



Ink Spots



The Newsletter of Fremont Area Writers *The "Centennial" Branch of the California Writers Club*

Nancy Guarnera Editor-in-Chief

Vol. 106 February 2021

inkspots@cw-c-fremontareawriters.org

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

2021202120212021202120212021202120212021202120212021

FAW General Meeting on Zoom – February 27th

Guest Speaker

Barbara Meyers

Writing about Mental Illness

by Knuti VanHoven

Author and minister, **Barbara Meyers** will speak to FAW on Saturday, February 27th at 2:00pm. She will discuss her book, *Held*, about her own experiences with the mental health system, and the life she's built ministering to, and working with, people who have to bridge the gap between their "real world" lives and their mental health challenges.

Almost all of us know someone who suffers from some form of mental issue, whether it's anxiety, phobias, mild schizophrenia, debilitating depression, or advancing Alzheimer's. When creating characters with mental illnesses, it's important to depict them accurately and sympathetically.

When Meyers first started to speak publicly on this topic, she decided to see how knowledgeable her audiences were. She asked them if their lives were being impacted by a friend, family member, or coworker with mental illness, and was shocked when nearly all of the hands in the audience went up. The answer is still the same today.

When she encountered it in her own family, Meyers sought answers from both science and religion. Her research led her to walk away from her tech career. She trained for, and began a ministry for people in the community who were dealing with the impact of their own illnesses, or those of the people for whom they care. Her ministry is filling a vacuum for people whose needs have been "politely ignored" for far too long.

"People with other illnesses are acknowledged and supported by their friends and families, but mental illness is treated very differently," she explains. When someone is hospitalized for surgery or an accident, people bring casseroles, they help out; for mental health challenges, not so much. Why? Because, she explains, there are so many misconceptions regarding mental illness. Meyers' book references the need that those who suffer with mental illness have to be understood, listened to, sympathized with, and sometimes, yes, "Held."

This event is free to anyone who wants to improve their writing or to help others accomplish that goal.

For your zoom link, email scottfrombayside@yahoo.com Please arrive a few minutes early.

For more information, contact Fremont Area Writers at cw-c-fremontareawriters.org.



<https://mpuuc.org/mhm/>



TERRY TOSH
FAW President

President's Message

I apologize for missing our January meeting, which we were able to see and hear, after all, thanks to Scott and the magic of Zoom! Whoever thought that we'd be hearing a live speaker from across the world...Dubai no less! Excellent choice, Cherilyn!

This year has not been amazingly different from last year in tension and worry, but I am hopeful that we will be able to continue to use our collective talent to innovate and come up with new ways to meet and accomplish our goals and mission...helping writers!

Think of the passion that our speaker Jesse Byrd talked about. What is that gnawing feeling inside of you? May I suggest that you get out a writing pad and pen or pencil. Consider the old-fashioned concept of two columns, the Pros and Cons of what you think you want to do. Let the ideas flow freely; keep the blocks of self-doubt out of the way. What's the best or worse that can happen?

It is a particularly busy time of year for our CWC organization, as we have the Literary Review submission deadline looming on April 15th, the Jack London Award nominees to select and vote for by March, the renewal of memberships to start working towards, as well as volunteers for the various offices and chairs to be sought.

On top of these, if the pandemic happens to play out anytime soon, we still don't know if we will have a home location...42 Silicon Valley is closed through the end of 2021.

I do believe we should plan on continuing to offer zoom options, even after we can meet in person, as there are those that have a problem joining us due to health issues or travel hardships, but we can discuss that on an as-needed basis.

FAW would like to know your vision! Frankly, we could use your help to stay focused and make this your club. Here are a few ideas. How about a treasure hunt for a special word, invite friends (younger writers) from anywhere in the country, or maybe the world and see who visits from the furthest away? Let us know what you want to do! Don't let the gloom of this pandemic fog your enthusiasm for your own life, or for your involvement in FAW.

