



INK SPOTS



*The Newsletter of the Fremont Area Writers, A part of the California
Writer's Club*

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Visit us at <http://cwc-fremontareawriters.org>

Webmaster – Linda Lee

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MISSION STATEMENT: Fremont Area Writers educates writers and the public by providing: a. Forums for educating members in the craft of writing and marketing their works and, b. Public meetings, workshops, and seminars open to all writers and the general public to facilitate educating writers of all levels of expertise.

**FREMONT AREA WRITERS
HOLIDAY PARTY & GIFT EXCHANGE
FOR FAW MEMBERS AND THEIR GUESTS
SATURDAY; DECEMBER 9, 2017; 6:00–9:00 pm
AT THE HOME OF
BOB and KATHY GARFINKLE
32924 MONROVIA STREET, UNION CITY
R.S.V.P 510 489-4779 or ragarf@earthlink.net**

Please bring a gift from yourself and guest (in the \$10.00 price range). Wrap the gift, but do not put a name or gender on it.

Potluck: Bring enough to feed 10 people.

If your last name begins with:

A-K bring a Dessert

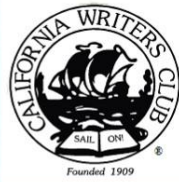
L-R bring a Main Dish

S-Z bring a Salad

Bring your own liquid refreshment(s)

Directions—From Fremont Blvd (North) and I-880:

Cross over the freeway heading north toward Union City. Cross over the freeway then the flood control channel bridge. Stop at the stop light at the bottom of the channel bridge at Lowry Road. There is a mosque on your left. Turn left onto Lowry and go under the concrete overpass. Turn right on to Regents Blvd, which is the second stoplight after the overpass. Follow Regents until you come to the stop sign at Jean Drive. Go straight still on Regents. Monrovia Street is the first right-hand turn after Jean. We are on the next corner on the right with a white motorhome in the driveway. Call the number above it you get lost.



Fremont Area Writers

The Centennial Branch

Grammar: How It Has Changed in Recent Years by The Grammar Diva Arlene Miller



You may know Arlene Miller as a best selling Amazon author who's made her reputation by letting us laugh at the same time she increases our understanding of grammar and the mechanics and traditions of the English language.

She'll be giving us interesting historic background as to why things work the way they do (or don't) and what aspects of accepted grammar have changed in recent years. (Don't you hate it when you know how to do something, then they change the rules on us?)

Arlene will be here to let you know what to watch out for!

To learn more about Arlene, go to her website, <http://bigwords101.com/>

Writers and Poets Open Mic!

When: 7:00-9:00 pm
Monday, Nov. 27th

Where:
Suju's Coffee
3602 Thornton Avenue
Fremont

Sat. Nov. 25th, 2:00-4:00 p.m.
Round Table Pizza
37480 Fremont Blvd.
Fremont, CA 94536

Fremont Area Writers is a branch of the
1,800-member California Writers Club.

Robert Garfinkle, President
(510) 489-4779
cwc-fremontareawriters.org

Lawyer/Author Rick Acker was the Guest Speaker at the FAW's October 28, 2017 Regular Membership Meeting. His topic was ***"The Publishing Business: What You Need to Know to Get Your Books Published by the Best Company for You."***



MESSAGE FROM JAN SMALL BOOK SIGNING CHAIRPERSON



Looking for novel (not a pun) Christmas presents before the holiday buying crush starts?

Why not give a personalized gift, a book written and autographed by a Bay Area author? Fremont Area Writers will hold a book sale and signing from 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 2, at the Fremont Main Library, [2400 Stevenson Blvd.](#), in Fremont.

Fourteen authors will be on hand to discuss, sell, and sign their work on a variety of subjects including children's, young adult, mystery, adventure, comics, religion, art, poetry, memoir, and more. There will be an Open Mic at 2:00 p.m. where authors will tell about their books and read excerpts from them.

Drop in to get a free bookmark, and to browse for special gifts that can be enjoyed and passed on for continuing pleasure.

Fremont Area Writers is a branch of the 1,700-member California Writers Club.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Robert Garfinkle

Hope you are ready for the holidays. There almost here (or is it they're?). I used the wrong word on purpose. I've seen too many posts on such website as Facebook or Craigslist, where the poster used the wrong word, like "there" for "they're." I'm sure you've seen more such poor grammar and spelling. What elementary schools did these people go to and how did they get out??

Our speaker this month is Arlene Miller. I know that you all hate grammar and spelling, but they are probably the most important things about writing that sets one apart from a good writer and a poor one. Let's all work at being great writers. Agree?

