

OUR JULY 9TH MEETING

DON MARUSKA AUTHOR, SPEAKER, ENTREPRENEUR, BUSINESS COACH

If ever there was a topic and presenter to match the interests, hopes and dreams of every member and guest in the house, it is Don Maruska. And he will present to SLO NightWriters at our next general meeting, July 9.



Don is the author of *How Great Decisions Get Made: 10 Easy Steps for Reaching Agreement on Even the Toughest Issues* (AMACOM, 2004) and *Take Charge of Your Talent: Three Keys to Thriving in Your Career, Organization, and Life* (Berrett-Koehler, 2013). His books, keynote speeches, and workshops guide audiences worldwide to fulfill their hopes in powerful, practical, and profitable ways.

And he is one of us! After graduating from Harvard, working the political scene in Washington, DC, then developing and growing three Silicon Valley businesses, Don discovered he had life experience to share and could work anywhere. His family made the *great decision* to move to Morro Bay. He has appeared on over thirty radio and television interview programs throughout the United States and keynotes worldwide.

Don has put together a two-pronged program for NightWriters: For one segment of the evening, he will speak to each of us as individuals inspiring us to *Take Charge...*

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Coming up...

Aug. 13: Critique Session

Sept. 10: TBA

Oct. 8: Dave Congalton

Nov. 12: Poetry Festival

Dec. 10: Holiday Event

2014

Jan. 14: Flash Fiction

Feb. 11: Paula Huston

DON MARUSKA continued...

Don states, "Did you know that even the best and brightest in excellent organizations have 30 to 40% of their talent untapped? You probably have hopes for your talent that lie unfulfilled. It's not enough to have a direction in mind. You need to get there! Experience the three keys to thriving in your career, organization, and life so that you enjoy the richness of your talent."

For the second segment he will guide us to take a look at an effective process for great decision-making as an organization and SLO NightWriter members. "Everyone faces tough issues, from where to go on family vacations to what to do with their lives or how to handle a high stakes issue. Often, these decisions are fraught with fear and loathing as diverse interests pull us in different directions. How do you discern what's really right for you? Learn about a proven process to help you fulfill your hopes and move forward with confidence."

Personally and professionally and organizationally, we will all win by attending this meeting.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: SETTING EXAMPLES



Dennis Eamon Young

Just in from Australia – Happy Father's Day Pop! Next was a call from Portland, OR, wishing a Happy Day and much love. It sure warms a father's heart to hear from his daughters.

My daughters grew up knowing their dad as a photographer. They were steeped in the life of lights, camera, action as well as the work that comes before and after the razzle-dazzle. I took them with me to drop film at the lab and they saw me sorting rolls of negatives to be matched with prints. Being surrounded by male and female photographers, art directors and clients was the norm for them. Along the way film changed to pixels and prints became digital files.

Our children absorb who we are and what we do. We believe they are not paying attention, only to find years later that they had stored it all away for possible use at a future time. We show them by our example how we view and deal with life and other the people around us. Both of my daughters have moved on into their own professions and yet both are photographers as well.

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President's Message...Continued

While reading *Origin*, a biography of Charles Darwin, I was quite taken with a section describing one of Darwin's sons asking his father a question. The boy explained that he'd been at a friend's house and the friend's father had no fossils to work on. Darwin's son had grown up thinking that all fathers did what Darwin did. In nature it is called imprinting and takes place by inherited instinct. Humans in advanced societies have, by and large, lost our trust in such instincts.

We are the role models for our children by what we say and do, how we act and, yes, also by what we write. They may not grow up to follow our path, but they will have been shaped by our example in how they approach their own path. These are important matters that should not be left to chance.

As parents to the characters we create in our stories we must strive to help them grow into the needs of the story itself. We need to act in a very precise and conscious manner. Every trait and sense each character displays must be a real and true part of them. If a reader thinks some action a character has taken does not fit, you will lose that reader. How has the character developed a particular way to think and act? What will their responses be in a situation?

An important lesson I have taken away from Susan Tuttle's "What If" writing workshops is that a writer must know every detail concerning one of his or her characters: Who they are; how they think; what drives them; how they will react to stimuli in any given situation; are they educated or grown up in slums with no chances to advance themselves? Even if these things do not come into the light of day in your story, it is important that you know them.

Excelsior,
Dennis

Fellow Writers!

Is a writing partner sick?

Needing encouragement?

Getting married or having a baby?

Suffering from the loss of a loved one?

Email me at jandkvolkov@att.net and I'll send them a card from their SLO NightWriters family.



Kalila

AND THE WINNER IS...

The results are in, the awards have been awarded, the stories and poems read. It was our most successful contest ever. Here's a summary:

53 stories were submitted

42 poems were submitted

We received entries from Italy, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Nova Scotia

Domestic entries came from 7 states as well as California

6 of the winners came from either outside California, or outside the US.

And now for the winners...

POETRY WINNERS

1st Place: "The Last Honesty" by Chris Alba, Paso Robles*

2nd Place: "Cecilia" by Mira Oaten, Santa Barbara See poem on Page 23)

3rd Place: "Opening Their Journals" by Ivan BrownOtter (see pg. 24)

Honorable Mentions:

"Detritus" by Carolyn Harrison, San Miguel, CA

"The Storm's Eye" by Ed Valentine, SLO

"Untitled" by Theodore End, Greenup, KY

"From One Goldilocks Planet" by Rosemary Wilvert, SLO

"What The Flood Left Behind" by Melissa Webb, Seattle, WA

"The Perfect Storm" by Elizabeth Sosaya, Templeton

"I Thought We Were Fine," by Grace Keating, Nova Scotia, Canada

"A Storm of Angst And A Chevy BelAir" by Mark Arnold, Los Osos

*Chris asked that we not publish her poem and we respect her decision

SHORT STORY/MEMOIR WINNERS

1st Place: "The Phone Call" by Grace Keating, Nova Scotia, Canada (see below)

2nd Place: "The Burgundy Room" by Christine Ahern, Los Osos, CA

3rd Place: "Lull" by Donna Reese, Oregon

Honorable Mentions

"The Last to Fall" by Rebecca Waddell, SLO

"Jackson's Plan" by Charlie Perryess, Los Osos, CA

"The Gail Storm Show" by Ronda Beamen, Arroyo Grande

"To a Devoted Companion" by Bill Scott, Nipomo, CA

"Ivan, September 11th" by Alysa Ivey, Roanoke, VA

"Storm Warning" by Mark Arnold, Los Osos, CA

2013 1ST PLACE STORY/MEMOIR WINNER

The Phone Call

By Grace Keating of Nova Scotia

I'm sitting here staring at this photograph with the words 'A Perfect Storm' scrawled across the front. I turn it over and there's your phone number. I know maybe I should've called before now, but the truth is, I was a little unsure of myself. Unsure of myself and maybe a little intimidated by you. Looking at you in the photograph, you seem so confident, so lovely, with your mouth open in laughter, sunglasses, just so, on the top of your head, exiting a cafe. One hand with your refillable coffee mug held high as you maneuver through a cluster of people, the other with your cell phone to your ear. You look like you own the world. It's in your smile. Maybe the photographer caught you just right, but then, I don't really know you.

I think back to how we met and how I'd been pulled to this party by your cousin Pete. He and I were in the middle of a conversation when you came rushing into the kitchen, went straight for him and gave him half a tickle and a kiss on the cheek.

"Who's this, Pete?" You asked, wrapped up in his arms. "Tell me he's not taken and tell me you're not saving him for someone else."

Pete glanced at me. "Don't mind her," he said, "she can come off a bit brusque, but she's really a sweetie underneath."

Earlier, I had noticed the photo stuck on the fridge, the same one I'm holding now and I glanced back and forth, the person to the image to the person again and I remember how you had the same expression on your face, you were so full of energy, so vibrant and it was all there in the picture too. I made some comment about the perfect storm.

