

**WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH**



# **Ink Spots**



**The Newsletter of Fremont Area Writers**

*The "Centennial" Branch of the California Writers Club*

Nancy Guarnera – Editor-in-Chief

[inkspots@cw-c-fremontareawriters.org](mailto:inkspots@cw-c-fremontareawriters.org)

**Vol. 5 No. 3 March 2026**

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



*Visual Prompt*

*Photograph by nguarnera*

# March General Meeting

\* March 28<sup>th</sup> \* 2 to 4 PM \* ZOOM \* FREE \*

## POETRY AS BALM

### *A Generative Poetry Workshop for Collective Wellbeing*

with Facilitator

**Dr. Adrienne Danyelle Oliver**



[adriennedanyelle.com](http://adriennedanyelle.com)

**W**riting, whether poetry or prose, can be more than just a form of creative self-expression. There is healing to be had on many levels. With more than 20 years of experience teaching about the joys of reading and writing, Dr. Adrienne Oliver enjoys sharing her writing expertise to help writers of all levels discover and preserve the joy of writing as a tool for well-being. She has published two chapbooks as testament to poetry as a balm.

This workshop will offer time to write using guided writing prompts. Adrienne will share some work, writing prompts, and offer space for participants to share their work with others. The acts of writing and witnessing will be a central part of the healing process for workshop attendees.



Dr. Adrienne Danyelle Oliver is a writer and educator living in Oakland, CA by way of a move across the country from her native town, Little Rock, Arkansas. She has two chapbooks published: *the body has memories* (Black Lawrence Press) and *collective madness* (Finishing Line Press), the latter of which was nominated for the 2023 Maya Angelou book award. Beyond writing and coaching other writers, Adrienne's community work includes producing [blackgoldstorytellers.com](http://blackgoldstorytellers.com), an award-winning inter-generational storytelling circle featuring stories of The Great Migration by Black elders who migrated from the South to Oakland, CA.

***This workshop is FREE to everyone!***

To get your link for this event, email a request with "FAW Zoom" in your Subject line to [scottfrombayside@yahoo.com](mailto:scottfrombayside@yahoo.com). You'll receive a link on or before the day of the meeting.

You can learn more about **Fremont Area Writers (FAW)** at [cwc-fremontareawriters.org](http://cwc-fremontareawriters.org).

FAW is one of 21 branches of the **California Writers Club (CWC)** [calwriters.org](http://calwriters.org).

All CWC branches welcome new members.

***EVERYONE IS WELCOME!***



**Scott Davidson**  
FAW President

# President's Message

Welcome to March. Spring is just a few weeks away. The days are getting longer. The snow is melting...

Right, we're in California, where we get to watch the rest of the country freeze while we debate whether we need a jacket. Sometimes that is hard to remember, even after 30 years since we moved here. But Spring does bring one thing. Time to get the garden ready for the year. Soon we'll see the little shoots, so delicate, that will grow into the monster squash and tomato plants we'll get later in the year. But Spring is the start, the beginning.

Which leads me to the beginning of our writing. I hope you all got to see our February speaker, Rich Amooi, on killer openings. Don't

doubt the importance of how you open your piece. It makes a difference to your reader, and your editor.

I'm in the middle of judging over 100 books for a contest, and I love bad openings. They let me put the book aside and make my life easier. When I see a good opening, I think, "rats, I have to read more." So many writers feel they must tell me about their characters. Are they married, their appearance using the traditional mirror to let them and us see themselves, the traditional mirror, how many kids, their profession. Boring.

The writer of one of my contest books did it the right way. In the initial scene, the heroine is getting ready to go on stage as a dancer. Will she wear her hot pants? That told me something. Two kids, one young, one in college text her with their crises while the stage manager counts down the time till her cue. Her mother texts. We know something about her appearance, and her age. It is a humor book, and there is a running joke where each kid and the mother say, "you're not wearing those hot pants, are you?" And she brilliantly resolves the problems and makes it on stage on time. We learn so much about her without a word of description. I'll be reading more.

Break down the openings of the books on your shelf. Did they draw you in? Or were they something you had to get through before the story began? You can learn so much, just by reading.

Keep writing and thinking,

**Scott**



*Visual Prompt*  
*Artwork by Jo Ann Frisch*



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# A Word from Our Editor



**Nancy Guarnera**  
Editor *Ink Spots*

Welcome to our March 2026 issue. We hope you enjoy it!