Our annual Holiday Party will once again be at our home in Union City, so plan on joining in on the fun on Saturday, December 9th, 6-9 pm. More details are in the Holiday Party flyer.

`We have gained several new members over the past few years, so as soon as I get the membership roster up-to-date, I'll be passing the files to our new Membership Chair—Chris Dews. I will also be sending out to all branch members a copy of our branch By-Laws. Though they have not been updated in years, many of you do not have a copy.

With Chris taking over the Membership duties, we need to fill his position as our representative to the NorCal Group. The job is not hard, but important to get our concerns and ideas to the group. Please consider volunteering.

FYI: Came across this link to a webpage discussion about the 10 types of novels that agents have already seen way too many times. <https://electricliterature.com/10-novels-agents-have-already-seen-a-billion-times-800be2860d9a>. Very interesting.

See you at the Round Table Pizza on the 25th and/or the party.

FEATURE OF THE MONTH



Joyce Cortez

A Bay Area native, I've lived in Oakland, Castro Valley, and Union City. In the summer leading into sixth grade, I had an experience that determined my career path. The principal of my school knew my mom through the PTA. He asked her if I would be interested in watching the front office while he and the secretary participated in a meeting. I was, I did, and I loved it. I handed out forms to parents with incoming kindergarteners and answered the phone. Sitting behind the secretary's desk felt natural.

My career goal of a school secretary settled, I focused on business and office subjects once I hit high school. That included typing and shorthand, but also an office machines class in which I managed to break three machines in fifteen minutes—manual calculators that I would date myself by mentioning, so I won't. Undaunted, the teacher set me up on a fourth machine. I felt the entire class hold its collective breath. Okay, so I wasn't meant to work in an accounting department or in retail. I was good with that.

At age 17, my mom died and I took on the role of the “woman of the house” for my father and older brother. I graduated from Hayward High School and moved on to Chabot College where I earned a Secretarial AA Degree. Try as I might, I could not get a job as a secretary. My first full-time job landed me as a clerk in the Merchandising and Sales Department at Mervyn's headquarters, where I successfully used an adding machine on a daily basis without breaking it. With a new career direction in the making, I returned to night classes at Chabot and added a Sales and Merchandising AA degree to my resume. However, I found the stress of being a supervisor and working 60-plus hours a week non-conducive to having a personal life.

I realized my career goal, at last, by working the front desk of a school for severely handicapped children under the auspices of the Alameda County Superintendent of Schools. Along with typing letters and I.E.P.s (Individual Education Plans), answering phones and greeting visitors, I called in substitute teachers and aides, and acted as

transportation liaison. I was in my element and happy. The reduced hours allowed for dating but didn't pay the bills, so another job search began. During this time, I had begun dating the brother of my best friend from college. He was instrumental in my finding a job at Lockheed.

Somewhere along the line, we married and had a son four years later. I was diagnosed with polycystic kidney disease shortly after his premature birth. The early discovery kept kidney failure and dialysis at bay for eight years. When our son turned seven, specialists identified his challenges as Asperger's Syndrome—on the high-functioning end of the autistic spectrum. The I.E.P.s I had typed at the Special Center for other people's children became central to my own son's life. The overall experience I had gained while working there prepared me for dealing with a number of issues we encountered. Meanwhile at work, I moved from Technical Typist to Assistant Administrator to Operations Planner to Contract Administrator. When my kidneys finally failed, I ended a 17-year career at Lockheed.

Dialysis made me face my own mortality. One day at dialysis, my blood pressure dropped rapidly to under 100 (systolic). I felt myself losing consciousness. The staff dumped me upside down, chair and all, and "pushed" fluids back into me. With my young son in mind, I began writing my autobiography to be sure he would know who his mother was...just in case.

This was a return to writing for me, which began in childhood as diary entries in a purported five-year diary. Five-year entries soon became one-year entries, which extended beyond the page to multiple pages stuffed inside—greatly detailing my life as a teenager. In high school, my best friend and I held short-story writing contests between ourselves and I dreamed of writing my own book some day. In college, I took a course in writing children's books and wrote a book for my new niece to enjoy. I submitted a writing sample for a correspondence writing course in my late twenties. Accepted, I didn't trust their sincerity, realized I couldn't afford the course, so didn't follow through. Life took its twists and turns and writing had taken a back seat.

After six years of dialysis, I received a kidney transplant. Continuing medical issues and the benefits of being present to address our son's special needs outweighed a return to work. My writing expanded from my autobiography to short stories and eventually I found the Fremont Area Writers' club, where I am happy to lend my skills as your board secretary. Today I am writing a romance novel, which is nearing completion of the first draft with the help of my writing critique group. Who says dreams don't come true?