Terry

FREMONT AREA WRITERS MONTHLY CALENDAR

SECOND SATURDAY

Meet Your Local FAW Authors

Second Saturdays

2:00 – 4:00 PM

Half Price Books
39152 Fremont Blvd
Fremont

THIRD SUNDAY

Literary OPEN MIC

Third Sundays

Sign-up 3:00 PM

Reading 4:00 – 5:30 PM
Half Price Books
39201 Cedar Blvd
Newark

FOURTH MONDAY

WRITERS' SALON

Fourth Mondays

7:00 – 9:00 PM

Slap Face Coffee & Tea
Meeting Room
37324 Fremont Blvd
Fremont

MEMBERSHIP

MEETINGS

Fourth Saturdays

General: 2:00 – 4:00 PM

42 Silicon Valley Pk 106
6600 Dumbarton Circle
Fremont

**CANCELED UNTIL
FURTHER NOTICE**

Zoom

Zoom

FAW Board Members



TERRY TOSH
President



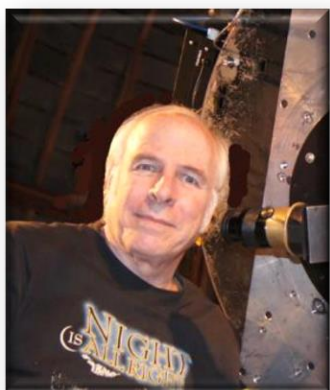
KNUTI VANHOVEN
Vice President



REKHA RAMANI
Secretary



CHERYLYN CHIN
Treasurer



BOB GARFINKLE
Past President –
Fremont Area Writers
Past President –
CA Writers Club

BOARD MEETINGS

3:30 to 5:00 PM

**Tuesday before the Fourth Saturday
Membership Meetings
on ZOOM**

JACK LONDON AWARDEES

FREMONT AREA WRITERS

- 2009 Bob Garfinkle
- 2011 Myrla Raymundo
- 2013 Carol Hall
- 2015 Art Carey
- 2017 Shirley Ferrante
- 2019 Jan Small

FAW Chairpersons



ART CAREY
Signage
Facility Liaison



SUE CURTZWILER
Volunteer Coordinator
Hospitality Co-Chair



SCOTT DAVIDSON
Webmaster



TISH DAVIDSON
CA Writers Club
Representative



AMBER DeANN
Facebook Page
Social Media



BOB GARFINKLE
Historian
Past President



NANCY GUARNERA
Ink Spots Editor
SIP Notes Coordinator



CHERILYN CHIN
CWC Advertising
& Promotions



TONY PINO
"Fourth Monday"
Writers' Salon



ANITA TOSH
Membership
Nor-Cal Representative
Authors' Table/Book Exchange



KNUTI VANHOVEN
Speakers Program
Publicity



CARMEN VONTICKNER
Hospitality Co-Chair

FAW MISSION STATEMENT

Fremont Area Writers educates writers and the public by providing:
Forums for educating members in the craft of writing and marketing their works *and*
Public meetings, workshops, and seminars open to all writers and the general public
to facilitate educating writers of all levels of expertise. (*Article II Section 1:1.1 and 1.2 FAW Bylaws*)

KUDOS – Members' News

KUDOS to Evelyn LaTorré whose first memoir, *Between Inca Walls*, was recently featured on 3 hour-long podcasts: the **National Association of Memoir Writers**; **Dropping in** with Diane Dewey [Download MP3 [itunes]]; and on **Stories That Empower** with Sean Faryodi <https://storieshatempower.com/>.

She has spoken to the local **American Association of University Women** book club, the **Pomona Lion's Club**, and chapters of the **International Educator's Organization**, **Delta Kappa Gamma (DKG)**. She will present a workshop entitled, "*How and Why to Write Your Memoir*," at the DKG annual convention and for the SF-Peninsula CWC chapter.

Her second memoir, *Love in Any Language, A Memoir of a Cross-Cultural Marriage*, will be published on September 28, 2021. It is on Amazon.com now for pre-orders. **Congratulations, Evelyn!**

KUDOS to Rekha Ramani who has just self-published her third book of poetry—*Raising A Sanctuary*. Books can be purchased from the author and on Amazon. **Congratulations, Rekha!**

General Zoom Meeting — February 27th

Our guest speaker will be Barbara Meyers—Mental Health Advocate.

