



Scribbles

California Writers Club—Central Coast Writers Branch
centralcoastwriters.org
September 2017

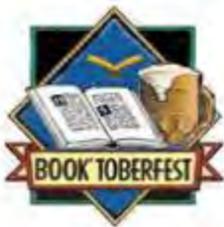
Tuesday, September 19

Laurie McLean

Tips for Thriving in Publishing Today

Literary Myth: If you don't have a literary agent, you aren't a real author. This is FALSE! Dynamic speaker and successful agent **Laurie McLean** of Fuse Literary will share insights from the trenches about the revolution going on in publishing and why is it no longer impossible to get published without an agent. Through self-publishing, crowdfunding, crowdsourcing, digital-first and other publishing initiatives, for the first time ever you can go it alone and make a living as an author. Is there a place for a literary agent in your future? Perhaps. Perhaps not. And perhaps literary agents are changing as much as the industry they work in. Laurie will candidly explain the ins, outs, pluses, and minuses of publishing in this new era and beyond.

McLean spent 20 years as the CEO of a multi-million dollar marketing agency and 8 years as an agent/senior agent at Larsen Pomada Literary Agents before co-founding Fuse Literary in 2013. At Fuse Lit, she specializes in adult genre fiction plus middle-grade and young adult children's books. McLean is also the co-director of the San Francisco Writers Conference, in its fifteenth year, and co-founded two ePublishing companies: JoyrideBooks.com for romance, and Ambush Books for tween and teen books (acquired by Short Fuse Publishing in 2015). Find out more at FuseLiterary.com and AgentSavant.com, and on Twitter @FuseLiterary and @AgentSavant.



Tuesday, October 17 — Book'toberfest!

Share your published work at the October CCW meeting! Details to come in your favorite email inbox.

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Changes

I'm going to begin by thanking everyone who helped to make our annual summer BBQ a success. This was our first year in a new location, and the change was managed expertly. Joyce harnessed the brilliant idea horse and set off for Whispering Pines Park. She passed the reins to Leslie who expertly navigated the trail to the finish line—pulling the rest of us along on a very large wagon! In all seriousness, as with everything that happens in CCW, the whole Executive Committee had a hand in the planning and execution. A special thank you to Leslie who really did take on the brunt of the arrangements. Thanks to everyone who came early to help clean and set up. Thank you to Maria, who home-baked all the bread, rolls, and many of the desserts. Thank you to DeeJ (DJ Smith), who not only shared her birthday with us, but also brought her own birthday cake to share. And, of course, a giant thank you to the Grilling Grices—our very own Harold and his fantastic kids, Sam and Helen. Once again they shopped for and prepped all the meat and veggies, Sam showed up by 7:30 a.m. to start the fires, and basically gave up more than an entire weekend for us. My sincere gratitude goes out to them all, and they should receive a hearty round of applause. One more thank you—to everyone who attended and kept a good sense of humor amidst the added level of excitement provided by the caterpillars that repelled down and attached themselves to anyone brave enough to seek the dappled shade of the oak trees.

Well, in case you're wondering, the weather didn't cooperate. I wasn't able to see the eclipse in person, but sharing workspace with the Naval Space Systems group has its perks. They were streaming the eclipse live from various NASA sites. And, I did enjoy the dimming!

So, it's September. I always had a love/hate relationship with September when I was young. I wasn't thrilled that summer was ending, but I was excited to go back to school. Each year was a new beginning, a clean slate. I looked forward to Labor Day weekend, our last bit of freedom before packing away summer gear and getting out our fall school clothes. Evidently, that's changed! Most schools are back in session already, which just seems wrong to me. How could I have given up those last precious weeks of summer on the beach with any expectation of concentrating in class?

What else in our lives has changed? Technology has taken writers from the time of putting quill and ink to parchment forward to laser jet on 100% recycled paper. And, the world of books has moved from distributed works being hand-copied by scribes to all the twists and turns of the publishing world today. I'm excited about our September speaker, Laurie McLean, who will help us understand the rapidly changing world of publishing and if there is a place for a literary agent as we navigate our personal paths. Laurie will give us a no-nonsense talk on this new era and beyond.