When was the last time you entered a writing contest or submitted your written work to a juried call for stories? Never?!? Well, this issue has bunches of opportunities for you to do just that. Check out the Contests section and see if there's something that tickles your fancy. There are calls for long and short poetry, and prose—flash fiction, novellas and short stories, both long and short. Some have themes and some leave that up to you. Most have entry fees, but these are generally reasonable. There's at least one that's FREE! Prizes range from cash to publication, sometimes both.

If you do decide to take the plunge and submit, please make sure to read the guidelines carefully and follow them to the letter. Unlike your newsletter editor, these contest folks tend not to be forgiving when it comes to typos or errors of any kind. Typically, they don't tolerate it when submissions do not follow stated guidelines...these are not suggestions,

these are hard and fast rules. So, writers, beware! And bonne chance! May the writing muses be with you. And should you prevail and win, please submit a Shout Out to *Ink Spots*, so we can celebrate your achievement. You can submit your Shout Out through the portal on the FAW website on the Newsletter page.

March is Women's History Month, and March 8<sup>th</sup>, is International Women's Day. IWD is a global celebration of women's contributions, achievements and resilience throughout history. One such achievement was the opportunity for Iranian girls to attend school. There was a time when this was illegal. At the risk of sounding political, and I really do not mean to, I mourn the lives of the 100 or so Iranian girls who were killed during one of the first attacks against their country last week. Their school was bombed while they were there enjoying the privilege of getting an education. Intentional, or not, the effect was same: one hundred global citizens will no longer make their contributions to their communities, their country, and their world. Truly, a tragic loss for their families, and for all of us. And certainly, not an auspicious start to the month set aside to acknowledge women and their accomplishments.

In recognition of Women's History Month, this issue seeks to acknowledge the lives of women. From the front cover photo, to the book review of Malala Yousafzai's memoir *Finding My Way*, to quotes by women writers, and finally, to two longer pieces, (one about women's experience with birthing children, and the other about one woman's adventure leading the Lewis and Clark expedition) this issue is a celebration of women. Regardless of your gender, I encourage you do some research into the lives of women throughout history. Choose a discipline: art, music, science, agriculture, literature, the military, exploration, aviation, etc., and surf the web. Women are there waiting for you to find them.

\* \* \*

**Just a quick reminder—April is National Poetry Month.** Please consider submitting a few poems, on any subject, for publication in April's *Ink Spots*. Deadline for all submissions is March 10<sup>th</sup>. Since this is late getting to you, please adjust the deadline date to March 15<sup>th</sup>. If you need more time, please email me at [inkspots@cwc-fremontareawriters.org](mailto:inkspots@cwc-fremontareawriters.org) and we can negotiate for more time.

For complete submission guidelines check the Newsletter menu on the FAW website and click on "Guidelines [here](#)".

**Please submit all submissions as attachments • Use a separate email for each type of submission**

**Send all submissions to: [inkspots@cwc-fremontareawriters.org](mailto:inkspots@cwc-fremontareawriters.org)**

**Make sure your name is on each piece you are submitting, not just in your email**

**WORD doc or docx 12pt Cambria for prose & 12pt Calibri for poetry JPEGs for artwork & photos (300 dpi)**

**If you'd like a full set of guidelines, email [inkspots@cwc-fremontareawriters.org](mailto:inkspots@cwc-fremontareawriters.org) and request it.**

# ***FAW – March Meetings***

## **Fremont Area Writers “Fourth Saturday”**

### **General Mtg on Zoom**

**Saturday March 28<sup>th</sup> 2:00 – 4:00 PM**

*Meeting is open to CWC/FAW members and the public  
Writers of all skill levels are welcome*

*Speaker: Adrienne Danyelle Oliver Poet (p.2)  
[www.adrienedanyelle.com](http://www.adrienedanyelle.com)*

*For details on Zooming, contact Scott Davidson at  
[scottfrombayside@yahoo.com](mailto:scottfrombayside@yahoo.com)*

## **Fremont Area Writers “Tuesday before 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday”**

### **Board Meeting on Zoom**

**Tuesday March 24<sup>th</sup> 4:00 PM**

*Meeting is open to FAW members to observe their Board in action.  
Comments and questions from members will be addressed  
at the end of the meeting, with prior notice.*

*For details on Zooming, contact Scott Davidson at  
[scottfrombayside@yahoo.com](mailto:scottfrombayside@yahoo.com)*

