



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 ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY
AT THE RESIDENCE OF FAW PRESIDENT BOB & KATHY GARFINKLE IN UNION
CITY LAST DECEMBER 9, 2017.***



The group enjoyed the sumptuous dinner.





Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all!

***Arlene Miller** was the Guest Speaker at the FAW's November 25, 2017 Regular Membership Meeting. She gave an interesting historic background as to why things work the way they do for (or don't) and what aspects of accepted grammar have changed in recent years.*



The Attendees



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Robert Garfinkle

We had a great time at our annual FAW Holiday Party and now we must all get ready for a successful writing year in 2018.

Our VP and Program Chair, Knuti VanHoven is putting together a dynamite cast of meeting speakers for next year. We start off 2018 with Tiffany Schneider. She is a relationship coach providing video, phone and in-person sessions throughout the Bay Area. She has published 2 books on the subject. Every type of fiction involves some kind of relationship between the characters. Whether you are writing a romance novel or a murder mystery, there has to be believable relationships in the work. She will give us tips on how to build your fictional relationships into those believable relationships and on how to maintain your own personal relationship while in the throes of writing.

Our branch membership is down from past years, so bring a writing friend to our meetings. We have a lot to offer. Remember that our CWC motto is: "Writers helping writers."

Myrla needs your writing, so please send to her your short stories, essays, poetry, etc. This is your newsletter and it is a great way to get published. Her deadline is always the 15th of the month.

See you at the Round Table Pizza on January 27th.

FEATURE OF THE MONTH



Cherilyn Jose

I am a Bay Area native. I was raised in Oakland, went to college at U.C Berkeley and later settled down in Union City to raise my family. As a child, I wanted to be either a marine biologist (thanks to trips to the Monterey Bay Aquarium and Moss Beach) or an astronaut (but as I became increasingly nearsighted that dream ended).

While at U.C. Berkeley I had internships with the Environmental Protection Agency (a government agency) and volunteered in an on-campus laboratory where I got to take care of hundreds of mantis shrimp (Google them, they're fascinating!). My undergraduate thesis, "Distribution and Abundance of Cryptofaunal Communities for Use in Biological Monitoring of Coral Reefs," was published in Berkeley Scientific.

After graduating from U.C. Berkeley with a degree in the Environmental Sciences with an emphasis in Biology, I landed an internship at the Monterey Bay Aquarium. It was a dream come true! I became SCUBA certified even though I was afraid of the water. But thanks to the woman who runs Miracle Swimming for Adults Afraid in the Water, I was able to get certified in Hawaii. I worked at the Monterey Bay Aquarium for two years as an aquarist and water quality technician, and volunteered for four years in the Sea Otter Research and Conservation Program. There I got to hold a days old sea otter pup in the palm of my hand!

I then got married and moved back to the Bay Area. I decided to become a Registered Veterinary Technician, a two-year degree from Foothill College. Shortly after graduating I became pregnant with my first child. It was then that I began to journal and discovered that I loved to write. While on bed rest while pregnant with my second child, I started my blog, "Ocean of Hope: Marine Animals Voice Their Wishes on Ocean Conservation Issues." <https://protecttheoceans.org/wordpress>

I still blog, and I also write children's books told from the POV of ocean animals. I'm in the midst of querying agents and editors, but I am willing to someday self-publish. I am currently writing a middle grade novel about a Hawaiian girl who meets a merman who can morph into different marine animals.

I joined my critique group (which no longer meets) and found the professional editor that I currently work with through Fremont Area Writers. I have been treasurer of FAW for the past few years.

FREMONT AREA WRITERS

OFFICERS



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



Secretary – **Joyce Cortez**



Treasurer – **Cherilyn Jose**



Knuti VanHoven
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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 Chair

**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 –
Jan Small

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 December 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

Turtle Liberation



by Penelope Anne Cole

Maybe you remember the plastic turtle “homes” from the pet store ages ago. I remember them. It was either a round or oval shaped clear plastic bowl-type home for pet store turtles. It had a place for turtle food and water, a ramp to crawl down to a moat-like swimming circle. It even had a plastic palm tree for a bit of foliage. I don’t know if each of us three kids had our own painted turtle or we just shared one. I doubt any of the many turtles back then were happy in their clear plastic bowl homes. I doubt they lived long and prospered.

Then some forty years later, our next door neighbor had a couple of turtle tanks full of small turtles. I liberated two of them for my daughter. Yes, I got two so they wouldn’t be lonely. These two were hand-sized turtles, not the half dollar pet-store size. This time, I determined to do a better job for our turtles than the plastic containers of years gone by. I got a nice, big tank for Skittles and Bittles, as my daughter named them!