I hope to see many of you at our next general meeting on September 19. As always, there's more information in right here in *Scribbles*.

***Until we meet again,
Happy Writing,
Laurie***



CCW's annual BBQ was at Whispering Pines Park this year. If you went, you were part of a sunny day, congenial writerly friends, and delectable food. Thank you to all who went above and beyond to make this a successful and memorable event! Judging by these photographs, it was a very good time.



BBQ Master Harold Grice



Oh those ribs! Sam Grice gets 'em just right.



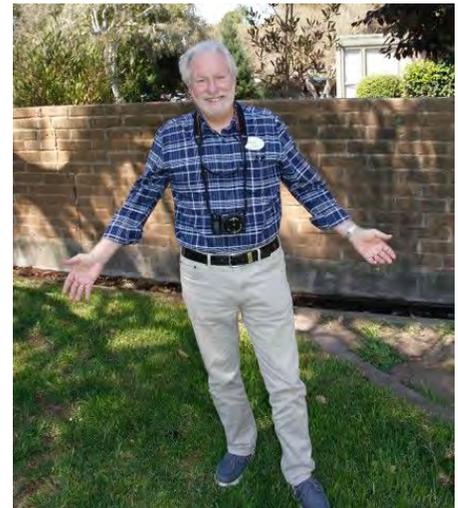
Harold's daughter Helen masters the veggies.



Joyce: Need a name tag?



Presidents, past and present: Harold Grice, Joyce Krieg, Laurie Sheehan, Janet Tezak, Ken Jones



Rare Ken Jones sighting



Beautiful Wanda Parrott



Patricia Hamilton Alana Myles



Scraped the plate!



Cynthia Guthrie & Wanda Parrot with "Life in Pacific Grove California"



Laurie greets the crowd.



Alan Grossman and Dessert



Sweet Maria Skytta



Jack London Award winners, past & present: Leslie Patiño, Harold Grice, Joyce Krieg, Ken Jones, Laurie Sheehan

Photographs by Dorothy Vriend (as well as snappy captions), Ken Jones, and Leslie Patiño

Thank you!

Announcements

Membership News

Welcome to our new CCW members:

Marc Alexander, Alka Joshi, Sarah Paff, and Christopher Tobin.



Member Congratulations!



Jesse J Elliott (aka **Julie Hanks**) now has her book in print and had a book signing in August for [*Death at Gran Quivera*](#). She writes about what she has loved so much to read—the Old West—except that her stories always have a strong female protagonist. Of her book, Kirkus Review said: “A fast-paced adventure tale of the Wild West with a strong female sleuth.”

Two Local Writerly Events Reported by Jennifer Schmidt

Author Erin McGraw will speak at the Pacific Grove Library Author Series on Thursday, September 21, at 7:30 p.m. A former Stegner Fellow from Stanford University’s Creative Writing Program, McGraw is the author of six books of fiction, including *Better Food for a Better World* (novel, 2013). Erin will read a handful of stories 3 to 4 pages long and talk about their genesis and development through this very short form. How does she construct a story? Where do her ideas come from? How does an author develop rich, complex characters in a short piece?

Opportunity to participate: Monterey Public Library is hosting its first Indie Author Day on Saturday, October 7. The event needs authors to join speaking panels, participate in Q&A’s, and so on. Authors can sell their books inside the library in their own designated spots in the Indie Author Day Book Store. Email harris@monterey.org, if you are interested.

The California Writers Club Bulletin is Here!

The summer *CWC Bulletin* that chronicles all the news from all the branches was released in August and should be in your email inbox by now. Besides our branch news, CCW is well represented in the new ads program. These members took out ads featuring their books: Jesse J. Elliott (Julie Hanks), Ayaz Piryani, Marina Romani, Christine Sleeter, Russell Sunshine, and Nancy Swing. Check them out! Thanks to Rusty LaGrange from the High Desert Branch for her hard work on this new *Bulletin*. Also, issues of The Bulletin (old and new) are on the CWC website:

calwriters.org/publications/#current

Writing Workshop by Shelly King

What: So You Want to Write a Novel Class

When: Saturday, September 30, 2017, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (full day)

Where: King’s home in Felton, CA (Directions sent after registration)

How do you turn your brilliant idea into a completed manuscript? All fiction genres are welcome!