You gave a carefree laugh and said, "Pete's lame idea of a joke. As if I didn't hear it all the time. I'm Storm, Isabella Storm Riley. Storm, being my mother's maiden name, and you are?"

"Malcolm," I say "pleased to meet you." As you leaned over, purposely close I thought, to pull the photo from the fridge, I said, "You know Malcolm means calm. Funny we should meet, storm and calm. I don't suppose you are stormy though are you? I mean, I'm not always calm, although people sometimes say that about me."

You gave a laugh, wrote your number on the back of the photo, and handing it to me said, "Call me, I think you're cute."

For the rest of the evening I watched you. I found myself constantly following your every move. The way you talked to everyone, being so freely open and warming the whole of every room as you entered. You came across with such strength and poise. I'm running all this through my mind, because there are so many things I see in you that I wish for myself.

I know I am many things but I am not an open person.

I can't do what you do and meeting you, I can't help but remember what I said to you at the party, you are storm and I am calm. I wonder are we truly opposite and do the names we carry in life affect our outlook on life or the way we present ourselves to the world. I wonder at the meanings of names and if we are opposite in name, are we opposite.

And as I think along these lines, I wonder about being with someone named Storm. Would there always be an uncertainty, not knowing what might trigger a storm? Would I be able to let you be stormy or would I always try to calm you? I try to think of all the positive things that happen from a storm, although strong and fierce and fast, it leaves behind a freshness when it's over. There is the calm before the storm and the calm after the storm, so there may be hope for us. I think of opposites, of ying and yang, push and pull, tall and short, the list is endless. And in rhyming them off I realise there is a certain harmony in all of them as there is with Calm and Storm. They are tied together, always paired, always with their own balance and it is with these thoughts fresh on my mind that I turn over the photograph, and call you.

(Look for the 2nd and 3rd Place winners in upcoming issues)



Sharyl A. Heber

Critique Group Chair

"Critique Group Connections"

NW Members—Please, email critique requests to: Sharyl Heber, Critique Group Coordinator sharylheber@gmail.com or call her at 805-528-3116. We'll print your specific request in this **Critique Group Connections***** section of the newsletter for all NW members to view, increasing opportunities for NW critiquing. Use this information to find a match for your needs, make contacts, or to start a new group or critique partnership. Contact Sharyl for assistance if needed. And, if you form a group, please let Sharyl know so she can list it on the website. She can also showcase the group's talent in the newsletter. Critique Group Guidelines are available on the website at www.slomightwriters.org.

***SLO NW cannot guarantee critique group formation or availability but do we strive to facilitate connections between writers so they can initiate and develop their own writing affiliations. While we cannot be, and are not, responsible for any outcomes from these associations, we hope they lead to great creative magic and magnificent literary works!

Poetry Critique Group Emerging! Any poet can join.
Any poet can benefit from input of a group.
Any interested poet can call Irene @ 481-3824.
Together we can set time and place to meet.

CRITIQUE GROUP REQUESTS:

Sheri Humphreys is seeking a critique Group for FICTION - ROMANCE genre specifically, SciFi and suspense are fine too. No specific skill level required. Preferred location is Cambria, Morro Bay, SLO. Contact Sheri by phone at 805-927-2453 or email at sheri@sherihumphreys.com

Kristen Herrera is seeking a critique group for FICTION and YA. Preferred skill level is intermediate to advanced / experienced. Preferred location is SLO City area or South County. Contact Kristen by email: kristenmbriggs@yahoo.com

Tony Taylor is seeking a critique group for FICTION, YA, CHILDREN'S MIDDLE GRADE or VARIED GENRES, preferred skill level is advanced / experienced writers. Preferred location is SLO City area. Contact Tony at 805-704-3528 or by email: tony@anthonyjtaylor.com

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Critique Group Connections, Continued

Rolynn Anderson wishes to organize a **NEW PLOTTING GROUP** for LITERARY FICTION with elements of suspense and mystery. Preferred skill level is advanced. Preferred location is Arroyo Grande/Los Osos/SLO area.

Contact Rolynn at 805-473-5847 or by email rolynna@earthlink.net

Irene Chadwick is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange for POETRY. Preferred Skill Level is Intermediate to Advanced. Preferred location for meeting is SLO City.

Contact Irene at 805-481-3824 or by email: irenekooi@gmail.com

David Flamm is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange or 1:1 writing mentor/partner or editing fee for service, for COMMERCIAL FICTION. Preferred Skill Level is Intermediate to Advanced. Preferred locations for meetings are SLO City, South County/Santa Maria, Orcutt.

Contact David at 805-868-3779 or by email: david.flamm@yahoo.com

Christina Grimm is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange for VARIED NO GENRE RESTRICTIONS. No skill restrictions. Preferred location for meetings is SLO City, Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cambria, but can travel to other locations.

Contact Christina at 805-459-4923 or by email: grimmpsych@gmail.com

Jill Stegman is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange for LITERARY FICTION or LITERARY HYBRIDS WITH THRILLER, SUSPENSE, MYSTERY. Preferred skill level is advanced. Preferred location for meetings is SLO City, Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cambria or North County.

Contact Jill at 805-466-1956 or by email: jastegman@gmail.com

Colin McKay is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange for COMMERCIAL FICTION – CRIME, YA, or SCREENWRITING. Preferred skill level is advanced. No location restrictions for meetings but would prefer Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cambria.

Contact Colin by email: mckay01@gmail.com

Deborah Brasket is seeking a critique group, online peer edit exchange, or 1:1 writing partner for ADULT LITERARY FICTION, NOVELS AND SHORT STORIES, AND FOR CHILDREN'S MIDDLE GRADE NOVEL. Preferred experience level is intermediate to advanced. North County is preferred.

Contact Deborah at 221-5405 or by email: dbrasket51@gmail.com

Bill Bloom is seeking co-author/editor arrangements for two projects—one, an autobiography; the other, a book about Albert Einstein's wife. Any fee for service to be arranged between author and editor.

Contact Bill at 543-1910 or by email: clb4u2c@charter.net

Critique Group Connections, Continued

Griselda Rivera is seeking multiple critique groups: MEMOIRS, TEEN & CHILDREN'S, ACADEMIC/ EDUCATION/LINGUISTICS.

Contact Griselda at grissilvarivera58@yahoo.com

Shruti Manier is seeking a critique group for YA FANTASY / SCI-FI; SLO City location is preferred.

Contact Shruti at 458-8616 or by email: shruti.maniar@gmail.com

Alycia Kiley is seeking a critique group for VARIED GENRES but primarily POETRY, NON FICTION and ARTICLES; skill level is intermediate. SLO City location is preferred.

Contact Alycia at 602-7075 or by email, alyciakiley@gmail.com

George Klein is seeking a critique group or 1:1 writing mentor/partner for COMMERCIAL FICTION; No particular skill level or meeting location restrictions.

Contact George at 712-3378 or by email, fangio@charter.net

Quote of the Month

"In his work, an artist should be like God in creation; invisible and all-powerful. He should be felt everywhere and seen nowhere."

~Gustave Flaubert

Word of the Month

"Plutolatry"

Definition: (N. Greek: *pluto*, wealth + *latry*, worship) excessive devotion to wealth

Synonyms: addiction, fanaticism, worship, zealotry

Usage: In an age when most were lucky to afford a single room, the overlord's huge house was the epitome of plutolatry.

MEMBER-AT-LARGE CONNECTION

Dear NightWriters,

When I became a Member-at-Large six months ago, I was familiar with the duty statement for the position. I felt confident that I could perform those specific duties well enough, and I was ready to learn and improve along the way. It turns out that board members wear lots of hats. There are projects that pop up all the time. They don't necessarily fit one box, so it is up to everyone to divvy them up. At the time I joined the NightWriters, the idea was thrown around about doing interviews for the monthly newsletter. I decided to take a stab at it.

