



Scribbles

California Writers Club • Central Coast Writers Branch
www.centralcoastwriters.org • January 2010



What I've Learned about Writing Self-Help Books

by C. Jonathan Shoemaker

Dr. Frederic Luskin, our November speaker, is professor and director of the Stanford University Forgiveness Project. He is adept at presenting the fine points of his topic to academicians, and with nine years experience in the production, presentation and sale of his books, has learned to present his work to the public in a way people will want to buy his book. However, his purpose in speaking to Central Coast Writers was to help us understand how to get our books sold:

If we want to write a self-help book on our pet topic it may give us pleasure to do so. If we want thousands of people to buy and benefit from reading a self-help book that we write, we need to do some research to determine what thousands of people are currently showing an interest in.

The producers of Chicken Soup for the Soul came up with the right idea to reach thousands of readers, Fred says. "They have created something that has value to the reader. They realized that there was a tremendous hunger for things that ask nothing of the reader but would make them feel better for a tiny bit of time. That's the brilliance of Chicken Soup. They ask you to do nothing. It offers a substitute for action." It allows them to enjoy experiencing the actions of others and then go back to who they are. It has sold many millions.

continued on page 4

MEETINGS

We meet on the third Tuesday of the month at the Casa Munras Hotel, 700 Munras Avenue, Monterey. We open the doors at 5:30 p.m. for optional dinner; the program starts at 6:30 p.m. with the speaker beginning at 7:00 p.m. For last-minute changes, check the Web site: www.centralcoastwriters.org

Magnus Torén, Director of Henry Miller Library, Big Sur, to Speak January 19

by David Rasch,
Vice President and Program Chair



Magnus Torén is an expert on Miller's life and writings, and has been the Library Director at the Henry Miller Library since 1993. He is largely responsible for creating the vital cultural, literary, artistic and educational resources and programs that currently characterize the well-known coastal institution.

Magnus holds a skipper's license and he spent the years between 1977 and 1984, and 1994-95, delivering yachts across five of the seven oceans of the world.

He made landfall in Big Sur where he, his wife Mary Lu, and their son Stefan live near Henry Miller's previous residence.

Magnus will share anecdotes from Miller's years living and writing in Big Sur, and his colorful early life as a writer in Brooklyn and Paris.

Torén will discuss Miller's motivation as a writer, his approach to writing, and why he was successful despite himself. There will also be some talk about Henry Miller's attitudes and writing about sex.

Henry Miller wrote many books, including *The Tropic of Cancer*, *The Tropic of Capricorn* and *Big Sur* and the *Oranges of Hieronymus Bosch*.

WHAT'S INSIDE...

<i>November and January Speakers</i>	1
<i>The Prez Sez</i>	2
<i>Call for Submissions</i>	3
<i>Scribbles Goes Electronic</i>	4
<i>Shades of Ray Bradbury</i>	5
<i>To Blog or Not to Blog</i>	6
<i>Christmas Party Photos</i>	7
<i>If the Shoe Fits</i> . . .	8



The Prez Sez...

by Harold Grice

Calling All Writers and Editors: Yer Newsletter Needs U!

Well folks, there's good news and other news. The good news is that Scribbles is becoming formatted to be available online, electronic download for those who know the jargon, and somewhere out there in Electronic Never-Never Land for those who have to do the search-and-see until found.

Those who still wish for paper-in-hand comfort may receive a printed copy of Scribbles by mail. In this manner, we hope to reduce the cost of publication to a minimum. The "other" news is that you'll have to request your copy by mail in order to get it as of February 2010.

The plan for creating Scribbles is being modified to fit the web-page format, and to ease the editing requirements for submissions and genres. As envisioned at this time, Scribbles will be organized as follows: The submissions will be downloaded and formatted for publication by the Copy Editor; then, after Scribbles is launched online, by editors of particular genres.

At this time we have commitments from Patricia Hamilton to publish Scribbles; Wanda Sue Parrott to serve as Copy Editor; David Rasch to present speakers and other functions; C. Jonathan Shoemaker to do both his column "If the Shoe Fits" and reviews of speakers and functions. Michelle Smith will write "Member Profiles" and Deanne Gwinn will organize the new Classifieds and Notices section.