Fee: \$250; includes a continental breakfast and light lunch.

Website for all details and additional upcoming workshops: shellyking.com/writing-workshops

Irish Writers Festival

The Irish Writers Festival is in Los Gatos, October 5 through 8, 2017, with readings, workshops, panel discussions, and extra events. Read about it at irishwriterslosgatos.com/festival-program2017.

Announcements (continued)

In Memoriam



**Merlin Gayle Askren
Pierre Chomat**



Merlin Gayle Askren, a CCW member in the past and again recently, passed away on August 15. He led an active life after moving to Pebble Beach and will be missed by those who shared the round table with him at our meetings. Merlin's obituary is in the August [Carmel Pine Cone](#) on page 16A.



Former CCW member **Pierre Chomat** passed away on August 22. Pierre published two books on environmental issues affecting the planet. He was a member of the Branch for a few years starting in 2004. Ken Jones said of Pierre, "... a great guy with big ideas and the most engaging French accent you'll ever hear. Very sad." Ken's photo shows Pierre in 2005 speaking at a CCW meeting. Pierre's obituary is here: legacy.com/obituaries/montereyherald/obituary.aspx?n=pierre-auguste-chomat

Submit Your Member Profile!

Our website, centralcoastwriters.org, has a member profile section and you are invited to submit your own by email to info@centralcoastwriters.org. To have a photo posted with your profile, please include the photo in JPG format with your profile email. If you would like to have a new photo taken, our club Treasurer, Clarissa Conn, has graciously offered to take photos of members at our meetings! Most of the photos you see in *Scribbles* are a product of Clarissa's labor and dedication to the club.

Let's Get Together And Just Write!

Inspired by the "Shut Up and Write" movement that started with thesis writers at universities in the San Francisco area, Joyce Krieg hosts a regular, standing appointment to work on writing with other like-minded individuals. As one "Shut Up and Write" participant sums up, "No critiquing, exercises, lectures, ego, competition or feeling guilty."

The group meets every Tuesday from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. at Crema, 481 Lighthouse Avenue in Pacific Grove.

- Any kind of writing is welcome. It doesn't **have** to be the Great American Novel or an epic poem.
- There is no cost to attend. Crema, however, is a business and provides this space for free, so it's only fair to at least order a cup of coffee or tea.
- Laptops are welcome and Crema has free WiFi. However, electrical outlets are sparse in the aging Victorian, so charge up that battery beforehand. Or go old school and bring a notepad and pen.
- Come when you can, but please be on time.

If you'd like to add your name to the list of interested writers, send Joyce an email at pacificgrovejoyce@gmail.com.

Networking Aloud: A Writers Open Mike

When: Every second Tuesday, 6:00–8:00 p.m. Where: OLD CAPITOL BOOKS, 559 Tyler St. Monterey.

Tuesday, September 12 features CCW member **Dr. Pat Hanson** reading from her forthcoming book *Stillness: My Final Frontier*, which, with candor, humor and in her own evolving voice, details her five-decade search for that elusive concept: peace of mind

“Mistaken Greed”

Stephen Choi

Since high school, Stephen Choi dreamed of being a novelist and yearned to pen his first book in either the Korean or English language. But despite earning a B.A. and M.A. in English literature with an emphasis on novels from Yonsei University in Seoul, Korea, and even with publishing several essays, he “dared not to publish a book.”

Stephen explains, “When I was before the bookcases in the book shop, sometimes I felt that I stood before huge trash cases. I was afraid I might make another trash,” he says. “I decided to publish when I’m confident I can publish a really good book. But these days I realized it was a mistaken greed.”

A CCW member for two years, Stephen first arrived in the U.S. in 1994. He was an assistant professor of the Korean Department at the Defense Language Institute’s Foreign Language Center where he taught Korean to American soldiers. Eventually, he published a word-study guide book geared toward Asian students (using Amazon’s CreateSpace) titled ***1650 Intelligent Words: The Best Example Sentences from Great English and American Books***.