You don't need a Zoom account to attend, but you do need to have Zoom on your smart phone, tablet, laptop, or computer—something with a camera and sound. Here's a link for a tutorial to help you set this up: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9isp3qPeQ0E>.

You will receive an email invitation with a link to use for the meeting.

Need help with Zoom? Contact Scott Davidson scottfrombayside@yahoo.com by the Wednesday, before the meeting. Put **FAW Zoom Help** in the subject line. Start logging by 1:50 PM. Thank you.

Welcome to THE PROMPT PALACE

Here we go again . . . another opportunity for writers to help writers write.

Anyone can suggest prompt ideas: put **FAW—Prompt Palace—Prompt** in the subject line of your email and send it to: inkspots@cw-fremontareawriters.org. We'll add it to the list. If you use one of **The Prompt Palace** prompts, and you'd like to share your work with the rest of us, put **FAW—Prompt Palace—Submission** in the subject line of your email and send it to: inkspots@cw-fremontareawriters.org, and we'll publish it in the **Writers' Corner**.

A walk in the woods Are humans really smarter than animals? Skin deep
What was that noise? When I was young and stupid I... I wish I could or was...
Hanging on by the tips of my fingers... Oh no! Did I just drink the Kool-Aid?
Power is... My most embarrassing moment was... When I was little...

A Word from Our Editor



Nancy Guarnera
Editor-in-Chief *Ink Spots*

Welcome to our February 2021 issue of *Ink Spots*. I hope this finds you and those you love, healthy and happy. Hope you are all wearing your masks and social distancing. Don't forget to get vaccinated when it's time.

I was taught not to judge others until I'd walked in their shoes. Life experience is unique to each of us. It's hard to imagine another's life experience if I haven't lived it...but I can listen and learn. I can choose to care enough about others and my country to attempt to understand the fear that lies behind grievance and hatred, no matter whose it may be. I just have to be willing to set my own grievances aside long enough to hear what is being said by others. No easy task, but doable if we choose to.

Our **General Meeting on Zoom** will be held on Saturday, February 27th from 2:00 to 4:00 pm; watch for an invitation from Scott Davidson. Our featured speaker will be mental health advocate, Barbara Meyers.

The "Fourth Monday" Writers' Salon will be on Zoom on February 22nd from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. Check with Tony Pino before the next meeting for an invitation if you don't get one. His contact info is on **page 11**.

You should be receiving your *Bi-Monthly SIP NOTES* on the first and third Mondays of each month. If you decide to send us a **SIP NOTE**, please send it to me at nguarnera16@comcast.net. Please put **FAW SIP NOTE Submission** and **your name** in the **subject field**. Thanks to those of you who have already submitted! I need more, so contribute observations, journal entries, poetry, short essays...the more inspiring the better. COVID fatigue is setting in, and we all need some inspiration to get our positive, can-do mojo back up and running. It looks like we may be in for challenging times in the coming months. Get your vaccine when it's your turn.

"**Tell Me A Story**" is in the final editing stages. Should be in your mailbox soon; again, sorry for the delay.

The FAW Zoom Social Write-In was a big hit this month and will be continuing. Watch for flyers. (*See page 8.*)

Remember, send your creative work for the **Writers' Corner**; your "shout outs" for **KUDOS**; and your prompt suggestions for **The Prompt Palace** (our feature, to help stimulate ideas for your writing—see **page 5**), etc. to the newsletter email address inkspots@cw-cfremontareawriters.org for publication in *Ink Spots*.

Stay safe and healthy...
Cheers! Nancy

Newsletter Submission Guidelines

Please send all submissions for *Ink Spots* to inkspots@cw-cfremontareawriters.org by **March 1st for the March issue**. Remember to put **FAW Ink Spots Submission** and **Your Name** in the **Subject field** of your email. Thank you for sharing your writing with the rest of us!

SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

On or before the **First Day of the Publication Month** (e.g. March 1st for the March issue, etc.)
Please submit your work as attachments, rather than in the body of your email.