Others have expressed interest and will be introduced in February. We hope to fill out the editorial department with members interested in volunteering to edit (and write for) particular genres.

And, oh yes, Ken Jones—or a designated alternate—will load this all up on the web site so it can be seen by all!



At the Christmas Party: Allison Mercer, Harold Grice, Pat Hanson

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Michelle Smith: "Member Profiles"

Mike Thomas and Cristy Shauck: Contests

Events Editor: David Rasch

Reviews Editor: C. Jonathan Shoemaker

Call for Submissions:

Help Launch Editor's Online Inkpot

by Wanda Sue Parrott, Copy Editor

Ask yourself: What might I be if I weren't a writer? Next, ask: Who would I be if I weren't a writer?

Then, help kick off the New Year and our Central Coast Writers' new Scribbles by submitting your answer in 100 words or less to our brand new electronic editorial department I dub "Editor's Online Inkpot" that launches in February. Please submit only one response in the format of your choice: poetry, flash fiction, or mini-personal essay. Deadline is Jan. 25.

Your "pay" upon publication will be your byline and 1-sentence biotag at the end of your piece. Publication date is editor's choice.

President Harold Grice visualizes the Inbox filling with members' writings: Letters to the Editor, Poetry, Fiction, Book Reviews, How-to-Write Articles, Author Interviews, Fillers (can be jokes), Features, Photos and Etcetera.

You retain all rights to material published in Scribbles. This initial call for submissions is the inaugural ceremonial launch of this facet of CCW's electronic newsletter.

I have been entering and running contests, teaching writing and publishing my own website for twenty-five years, so am pleased to help

CCW's editorial team make the transition from the spectacular hard-copy editions of Scribbles edited by Joyce Krieg to this mostly electronic version.

I say mostly electronic, since members who wish to continue receiving hard (paper) copies through the mail may submit their requests to the same editorial inbox now seeking answers to the question: *What (who) might (would) I be if I weren't a writer?*

ccwscribbles@sbcglobal.net

State "Submission" (or Letter, etc.) in the subject line and put your name, e-mail or snail mail address on your entry.

I will be first to respond, briefly, in the senryu form of untitled, unpunctuated 3-line, 17-syllable poetry often mistakenly called haiku:

**while I'm growing old
if I could not write my dreams
I'd be bored to death**

(Wanda Sue Parrott, Monterey, co-founded the National Annual Senior Poets Laureate Poetry Competition for American poets 50 and older; www.amykitchenerfdn.org, amykitchenerfdn@hotmail.com, 831-899-5887)



Submissions Guidelines: Scribbles, an online newsletter, publishes news items, features, articles, contest and market information about the writing life. Also welcome are poetry and short stories. Top priority is given to work submitted by members of Central Coast Writers.

If you are not a member of CCW, please state "Non-member" under your name; or, if you belong to another branch of California Writers Club, please so indicate beneath your name. We will acknowledge all manuscripts received electronically; if you have not heard from us within ten days following submission, please resend your manuscript.

Please keep a copy of your submission, as we do not return manuscripts. Submit your manuscript electronically with your name, address, e-mail, and phone number in the upper right margin of the first page.

Please submit your work in standard manuscript form via RTF (Rich Text Format) or in the body of an e-mail.

Please identify your submission as "News," "Poetry," "Column" and etc. in the upper left margin of your manuscript, or write the name of the Editor to whom it is being submitted in the Subject Line.

Scribbles reserves the right to edit work as necessary for space or literary considerations, such as spelling, grammar, length and appropriateness of content.

**Send Submissions by e-mail to:
ccwscribbles@sbcglobal.net**

**Change of address and e-mail address:
Contact Membership Chair Ludmila Austin at
ludaustin@yahoo.com**

New Scribbles Goes Electronic Starting in February 2010

This is the last hard copy of Scribbles to be sent by snail mail to all active members of the Central Coast Writers (CCW) Branch of the California Writers Club.