I didn't have any experience to speak of. If I really wanted to, I could fool you into thinking otherwise by claiming I worked in Human Resources and participated in interviewing, but the truth is it was never my main responsibility and there is a huge difference between interviewing potential employees and interviewing authors – with employees you have to mainly make sure they don't say too much, while with authors your goal is the exact opposite.

I should also mention that I am a shy person. It's an interesting contradiction in my personality – I am addicted to people and I hate being alone, but if I am in a room full of strangers, I find it scarily intimidating to approach someone. Asking people questions represented a challenge for me, but it was one I wanted to face. The first person I interviewed was [Jay Asher](#). It was probably the best choice I could have made. He was most accommodating, and it was easier for me to contact others once I could tell them I had interviewed a NYT bestselling author. Since then I spoke to [Rachael Herron](#) (romance writer), [Ingrid Escajeda](#) (TV show writer) and in this issue of WordSmiths you can find my conversation with literary agent Danielle Smith.

Of course this is not Pulitzer Prize-worthy reporting, but I have come to realize this is something I truly enjoy doing. It has also been an invaluable lesson for me. I learned that unless you ask, you will never know. I have since talked to many strangers, including some at our general meetings. People have fascinating stories to share – if you just ask. They may not look like they do. That's the most beautiful thing about it. You can be staring at an old box in the attic and let your gaze slide right past it, without ever discovering it is full of shiny jewels.

I would love to hear any suggestions about how we can make these interviews more interesting for you. I would also love to encourage you to let me know if you would like to be interviewed, or if you would like to submit to our newsletter an interview you have



*Andrea Chmelik
Member-at-Large*

conducted yourself.

Don't be shy (or be and remember – I am too!) and send me an e-mail at chmelik.andrea@gmail.com. I can't wait to hear from you!

Yours,

Andrea Chmelik
chmelik.andrea@gmail.com

PS: Last month I wrote a [column about my struggles to find time and motivation to write](#). I have received some wonderfully helpful feedback and I am waiting for more! Please, send me your tips and I will compile a list that I will share with all of you!



As many of you know, Andrea has been awaiting the birth of her second child. Please welcome the newest member of SLO NightWriters family, born on June 27 at, as Andrea wrote, "3:00-ish pm." She weighed in at 8 lbs, 13 oz (more than a pound bigger than her brother!) and measured 20.5 inches in length. Isn't she a cutie?

Welcome, Fiona Rose Masney!



Proud Mamma and child.
Congratulations, Andrea!



Fiona Rose Masney (wearing a hat knitted
by your esteemed Newsletter editor)

KUDOS... KUDOS... KUDOS

Judythe Guarnera's essay, "Knowing They Are Loved" was published in the Chicken Soup for the Soul's 20th Anniversary Reader's Choice Edition.

Judythe Guarnera's essay, "Acing the Final," won 2nd Place in the San Mateo County Fair's Literary Arts Contest. Her memoir, "The Bridesmaid and the Plumber's Friend," received an honorable mention. A glitch resulted in both pieces not being published in the "Carry the Light" anthology, so they are posted on the fair's website. Read her entries and what was said about **our website** (they are very impressed by the site and what NW has to offer): <https://www.sanmateocountyfair.com/contests/departments/literary-arts>

Another of **Andrea Chmelik's** blog posts has been selected by Babble's editorial team and will be published in their e-book about post partum depression. The book will be launched sometime next year. The post that they have selected is this one (in case you want to read it): <http://andreachmelik.blogspot.com/2012/04/when-motherhood-doesnt-come-naturally.html>

Terry Sanville's flash fiction story "Trying Not to Feel" will appear in the upcoming edition of "RiverLit," a print quarterly. Check them out at <http://riverlit.clymerygallery.com/>

Terry Sanville's short personal essay "The Ability to Choose" will appear in next edition of "The Avalon Literary Review," a print journal out of Orlando Florida. Check them out at <http://www.avalonliteraryreview.com/index.html>

A review of **Beryl Reichenberg's** picture book for ages 3 to 6, *The Mysterious Case of the Missing Birthday Cake*, appeared on drbooks.blogspot.com. Said the reviewer, "This book encourages bravery, observation, kindness and friendship, and can be used to teach sequence of events. It's a great read-aloud story time book for pre-schoolers and kindergartners."

Judy Salamacha's *Colonel Baker's Field, An American Pioneer Story* has been running a marathon ever since it came out. She was written up in BCAFYI in June, and on July 6th her co-author and publisher/collaborator were featured on CSpan Book TV. On July 31, Judy and her daughter, Jody, will give a presentation at the Morro Bay Library. Judy also will be at Coalesce Book Store in Morro Bay on August 24th to sign books. Mark your calendars so you can get your own autographed copy of this fascinating, tightly-written, thoroughly-researched volume of local history.

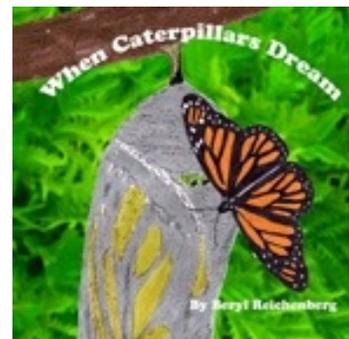
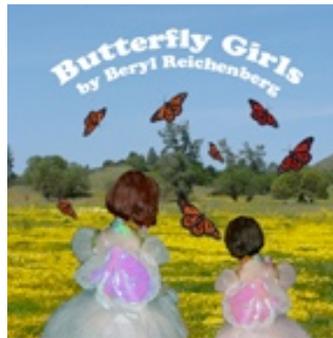
Susan Tuttle has posted a 1,300 word excerpt from her suspense novel, "Piece By Piece," on the Ballot Press website as part of their ongoing contest. You can read the excerpt, which comes from about 1/3 of the way into the novel, and vote to help her win publication of the book at:

www.ballotpress.com/category/read-and-rate

Susan Tuttle has also recorded the first of 12 spiritual songs she has written over the past 3 years. "Take My Hand, O Lord" will be available soon on Bandcamp.com as a single, and the album, which will contain two Christmas songs, will hopefully be out in time for holiday gift giving.

BOOK LAUNCHES

Beryl Reichenberg, a NightWriter and a children's picture book author, will be signing and talking about her latest books at Whiz Kids Toy Store on August 10 from 11 to 1 PM. Both her latest books, *Butterfly Girls* and *When Caterpillars Dream*, will be featured. Drop by and also learn how to fold an accordion book. For more information, contact Lesa Smith at Whiz Kids, 805-547-1733. Whiz Kids is located at 3979 S. Higuera, next to Trader Joe's.



SLO NW e↔Line Edit Exchange

Can't find a critique group? Don't have time for meetings? Have specific needs for feedback on your work? Our Electronic Peer Review Line Edit Exchange is perfect for out-of-town members, or those with restricted time schedules. All E-Exchange Partners are SLO NW members.

- Exchange views with other writers: no fees charged, no credit expected or required.
- Contact each other, set their own rules and time frames.
- Use your own style of editing/commenting.
- If you don't find value in the feedback, try someone else on the list.

To be added, contact **Sharyl Heber** (sharylheber@gmail.com) with: Your Name, Email, Genre (if you desire a specific one), Skill Level (if you require a specific level). She will add you to the list. Then you can reach out on a one-to-one basis and find the right writing partner for you.

JUNE EXCITEMENT

Review of our June Meeting
by Susan Tuttle

Excitement ran high at our June meeting as the winners of our annual short story and poetry contest were revealed. The winning stories and poems kept us all spellbound. And one of the best surprises of the evening is that First Place in Story/Memoir went to Grace Keating from Nova Scotia, Canada. Yes, the annual NightWriter story/Poetry contest can now boast an international winner!