FREMONT AREA WRITERS

OFFICERS



Robert (Bob) Garfinkle –
President
Past President, California Writers Club.
Historian



Secretary – **Joyce Cortez**



Treasurer – **Cheryl Jose**



Knuti VanHoven
Vice President



Tony Pino, Open Mic.



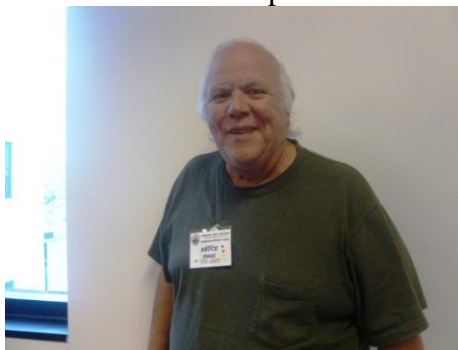
Art Carey –Signage



Carol Hall
Facebook Page, Meetup,



Evelyn LaTorre
Central Board Representative



Bruce Haase
Authors Table Sound Equipment, Book Exchange



Jan Small, Book Signing



Liz Breshears
Community Outreach



Chris Dews
Membership Chairperson

**JACK LONDON AWARDEES
FREMONT AREA WRITERS**

2009 Robert Garfinkle
2011 Myrla Raymundo
2013 Carol Hall
2015 Art Carey
2017 Shirley Ferrante

**FREMONT AREA WRITERS
CHAIRPERSONS**

Meet Up, Facebook Page - Carol Hall
Open Mic - Tony Pino, Bruce Haase
Historian - Bob Garfinkle
Membership – Chris Dews
Newsletter - Myrla Raymundo
Publicity, Website & Newsletter Liaison
Knuti VanHoven
Book Signings - Jan Small
Central Board Rep - Evelyn LaTorre
Community Outreach - Liz Breshears
Authors Table, Book Exchange, Sound
System - Bruce Haase
Signage - Art Carey
CWC Advertising and Promotions Chair
– Cherilyn Jose
Nor Cal Rep – Vacant
Hospitality, Welcome New Members –
Vacant

CALENDAR

BOARD MEETING – Fourth Saturday of the
month 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm – 37408 Round Table
Pizza, Fremont.

OPEN MIC – Fourth Monday of the month
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm at Suju's Coffee Meeting
Room, 3602 Thornton Ave, Fremont

FREMONT AREA WRITERS REGULAR
MEMBERSHIP MEETING – Fourth Saturday
of the month, 2:00 pm -4:00 pm, – 37408 Round
Table Pizza, Fremont.



Myrla Raymundo, MBA-
Writer/Editor

Ink Spots Newsletter

This Editor welcomes you to our November 2017 issue of the Ink Spots. It contains the latest FAW news and tidbits, poems, prose, essays and articles written by our members. It also contains news from other clubs in the California Writers Club.

Ink Spots is issued monthly and is distributed to FAW members at the club general meeting every month. It is also emailed to those with email addresses. It is also emailed to the different clubs of the California Writers Club.

Ink Spots welcomes you to write articles and submit them to this Editor at myrlaraymundoback@gmail.com or raymundomyrla@gmail.com.

FAWS WRITERS CORNER

My Memories of my Husband Ray



I know I love you so, till death do us part.
I want to stay with you, till we're old and you said you won't let go, but you let go.
I want to stay with you because you were always there with me, but you let go.

At home, I look at the big pile of your clothes and I cry.
I am so hesitant in getting rid of that big pile, because that became so very much a part of my life.
I look at all your pictures and I still swoon on how handsome you look.
When I'm driving when you became sick and didn't want to drive anymore, I could feel you beside me and telling me:
"You are driving in the middle lane.
"Slow down
In the morning at breakfast, I am eating alone and I miss your company.
The whole day that I'm alone, my life is so lonely that I am sobbing thinking of your loving company.
At night while watching TV, I miss you and your favorite program Boxing, especially Pacquiao's fight.
I miss you tinkering in our cars at the garage.
I miss you when you said, "I want to live up to the time that my granddaughter Alexis reaches 18."
I miss you when I go to New Luk Yen, where we usually eat our lunch.
I miss you when I buy our Chicken Sandwich from the Vietnamese Store and eat it with chips and with a cold can of coke.
I miss you when I open our Museum and I'm there alone and working.
I miss you when I'm walking alone in the Casa Verde Park for my exercises; we used to walk with our dog Raider. Now you and Raider are gone.
I miss your warm embrace at night when we talk about our happenings during the day. Now, I don't have anybody to talk to about how I feel.
You Said You Won't Let Go – but you are gone. I will always pray for you and God will always be with you.