Stephen’s favorite authors include Joseph Conrad, D.H. Lawrence, James Joyce, Herman Melville, and John Barth. He’s visited the homes of Lawrence in Nottingham and Joyce in Dublin, but his favorite among favorite authors is Melville. “He’s a big, mysterious, and symbolic mountain that I or most of the novelists can never climb, I think,” he says.

But it’s not like Stephen hasn’t literally tried to soar over mountains. Hang gliding was his favorite hobby, a pastime quashed by two broken legs. He also played golf for two decades but abandoned the sport due to arthritic fingers. “I enjoyed flying myself with my own judgment and power (without engine’s or God’s help) in a hang glider, and I enjoyed watching golf balls flying to the sky by dint of my judgment and power. Both of them gave me an ecstasy you can’t imagine or experience if you didn’t have a chance to fly for yourself.”

As for future endeavors, Stephen quotes Richard Bach when he says, “I believe that ‘a professional writer is an amateur who didn’t quit.’” He adds, “I wish I could write a novel like Melville’s and gladly breathe my last breath.”

Stephen certainly knows how to dream big.

Michelle Smith’s articles have been published in a variety of magazines. Her website is theebonyquill.com.



Robert Lowell



Born into one of the oldest American aristocratic families in Boston, Robert Traill Spence Lowell (March 1, 1917) was destined to become a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet and a Poet Laureate. He traced his roots back to the Mayflower. From 1940 through 1941, Lowell attended Louisiana State University.

He was a gifted writer and could write formal verse as well as metered verse and free verse. In *Life Studies*, Lowell's writing falls between metered and free verse. This book was a huge part of the Confessional poetry movement, which he founded. *Life Studies* contained frank discussions of personal, family, and psychological struggles. During his career he developed more stylistic styles of writing.

From 1946 to 1948, Lowell was the sixth Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress. He was one of the most important post-World War Two poets. His accomplishments include winning the National Institute of Arts and Letters Award in 1947 and the National Book Critics Circle Award for Poetry in 1977. According to biographer Paul Mariani, Lowell is "the poet historian of our time" and "the last of America's influential poets." Lowell was influenced by Allen Tate, Elizabeth Bishop and William Carlos Williams. Bishop and Lowell influenced each other's work. One can see Bishop's influence in the poem, "The Screams!" Among Lowell's students were Anne Sexton and Sylvia Plath.

In 1964, Lowell wrote one of the best poems called "For the Union Dead," which is written in looser verse. In 1967 he returned to metered verse in "Near the Ocean."

Throughout his life he carried the burden of having manic depression. In his fifties, Lowell started taking lithium to treat his mental illness, which helped by preventing relapses, although not all. Despite this, he achieved success, winning two Pulitzer Prizes, for *Lord Weary's Castle* in 1946 and *The Dolphin* in 1973.

In 2014, Lowell was featured in an HBO documentary "The 50 year Argument" about *The New York Review of Books*, which he founded with his second wife Elizabeth Hardwick.

The Poetry Corner

By Nancy Jacobs



After 23 years of marriage, Lowell left his second wife to marry Caroline Blackwood in 1972. Lowell died on September 12, 1977, in New York City. His final work was published posthumously.

For the Union Dead by Robert Lowell

The old South Boston Aquarium stands
in a Sahara of snow now. Its broken windows are boarded.
The bronze weathervane cod has lost half its scales.
The airy tanks are dry.

Once my nose crawled like a snail on the glass;
my hand tingled
to burst the bubbles
drifting from the noses of the cowed, compliant fish.

My hand draws back. I often sigh still
for the dark downward and vegetating kingdom
of the fish and reptile. One morning last March,
I pressed against the new barbed and galvanized

fence on the Boston Common. Behind their cage,
yellow dinosaur steam shovels were grunting
as they cropped up tons of mush and grass
to gouge their underworld garage.