After the readings and a short break, we reassembled to watch an unrehearsed presentation by Anna Unkovich and agent Danielle Smith on how **not** to approach an agent. Thankfully, they followed this comedic, but all-too-lifelike (things like that actually do happen, according to Danielle), fiasco with how to prepare and approach an agent in a serious, professional manner. We all came away wiser and grateful for the information.

Judy Salamacha then gave us an overview of this year's Central Coast Writer's Conference, which promises to be the best ever. There's a dazzling array of writers, poets, agents, editors, etc., winging their way to Cuesta College on September 20-21. If you haven't yet attended the conference, this is the one to go to. For more information, go to:

www.communityprograms.org

And finally, we held the drawing for the CCWC scholarship to be awarded to a NightWriter member who entered the contest. Since the winner has to be present to win, we went through three names (sorry to those who weren't in attendance) before we found our lucky writer: Rebecca Waddell! It was a great night for her, for she also won an honorable mention for her story (see page 4 for the full list of winners.)

Next month is our famous "Critique Extravaganza." Mark your calendars and bring @250 words to be critiqued, if you wish. See you on August 13th!



Mark Arnold collects his second HM of the night



Grace Keating from Nova Scotia looks happy with her 1st Place win



Bill Scott accepts his HM award



Becca Waddell receives her HM award from Judith Amber Bernstein



And enraptured audience - Charlie Perryess and Mark Arnold, 2 award winners, front and center. Synchronicity?



webmaster Janice sharing a laugh



Anne Schroeder dropped in from Grants Pass, OR to read her fellow writer's winning entry ("Lull" by Donna Reese)



Come one, come all to the CCWC on September 20th and 21st. (Judy Salamacha, Danielle Smith and Anna Unkovich)

How NOT to dress, talk, act in front of an agent (Anna and Daneille)



Sherry Heber awarding Mira Oaten her 2nd Place Prize

MUSINGS AND NEWS: TOLOSA CORNER



*Judythe Guarnera,
Tolosa Submissions
Manager*

"A great deal of intelligence can be invested in ignorance when the need for illusion is deep." ~Saul Bellow

A friend sent me the above quote. Still haven't figured out if the quote was directed at a shortcoming of mine or rather some reference to today's politics. Send me an e-mail if you can write a short paragraph about how the quote might help develop a character in a story.

I have a story to tell about something that happened to me. There's a moral to the story that might help you get published.

Perhaps you read in last month's NW WordSmiths Newsletter, that I had received a second place award in the San Mateo County Fair Literary Contest and that my essay would be published in "Carry the Light," a 300 page anthology.

I was tickled to find out that my other entry, a memoir piece, had also received an Honorable Mention. I was also invited to read my essay at a Winner's Circle at the Fair. Excitedly, I waited for my ribbon and the anthology.

When it came, I ripped open the envelope to find a lovely glossy, covered book. I read my name and the titles of my two essays in the front of the book. Then I looked in vain to find my published work. Under essays, the first place entry was followed by the third page entry. Mine was missing.

I went page by page through the book, checked the table of contents and the index. Nada.

Now, early on I had connected with a very nice lady who managed the entries. Paul Alan Fahey, a writer friend of mine, had also connected with the woman the year before when he had won first place in the contest. So, we had some nice communications back and forth. She helped me get my entry straightened out. I sent her e-mails thanking her for her work and she praised my writing.

Although I was crushed not to be published and figured there wasn't anything that could be done about it, I wrote her an e-mail and shared my disappointment. Of course she responded. Turns out that, somehow, a "no" was written after my name and entries, indicating that I had opted out of being published in the anthology.

The great part was that there was something that could be done. This is what she wrote:

“ We can't fix the book but I'd like to make it up to you in some small way. How about if we publish your two entries on the fair literary page, on our Carry the Light blog, and also on our FaceBook page? We could also include your photo and bio and our apology for this oversight.”

Can you guess what the moral/lesson is that I mentioned at the beginning? Editors and Publishers are people. They like to hear praise and to be thanked. If you can find a way to connect, the chance that the connection makes both you and the other person happy is a good one.

And sometimes it may get you a response that you never expected.

TOLOSA KUDOS

Join me in celebrating the NW members who have been published in Tolosa Press during the past month.

Destry Ramey wrote a tribute to “My Dad, Jack,” which was published in SLO City News.

Judith Amber Bernstein's humorous “Wildlife Saver” was published in Coast News.

Mike Price's essay, “I Can Do This,” was published in SLO City News.

Don't forget that you can't get published if you don't submit and you can't submit if you don't write.

In the rhythm of writing,

Judythe

2 CONTESTS FROM A ROOM OF HER OWN (AROH)

These contests are just for woman (Sorry, Guys) and feature great monetary prizes as well as publication. Well worth the entry fees.

1. **AROH Orlando contest:** For women writers. \$1,000 prize in each category, plus publication in the LA Review. Deadline July 31. Categories: short fiction (1,500 words); Creative Nonfiction (1,500 words); Poetry (36 lines); Flash fiction (500 words). \$15.00 entry fee per submission. For information and entry form: www.aroho.org/orlando.php
2. **AROH To The Lighthouse contest:** Best unpublished poetry collection by a woman. \$1,000 plus publication by red Hen Press. Deadline, August 31. Limit of 48-96 pages. \$20.00 entry fee. Entries must be snail mailed to arrive by due date. Download the cover sheet on the website. www.aroho.org/To The Lighthouse.php

A NIGHT OF CRITIQUE!

**The August 13th General Meeting
Bring 250-500 words to read for critique!**

There's a special treat planned for August: **A Critique Extravaganza!** If you're not in a critique group, do you wonder what it's like, what kind of feedback a NightWriters group would give? If you are you in a group, do you sometimes wonder if another group of writers would give different feedback?

Well, wonder no more. On **Tuesday, August 13, at 7:00 pm**, our general meeting at the PG&E Education Center will hold its **3rd Annual Critique Extravaganza**: How to give them, how to receive them, anything you want to know.

We'll cover the basics of effective critique process and discuss the variations that have evolved in our existing groups. This is an interactive, hands-on meeting. Members and guests are encouraged to **bring 250-500 words to read for critique**. We'll hear and critique as many pieces as time allows. Our experienced panel will give feedback to the reader, and we'll take comments from the general NW membership as well. And, **don't forget to also bring paper and pen for taking critique notes**.

One of the greatest values of participating in a critique process is that you get to hear a variety of perspectives and learn by what other writers do right—and not so right. It's a fabulous way to improve your skills.

Don't be shy! Bring your work on that Tuesday night. It will be encouraging, informative and fun!

SLO NightWriters Critique Groups are a special part of the NightWriters' experience. They are a Members-Only Benefit and offer a way to exchange writing for feedback with others in a supportive environment.

For group guidelines and further information regarding our critique groups, visit our website at www.slownightwriters.org or contact our Critique Group Coordinator, Sharyl Heber (sheber@charter.net)

POETRY KIT SUMMER POETRY COMPETITION 2013

The theme is "stories" (this can be broadly interpreted). There are no style or length restrictions but a short poem is just as likely to be selected as a longer one. Competition Judge; Jim Bennett. 1st prize is £100. ONLINE ENTRY ONLY by email to comp@poetrykit.org after an appropriate fee is paid by Pay Pal to info@poetrykit.org Deadline: before midnight 30th September 2013. First prize is £100 plus publication at the Poetry Kit website. Entry fees: 1 poem, £3.50; 3 Poems, £8.00; 5 poems, £10 For more details please go to: <http://www.poetrykit.org/comp2013.htm>

WRITE IT RIGHT ~ WRITERS CLINIC

**Explore Dialogue and Plot
in this 4-hour Hands-on, Interactive Workshop**

Saturday - July 20th

9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Held at the PG&E Education Center, 6588 Ontario Road, San Luis Obispo

Unrealistic dialogue and weak plots can kill an otherwise terrific story. In this workshop, we will spend 2 hours on Dialogue and 2 hours on Plot, using "Write It Right" exercises to learn the skills and strategies we need to make our writing the best it can be.