# ***FAW – March Meetings***

## **Fremont Area Writers**

### **“Second Saturday”**

## **Social Write-In on Zoom**

**Saturday March 14<sup>th</sup> 2:00 – 3:30 PM**

*Get to know others through personal writing with prompts.  
Members receive a Zoom invite. Non-members should  
contact Scott Davidson (see below) for an invite.*

*For details on Zooming, contact Scott Davidson at  
[scottfrombayside@yahoo.com](mailto:scottfrombayside@yahoo.com)*

## **Fremont Area Writers**

### **“Fourth Monday”**

## **Writers’ Salon on Zoom**

**Monday March 23<sup>rd</sup> 7:00 – 9:00 PM**

*Open to FAW members and the public.  
Share, listen and support writers as they read their work.  
For a Zoom invitation link contact Tony Pino (see below).*

*For details on Zooming, contact Tony Pino  
[up.dragonfly.com@gmail.com](mailto:up.dragonfly.com@gmail.com) or 510-745-0761*

# FAW 2026 Speakers

## 2026 FAW GENERAL MEETINGS TOPICS & SPEAKERS

**MARCH 28<sup>TH</sup> 2-4 PM ZOOM**

**Workshop: Using Poetry for Healing**

**Adrienne Danyelle Oliver** *Poet, Writing Coach*  
[www.adriennedanyelle.com](http://www.adriennedanyelle.com)

**APRIL 18<sup>TH</sup> (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday) 2-4 PM ZOOM**

**To Be Determined**

**MAY 23<sup>RD</sup> 2-4 PM ZOOM**

**Writing Family Secrets**

**Lisa Montanaro** *Author*  
[www.LisaMontanaroWrites.com](http://www.LisaMontanaroWrites.com)

**JUNE 27<sup>TH</sup> 2-4 PM ZOOM**

**Writing Comedy or Writing Comedy  
into Fiction**

**Brian Copeland** *Author, Comedian*  
[www.briancopeland.com](http://www.briancopeland.com)

**July — No General Meeting**

**FAW PICNIC**

**Date, Time & Place TBD**

**AUGUST 22<sup>ND</sup> 2-4 PM ZOOM**

**Writing Flash Fiction**

**Robert Seigel** *Writer, Teacher*  
[www.robertanthonysiegel.com/writing](http://www.robertanthonysiegel.com/writing)

**SEPTEMBER 26<sup>TH</sup> 2-4 PM ZOOM**

**Anatomy of a Short Story**

**Margaret (Peggy) Lucke** *Writer, Editor,  
Teacher*  
[www.margaretlucke.com](http://www.margaretlucke.com)

**OCTOBER 24<sup>TH</sup> 2-4 PM ZOOM**

**The Art of Revision and Self-Editing**

**Katherine Sherbrook** *Writer*  
[www.kasherbrook.com](http://www.kasherbrook.com)

**NOVEMBER 28<sup>TH</sup> 2-4 PM ZOOM**

**Practical Tools for Writing Layered  
Stories, Not Stereotypes**

**Angela Álvarez Vélez** *Writer, Teacher*  
[www.angelaalvarezvelez.com](http://www.angelaalvarezvelez.com)

**December — No General Meeting**

**FAW HOLIDAY PARTY**

**Date, Time & Place TBD**



**General Meetings are on the 4<sup>TH</sup> SATURDAY of the month**

*(April is an exception this year — see above.) (No general meetings in July & December.)*

All FAW members receive links to FAW meetings. Non-members can email  
[scottfrombayside@yahoo.com](mailto:scottfrombayside@yahoo.com) to receive a link. Put "ZOOM LINK" in the Subject line.

*You will receive the link the week before the meeting.*

**PLEASE NOTE:** While not required...if a topic is of interest to you, consider checking out  
the speaker's website, before the meeting. There may be gold waiting for you there!

# KUDOS – Members' News

If you have an accomplishment related to your writing, or some other creative aspect of your life, and would like to share it with FAW members in this space, please send it to [inkspots@cwc-fremontareawriters.org](mailto:inkspots@cwc-fremontareawriters.org), or submit it through the **Shout Out for Ink Spots** link at [cwc-fremontareawriters.org](http://cwc-fremontareawriters.org). Just scroll down the home page until you reach the red **Shout Out** link and click on it. Please do your best to keep it to **100 words or less**. Put **FAW – Shout Out – Your Name** in the Subject field of your email to us. If you don't, your email may get lost in the mail. Thanks!