WORD COUNT:

Feature articles (Presidents Message, The Spark, features, etc.): **350 - 450 words max.**
Creative Submissions: **1,000 words max.** (unless you are willing to have longer pieces serialized)
Weekly SIP NOTES: **350 - 400 words max.** **Kudos:** **75-100 words max.**

FORMAT: **Text** – Word.doc/docx in Arial 12 pt. **Photos** – JPEG

Please **DO NOT** use special formatting. **ONLY** use the return key at the end of each paragraph.
Please don't double space between sentences. Thank you!

Your Bi-Weekly SIP NOTES

WEEK #30 DEC. 9TH SUE CURTZWILER

Neighborhood Surprise Amidst 2020 COVID-19

Early this year when the COVID-19 shutdown started to change our lives, I thought about what I could do to help people keep smiling. It took me quite a while to figure out what to do that was safe, followed sanitary guidelines, and was inexpensive.

As EASTER approached, I realized I could make Easter treats in a plastic bag (rather than a basket). I boiled some eggs—decorated with stick on Easter seals, bought individually wrapped candies, and with older stationary from my roll-top desk, hand-wrote a simple little note about Happy Easter or their idea of spring as budding plants were peeking from the ground, the basic sign of new beginnings and staying positive.

The spring and summer continued with relentless warnings about the global attack on humanity by COVID-19, the tremendous surge of cases and the unwavering effort of the medical community pleading for us to wear masks, keep our distance, stay within our bubble—those within your household, and refrain from traveling. If only people would follow something as simple as wearing a mask.

Finally, HALLOWEEN and autumn arrived. I immediately thought of small pumpkins especially for the kids. I found a good deal at Trader Joe's. I signed my little pumpkins with "Happy Halloween, Aunt Sue" and left one on each doorstep.

Within about a week, the **Neighborhood Surprise** started. First, I got a few phone calls from those who knew me and said with a tease in their voice, "Is this Aunt Sue?" Then another neighbor brought me a small loaf of homemade pumpkin bread his wife had made. Within the last week or so, I found a bag of groceries at my front door filled with some instant potato mix, fresh apples, two types of canned green beans, cans of gravy and cranberry sauce, and a single desert cookie baked in pan. And, oh yes, even a fresh pineapple. Did you know that the pineapple is a symbol of wealth, honor, hospitality, and welcoming?

I smiled inside with an overwhelming sense of "It's working." My goal is to get to know my neighbors more than a wave and a nodding smile. I would like all of us to learn about each other and be willing to help one another. I want to get a few other neighbors to help create a little community on our street. It would be fun if people started talking to each other, and maybe learn what each of us needs in an emergency.

CHRISTMAS, oh my! Have you been naughty or nice this year? After checking with a few neighbors to see if they would participate, should I plan a Secret Santa exchange? I have a plush, homemade Santa Suit with big white cuffs, hat and beard, even wrap around material to look like boots. Do you think Santa should walk up and down the street (if it's not raining) and pass out something simple? How do I plan for the young kids? Candy canes are already on standby. Maybe lead a sing-along with neighbors standing in front of their homes? Now, I'm not a great singer, but it doesn't matter for something like this; it's all about participation, spreading good cheer, and building a sense of community. I'd like to remember ending 2020 with some fun—even if Santa has to wear a mask!