Starting in February 2010, Scribbles becomes an electronic online publication slated to appear on our website around the first day of every month.

Patricia Hamilton, CCW member from Pacific Grove, is serving as publisher. She joins webmaster Ken Jones in helping create the new online venue for Scribbles, which made its January debut the day this newsletter was mailed to you. You can see it in its entirety at www.centralcoastwriters.org.

Members who wish to continue receiving hard copies of Scribbles must request their names remain on the mailing list for paper editions. Send your request by mail to CCW Scribbles, P. O. Box 997, Pacific Grove, CA 93950 or submit by e-mail to:

ccwscribbles@sbcglobal.net

You may also download and print your own copy from the online edition. According to CCW President Harold Grice, the ultimate goal of the electronic version of Scribbles is to serve as a showcase for CCW members who would like to publish everything from poetry to prose and whatever falls in between.

Editors are needed to coordinate specific sections from which pages will be created for Scribbles. Your ideas for various sections are welcome. At present, volunteer editors are needed for: Poetry Page (poems, articles and contest news); Fiction Page (short stories and articles about writing fiction); Non-fiction Page (anything factual); Members Page ("Bragging Rights" about members' sales and/or awards, photos and news); Editorial Page (President's column, newsletter staff info, letters to the editor).

Newest section to be added is the Classified Page, which might also include display ads, with this being the first ad posted: HELP WANTED: Editors. Volunteers may submit their applications to ccwscribbles@sbcglobal.net. Write "EDITOR" on the subject line to avoid being deleted as spam.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS EVERYONE! Many thanks to Daniel and Patricia Matuszewski for hosting the CCW Christmas Party once again in their beautiful home in Seaside. Thanks also to Bruce and Judy Cowan for their Christmas tunes—and to all members who came!



Patricia Hamilton, Scribbles publisher, is the owner of Park Place Publications, "Creative and Dependable Book Publishing Services Since 1982." Patricia has been helping authors self-publish their books for pleasure and profit, and her own healthy travel guides have won regional and national awards for design and innovative marketing. Contact her at publishingbiz@sbcglobal.net

Dr. Frederic Luskin continued from page 1

The trick is to "combine your strength with what the marketplace might want." What we are doing is twofold. It is first a labor of love. We are helping people make their lives better by writing from our strength. We also need to remember that it is a JOB. We need to help the publisher sell our book. Publishers need to think in terms of accounting – numbers and money.

One thing Fred learned while attempting to sell his book *Forgive for Good* (HarperCollins Publishers, 2002) was he needed to write in the language of his target audience. If we use language that sends the reader to the dictionary, ". . . nobody will buy your book." "Not even your mother will read it!" If we write in a way readers have no problem figuring out what we mean, they will readily refer our work to others. The publisher will see it as a book well worth the expense and effort to produce, and push the sales.

Fred believes you have to find some place of integrity between writing something just for you and writing something that will sell. Writing something that will sell is not a terrible thing, but it's kind of a harsh thing, because it's numbers-based and not heart-based. But each one of us has to try to find the place where we want people to read our work. "Where do I fit in this? What kind of voice could I live with? The selling is going to be more than the writing."

AUTHOR HAUNTED BY BRADBURY'S *FAHRENHEIT 451*

by G.M. Weger

Thinking back over the last 12 months, I thought I would highlight some of my writing/publishing wisdom in "A Christmas Carol" sort of way. I've been visited in 2009 by many ghosts of my past, present, and future. However, as I began writing about my lost year, I lost interest. I mean, what a ride this year has been for me! Instead, I decided to write about something that happened to me in November.

STILL IN PURSUIT OF THE DREAM

Sketch of Quill and Book

by G. M. Weger

By now, long-time readers know that I work for the Department of Defense (DOD) writing test questions for military enlistment. What nobody knows is that some subjects are not allowed by what I refer to as the "language police." Anything that might cause a potential enlistee discomfort is anathema to the DOD. I have to follow what I consider to be ridiculous, politically correct rules because if I don't, I'll be out of my job.

But outside of my place of employment, and where it matters the most, I'm free to speak and read what I want. Especially in the world of writers, right?