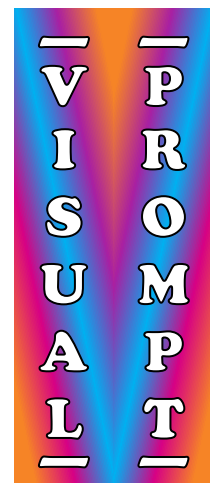
**KUDOS to Cherilyn Chin** who has signed a new contract with Twenty First Century books, an imprint of Lerner books, to write a non-fiction book all about octopuses targeted to the high school audience market. Lerner has just finished publishing Cherilyn's 8-book children's series, *Lily Lu to the Rescue*. **Congratulations, Cherilyn!**

**KUDOS to Myles Garcia** whose book is quoted in the fresh documentary *Behind the Athens 2004 Olympic Opening Ceremony* just posted on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqCVecXlt24&t=1s>) Look for it just after the 43:00-minute mark. **Congratulations, Myles!**



## DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS

Sunday March 8<sup>th</sup> *Spring Forward 1 Hour*



*Photograph by nguarnera*

# FAW & CWC Information

– PLEASE READ –

MARK YOUR  
CALENDAR

*You're Invited to...*

## Fremont Area Writers Social Dinner

Monday March 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm

Le Moose Café

at 5014 Mowry Ave. in Fremont

*Details will be e-mailed to members. Feel free to bring a guest.*

*<https://lemoosecrepecafe.com/qr-all-menu/>*

## FAW Needs You **Help Wanted** FAW Needs You

The following non-elected Board positions need to be filled:

### CWC & NorCal Representatives Wanted

We are looking for a California Writers Club Representative and a NorCal (Northern California Branches) Representative. Evelyn LaTorre has held both these positions for a number of years and is planning to step down as soon as we've found replacements. For more information about these positions, contact Evelyn at [elatorre@aol.com](mailto:elatorre@aol.com).

You can also contact Scott Davidson at [scottfrombayside@yahoo.com](mailto:scottfrombayside@yahoo.com).

#### Hospitality Chair

welcomes, introduces, contacts, & encourages newcomers to join FAW

#### Service Coordinator

finds & assigns volunteers to assist FAW committee heads

*Please speak to a Board member if you are interested in one of these positions or in being of service to FAW in some other capacity. Check the last two pages in this issue for contact info.*

# FAW & CWC Information

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

— PLEASE READ —

**Fremont Area Writers is moving its April 25<sup>th</sup> General Meeting to April 18<sup>th</sup> — from the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday.**

The meeting time will remain the same: 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

The meeting will still be on Zoom and is open to everyone.

Everyone will receive the link to the meeting from Scott.

*All of FAW meetings are is FREE.*

*This change is a one-time occurrence.*

This change is being made to accommodate those FAW members who want to participate, as readers and/or audience members, in the **Hayward Lit Hop**.

## HAYWARD LIT HOP

A Literary Hop through  
Downtown Hayward

Saturday April 25<sup>th</sup> 2026  
2pm - 8pm

For additional information:  
<https://haywardlithop.com/>

## CWC-NorCal

### Building Better Branches Leadership Conference

Sunday April 26<sup>th</sup> 8 am to 3 pm  
Zio Fraedo's Restaurant  
611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill

### FAW Attendees:

Scott Davidson, Pat Doyne,  
Cherilyn Chin, Stephen Yuen

**We need at least one more...let us know  
if you'd like to go!**

If you have questions or suggestions about the conference or improving our branch, email Scott Davidson at [scottfrombayside@yahoo.com](mailto:scottfrombayside@yahoo.com).

# FAW & CWC \$\$\$CONTESTS\$\$\$

\* CONTESTS \* CONTESTS \* CONTESTS \* CONTESTS \* CONTESTS \* CONTESTS \* CONTESTS \*

## San Joaquin Valley Writers

*Announces Their Biennial Writing Contest*

### "Make Us Want to Read More"

SJVW's is pleased to announce its biennial writing contest for all CWC members. For 2026, the theme is *"Make Us Want to Read More"*. As we often hear, if you don't grab agents—or any reader, for that matter—from the very beginning, you will lose their interest and they won't continue reading. With this idea in mind, the contest this year is focused on openings for prose fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. We want to see how you hook the reader early on—how you make the reader say, "Okay. I like this! I'm hooked!"

All entries are limited to 300 words or fewer. Submission deadline is May 1, 2026. For complete details and submission information visit:

[www.sjvalleywriters.org/contest](http://www.sjvalleywriters.org/contest)

## The Smalls Too 2026

**A BIG contest  
for small poems and prose**

**Deadline: March 15<sup>th</sup>**

Announcing a statewide CWC poetry and prose contest beginning on February 15. Inviting your submissions of 8-line poems or 75-word prose.

