarterly literary and visual arts magazine that features fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, and art. Based in Santa Cruz, the magazine addresses themes such as environmentalism, personal freedom, innovation, and artistic spirit. The magazine seeks to present diverse national voices around themes that have a special resonance with our region. To learn more or submit a piece, visit: www.catamaranliteraryreader.com.

October 12 - San Francisco Writing for Change Conference For more information and lineup of speakers, visit <http://sfwritingforchange.org>.

November 15 - Perugia Press Prize for a First or Second Book by a Woman Prize: \$1000 and publication. Manuscripts are generally between 45 and 80 pages; submit manuscripts that fall within or close to this page count. Entry fee: \$25. Submit to: http://www.perugiapress.com/submission_manager/index.php.

November 2 and 3 - Third Annual Ventura Country Writers' Weekend In Camarillo. Features seminars and panels of publishing professionals and published authors. For more information, visit <http://www.pipwwritersweekend.com>.

December 6-8 - Big Sur Writers Workshop for Children and Young Adults For 17 years writers from all over the country have come to the Big Sur Writing Workshops for a hands-on intensive weekend with distinguished faculty to ready their YA or children's book manuscripts for publication. For more information, visit <http://bigsurwriting.wordpress.com>.

December 8 - South Bay Writers Workshop: Scenes Do It With Plots Presenter Jordan Rosenfeld. 9:30-3:30 at Three Flames Restaurant, 1547 Meridian, San Jose. Priced at \$29-\$67, including continental breakfast and lunch. For more information, visit <http://southbaywriters.com/wordpress/events/jordan-rosenfeld-workshop>.

February 13-15, 2014 - San Francisco Writers Conference It's not too early to begin planning or to register! For more information, visit <http://www.sfwriters.org>.

IF THE SHOE FITS . . .

by Jonathan Shoemaker

Yes, You Can!



Funny how certain things stick with us. We're not even aware of underlying impressions that color our view of life, or what gave rise to them. They form in the early years. As we observe others, our lack of experience and knowledge causes us to draw erroneous conclusions. Or we take what people say off the top of their heads as absolute fact. Vague impressions crowd into our young minds, convincing us of what may or may not be true, urging us forward or holding us back.

Years later, we realize the folly of harboring certain unfounded prejudices and preferences. We experience a gestalt moment that frees us from harmful illusions, especially impressions that undermine our confidence in our own potential.

Miss Sauer, my teacher in third and fourth grade, had me copy chapters from the Bible when I became disruptive, especially during Art, which was not my forte. When she saw my attempts at drawing, she said, "Oh, my! You're not very good at that, are you?" From then on, she provided me with plenty of reading and writing assignments while the other students were busy with their art work. It was the only way she could keep me from becoming restless during those periods. Far from being punishment, I enjoyed the activity. Reading all those stories from the Old Testament kept me from getting bored, and reading the New Testament helped me understand things that the other kids knew very little about.

But the awareness of my lack of artistic talent stayed with me for many years.

I didn't try my hand at drawing again until age thirty, when I was using total immersion techniques to teach modern languages. My students had no trouble recognizing my quick sketches on the blackboard and saying the proper word in the target language. I thought, "Hey, I can do this!" I remembered Vincent van Gogh's words, "If you hear a voice within you say you cannot paint then by all means paint, and that voice will be silenced."

His words rang true for my students when I taught poetry and short story writing in English to my English as a Second Language students. When they said, "I can't," I said "Just start writing words on the page and keep on writing until the time is up." One boy wrote *I can't write poems* over and over. I said "Add the word 'because' and keep going."

He did. He started to rhyme. He began to put it into verses. His second attempt was to a girl. "Does it have to rhyme?"

"It doesn't really have to!"

"Okay, thanks." And on he wrote.

The students even asked permission to read their work to the class, resulting in much applause.

I paraphrased "*Sí, se puede!*" for them; the motto of the United Farm Workers:

"*Sí, que puedes!*" Yes, you can!

Be well,

and do good work,

Jonathan



The Last Word
Leslie Patiño, *Scribbles* Editor
Agent Queries

I finally did it. I've finally started sending my novel manuscript to agents.

It seems like I've been writing it forever. That's partly because this novel is running together in my head with the first one I worked on after retirement from my day job. Number One got shelved a couple years ago, and I started *Monterrey Brewing Company* shortly after. It's seen four versions. I'm grateful for the input on portions from four paid editors, several CCW members, peers in an OLLI class and UCLA online classes, family members and one writing buddy who read the whole thing.

I started novel-writing classes at Lighthouse Writers' Workshop in Denver before moving to Monterey almost three years ago. I went to the 2013 San Francisco Writers Workshop and Speed Dating with the Agents. I came home and interviewed two individuals who help build writers' websites. In one case, that included a face-to-face meeting in Austin, Texas. I'm doing Amazon reviews (currently 478 votes, 86% helpful rating). I'm writing a weekly blog that's taking ridiculous amounts of time. During July, the second full month of the website, there were 409 unique (=different) visitors, averaging 2.7 visits.

Will any of that make a difference?

We all know the answer if the novel's no good. Even if it is good, it's still a crapshoot to an extent. (Excuse the language. I just re-read Stephen King's *On Writing*.) The score so far? Sixteen queries sent, seven rejections.

Want to help out? Visit my website (www.lesliepatinoauthor.com) and boost the unique visitors' numbers. Better yet, "Subscribe to this site" which means you'll get an email notification when I post something new—typically on Mondays.

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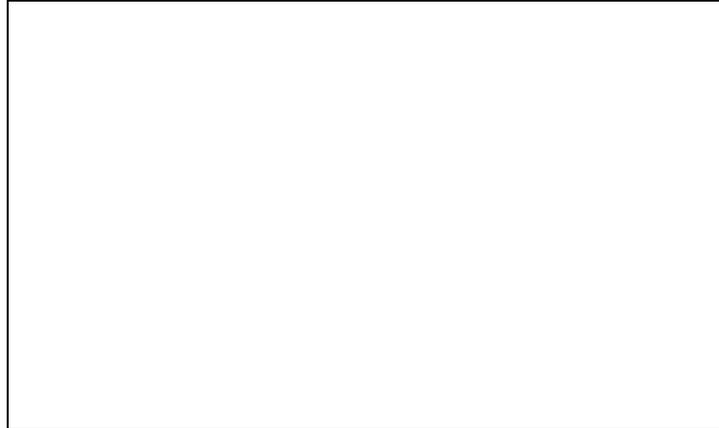
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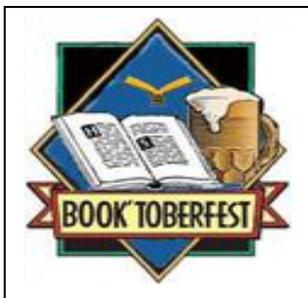
Dorothy Vriend: Monthly Speaker



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Coming October 15



Booktoberfest

5:30-8:00 p.m.

Point Pinos Grill

79 Asilomar Boulevard

Pacific Grove, California