Sue Curtzwiler

11/28/2020 ©

Monthly Writing Opportunities

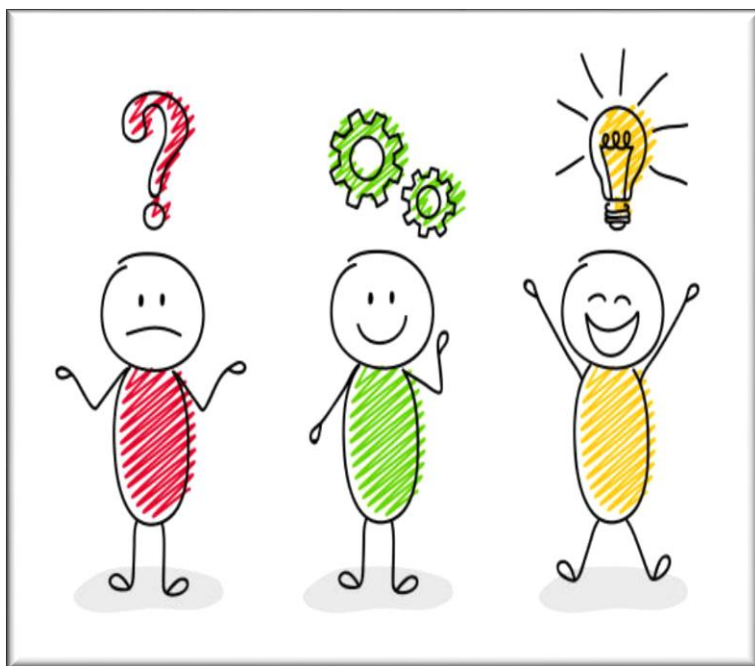
You Are Invited to the

FAW Zoom Writing Social

2nd Saturday, March 13th from 2-4 pm

**Get to know other members through
personal impromptu writing.**

When you sign in, the computer will randomly assign you to a room with several other FAW members. Once everyone is gathered, you'll get three writing prompts. Choose one and write for 8 minutes. You can write memoir, fiction, or poetry, but the writing prompts are designed to encourage you to write about yourself so that we can get to know each other better.



After you write, there will be time for all four people in the room to read their responses to the prompt and chat, then the computer will reassign everyone to a different room, the prompts will change, and the process will repeat.

All FAW members will get a Zoom invitation on the Friday before the Social.

Example prompts from the holiday social in December: I never thought I would meet... Everything changed when... I never thought I would be grateful...

See you there!

Important FAW Information:

— PLEASE READ —

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

FAW is updating its **membership database** to make sure we have current information for everyone.

Please, if you've made a change to your name, email address, phone number, mailing address, or your CWC/FAW member status within the past two years, send your new information to our **Membership Chair, Anita Tosh** at nanatosh56@gmail.com. Please send by March 15th.

Membership Status Levels and descriptions include the following:

***Active:** Active members have published a book within the last ten years. Or you may be eligible if, within the last three years, you have published articles in periodicals of general circulation or self-published a book. Active membership is open to all writers including: fiction, non-fiction, playwrights, scriptwriters, poets, book reviewers, photojournalists, self-published authors, and includes other publishing industry professionals, (critics, editors, publishers, copyeditors, and teachers).*

***Associate:** Associate members are currently writing with the intention of publishing or were last published more than ten years ago. This membership category includes non-writers working in writing-related occupations.*

***Dual:** Dual members have a primary, paid membership in one branch, and have, for an additional fee, dual membership(s) in other CWC branch(s).*

For more details, go to the CWC website calwriters.org and select **membership** and **qualifications**.

Thank you for sharing your updated information with us!

Here's the link for the NorCal events calendar.

**Use it to find out what other branches are doing and when—
guest speakers, conferences, special events, and more.**

<http://cwcnorcalwriters.org/events/>

A Very Important Reminder

Any CWC member can attend meetings of any other CWC branch for the same fee that the branch charges its own members. This applies only to meetings, not to conferences or special events. If you are interested in attending a monthly meeting at another branch, check the events calendar for branches in Northern California. It can be found at ***<http://cwcnorcalwriters.org/events/>***



Sue Curtzwiler
Volunteer Coordinator

VALENTINE'S DAY!

Favorite dinners, red roses or Spring flowers, chocolate delicacies, and memorable cards are common ways to show affection to your loved one. How about getting untangled from the ribbon that ties a bouquet or climbing out of the red heart-shaped box of chocolates?

Think back, what was that sweetness that attracted you to your heartthrob? Setting the table with a touch of different detail or a day strolling on a favorite trail? Every couple has something unique only for each other.

What is your favorite tradition for Valentine's Day?

Perhaps it's spending time with a good friend traveling along memory lane, recounting the successes of surviving bumpy hills, and the reward of understanding lessons learned from disappointment or failure. You see, without the bitter taste of some foods you cannot appreciate the sweetness of chocolate covered strawberries. My piano teacher explained that without the minor chords, the beautiful harmony of a song would not exist and would be missed. So, it is with life, the good and bad hold hands together. A dismal thought for a day we express our love? Not really. Love grows stronger when you share life with the person or people you cherish.