**Awards: 1<sup>st</sup> Place - \$100, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place - \$50, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place - \$25**

**For Contest Details and Guidelines:**

[calwriters.org/the-smalls-too-a-big-contest-for-small-poems-prose/](http://calwriters.org/the-smalls-too-a-big-contest-for-small-poems-prose/)

# \$\$\$ CONTESTS \$\$\$

## NARRATIVE MAGAZINE

For general submissions to the magazine:

[www.narrativemagazine.com/submit-your-work](http://www.narrativemagazine.com/submit-your-work)

### Winter 2026 Story Contest

**Fiction & Non-fiction / 1<sup>st</sup> Prize: \$2,500 / Deadline: March 31<sup>st</sup>**

[www.narrativemagazine.com/winter-2026-story-contest](http://www.narrativemagazine.com/winter-2026-story-contest)

#### Story of the Week

[www.narrativemagazine.com/story-week-guidelines](http://www.narrativemagazine.com/story-week-guidelines)

#### Six-Word Stories

[www.narrativemagazine.com/sixwords](http://www.narrativemagazine.com/sixwords)

#### Poem of the Week

[www.narrativemagazine.com/poem-week-guidelines](http://www.narrativemagazine.com/poem-week-guidelines)

#### Photography

[www.narrativemagazine.com/photography](http://www.narrativemagazine.com/photography)

**DEADLINES:** Continuous...check your category

# TCK Publishing.com

## TCK Publishing Mission Statement

*"To build a sustainable book publishing company that helps as many authors as possible fulfill their dreams."*

Our mission is to help all our clients earn a full-time income from book royalties.

TCK has various contests throughout the year and accepts submissions of both fiction — all genres and markets — and non-fiction.

## FREE classes and webinars

[www.tckpublishing.com](http://www.tckpublishing.com)

# \$\$\$ CONTESTS \$\$\$

The Wolfe Pack &  
Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine

Proudly Announce

Our Twentieth Annual

## Black Orchid Novella Award Contest



Portrait of Nero Wolfe by Kevin I. Gordon

### Does your sleuth measure up to this master?

We are looking for original works of fiction in the traditional deductive style exemplified by Rex Stout's Nero Wolfe. Your entry must:

- Contain no overt sex or violence
- Emphasize the ratiocinative skills of the sleuth
- Not include characters from the Nero Wolfe series

First Prize: \$1,000. . .and publication in Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine\*

Entries must be 15,000 to 20,000 words in length, and must be submitted by May 31, 2026. The winner will be announced at The Wolfe Pack's Annual Black Orchid Banquet in New York City on December 5, 2026.

Please visit [www.nerowolfe.org](http://www.nerowolfe.org) for official rules, procedures and guidelines.

For questions, contact Jane K. Cleland, Chair of the BONA contest, at [Jane@janecleland.com](mailto:Jane@janecleland.com).

\*If no acceptable candidates are received, AHMM and The Wolfe Pack reserve the right to declare no winner for any given year.

# \$\$\$ CONTESTS \$\$\$

## Tom Howard / John H. Reid

### Fiction & Essay Contest

TOTAL PRIZES: \$12,000 1<sup>st</sup> prize each Story and Essay \$3,500

DEADLINE: May 1, 2026

GENRE: All styles & themes - fiction and nonfiction

SUBMISSION FEE: \$ 25 per submission • unlimited number of entries • Length: 6K words max

SUBMIT TO: [winningwriters.com/our-contests/tom-howard-john-h-reid-fiction-essay-contest](http://winningwriters.com/our-contests/tom-howard-john-h-reid-fiction-essay-contest)



## WERGLE FLOMP Humor Poetry Contest

DEADLINE: April 1<sup>st</sup> (now accepting submissions)

GENRE: Humorous Poetry (published or unpublished)

NO FEE!