Your loving wife Myrla

SKEETER



by Jan Salinas

Skeeter couldn't scoot his chair much closer to the TV if he tried. It's Sunday night. As soon as Ed Sullivan comes on, he closes his eyes. His chair rocks back and forth a little.

"Mom, why does he turn on the TV, then go to sleep?" young Ernie asks.

"He says he's just resting his eyes," she says. "He's weary. Skeeter works hard. He gets up at three every morning and goes downtown to the restaurant. He hauls beer cases up from the cellar and then makes coffee for the restaurant before customers arrive. He wants to work so he can give me something toward his room and board here. He bought us that television set. He is always telling me he is forever grateful for giving him a room here in town when he had no place to go."

"Remember when Skeeter had the farm, Mom? He worked hard," Ernie says. "Remember when he hired me to do chores in the barn after school? That was before he moved in with us. Now I never know if he's dead or not."

Years before, Skeeter rests on the stump in the yard by the barn before heading up to the lonely farmhouse. Today he feels extra tired and defeated. He waits until the sun sets behind the tall poplars, barely noticing, just too exhausted to take another step. His knee has been aching for a long time now. He rubs his knee and moves his lower leg in a forward motion as if to kick off the pain. He realizes he never notices the pain as long as he is pitching hay and tending to chores. It is mostly a one-man show these days and he isn't sure how much longer he can keep up the pace.

He and his wife Aggie used to do chores together. Those were happy times. Those were the good old days. Seems like a long time ago now. He closes his eyes so he can hear her whistling as she goes about her day. The birds would get suddenly quiet as if they anticipated a coming storm when they heard her whistle in the yard. She got a kick out of entertaining them with her bird song whistles. They listened, and they warbled back trying to imitate her.

Skeeter speaks out loud. *Aggie, why did you desert me? It's not the same. It's just no fun anymore. When you got sick, I figured you got a touch of something. You were always so hearty. Then, you were gone. I fell to the ground when doc told me the news that you had leukemia. He gave you less than a month to live. Why didn't you take me with you, Aggie?*

I've been trying to hold on to things here because we built this farm together. I can't ignore our animals, the ones we raised. They still need someone. Bronte misses you every day. I can't ride her so I put her out in the field behind the barn and she lollygags 'til I bring her in. I think she is still pining.

I painted all the buildings white. You'd like it. Everybody else here in Iowa has theirs that typical red so I thought it would be nice to do something different and give the place a clean look.

Gotta tell you something, Aggie. I don't know what to do. Our son came by the other day. Chuck seemed concerned about me and the farm. He said I was too old to do farming. You know how blunt he can be. If I signed the farm over to him, he would take it over and I could retire. He said I could stay here and relax for the rest of my days. I think I am going to take him up on the offer, Aggie.

A few weeks later, Skeeter hops in his old Ford truck and drives the dirt road into town to pick up Chuck. They have an appointment with a lawyer thirty miles away.

Skeeter has thought long and hard over the decision to give up the farm. He knows he isn't getting any younger and with his aching knee and all, at least he can still live at home and give advice now and then about the chores. He and Chuck don't always see eye to eye on things but at least the farm will stay in the family. He feels good about his decision to sign over the farm to his son. It will be a weight off his mind.

"Geez, dad, how old is this truck?" Chuck asks.

"I've had this old gal since day one. Still rides like a charm, doesn't it. A little dusty, maybe, that's all. Your mom and I bought this truck together, don't you remember?"

"Yea, I remember all right. You taught me how to drive in this old crate," Chuck says.

"You said, this truck will be yours someday. Remember that?"

"And it will be. Guess it goes with the farm."

Skeeter glances at Chuck who is laughing loudly. Is that a genuine laugh or is he sneering, he wonders?

Once parked, they brush the dust off their pants before climbing the steps to the lawyer's building. He greets them and offers them a seat in his office.

"By the way, sir, my dad knows English but can't read or write in English. He only knows German," Chuck explains.

"Do you understand what you will be signing?" the lawyer asks Skeeter.

Skeeter turns to his son with one long, last questioning stare, looking for a reassuring nod from Chuck.

"Let me read the contents to you, sir, so there is no misunderstanding," the lawyer says.

"I already explained it all to you, dad," Chuck says. "Just make your mark. You gotta get back to the farm for evening chores before dark."

"Look, I'll read it anyway. It won't take that long," the lawyer insists. He reads the document.

"Do you understand what you are signing?" the lawyer asks.