...I was uninvited to read my own book...

If you really believe that last line, you're like I was about a month ago when I was uninvited to read my own book, *East Garrison*, at a local library reading event.

The persons who objected to me didn't know that they were depriving me of my basic right to freedom of speech and, in fact, were censoring me. I was told I just "wasn't a good fit."

...nightmares of Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* began to haunt me...

I never gave Bradbury's book much thought before. I mean, I live in America and have the right to freedom of speech. That's something I read about in history class. *Fahrenheit 451*, was published in 1953

(ten years before I was even born) and critiques what Bradbury saw as issues in American society of the era.

In the twentieth century, book burning was considered the same as irrationality. The beginning of *Fahrenheit 451* has been written about as being "contagious with the period of Nazi anti-intellectualism during the late 1930s." The novel also appears during the era known as the McCarthy period, characterized by blacklisting, and censorship.

...in the twentieth century, book burning was considered the same as irrationality...

Since Bradbury wrote *Fahrenheit 451*, it has been subject to interpretations, mainly focusing on suppressing dissenting ideas through the burning of books. In the past Bradbury stated that the novel is not about censorship, but is a story of how television destroys interest in reading literature, leading to a replacement of knowledge with "factoids", partial information devoid of context. Kind of sounds like our world now, doesn't it?

Fahrenheit 451 ends with the same premise as Dickens' classic Christmas tale. The society the protagonist knew has almost completely collapsed and a new society must be built from the ashes, like the phoenix rising.

... it's implied that the book-keepers will build mirror factories ...

It's unknown whether this new society will meet the same fate, but it's implied that the book-keepers will begin to build mirror factories (mirrors are a metaphor for books) to show people who they are, what they have become, and how they can change with time and knowledge.

The year 2009 has come full circle. It has been a year filled with writing and publishing wisdom for me. Unfortunately, wisdom comes at a high price. I see the future if I stay this course, but I'm hopeful about 2010 and intend to make BIG changes in my life to interrupt what I see as my fate.

I hope the New Year brings good fortune to you, and may God bless us, every one!

Letter to the Editor

TO BLOG OR NOT TO BLOG? THAT IS THE QUESTION...

Dear Editor: What is your opinion about blogging? As writers, we are told "You must have a website and a blog." But those who value their privacy say, "We've lived all our lives without blabbing or flapping our jaws for all the world to see and read." What exactly is the difference between a website and a blog, and why should we have either or both?"

E-Boggled, Seaside

Dear E-Boggled: A blog is a daily, weekly or monthly column in which you give your opinion. It can be based on daily news, such as an opinion about Tiger Woods and his alleged indiscretions, or a religious sermon similar to the spiritual messages we hear from street corners, pulpits, radio and TV. A blog can be about a specific topic, such as the science fiction writer who touts his own works, or the blow-by-blow description of a breast-cancer survivor's recovery after her double mastectomy.

As a columnist, the blogger can even report on financial and political news for pay, but not for salary or company benefits. In other words, a blogger can be a freelancer. Other bloggers appear in newspapers for no pay except the attention they get. Until blogging shook up newspapering and threatens to kill print-media journalism, there was an unwritten taboo that pertained to all but a privileged few columnists: If necessary to use a proper pronoun, say "we" and never "I," "them" but not "me," and "their" but never "my."

Bloggers today are often first person opinion giv-

ers and gossip mongers whose favorite viewpoints are "me," "myself" and "I." Those who enjoy blogging also like to participate in texting, tweeting and twirping. Will it produce great works of philosophy, science or fiction or that Great American Novel?

A website is more like a magazine or newspaper in the respect that it has a Home Page and contents that can be educational, informative and health-enhancing. It might be filled with photos or even blog columns, and it can serve as the website owner's own personal family album, but generally a website is looked upon as the unit of commerce in the international Electronic Main Street of commerce. Whether you are selling products and services, have a book to publicize, of editorial news to share, the website is the place to turn.

The thing that makes websites different from most newspapers today is that the information on websites is more likely to be honest and factually correct than the plethora of blogs and other opinion-passing exchanges that have turned journalism upside down and inside out. Newspapers are, after all, carriers of gossip.