PRIZES: \$3,750 in prizes

INFO & SUBMIT TO: [winningwriters.com/our-contests/wergle-flomp-humor-poetry-contest-free](http://winningwriters.com/our-contests/wergle-flomp-humor-poetry-contest-free)



Fremont Cultural Arts Council • Half Price Books • Fremont Area Writers

## FLASH FICTION CONTEST

### TOPIC: **First Love**

Title with Poem or Prose • 300 Words Max. • Must fit on (1) 8 x 11 sheet • 12 pt or larger

# OF SUBMISSIONS: (3) Poems/(3) Prose/Combination of Poetry & Prose

DEADLINE: April 6<sup>th</sup> • Midnight

CONTEST DATE: Saturday • April 11<sup>th</sup> • 10:00 – 5:00 PM

LOCATION: Half Price Books • 39152 Fremont Hub • In Fremont

**FOR MORE INSTRUCTIONS TO COME GO TO:**

<https://www.fremontculturalartscouncil.org/flash-fiction-contest>

# Book & Movie Reviews

Here's your opportunity to share your favorite books & movies. They can be just for fun, ones that changed your life, books on writing craft, etc. If you decide to submit: **300 to 600 max. word count doc file.** Please send to the **Ink Spots** email address and put **FAW—Book/Movie Review—Your Name** in the Subject field.

*(The opinions stated here are strictly those of the individual, and do not represent either CWC or FAW.)*

## FINDING MY WAY

**by Malala Yousafzai**

In Malala's words, this memoir is about how "My early twenties were a tangle of anxiety and indecision, reckless nights and foggy mornings, friendship and first love." From time to time, she wonders how her life would have been different if she hadn't been shot in the face at age 15 by the Taliban on her way to school in Pakistan. She was then, and still is, an outspoken advocate for girls' education. Great Britain has guarded this youngest (born in 1988) Nobel Peace Prize Winner's life since saving it after the attempted murder.

The book begins when Malala enters Oxford University in 2017 as a Philosophy, Politics, and Economics major (like her inspiration, Benazir Bhutto, prime minister of Pakistan, 44 years before). Malala vows not to repeat missing a social life like she did in her high school days in Birmingham, England. She wants to return to the peer approval and friendships of her grade school days in Pakistan. So, she buys more trendy clothes like jeans and t-shirts and stows away the "correct clothes for Pakistani girls" that her mother picks for her.

Her first act at Oxford is to sign up for too many extracurricular activities, such as rowing club. Her attempts to blend in are sometimes successful and sometimes not. But other students want to take photos with her, and the British press catches her going to her early morning rowing practice wearing jeans instead of the traditional shalwar kameez. When photos reach Pakistan, she is called a traitor, porn star, and having abandoned her country and religion.

Malala forgoes some activities, such as attending Club Night, until her curiosity outweighs her fear of being photographed. Always a risk-taker, Malala delights in the thrill of climbing across a church rooftop to a forbidden bell tower at night. No one photographs her there. She also tries marijuana and, after a bad trip ignites panic attacks, she sees a therapist to discover she suffers from PTSD from never having processed the emotions of being shot in the face.

The twenty-year-old amasses an interesting group of mostly female friends with whom she gossips, eats, shops, parties, and too seldom, studies. In her third year at the university, several of them live together in an old house. In the spring of 2020, Covid sends them all back home for remote classes.

During her first two years, Malala befriends a few young men, one of them most likely deals drugs and never has enough money for food. Malala becomes fond of him and feeds him and counsels him to get on the right path. Fortunately, he disappears from her life. Even after she meets and falls in love with Asser, a Pakistani amateur cricket director from Lahore, she is firmly set against marrying anyone. She never wants to be relegated to a life of cooking (so never learns to cook) and raising too many children. She thinks marriage will deny her independence and a creative life, like many of the women in her culture. After agonizing for years, much to the chagrin of her traditional mother, she sets down her own rules for future happiness in marriage.

I read this book in one day and hope there will be a sequel as Malala lives more of her life. I assume that she will continue to urge readers to value education, challenge injustice, and believe in the power of individual voices to effect change. This book is a must-read for anyone interested in social justice, human rights, and the extraordinary impact that one courageous person can have on the world.

**Review by Evelyn LaTorre**

# Notes from the World

*HEAR YE!  
HEAR YE!*

Check out the  
**Poetry Foundation**

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/poem-of-the-day>

Register to receive  
a free poem each day  
& all sorts of other  
cool poetry stuff

## AUTHORS PUBLISH

<https://authorspublish.com>  
Check here for lists of publishing  
opportunities (*Please vet before submitting*):

[https://authorspublish.com/  
32-flash-fiction-markets/](https://authorspublish.com/32-flash-fiction-markets/)

[https://authorspublish.com/  
12-places-that-publish-writing-about-  
writing-and-publishing/](https://authorspublish.com/12-places-that-publish-writing-about-writing-and-publishing/)

[https://authorspublish.com/  
25-magazines-accepting-creative-  
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... and many more ... a newsletter  
and free webinars on craft....