This third in our acclaimed series of "Write It Right" workshops is designed for beginner, intermediate and experienced writers—fiction and creative nonfiction alike. Attendance at first clinics is **not** required.

Volumes 1-6 of the "Write It Right" Series will be available for purchase on CD at the clinic.

Guaranteed to improve and stretch your writing talent!

\$25 Member Early Bird Registration received by **July 13**

\$35.00 Non-member Early Bird Registration received by **July 13**

Walk-ins welcome (\$40.00 at door) but you **must email by July 18th** to reserve your seat.

Registration Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Genre: _____

**Hurry! There's still time to
reserve your seat! Mail Today!**

Mail this form with your check payable to:

SLO NightWriters P.O. Box 6241, Los Osos, CA 93412
Questions and information: contact Susan Tuttle at aim2write@yahoo.com

TIPS FROM A LITERARY AGENT: INTERVIEW WITH DANIELLE SMITH



Danielle M. Smith

Danielle Smith began her agent career at [Foreword Literary Agents](#) in 2013 where she represents picture books and middle grade books authors and illustrators. Her enthusiasm for children's literature began as a young child, but grew exponentially when her own two children were born. Shortly thereafter she began reviewing books at her now top rated children's book review site [There's A Book](#). For more than five years she's been involved professionally with books through print and online publications. Danielle is also a middle grade book writer, a member of SCBWI and can frequently be found on Twitter (@the1stdaughter) talking about anything from children's books to the BBC's Sherlock to her own parenting woes & joys.

Being a blogger myself, I am curious how did you decide to start a blog with children's book reviews.

When my son was about 18 months old, he loved books. He loved reading and wanted to read constantly, but I had hard times finding good books for him. The town we lived in at the time had a poor library, my husband and I were in school and didn't have money to spare and I kept thinking: "I can't be the only parent whose kid loves to read so much, struggling to find books for him or her." I decided to look into it. That was five years ago.

How did you become an agent? What did you want to be when you were a child?

If I had known what an agent was at the age of 8 or 9, I would have said that was my dream job. Through the course of writing my book review blog, I have interviewed authors and editors and I met other book bloggers. One of them was Pam van Hylckama Vlieg. Pam is one of the partners at Foreword Literary Agency now. She started with blogging shortly before I did and we became good friends. Pam started interning with Laurie McLean, who is now another partner at Foreword Literary. I signed with Pam for a middle grade book I wrote. I started working with her and learning about agenting. Then Laurie, Pam and Gordon Warnock started Foreword Literary and needed somebody to work with children's books, picture books and middle grade books. They asked if I was interested in doing that full time. I was so excited about the offer! It was scary at first – when I started my blog five years ago I would have never thought that I would become an agent. But it is neat because what I enjoyed about reviewing was being able to promote books from authors that I really loved. The transition seems perfect. Now I get to work with authors and help them publish their work.

Can you tell me what exactly an agent does? What are your responsibilities once you sign with a writer?

When I decide to represent a writer or illustrator, I will review what they have written,

DANIELLE SMITH INTERVIEW...CONT'D

give them revision notes and let them know if something needs to be worked out or if edits are needed to make their work really shine. Once all is done, I submit it to the editors of publishing houses I feel would be interested in it. I spend a lot of time researching and making sure that I picked the right editor for each book. I have a lot of different clients – some of them are more interested in making sure that their book will get great marketing plan and the publisher will get their book out there, others are more interested in working with certain people in a particular publishing house. Then I negotiate the terms of contract. After that author works with the editor and once the book gets published I help with marketing. Our agency is very hands on. We have a whole publicity group that works to promote the author.

Do you continue to work with the author on their next books? Are most relationships long or short term?

I prefer to work with the author long term. I am not a project based agent. I recommend that picture books authors I take on have three or four books completed. For me to just take them on for one book project would feel strange.

You ask to see 10 pages of manuscript. What is it that catches your eye in those 10 pages? What are you dying to see?

I am definitely a character driven reader and agent. Usually when I read a manuscript I consider really good, it is because I become connected to the character even in just those 10 pages. There is something so compelling about that person or the story surrounding that person that I want to read more and figure out what is going to happen to them. There is a big difference between just writing a story and writing something that is compelling. If I could ask for anything, I would say I really want a magical realism story. There are not too many middle grade books like that. Betsy Bird, who is a librarian at New York Public Library and reviews books for School Library Journal, points out there aren't very many middle grade books that feature characters of color. If there is a book with a character of color, then it is what the story is about. There should be books in which characters are different races or nationalities, but it is not something that needs to be pointed out. I would love to see that.

What kind of homework should writers do before they contact you?

I think the first important thing is to read the agency web-site and guidelines. Hopefully before they've done that they finished their book. Don't submit unless you have the whole book. Do some research. I am surprised by the amount of people who mass mail. It is worth your time to look at the agent's blog or web-site if they have one, find out who

DANIELLE SMITH INTERVIEW...CONT'D

their clients are, see what deals they made – most agents that I know don't just sign for a project, but want to work with the author long term. It is a partnership you are getting into and you should invest some time into finding the best one for you. If you know what the agent likes to read and what kind of authors he or she represents, then you know if he or she might like your work.

What are the most common mistakes or turn offs?

I think it starts with the query. If you send a very long query that goes into too much detail or does not talk about the book, that is a turn off. I like 3-paragraph query that talks about the book and a little about yourself. Authors need to do their research and remember it is a business relationship. They need to be professional.

For beginner writer who doesn't know the business, what is the best way to search for an agent?

There is a site called [Query Tracker](#). It is a really good site that lists agents. You can search by genre and you can look at each agent and read what other people said about them in comment section.

Does a geographical location matter?

It's a personal choice. For example I don't have any clients that live nearby. Our agency is all virtual, we don't have an actual office. We do Skype meetings and video conferences. I get excited when I get to meet my clients, but to me geographical location is not important.

Is it important nowadays that the author you represent has an established social media platform?

I don't think it matters. It is nice if the author already has that established and it helps with promoting the book, but it is not required. I have a mixed bag – some of the authors have followers and some don't.

Do writers need an agent?

It depends on what you want to do. If you want to publish with a big publisher, then you are going to need an agent, because they won't accept things from general public. But if you want to do your own promotion, you can just self publish. Our agency tailors to authors needs. We can represent you with a big publisher house, or help you with promotion and marketing if you self publish. We can help you to avoid mistakes that might cost you money.

For more information, visit the Foreword Literary site: <http://forewordliterary.com/>
Check out Danielle's submission guidelines: <http://forewordliterary.com/foreword/danielle-smith/>

The Winning Poems

CECILIA

On Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles
Cecilia struts on high heels, sporting
tight faded jeans, Frisco T-shirts
oversize sunglasses, purple nail-polish
tilts her red Maxfactor lips to heaven
her face spilling with dreams

She sings along a Mexican song
from a passing car, slow and melancholy

"Voy para norte! Voy para norte!"
"Para alcanzar me sueño"

Memories shift as vivid as fire
her journey from the blue hills
of the Sierra Madre, Guatemala
to the stretch of potholes along
La Carretera al Pacifico, to the border
of Mexico, past yawning ravines
of El Espinoza del Diablo
all the way to Los Angeles

Down there
locked inside a trunk of an old Ford, hot and airless
she curls like a cat on a piece of cardboard
endures the raw heat of summer, count sparks
of light drifting in and out, gasping for breath,
holding fast to a single beam to keep her march
as dreams are flung, killed, in cold and starless nights

Out of the trunk on the hill of Matamoros, T.J.
she heads north, darts in and out of alleys
crossing highways, skipping gutters, bridges,
solitary stations of border patrols, outrunning
dogs barking in rage into a house with shut
windows and dark streams of secrets

Inside closed doors, quick eyes stare at her in silence
faces brown as cinnamon bark, fresh as Amazon mangoes
bound by one language, one dream, one plan, one destination
a journey of no return.