During this time with so many restrictions against traveling or dining out, you might have made new memories together tending the garden for those summer strawberries, trying a new recipe, or change one thing inside the house—maybe a whole room. I look forward to the charm of a cheerful new office/music room renovated with the help of my loving family. To those of you who play piano, do you remember balancing a penny on the top of your hands as you scaled the keyboard? Failure before success, you bet; that was a challenge.

You will never need to wait for or miss Valentine's Day, practice kindness every day. Do it now! Any time is the right time to have those chocolate truffles, strawberries, and special dinners. Get dressed up a notch above the normal attire for a walk around the lake. Simply share loving life with that special person. Happy Valentine's Day.



Notes from the World

Two More FREE “Jane Cleland” Writing Webinars

Award-winning author Jane Cleland is offering two more **FREE** Zoom writing craft webinars to all writers. If you're available, and you're a writer, these will be interesting and helpful in understanding different aspects of the craft of writing.

Saturday, March 13, from 10:00 to 11:00 AM PDT

“The Perception Gap: How to Use Your Characters’ Views of the World to Create Compelling and Twisty Plots”

Saturday, April 17, from 10:00 to 11:00 AM PDT

“The Art of Backstory: Using Flashbacks and Flash-forwards”

Sign up in advance at Jancleland.com/events to register for these webinars. You'll receive a link to the webinar the week before the event.

Jane Cleland is an award-winning author who writes crime fiction, middle grade, espionage, and the long-running Josie Prescott Antiques Mystery series, all published by St. Martin's Minotaur. She has just published the 13th book in the series, *Hidden Treasure* and the 14th book in the series has been accepted by her publisher. Cleland contributes craft articles to **Writers Digest** and teaches professional writing at the university level.

Fremont Area Writers “Fourth Monday” Writers’ Salon

Monday March 22nd 7:00 – 9:00 PM

For details on Zooming, contact Tony Pino

up.dragonfly.com@gmail.com or 510-745-0761

More Notes from the World

★ CONTESTS ★ ★ NEWSLETTERS ★ ★ ETC. ★

Writers Weekly. Free newsletter. 24-hour short story contest once each quarter. Topic and word length revealed after signing up. Limited to 500 entrants. \$5 entry fee. Also lists some paying markets for fiction and nonfiction. writersweekly.com

Winning Writers. Free newsletter. Lists free contests (many age or location restricted) as well as pay-to-enter contests. Lots of poetry contests. winningwriters.com

The Write Life. Website. Lists free contests (with a few exceptions.) Includes book, short fiction, essay, and poetry contests. Many contests are very specific, e.g. book by first generation immigrant, book of military fiction. thewritelife.com/writing-contests

Poets & Writers. Website. Searchable contest database with filters for cost, genre and deadline. pw.org/grants

Submishmash Weekly. Free newsletter. A curated arts newsletter with select publishing opportunities including contests, publications seeking submissions, and artist residencies. Run by the submission platform Submittable.com.

The Writer. Website and free newsletter. Listing of mostly pay-to-enter contests. writermag.com/contests

Fan Story. Paid site. Seven-day free trial. \$9.95/month or \$69/year. Feedback on writing you post and almost daily contests that can be entered at no additional fee. fanstory.com

Terrific Resource for Writers in the Age of COVID — FREE

The **Gotham Writers Workshop** in New York City has put together the **Inside Writing** series of free talks about writing. Each talk features a writer in a particular genre and an agent who deals with that genre. The first season covered everything from historical fiction to graphic novels to writing query letters.

Seasons 1 & 2 are archived at:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIOByuSHCqP7V9mSsoqU5Fojjys2LsvYi>

Season 2 (recent presentations)

Inside Writing: Satire and Parody

Inside Writing: Comics and Cartoons

Check out these **free** talks on your genre!

Call for *Romance* Submissions

Belonging Books, a new, inclusive, feminist publishing house, has begun accepting submissions for launch in June. Submissions can be of all lengths from and about minorities—people of color, people with disabilities, religious minorities, LGBTQ+ people, etc.—and non-traditional romance.

Mission: diversify and modernize the genre.
belongingbooksonline.wordpress.com

Free Online Workshops

scriptwriters check out
roadmapwriters.com

More Notes from the World

HEAR YE! HEAR YE! HEAR YE!