Do you really need a blog? Sure, if you love your own opinion—even if no one else reads it or cares about it. We now live in the age of citizen journalists. If you want to join the e-press corps, get a blog. If you must choose, start a website? You can add a blog later.

Comments? (Please address your comments to Editors at ccwscribbles@sbcglobal.net)

News reporting has evolved into a New Age of Citizen Journalists... they are unpaid reporters popularly known as Bloggers.

*A blog is what used to be known as a column...
Until recently.*

Spring 2010 Writing Contest—Entries Must be Postmarked by January 15, 2010 Poetry and Short Story Winners Published and \$500 Prize!

The two winners of the Central Coast Writers Branch 2010 writing contest will each receive \$500 and have their work published (print and online) in the Spring 2010 Homestead Review produced by Hartnell College.

Contest Rules (See complete rules at www.centralcoastwriters.org)

Eligibility: Open to all work not previously published. Simultaneous submissions allowed.

Entry Fee: Short stories: \$15. Poetry: \$5.

Multiple Entries: Enter as many times as you wish, with separate fee for each entry.

Maximum Length: Short story: 4,000 words. Poetry: no restriction.

Submit to: CCW Writing Contest, P.O. Box 51805, Pacific Grove, CA 93950.

Notification: Winners will be notified by March 31, 2010 and announced in Scribbles, the Central Coast Writers' newsletter.

Questions: E-mail ccw-contests@comcast.net



Christmas Party 2009





**CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB
CENTRAL COAST WRITERS BRANCH
P.O. BOX 997
PACIFIC GROVE, CA 93950**

*January 19
Magnus Torén,
Director of the
Henry Miller Library
Casa Munras Hotel,
700 Munras Ave.,
Monterey*

WRITING FROM YOUR SOUL WORKSHOP

CCW member Susan Scott will lead a workshop called "Writing From Your Soul" Sat., Jan. 30, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in Carmel. Susan calls this "a fun writing workshop" and says, "Using short, snappy exercises and techniques, you'll ignite your creativity and tap into inner wisdom."

Susan is the author of *Create the Love of Your Life*, *Attracting Soulmates* and *I Wish I Could Tell You* and has been an intuitive counselor for 30 years.

The workshop fee is \$40. To register and for more information, call Susan at 831-646-9111.

If the Shoe Fits . . . Do Unto Others . . . ?



Ah, yes! The Golden Rule! As children we most often heard those words of wisdom from adults at times when we, or our peers, committed a negative act that may have

harmed, or inconvenienced others.

I doubt that we were in the mood to hear or heed the advice while we were being admonished as miscreants; especially when the adult was publicly making us the ridiculed example in the presence of our peers. And how would the teacher enjoy being the object of public ridicule, giggles and snickers? Great job of teaching by example!

From a different perspective, when planning a special occasion for our playmates, each of us thought of things to do for them that we would enjoy if they were done for us. Now that's when The Rule makes good sense and sets a pattern for a positive, productive life.

It is not an avoidance of doing to others, but the joy of doing for others; not the curse of karma, but the blessing of doing well by doing good; not a man-

date from above, but a decision from within.

If we make a list of our five, or even ten, pet peeves and turn them into our pet projects, we will be well on our way to a life full of blessings. We start each item in the list with, "I hate it when people..." Then we rephrase it in terms of what we can do for others: I will yield to merging traffic; I will visit my friend at the hospital; I will invite the person with only one item to go before me in the checkout line; I will call 911 when I see a motorist in trouble at the side of the road; I'm going to arrive on time to every club meeting; I will have a piece ready to read at every critique meeting; I will arrange to have some free time to help in the publishing of Scribbles; etc. It's possible that our self-esteem will be enhanced, there may be less stress in our lives, and our writing skills may benefit as a result.

To quote George Eliot: What do we live for if not to make life less difficult for each other?

Give me a smile when we happen to meet.

Hear me when I call.

Let me know when I have erred.

Assist me when I fall.

*Be well, and enjoy the blessings of the Season
throughout the new year. Jonathan*