2nd Place Poetry Winner



Amazing poetry was revealed as the winners read their entries. 2nd Place was won and read by Mira Oaten from Santa Barbara, CA. for her poem titled, "Cecilia."



3rd Place Poetry Winner

Opening Their Journals at the Navajo School

By Ivan BrownOtter
Cayucos, California

A perfect storm
slowly swallows the ski
Cool air rushes in
fresh with the scent
of juniper soil

Suddenly
the classroom explodes with light
The brazen crash ... a lightning strike
Zigzags of fire hiss like snakes
Ozone's sour tongue licks the air
The roar of a freight train
comes barreling straight down

Kids rush to the windows
Glowing marbles pour out of the sky
bouncing big as hominy corn
rumble the canyon like kettle drums
and paint a path of summer white
out across the plateau

With my ears still ringing
I whisper to the class
"Take out your journals
It's time to write"

Some stay at the windows
others sit on the floor
opening their journals
to the storm

SUNDAY POETRY

South County Poets meet on the 4th Sunday of each month in **Rooster Creek Tavern**, a popular restaurant at the corner of Short and E. Branch Street in the heart of the **Village of Arroyo Grande**. Parking is plentiful behind the restaurant.

Gather at 5:30 pm. Readings start at six, followed by a short break and open mic. There will be a break during the meeting. Bring your poetry to share and join NightWriter's own Evy Cole at Rooster Creek Tavern on July 28.



CORNERS OF THE MOUTH

Poetry Readings held on the 3rd Sunday of every month at 7:00 pm. There is a featured poet, followed by open mic readings. Corners of the Mouth meet at Linnea's Cafe in San Luis Obispo, 1110 Garden Street. Join Kevin Patrick Sullivan and some of the area's best poets every 3rd Sunday at 7:00 pm. Bring some work to share.

BALLOT PRESS NOVEL CONTEST

Have you entered your finished novel yet? This is a great way for an unknown, or relatively unknown, author to break into publishing. This is a legitimate contest, with the main prize the opportunity to work with a professional editor and have your book published by a publishing house that still does marketing and promotion.

Writers retain all rights to their work, unless you win the contest. If you win and your work is not selected for publication, all rights revert back to you. Royalties top out at 50%, much better than most traditional publishers. If selected, your book will be produced in both print and all e-formats. They target bookstores and libraries as part of their marketing campaign.

It's easy to enter. Simply upload your **finished manuscript** to the Ballot Press website (www.ballotpress.com/writing-contest/) and post a **1,500 word excerpt** from the book for open voting. Then tell everyone you know to go vote for your entry. For more information go to the Ballot Press website, or contact Ballot Press Publisher Karen Velie at 805-234-1703.

And while you're there, vote for **Susan Tuttle's** excerpt from her suspense novel, "Piece By Piece." You have until August 25th to vote on this work, but do it now, so you don't forget. www.ballotpress.com/category/read-and-rate Help her win publication!



2 MORE CONTESTS

1. The Killer Wore Cranberry: Room for Thirds Anthology: Short stories between 1,500 - 5,000 words. All stories must be about murder and mayhem at Thanksgiving, must feature a typical Thanksgiving dish as a vital part of the story (i.e.: turkey, mashed potatoes, pumpkin pie) and must be funny! This anthology is all about making people laugh while enjoying a great mystery short at the same time. The anthology will be edited by Editor-in-Chief Jay Hartman. **Deadline: September 1st.** Send to jhartman@untreedreads.com with "Thanksgiving" in subject line. Submit in .doc, .rtf or .odt format only. No up front payment, but royalties will be shared. Direct all questions to jhartman@untreedreads.com

2. The Inland Empire branch of the California Writers Club are hosting a writing contest. The contest is open to anyone, and we offer cash prizes. The categories are fiction, nonfiction and poetry, and the **deadline is August 15**. The theme -- which must be touched upon but need not be written to -- is "The truest wisdom." For more information about the contest and the rules, visit the Inland Empire website at: <http://www.angelfire.com/amiga/iecwc/>

NW FOSTERING THE NEXT GENERATION

“The SLO NightWriters **Teen Writing Workshop** at the San Luis Obispo County Library this summer was a tremendous success,” reports Margaret Kensing-Klopper, Head of Youth Services at the San Luis Library. “We had a group of preteens and teens who were chomping at the bit to work with expert authors to hone their writing craft. The youth were very excited to have like-minded individuals to bounce ideas off of and simply share in their love of writing.

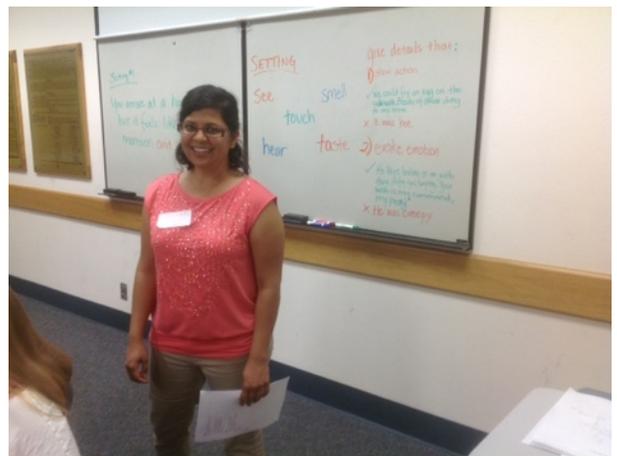
“**Shruti Maniar** was an excellent leader. She was able to bring the students’ skills to a higher level in a way that was fun and interactive. I heard from many of the teens and parents afterward how much they enjoyed this week-long workshop, and that they would definitely want to do this again! One of the teens who entered into the workshop started out a little wary, but with Shruti’s warmth and encouragement, this author blossomed into an excited and interested participant.

“I would highly recommend this workshop and look forward to hosting this with NightWriters (and Shruti) again next year!”

According to Sharyl Heber, who visited the workshop, Shruti led exercises on Setting, Character Development, Story Premise and Show Don’t Tell. Attendees had the opportunity to publish excerpts of their work in a short Teen-Zine that was printed and shared with the class. They each came away with a formal Certificate of Completion and NightWriters brochures and information on the teen scholarships for the CCWC in September.

Congratulations to Shruti for a job well done. Reaching out to the youth in our community was high on the list of Future Strategies identified by NightWriter members in last year’s Strategic Planning session. Shruti picked up this ball and ran with it, creating a highly successful platform from which to encourage and nurture the next generation of writers. It’s obvious from both Sharyl’s Ms. Kendinger-Klopper’s reports that young writers are anxious for opportunities to learn their craft. Perhaps next year, with more NW volunteers stepping up to spend a week with young writers, we can expand our youth program to include more teens county-wide.

If you are interested in exploring this great opportunity, contact Sharyl Heber at sheber@charter.net.



NightWriter Shruti Maniar in full “teacher mode.”

PROGRAMS DIRECTOR

NW is in need of a **Program Director for 2014**. It can be one person, or a team of writers who collaborate to find interesting and entertaining programs for our monthly meetings. A team approach is a great way to go, so no one person has all the responsibility, and you have built-in brainstorming collaborators. Judy Salamacha, our current Programs Director, will be on hand to help with questions or problems. Interested in exploring (not committing to) this opportunity further? Drop us a line at slonightwriters@yahoo.com or contact your Member-at-Large, Andrea Chmelik at chmelik.andrea@gmail.com.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS WANTED

Do you have some great information other writers could use? Do you use a specific process or technique that would be of value to others? Do you follow interesting blogs, know of a fantastic website for writers? Have you read a great book—or a bad one—you could review? Do you have a quote, an interesting word, or do you know a writer you could interview? You're a writer: Why not write for WordSmiths? (Great for your resume!)