CWC Literary Review Extends Deadline

The CWC High Desert branch recently held a Zoom meeting featuring Managing Editor Elisabeth Tuck who discussed Q&A on the Lit Review submissions. She and President Donna McCrohan Rosenthal informed the group that there has been a serious lack of submissions from our CWC members for the 2021 edition of the Literary Review. They also announced that

the deadline for Literary Review submissions has been extended until April 15, 2021.

All CWC members are encouraged to submit.

Traditionally 75% of the submissions are received in the last two weeks of the window, but even so, it looks like there may be less competition this year than in the past. This may be your chance to get published in the CWC Lit Review. Edit your best work, get someone you trust to proofread, and submit.

Guidelines are at <https://calwriters.org/publications/#submit>

Please be sure you follow ALL the directions. For best consideration, it is recommended that you do not wait until the last minute to submit.

CWC 2021 LITERARY REVIEW

CALL FOR
SUBMISSIONS
NOW OPEN

**DEADLINE:
APRIL 15, 2021**

<https://calwriters.org/publications/#submit>

Genre-specific Websites

Sisters in Crime <http://www.sistersincrime.org>
(open to men as well as women)

Mystery Writers of America <http://www.mysterywriters.org>

Romance Writers of America <http://www.rwa.org>

Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America
<http://www.sfwaweb.org>

Inspire Christian Writers <http://inspirewriters.com>

Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators
<http://www.scbwi.org>

Women's National Book Association <http://www.wnba-books.org> (open to men, as well as women)

Academy of American Poets <http://www.poets.org>

Poetry Society of America <http://www.poetrysociety.org>

National Association of Memoir Writers
<http://www.namw.org>

American Society of Journalists and Authors
<http://www.asja.org> (nonfiction writers)

CineStory (screenwriters) <http://www.cinestory.org>

Scriptwriters Network <http://scriptwritersnetwork.com>

Historical Novel Association <https://historicalnovelsociety.org/>

Horror Writers Association <http://www.horror.org>

More Notes from the World

Reedsy Learning

Free Writing Classes, Webinars and A Blog

https://blog.reedsy.com/learning/courses/writing/show-dont-tell/?utm_source=mailparrot&utm_campaign=learning_show_don_t_tell

Reedsy has lots of free classes and webinars for writers, as well as lots of archived blog topics.

Check it out!

TCK Publishing.com

2021

Readers' Choice Awards Contest

Voting from January 1, 2021 to November 13, 2021

Details at <https://www.tckpublishing.com/2021-readers-choice-awards/>

Winners will be declared and prizes awarded on November 30, 2021

2021

Poetry Contest

Submissions are open **now through March 31, 2021.**

Details at <https://www.tckpublishing.com/2021-poetry-awards-contest/>

Winner will be declared and awarded \$1,000 on April 21, 2021. Enter your poems today!

Additional list of poetry contests <https://www.tckpublishing.com/list-of-poetry-contests/>

Additional list of book awards contests <https://www.tckpublishing.com/book-awards-contests/>

Explore this site for contests, some free/some fee, in every genre!

Imagine 2200:

A New No-Entry Fee Climate-Fiction Contest by Fix, Grist's solutions lab

They are looking for **short stories (3,000-5,000 words)** that envision a just, regenerative future. What will the world look like in the year 2200—or anywhere between then and now?

For contest details: https://grist.org/fix/climate-fiction-writing-contest-imagine-2200-prizes/?utm_source=winningwriters&utm_medium=email210124&utm_campaign=clifi

Deadline: April 12, 2021 Submittal portal:

https://grist.submittable.com/submit?utm_source=winningwriters&utm_medium=subemail210124&utm_campaign=clifi

\$8,700 in prizes and publication in immersive digital collection on the Fix website. NO FEE!

For more information and details check out <https://grist.org/> and <https://grist.org/about/fix/>

January Speaker Recap

Author Jesse Byrd: Passion to Profession

by Sue Curtzwiler and Nancy Guarnera

"Writing is a journey, don't try to be perfect. Always do the best that you can do right now. This is a craft; you will keep growing."