I even got an attractive pedestal for the tank. Then filled the tank about one third full of water and found several flat rocks to make a platform for the turtles to climb out to sun themselves in the reptile lamp light. I got the correct turtle food and they were all set up.

But the tank got dirty real fast. So I cleaned it, which meant taking everything out. First the turtles, then the rocks, then I emptied the water and scrubbed and rinsed the tank. I re-filled it, replaced the rocks, and set up the lamp. Meanwhile, Skittles and Bittles were swimming around in the kitchen sink. They were okay there, but seemed crowded in the smaller space. I put the turtles back in their tank, but for the next week’s cleaning, I decided to put them in the bathtub. They really liked it there—lots of room to swim around.

So each week after that Skittles and Bittles went into the tub, rocks and all, while I cleaned their poopy tank. Then it dawned on me—they eat and then they poop. Such a concept! What if I feed them in the tub while I’m cleaning their tank? Then they’ll poop in the tub—which is much easier to clean than the tank. And maybe, just maybe, their tank would stay cleaner longer. So I tried that and yes, the tank did stay cleaner longer. Yay! I didn’t have to clean the tank quite as often, but it was still an additional chore that I had taken on at the request of my daughter. As a single mother, I wanted my daughter to have pets. But we already had two cats and two dogs. We really didn’t need two turtles. They weren’t soft and cuddly. They didn’t stir me to go walking. They didn’t do tricks

or come on command. Oh, it was entertaining to watch them swimming around and basking on their rocks. I cared that they lived. Though, more and more, I came to believe that Skittles and Bittles were imprisoned in their tank—not their true habitat. I was also enslaved as their caretaker. I felt guilty depriving them of a natural outdoor life. And I felt guilty about those feelings. So I started to plot and plan for the end of our mutual enslavement.

I had noticed the middle school where I walked my dogs was enlarging their Nature Center to include a large pond. I had an “Aha” moment. Maybe their nature pond needed a couple of turtles? My daughter was still in elementary school and had gone on field trips to the nature center. We decided to ask the nature center director if we could re-home our turtles there. He said yes. He already had a couple of turtles, but he would take ours, too. I set up an appointment and went home. There’s not much to do to prepare turtles for moving to their new home. We put them in the cat carrier, because it had a handle, and drove the two blocks to the school after classes ended.

We followed Mr. Brian with our turtles to the pond. There were actually two ponds. Mr. Brian thought the deeper pond would be best for them since it had logs for sunning and lots of natural food. We knelt down and put the first turtle in the water. Skittles immediately dove down and was gone in seconds. Then we released Bittles. He started swimming out on the surface of the water then turned to look at us—almost as if to say goodbye and thank you. Then he too dove under water, gone from sight. We waited at the edge of the pond for a few moments, hoping to catch a glimpse of our turtles enjoying their new home and freedom. But we didn’t see them again. They were free and wild now. They weren’t ours—they belonged to nature now. We were quiet on the drive home. It was a one of those happy, sad days. I put the turtle tank on the street with a “free” sign. From time to time, we’d watch the Nature Center Cams to look for Skittles and Bittles and wish them the best in their new, free life. On the Nature Center website there’s a picture of a turtle lounging on a log—is it Skittles or Bittles?

Congratulations.....

Tish Davidson has had her story "The Hamster Matchmaker" accepted for publication by Moonshine Star Co. in a 2018 anthology.

EARTHQUAKE!



By Teresa Connelly

When I was a senior in college I lived in an apartment suite with three other girls, one of them from Japan. Three of us were used to earthquakes as we all lived in northern California. The fourth girl, who was my roommate, had never experienced an earthquake and so had no idea what to expect.

I was quite seasoned in that department, for when I arrived in California in June of 1964 there was a rollicking earthquake that sent me sprawling on the floor. I watched in horrified amazement as telephone poles swayed back and forth, leaning so far as to give the impression that they were soon to fall. Nothing so dramatic happened, but that quake left a lasting impression.

Over the next several years as I lived in various houses around the Bay Area, I had felt many small quakes that made me a bit nervous, but not as terrified as the first one. In fact, it seemed that the more quakes I felt, the less they disturbed me.