WordSmiths is looking for more NW members to submit articles, reviews, quotes, words, interviews, kudos, etc. Send to: Newsletter Editor at aim2write@yahoo.com or slonightwriters@yahoo.com. Be sure to **put "Newsletter Submission" in the subject line.**

On Thursday July 11th, at 7:00 pm, Cal Poly poets **Lisa Coffman** (who gave a wonderful presentation for NW) and Leslie St. John will kick off the Cal Poly Summer Reading Series. The free reading will take place in Science North (Bldg 53), room 215 on the Cal Poly campus. Both poets are originally from the South, both are dynamic, articulate readers of poetry, and both have just published new books, each of which will be available for sale at the reading. If you haven't heard Lisa read her work, don't miss this one. She's fabulous.

GREAT BEGINNINGS

...INFORMATION FOR BEGINNING WRITERS (AND EVERYONE ELSE TOO)

WHO ARE YOU?

From "Write It Right: Exercises to Unlock the Writer In Everyone"
By Susan Tuttle

This probably isn't news to anyone, but writers, even though their craft is a solitary one, do not write in a vacuum. Everything they see and do in everyday life becomes fodder for their stories.

But there is more to it. There is the writer him- or herself. Just like with food, you are what you write. You cannot be true to who you are if you try to write like someone else. Your vision will not be honest and compelling. Your stories will feel derivative. Imitation is a good way to learn techniques, but then you must go the extra step and make it your own. Only you see the world the way you do. Only you interpret events the way you do. And only you can write your stories.

To do that you must know who you are. As a human, as a man or woman, as a writer. I'm not talking psychology, or your bio, the when and what and where of your life. I'm talking about the how: how you got to be who you are. It's not enough to know that this or that happened to you. What's important is knowing how the event affected you, how it helped shape you into who you are, right now, today. The writer who sits with a whole population in his/her head, trying to get all their stories onto (virtual) paper.

Try this exercise from Volume 8 of my *Write It Right* series: *Voice and Style*. Set a timer for **20 minutes** and **write down the how of you**: how you got to be who you are. Let it be a stream of consciousness, whatever comes into your head. **Don't stop to think or correct**, just look at both the big and the little events of your life and write about how they affected you, your relationships, your wants and desires, the way you look at life. You're not writing a biography here, but concentrating on the thought: I am this because this happened. I am this because that happened. Write until the timer goes off. Then read what you wrote and see what surprises you. What saddens you. What scares you. What pleases you. Read your essence.

Once you can get inside to the places you don't want to go and open them up to the light (no, you don't have to share this with anyone else or even talk about it), you can then mine them for your stories. For in a very real sense, you are in what you write. Every character is an aspect of your own personality. Every setting reflects something deep within you. Every event in your stories is triggered and shaped by the events of your own life. And once you become comfortable with yourself, once you learn to accept who you are when no one is looking, then your stories will spring to life with a vitality they didn't have before.

When editors and agents speak of a unique vision, of a different way of telling a story, this is what they mean: They want to see you in the paragraphs, the sentences, the words. When you truly know yourself, the words you choose will reflect your unique self whether you write about other worlds, finding love, serial killers or a family saga. The world is waiting for your vision, your way of seeing life. You owe it not just to them to know yourself well enough to imbue your work with your uniqueness. You owe it to yourself.

We Need Your Help!

The success of non-profit organizations like NightWriters depends on its members. We all have talents other than writing that any organization could make use of.

NightWriters has many special opportunities for members to get involved, working "behind the scenes." If you'd like to assist in any capacity, email: slonightwriters@yahoo.com

President: Dennis Eamon Young
Vice-President: Sharyl Heber
Secretary: Carol Schmidt
Treasurer: Susan Tuttle
Program Director: Judy Salamacha
Contest Committee: Judith Bernstein, Sharyl Heber, Anita Hunt
Publicity Director: Jeannie Bruenning
Membership Director: ****Vacant****
Critique Group Chair: Sherry Heber
Member-At-Large: Andrea Chmelik
Writers' Workshops Coordinator: Sherry Heber
Tolosa Press Submission Manager: Judy Guarnera
Welcome Committee: Griselda Rivera, Anna Unkovich
Sunshine Chair: Kalila Volkov
Website Master: Janice Konstantinidis
Web Assistant: Lila Bhuta
Newsletter: Susan Tuttle
Art Director: Dennis Eamon Young
Assistant Secretary: Janice Konstantinidis
Board Assistant: Rebecca Waddell

About Our Monthly Meetings

NightWriters' Evening Meetings are on the second Tuesday of every month, year round. We encourage interested visitors to join us at 7:00 pm. Admission is free; refreshments are served.

Next Meeting: August 13th, 7:00 pm, at PG&E Education Center, 6855 Ontario Road, San Luis Obispo. It's our famous Critique Night. Bring a 250 word piece to read and experience a safe and productive critique session.

Writers' Critique Groups: For paid members only. These groups read and critique each other's work and discuss the business of writing. Visitors welcome; phone ahead to make arrangements. See details below, or visit our website: www.slonightwriters.org

Notify NW of any change in address or email:

slonightwriters@yahoo.com. Join NW and send dues or renewal checks (payable to SLO NightWriters) to: SLO NightWriters, PO Box 6241, Los Osos, CA 93412-6241. Or join/renew online through our website:

Email all correspondence to: slonightwriters@yahoo.com or snail mail to: SLO NightWriters PO Box 6241 Los Osos, CA 93412-6241. We must have your **current email address** in order to send the Newsletter and other important NW announcements.

Newsletter Submissions: Send **by the 15th of the current month** for next month's publication. Send in kudos, writing articles, quotes, facts and tidbits, etc. Mark email "for newsletter" and send to: slonightwriters@yahoo.com

Have YOU Checked Out Our Website Lately? Control Your Own Information!

Post your bio, picture, book covers and ordering links! Contribute a writing blog post! Free publicity!

MEMBER SITE LINKS!

List your website(s) and blog(s) with live links — makes it easier for the public to find you and helps build your platform!

BOOK REVIEWS!

Get your book reviewed. Write a review—it's a valid publishing credit!

WRITERS SERVICES!

Do you have a writing or professional skill? Get listed on our new Services Page.

FACEBOOK!

Become a "Fan" of NightWriters! Visit NW's Facebook page and sign up today! Also, link your Facebook page and your websites and blogs to NW sites!

LinkedIn!

New! Connect with NW on LinkedIn! Help build your author platform with writing professional connections.

CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

NW Critique Groups are a wonderful benefit of NW Membership. Some groups are full, but many welcome visitors. Always contact the group leader listed for specific information regarding group availability and visiting options. SLO NW cannot guarantee critique group formation or availability but we do strive to facilitate connections between writers so they can initiate and develop their own writing affiliations. While we cannot be, and are not, responsible for any outcomes from these associations, we hope they lead to great creative magic and magnificent literary works! Contact **Sharyl Heber, Critique Group Coordinator** to list your critique group and critique needs in the NW Newsletter and on the NW Web site. sharylheber@gmail.com

Can't find an existing group? START ONE. It's easy! If you're new at this, don't be intimidated. It's fun and there are no lofty requisites. All it takes is two or more folks committed to reading/hearing the work of others and providing honest, constructive feedback. Critique groups are not teaching sessions. They are writers learning from reading and critiquing each others' works. Effective formats may include exchanging the review/editing service by mail or electronically, or meeting face-to-face and reading aloud to each other, or any combination that works for the group. One of our groups takes a lesson/learning approach and does practice writing exercises every meeting. Some groups focus on a particular genre; others accept all kinds of writing. Each group is different depending on their needs and interests. **Group members set their own times, dates, meeting locations, and parameters.** We have **Critique Group Guidelines** on our website to help get you started and we can provide a mentor to attend a few sessions if needed. www.slownightwriter.org. Contact slownightwriter@yahoo.com or Sharyl Heber, Critique Group Coordinator (sheber@charter.net) with your critique needs and genres and she'll do her best to assist you.