Parking spaces luxuriate like civic
sandpiles in the heart of Boston.
A girdle of orange, Puritan-pumpkin colored girders
braces the tingling Statehouse,

shaking over the excavations, as it faces Colonel Shaw
and his bell-cheeked Negro infantry
on St. Gaudens' shaking Civil War relief,
propped by a plank splint against the garage's earthquake.

[Finish reading the poem...](#)

Contests and Conferences

By Patricia Watson



CONTESTS

Past Loves Day Story Contest

Deadline: Midnight EST September 17, 2017

Entry Fee: Free, sponsored by Spruce Mountain Press in celebration of Past Loves Day

Website: ourpastloves.com/contest

Awards: 1st Prize: \$100.00, 2nd Prize: \$75.00, 3rd Prize: \$50.00, Judges will also choose honorable mentions. Winners will be published on the website.

Submission Requirements: See website for guidelines. Nearly everyone has memories of a former sweetheart. Write your true story of an earlier love, in no more than 700 words. Tell us about someone whose memory brings a smile or a tear, or both: in particular, how did that person's presence in your life change you and how you experience the world? Your story may be heart-warming or humorous. Tell about your earlier sweetheart as if you were talking to your best friend.

Fresno State Philip Levine Poetry Prize

Deadline: September 30, 2017

Entry Fee: \$25.00 by U.S. Post, \$28.00 online by Submittable

Awards: \$2000.00 prize and publication of book

Website: fresnostate.edu/artshum/english/levineprize

Submission Requirements: See website for guidelines. Submit a book of poems 48-80 pages. No more than one poem per page, previously unpublished work only.

WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES

Historical Writers of America Conference

Location: Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort, 1300 Tuyuna Trail, Bernalillo, NM

Date: September 21-24 2017

Deadline: Registration open.

Fee: \$450.00 - \$590.00, Fee for guests of attendees \$275.00. Extra fees for tours, food, and lodging.

Details: Each year a historic location is chosen for this conference. Focus is on research, writing, and publishing both fiction and nonfiction historical work. This year's event is in Albuquerque, NM.

Website: historicalwritersofamerica.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=735549&module_id=245552

Digital Author and Indie Publishing Conference/BCX Boot Camp Extreme Writer's Conference

Location: The Mikado Hotel, 12600 Riverside Dr., North Hollywood, CA. Room rates include breakfast. Call hotel and reference BCXDASP for room block rates. 1-818-763-9141

Date: October 20-22, 2017. Registration open, two conferences at one price. Registration fees include both events and keynote buffets (except for daily registrants). Keynotes are \$49.00 per day for daily registrants.

Fee: \$399.00 in September, \$499.00 in October, fees include keynote buffets. \$499.00 gold registration includes professional critique and advance submission pitch with a literary agent. Daily registrant prices available.

Website: wcvriters.com/da/index.html and wcvriters.com/bcx/index.html Sell out is a strong possibility for the conferences.



We Are Not Alone*

In *Illusions: Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah* (1977), Richard Bach says, “How do you know if your mission in life is finished? If you’re still alive, it isn’t.”

My brother-in-law Martin passed on close to the second anniversary of my wife Sandra’s passing. At that time, my niece reminded me, “Even if we are apart, we are together in grief and joy. Despite many years or miles apart, we are not alone. Apart, but not alone.”

And now, close to two years later, we have lost Martin Dodd, one of our 24 charter members. Those three dedicated people spent their lives helping others, and set high standards for all who know them.

I know little of Martin Dodd’s life aside from his activities as a CCW member and from reading his obituary, but I have learned to respect him highly. Right from the start, Martin contributed selflessly to our CWC branch over the years. His energy and dedication were an inspiration to all of us. In our first critique group, his diplomatic suggestions were professional and inspiring. When the branch needed money, he took charge of our poetry and short story contests to raise funds for the club. He served on the board and was Vice President under Ken Jones (2004-2005). He was co-editor of *Scribbles* in 2003 with Laura Emerson (formerly Harris) and with Ken Jones in 2004.

I suppose that anyone might come close to the point of saying, “Aagh, it’s hopeless.” But when no hope was left in sight for Martin Dodd in his personal life, he found hope by providing hope for others; especially to help the homeless, the helpless and others who were desperate to lead a productive life.