Jesse Byrd ~ award-winning children's author



Jesse Byrd reminded us that following one's passion isn't always easy, but it can be hard to ignore. It's something deep inside you that just won't let go. And sometimes that passion becomes a profession.

For example, Byrd is 6'8" and played basketball at UC Santa Barbara. During weeks recovering from a basketball knee injury, his zeal to write children's books took hold. He gave up basketball and studied writing. His community work with children throughout his life taught him how they reacted to everything: games, nature, each other...which gave him inspiration and background. After school, he worked for Google and wrote a middle-grade novel in his spare time. He left Google to pursue his dream of publishing his book, but wasn't able to raise the money he needed. He went back to Google, got a promotion and lots of encouragement. "This was like going to grad school, I learned the value of teamwork," Byrd explained.

He left Google again; this time, with support from family and friends, he devoted his time to writing. "Don't let one failure stop you from moving forward," they told him. This time it stuck—don't wait until later (i.e., retirement), do it now!

There are two popular kinds of publishing: self-publishing and traditional publishing. Byrd does both. His formula for writing is a combination of process and inspiration, obtained from experience, education, and exploration. He's had the opportunity to travel the world, and explore and experience the unusual, such as kissing giraffes and sitting for a fish pedicure. Unusual architecture can also inspire him to create fun mash-ups for his children's books. (He called into our Zoom meeting from Dubai!)

Byrd's most popular children's picture books include: *Real Jungle Tales*, *Sunny Days*, *Dream Catcher*, and *King Penguin*. He uses a Story Grid Template for each scene in his book outlining the following: page number, setting, characters/illustrator, action, text, mood, and additional scene notes. He will provide his illustrator with stick figures for full development in black and white. Once the book nears completion, the color illustrations are developed. Byrd emphasized the need to "get inside the character's mood" and make sure that the illustrations reflect the moods at play as you "mix it up" throughout the story.

Byrd is strongly committed to diversity and makes sure that the team he assembles is authentic and reflective of the project, especially with regard to his illustrators. He wants the best publishing team he can get. It took ten years to find his "dream" agent...worth the wait. He recommends taking the time to build your best team.

Why children's books? Because they're shorter and take less time to produce, they're the fastest growing genre, and one of the top grossing genres, especially pre-school books.

One top publishing tip: Identify your non-negotiables, and don't negotiate them.

One final word: If you choose this profession, remember that you'll be a brand: "storytelling and story selling" for children. Make sure you reach out to their development and what their connections to their world.

Website: jessebcreative.com **Email:** jesse@jessebcreative.com **Agent:** susanmarymalone.com

Story grid: jessebcreative.com/services/storygrid **Creative network and creative work:** behance.net

FREMONT AREA WRITERS' CORNER

Ring Around the Rosies

Ring around the rosies,
Pocket full of posies,
Hold your nose, walk carefully,
for Death hangs in the air.

You can't grab hands and circle round,
Laugh with kindergarten glee,
All fall down,
Then rise again,
for Death hangs in the air.

If you see buboes, measles spots,
blisters, bleeding, bruising, pox,
And quickly run away?
If you avoid winged pests,
sheep and monkeys, all the rest,
Can you then be safe?

No, my child, naive you are,
Thinking, if you see,
That you can get away in time,
Now, listen carefully;

He cannot see, nor hear nor smell,
No mother gave him birth,
Yet smaller than the smallest cell
His power covers Earth.

He harvests victims one by one
The good, the bad, the clean, the scum;
The very thing that gives you life,
Your breath, he'll claim his own.
Then while you pant, He'll laugh, divide,
He'll send his evil offspring out,
through nostril chutes
and throaty sounds,
To wait for prey while hanging,
hanging in the air

So run home child, slam the door,
Call Mother to protect you,
Stay wrapped inside her warm embrace,
Together pray to God for grace,
For Death is waiting, yonder,
Hanging in the air.

Marie Blanchard

CAT AND MOUSE

cat plays with a mouse
I rescue it from the cat
mouse bites, won't let go
tears streaming, I flail my arm
mother laughs at kitchen door

Nancy Guarnera

No More Goldilocks

sun rises at dawn
peeks over the horizon
warms our fragile Earth
the oceans rise, glaciers die
too hot, too cold, not just right

Nancy Guarnera