CRITIQUE GROUPS WITH OPENINGS

POETRY CRITIQUE GROUP FORMING

Poetry Critique Group Emerging! Any poet can join. Any poet can benefit from input of a group, regardless of experience. Call and together we can set time and place to meet.

CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS

Contact: Irene Chadwick, 481-3824
irenekooi@gmail.com

'JUST US' CHILDREN'S BOOK CRITIQUE

Meets in the South County. Critiqued at a fast pace, in a process where members critique each other's writing electronically, followed by a face-to-face meeting twice a month. **Meetings are held 1st and 3rd Saturdays at 10 am.** Contact moderator for details and directions.

CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS

Moderator: Lili Sinclair, 904-9697
liliasinclair@gmail.com

NORTH COUNTY GROUP

Meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays from 9:00 am-noon. Adult Fiction, Memoire, etc (See page 19). Non-fiction, too, until another group can start. Meets in Paso Robles. **CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Moderator: Lillian Brown, 215-6107
lilliofslo@aol.com

SLO CRITIQUES

This group has no genre restrictions and no skill level restrictions. Meeting location is San Luis Obispo. The day and meeting times will be open to discussion.

CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS.

Moderator: David Schwab, 543-3111
daveschwab@sbcglobal.net

HI HOPES

This group was invented to fill a need for a Los Osos/San Luis Obispo group that incorporates writers who generate stories, essays, novels,

CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

CRITIQUE GROUPS WITH OPENINGS

poetry—you get the picture—writers of any description. Whether or not you wish to publish, we'll help you with ideas to improve your writing. Led by Sharon Sutliff, we meet on the **2nd and 4th Mondays at 9 AM and usually wrap up in time for lunch.** We meet in various locations. Call one of the moderators to arrange a visit, or get more information. **CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Moderators: Sharon Sutliff, 544-4034
Audrey Yanes, 748-8600

What If? Writing Group I (a.m. Group)

Meets **every Wednesday morning in Grover Beach from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm.** Not a traditional NightWriter critique group. Work is produced in each session, then analyzed according to the objective of the day's goal. Based on writing exercises designed to jump-start the creative process (gleaned from a variety of published authors), these sessions take writers through the process of writing fiction from inception of idea to the final resolution. This group is for all fiction/non-fiction writers who want to learn the process of crafting a well-told story while developing their own voice and style. We explore such topics as ideas, character, story arc, tone, voice, POV, tension, dialogue, resolution, writing mechanics, etc. There is a small fee involved for this class to cover materials. If enough interest is expressed, a night class may be started.

CURRENTLY OPEN FOR 2 MORE MEMBERS

Moderator: Susan Tuttle: 458-5234
aim2write@yahoo.com

NEW GROUPS FORMING!

ADULT NOVELS

Lili Sinclaire is considering **FORMING A NEW GROUP** for **ADULT NOVELS** in a process where members critique each other's writing electronically, followed by a face-to-face meeting.

Contact: Lili Sinclaire, 904-9697
liliasinclaire@gmail.com

POETRY

Irene Chadwick wants to start a new **POETRY GROUP**, open to all poets of all levels. Meeting place, time and date to be decided by members of the group.

Contact: Irene Chadwick: 481-3824

WHAT IF? WRITING GROUP II

For all writers of fiction and creative non-fiction. Meets **every Wednesday in Los Osos from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm.** Not a traditional NightWriter critique group. Work is produced in each session, then analyzed according to the objective of the day's goal. Based on writing exercises designed to jump-start the creative process (gleaned from a variety of published authors), these sessions take writers through the process of writing fiction from inception of idea to the final resolution. This group is for all writers who want to learn the process of crafting a well-told story while developing their own voice and style. We explore such topics as ideas, character, story arc, tone, voice, POV, tension, dialogue, resolution, writing mechanics, etc.

CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS

Contacts: Susan Tuttle, 458-5234
aim2write@yahoo.com

CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

FULL CRITIQUE GROUPS: CALL TO VISIT

LO PROSE

Meets in **Los Osos on the first and third Wednesdays at 7pm till usually 10pm.** Charlie Perryess and Lorie Brallier share hosting responsibilities, running a tight ship so that everyone can read. No cross talk permitted. At the beginning and at our break we socialize. We're all serious but fun-loving. Presently the writing covers several genres: YA novels; short stories; short stories woven into a novel; fantasy; humorous mystery novel; political satire novel; and personal essays. We write just about everything except poetry. **CURRENTLY FULL – NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS** but guests are welcome. It may happen that space could be made for a compatible writer.

Moderators: Charlie Perryess, 528-4090
Lorie Brallier, 528-8845

LONG STORY SHORT

Flash Fiction/Nonfiction only meets the **2nd & 4th Fridays every month, from 10 am to 12 noon** in Arroyo Grande. Bring paper and pencil, or your laptop if you are so inclined—flash pieces, 1000 word strict maximum. **CURRENTLY FULL – NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS** – call or email Diane to be placed on a waiting list.

Moderator: Diane Smith 858-414-0070
mdcomposes@yahoo.com

NOVEL IDEA

Meets twice monthly on the **2nd and 4th Wednesdays in San Luis Obispo**, dealing with book-length works. The group is fully committed to helping one another craft material in the chosen genres with helpful critiques and

encouragement. Marketing techniques are part of the on-going exchange. We are currently full but welcome one-time guests to observe how our group functions in the hope of encouraging establishment of new groups. **CURRENTLY FULL – NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Moderator: Barbara Wolcott, 543-5240

FICTION/NONFICTION

Meets on 1st and 3rd Mondays from 9:00 am to noon in San Luis. Members bring original work to each session and read aloud to the group. The group provides constructive suggestions for improving the writing and the structure of the stories. Prose forms of literature—short stories, novels, memoirs, essays, newspaper and magazine articles, travel—are this group's forte. It welcomes writers who are serious about producing work for publication. Those interested in attending or who need more information should telephone. **CURRENTLY FULL — NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Moderators: Terry Sanville, 541-0492
Gloria Pautz, 543-2049

TEEN FICTION CRITIQUE GROUP

Meets every other Friday in Los Osos, with a specific focus on fantasy, sci-fi, paranormal fiction for teens. Members exchange work and critiques by email, then expound on comments in person at bi-monthly meetings. When needed, in-person meetings may be conducted via Skype.

CURRENTLY FULL — NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS

Moderator: Shruti Maniar
shruti.maniar@gmail.com

CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

FULL CRITIQUE GROUPS: CALL TO VISIT

WHAT IF? WRITING GROUP II

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Contacts: Susan Tuttle, 458-5234
aim2write@yahoo.com

SOUTH COUNTY WRITERS

Meets on the **second and fourth Saturdays from 9:30 AM to noon in Grover Beach**. This group thrives on variety, writing short stories, articles, poetry and novels, all genres from fiction to biography and memoirs. Members exchange work by email at least one week before the meeting in order to receive in-depth critiques aimed at eliminating weaknesses and increasing strengths in everything from plot and character development to grammar and proper manuscript preparation. Writers of all levels from beginner to advanced are welcome. We

meet in a casual and fun atmosphere and are serious about fully developing each member's writing talent, whether for publication or self-satisfaction. Visitors are always welcome.

CURRENTLY FULL – NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS

Moderator: Judy Guarnera, 474-9598