## FREE Online Workshops w/ JANE CLELAND

Award-winning author Jane Cleland offers **FREE** Zoom workshops on the craft of writing for writers of every skill level. Jane takes you behind the curtain and shares her years of experience with writing craft and its many intricacies, as well as the world of traditional publishing, with its agents, editors and publishers...Oh my! Register in advance at [janecleland.com/events](https://janecleland.com/events). You'll receive a link for the workshop shortly before, and on the day of the event. Don't miss these...register early.

**Saturday, Mar 14 from 10:00 to 11:00 AM PT**

**"Nurture Your Creative Spirit: Feel Better, Write Better—Listen to the Pros"**

Learn proven strategies from successful authors who have mastered the art of sustainable creativity.

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**"Your Novel is Finished—Now What? Everything You Need to Know to Get Published"**

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Jane Cleland is an award-winning author who writes both fiction and nonfiction. Her fiction includes the long-running Josie Prescott Antiques Mystery series, published by St. Martin's Minotaur and *Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine*. Her non-fiction includes the Agatha-Award winning best-sellers, *Mastering Suspense*, *Structure & Plot* and *Mastering Plot Twists*. She's a Contributing Editor at *Writer's Digest Magazine* and the chair of the Black Orchid Novella Award (BONA). Cleland teaches writing at the university level, and offers free monthly webinars on the craft and business of writing.

Register on Jane's website to receive a Zoom link.

<https://janecleland.com/events/>

**winningwriters.com**  
contests with big \$\$\$ prizes

# 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](http://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](http://winningwriters.com)

**Poets & Writers. Website.** Searchable con-test database with filters for cost, genre and deadline. [pw.org/grants](http://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](http://Submittable.com).

**The Writer. Website and free newsletter.** Listing of mostly pay-to-enter contests. [writermag.com/contests](http://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](http://fanstory.com)

## Gotham Writers Workshop — FREE —

The **Gotham Writers Workshop** in New York City has put together the **Inside Writing** series of free talks about writing. Now in its fifth season, the workshops cover a variety of tools necessary to writers in today's world. The format varies from season to season. Best of all, you get to listen and learn from other writers!

**Free Talks are archived at:**

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

**Inside Writing:** A recent Special Episode discussed the importance of using "sensitivity readers" as part of your editing process.

Check out these **free** talks on writing!

## Call for *Romance* Submissions

**Belonging Books**, an inclusive, feminist publishing house, began accepting submissions in June 2020. 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](http://belongingbooksonline.wordpress.com)

## FREE Online Workshops

*scriptwriters check out*  
[roadmapwriters.com](http://roadmapwriters.com)

# 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](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 many archived blog topics.

**Check it out!**

## GENRE WEBSITES

**Sisters in Crime** [sistersincrime.org](http://sistersincrime.org) *(also open to men)*

**Mystery Writers of America** [mysterywriters.org](http://mysterywriters.org)

**Golden State Romance Writers**  
[goldenstateromancewriters.org](http://goldenstateromancewriters.org)  
*(open to all genre fiction writers)*

**Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers Association**  
[sfwa.org](http://sfwa.org)

**Inspire Christian Writers** [inspirewriters.com](http://inspirewriters.com)

**Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators**  
[scbwi.org](http://scbwi.org)

**Women's National Book Association** [wnba-books.org](http://wnba-books.org)  
*(also open to men)*

**Academy of American Poets** [poets.org](http://poets.org)

**Poetry Society of America** [poetrysociety.org](http://poetrysociety.org)

**National Association of Memoir Writers** [namw.org](http://namw.org)

**American Society of Journalists and Authors** [asja.org](http://asja.org)  
*(nonfiction writers)*

**CineStory** [cinestory.org](http://cinestory.org) (screenwriters)

**Scriptwriters Network** [scriptwritersnetwork.com](http://scriptwritersnetwork.com)

**Historical Novel Association** [historicalnovelsociety.org](http://historicalnovelsociety.org)

**Horror Writers Association** [horror.org](http://horror.org)

## FundsforWriters.com

*Chosen 101 Best Writing Websites by Writer's Digest for the last 20 years in a row.*

One of the web's best experts on **grants/fellowships/scholarships/awards/contests** for writers.

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## fanstory.com

*Contests with cash prizes you can enter this week!*

Take a look at this site. Lots of interesting contests.

Many are very short...not necessarily easy, but as short as a one-line poem, or a 50-word flash fiction story. Some may have deadlines fast approaching, others you'll have time to contemplate.