In September of 1979 I transferred to the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. The first year I lived in a towering residence hall. From my seventh floor room, I often felt the building sway. Each time it upset me, thinking that at any moment the whole thing would crumble to the ground with me trapped inside. To defray some of my fears, I stood at my window and watched nearby buildings sway along with mine, thinking that if they didn't fall, my building wouldn't either. Afterward I never saw any evidence of destruction.

One beautiful spring day I was up on the roof sunbathing. I had lathered myself up and gotten comfortable with one of my textbooks. I grew sleepy and just as I began to drift away, a rolling quake hit that brought me to my feet. From my lofty perch, close to the railing, yet far enough that I wouldn't fall off, I watched neighboring buildings sway. Sirens went off, fire engines zoomed past and a series of ambulances raced down the streets.

To the best of my knowledge, no one got seriously hurt, but a few older folks supposedly suffered heart attacks.

The following year I moved into a large multi-bedroom house that was sponsored by the Soroptimist Organization. All the girls in my building were low income like myself. The organization allowed us to live rent-free as long as we maintained excellent grades and were never in academic difficulty. We also had to keep the facility spotless and host the organization whenever they chose to hold fundraisers.

Over a period of several months earthquakes regularly shook the house. One time I was sitting on the toilet. I imagined myself being found in the rubble with my pants down. That frightened me so much that from then on I tried not to stay in the bathroom for any longer than absolutely necessary.

The number and intensity of the quakes intensified as the year went on. Because the building was old and shook in a frightening way, I was afraid to live there, so for the next school year I applied to the senior dorm across campus and was accepted.

I had not visited the building before move-in day, so I was surprised to find that it was about the same age as the Soroptimist House. It was also located near to train tracks which caused the building to shake and sway whenever a train went by.

I convinced myself that it didn't matter the age of the building or the periodic shaking for I was happy to live with other seniors and to be free from the overarching demands of the Soroptimists.

Unfortunately that year was a particularly fertile one for earthquakes. We were shaken regularly, but seldom while we were in the dorm.

When one hit whenever I was in class we were evacuated into the quad, a grassy area in the center of campus. It became an expected ritual. Earthquake, evacuation, sitting under the shade of a tree. It was almost bucolic and definitely lured me into a false sense of security.

Early one February morning in 1971, around six, the building shook with such ferocity that my three suitemates were all awakened. At first we gathered in the kitchen which separated our rooms, when as the shaking intensified, we split apart so we could stand under a door frame, supposedly the safest place.

My roommate was so terrified that she fell at my feet, grabbed my ankles, and begged me to save her. I uttered as comforting words as I could, but I was scared that I was going to die. The shaking seemed to go on forever.

When it finally stopped, my roommates and I discovered huge cracks running down our walls and chunks of plaster that had fallen in our showers and on our beds. We were evacuated to the street, where we stood in our nightgowns, clustered in groups of equally frightened students.

When we were allowed inside, we dressed for class and headed off. Later on we heard on the news that the quake registered 6.5 and caused heavy damage to buildings, highways and bridges. It threatened a reservoir in the San Fernando Valley, which leaked a steady stream of water that, thankfully, did not flood low-lying valleys.

Our building survived. While we were at class, maintenance came in and cleaned up the mess. When we returned to our suite, fresh plaster covered the cracks.

For days afterward our building shook. There were a series of mini-quakes that hit at all times of the day and night, but even after they stopped, we were sure that each passing train was another quake.

Years went by when only periodic mild quakes rattled us in the San Francisco area. None of them rattled me like the one in 1971. Each time one hit, I'd stop what I was doing, look around for cracks, decide whether to get up and look for a safe place in which to be, but then when things stopped shaking, I continued doing whatever it was that I had been working on.

Things changed in October of 1989. I had just picked my kids up from a friend's house when the sidewalk moved like waves. The surge was so strong that my friend and I were thrown to the ground. My eight-passenger van rocked and rolled. My kids, who were inside, looked at me through the back windows and screamed.

It was terrifying. Not only did the sidewalk buckle, but telephone poles swayed back and forth with such ferocity that it was surprising that they didn't bend over and crack apart. We were all so shaken that we didn't move for several minutes after things settled down.

My first thoughts were to call my husband, but I had to wait until I got home to do so.

Later we learned that it was a 6.9 quake that caused substantial damage and killed 67 people and over \$5 billion in damages.

I am grateful that we have been blessed with calm years since then, but I am ever alert for the next one.

I'd also like to report that I have an emergency bag packed and ready to go, but that would be a lie. It's almost as if I don't prepare, it won't happen, but that's a stupid way of thinking.

Meanwhile I'll think about that bag and hopefully, act on it soon.

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