"Yes," Skeeter nods.

"Well then, now all you have to do is put an "X" right here next to your name, sir," the lawyer explains, "and it's a legal done deal."

Chuck hands his dad the pen and Skeeter puts his signature "X" on the document with no hesitation.

"Okay, gentlemen. That finalizes our business here," the lawyer says as they stand and shake hands. "Best of luck to you both. It has been a pleasure."

Skeeter breathes a deep sigh of relief as if a burden has been lifted off his shoulders. No more chores. He can watch the sunset in peace and spend time with Bronte anytime he wants. It feels good to have family take over the farm. He drops Chuck off and goes home to tell Bronte the good news.

The sun is barely up the next morning when Chuck bursts into the kitchen.

"Dad, got news for you. Pack your bags. You're outta here. See ya' around, old man." Chuck throws a sly grin and guffaws that sends spit toward his dad.

Skeeter closes his eyes, his blood turns cold as if a slithering snake is crawling through his body. His son has betrayed him. He waits for the sound of Aggie's soothing, happy whistle to calm his mind. Aggie would have warned him.

Three Strikes and Out, But...



By Art Carey

I have always had three goals in writing. The first is to win the Nobel Prize For Literature like John Steinbeck, Alice Munro, and Ernest Hemingway. I can picture myself in Stockholm, wearing my new tux, smiling modestly as I accept the award amid polite clapping.

Unfortunately, I gave up that hope years ago when I read the criteria for selection: “*in the field of literature the most outstanding work in an ideal direction.*” Outstanding? Maybe. But in an ideal direction? What’s with that? I’ve been lost more times writing than I have trying to figure out what I can get away with deducting on my income tax.

The second goal is to win a Pulitzer Prize in Journalism. I realized doing that was unlikely the first day I went to work as a reporter on the Muskegon, MI, Chronicle, fresh from J-school at the University of Michigan. It was Monday. The newspaper had no Sunday edition. Unfortunately, inconsiderate Muskegonites kept dying over the weekend. Someone had to write the obituaries. The city editor passed out death notices from funeral homes to reporters like a dealer flipping cards in Las Vegas. He gave me two to write up. The deceased hadn’t been movers and shakers in the community. These were ordinary people with names difficult to spell correctly and too many survivors to list. Where was the big story that would propel me to fame and my Pulitzer Prize? I waited patiently, but it never came.

My third goal in writing is to place among the top three finalists in the weekly cartoon captioning contest of the New Yorker Magazine. Not to win, of course. I’m realistic. The contest gets up to 9,000 entries a week. Besides, who can aspire to equal the wit of successful writers who melded keen insight and expression with an artist’s provocative drawing? Cartoons like the one in which two birdwatchers look at a bikini-wearing bird singing in a tree. “It’s a thongbird,” one suggests. Or the 1928 classic cartoon of the child urged by her mother to eat broccoli. The little girl sneers, “I say it’s spinach and I say the hell with it!”

At first, writing a clever caption for a cartoon looked simple. Ha! When the late Roger Ebert, he of Siskel and Ebert, combative movie critics on TV, finally cracked the hallowed final three of the weekly contest, he revealed he had submitted entries hundreds of times. I have done better, entry-wise.

I don't know the exact number, but if you enter the contest almost each week for years without success rejection becomes a habit. Who's counting? What, then? Perhaps I should try writing movie or TV scripts. There's a lot of really, really bad stories littering the TV channels. I've got an idea. There's this powerful movie agent who lures nubile young actresses into his hotel room to discuss their careers, but he ...you know. But one of the women is the daughter of a cop, and she takes a .357 magnum with her and...

Okay, I've still got to work on the ending. Easier to start than to finish, right? As they used to say in radio (remember that?), stay tuned.

Art Carey

Art Carey has short stories in two anthologies. They are *After Effects*, published by Zimbell House, and *The Killer Wore Cranberry*, *A Fifth Course of Chaos*, published by Untreed Reads

HALLOWEEN



By Jan Small

Halloween reminds me of my mother-in-law.
No! She wasn't a witch. She was born on Halloween.
We usually celebrated her birthday the day before so she could be home to hand out treats.
Mom Small was a great cook. I loved her peach pies.
She was also a wonderful seamstress. When I bought new clothes she would adjust them fit me better.
She taught me to knit and crochet.
Our son, Steve, was born October 24th. His very first outing was to Mom Small's birthday party.
She has gone on to be with the sLord.
I look forward to seeing her in Heaven when it is my turn to go.
So, on Halloween I say a prayer thanking God for giving me such a nice mother-in-law.

Myrla Raymundo, MBA
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