My granddaughter once sighed, “Why do I even try?” My response was, “Because if you give up, it doesn’t help anybody.” Yes, although we write in solitude, we are not alone. We have things to say that other people might need to hear. And we have friends who can and want to help us express our thoughts and feelings. From the founding handful who met at the Thunderbird Bookstore, to those who have come along with fresh blood and sweat, to those now joining and participating, we have true friends who are willing to advise us and encourage us.

We are members of a communicative culture, gathering ideas and sending them forth from our own point of view to a few—or maybe to thousands. By caring and expressing, we send our words across time and distance to inspire hope and energy to those we love and to others whom we may never even know. Yes, C. S. Lewis, “We read to know we are not alone.” But we write because we know we’re not alone.

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

(*An encore column written last year. -Ed.)

CCW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Last Word

By Lana Bryan

Everyone Behaves Badly



I can't imagine that there is one of us who has not read Hemingway, likely in high school or college for the first time: *The Sun Also Rises, A Farewell to Arms, The Old Man and the Sea, For Whom the Bell Tolls, To Have and Have Not.* Hemingway was bigger than life. He is not my favorite writer, but fascinating nevertheless, in the life he lived.

In 1964, I read in *Life Magazine* the manuscript of *A Moveable Feast* about his years in Paris with his wife Hadley, as he was trying to write and trying to get published. He had died by his own hand only 3 years before the publication. His fourth wife, Mary, put the book together from Hemingway's manuscripts and notes. In 2009, his grandson published an edited and "restored" version.

Recently I read Paula McLain's novel *The Paris Wife*, describing Hadley Hemingway's life after her marriage and found it fascinating. I was not looking, however, for more about Hemingway when I was pulled in by *Everyone Behaves Badly: The True Story Behind Hemingway's Masterpiece The Sun Also Rises* by Lesley M. M. Blume (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016). I read a sample on Kindle. Yep, hooked again.

Blume returns to life the real men and women who peopled Hemingway's world, and how they all interacted. A trip to Pamplona, synonymous with the running of the bulls thanks to Hemingway, prompted a writing spree that resulted in *The Sun Also Rises*, and subsequently ruined the lives of the thinly disguised "characters" who accompanied him there. One of them, Donald Ogden Stewart, dismissed it as journalism, so true were the portrayals.

I read *The Sun Also Rises* as a college freshman, and must admit that much of it just swam right over me. Blume's book ignited a desire to read it again. Fifty years later, it made much more sense to me. If it's been decades since you read any Hemingway, it might be fun to read him again.

As a postscript, Woody Allen brought Hemingway to life with actor Corey Stoll in the film *Midnight in Paris*. Wonderful and so watchable.

Until next time,
-Lana

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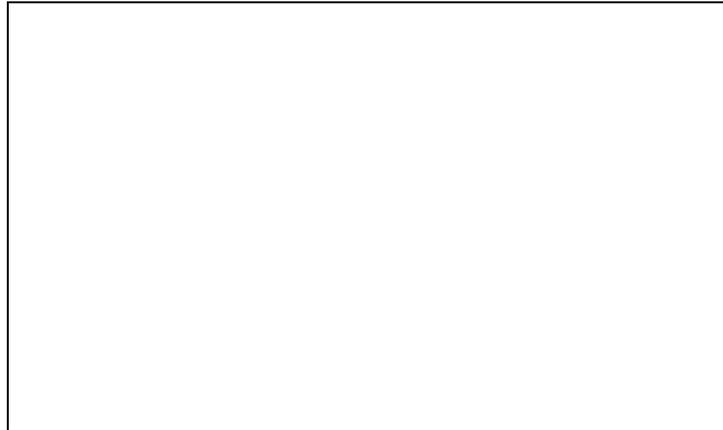
Not yet a member of CCW?

You can join at a monthly meeting or online at:

centralcoastwriters.org



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September 19

Laurie McLean

“Tips for Thriving in Publishing Today”

5:30 p.m.—CHECK-IN and DINNER

6:30 p.m.—MEETING

Point Pinos Grill

79 Asilomar Boulevard

Pacific Grove