**Fee Site.** Seven-day free trial. \$12.95/month or \$155/year. Feedback on writing you post and almost daily contests that can be entered at no additional fee.

# ***FAW Members on Social Media***

## ● **Angelica G. Allen**

Angelica is a Seventh-Day Adventist Christian author of **Millennial Fiction and Poetry** books, genres targeted to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ to millennials. These SDA Christian genres were created by the Fremont, Bay Area native, and are defined as having Seventh-Day Adventist symbolism, coded languages, lyrical writing, illustrations, and emotional storytelling in her U.S. Copyright. You can learn more about these books on her website: **angelicagabriellaallen.com**. Like her author Facebook page **@AngelicaG.Allen** and follow her on Instagram: **@AngelicaGAllen** where she posts a new poem in her Reels section every Wednesday!

## ● **Cherilyn Chin**

Cherilyn is a professional aquarist and marine biologist. For the past 12 years, she's maintained her award-winning blog, "**Ocean of Hope: Marine Animals Voice Their Wishes on Ocean Conservation Issues**," and has 8,500 followers on Twitter. She also writes children's fiction and non-fiction books about the ocean. She's a website developer, strategic content copywriter, and digital marketer at **Wordsmith for Wealth**.  
**https://oceanofhope.net**; Twitter: **@protectoceans**; **https://wordsmithforwealth.com**

## ● **Terry Connelly**

Twice a week Terry posts her own writing ranging from essays, personal stories, poetry and short fiction. On her second blog she posts prompts twice a week, to help get you started. **tconnellyswritingposts.com** and **connellyswritingprompts.com**

## ● **Evelyn LaTorre, EdD**

Evelyn loves to travel and write about her experiences. Besides travel adventures, the blogs on her website share the first chapter of her prize-winning book, *Between Inca Walls*, her adventures in other countries, and her cousin's drowning on the Costa Concordia cruise ship. Her second memoir, *Love in Any Language*, shows how a shotgun wedding turns into a bulletproof marriage. It won a Book Excellence award. You can also find recent recordings of her interviews. Website: **https://www.evelynlatorre.com**.

## ● **Dave M. Strom**

Check out Dave's creative and tech writing blogs and his videos at: **http://davemstrom.wordpress.com/**  
**http://davemstrom.weebly.com/** **http://www.youtube.com/user/davstrom**

## ● **Anita Tosh**

Anita writes YA Christian fiction often with a focus on the "end times." She's recently published her third book, *The Book of Jeremy*. It's now available for sale. Website & Blog: **booksbyanita.com**  
Facebook Group: **https://www.facebook.com/groups/111394698919**  
YouTube Channel: **https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCn2Eh1NyNnca6V0pAZNUSRA**

*"A strong woman builds her own world. She is one who is wise enough to know that it will attract the man she will gladly share it with."*

*— Ellen J. Barrier, I Want to Feel Your Power Today*

# FREMONT AREA WRITERS' CORNER

\*\*\*\*\*

## A Thousand Lives Over

by Maren Madalyn

(Part 1 of 3)

Screams rattle the windows, but Ellie pays them no heed. "Get ready to push! On three. One, two... three!"

Maria pushes, her face reddening with the effort. Before Ellie, the vortex of life widens. She sees a tuft of dark hair peeking through, even as blood pools over the sheets.

"Push," Ellie urges again, "that's it, now breathe in, hold it, hold... and... release."

Maria sinks back into the hospital bed as her fists slip from the crossbar. Forty-seven hours, and still the baby is not here. Maria moans, her eyes fluttering.

"Higgins," the nurse hisses under his breath, "call it!"

"No!" Ellie whispers. "No, she can do this. The baby's crowning, just one more push."

"But Dr. Patrovich said—"

"Not yet! I need you to trust me!"

Ellie knows what that nurse wants to do. She knows what hospital protocol dictates. Modern Cesareans save hundreds of mothers' lives every day in the United States. But Ellie also knows that it would all but guarantee Maria's death. Nothing about this patient's history or her infant's health indicates this outcome. Yet Ellie still feels this truth deep within her bones.

The nurse hesitates. "One more push," he relents, placing Maria's hands back on the crossbar. "But that's it, Higgins. Then call it."

Ellie says nothing as Maria groans again. Instead, she closes her eyes and reaches deep within herself, plunging into an ancient wellspring of power used only in the most dire of circumstances. As the magic swells, she fortifies it with her own life-force. She may only have one chance.

Maria screams with renewed agony, and Ellie bellows her command: "Creator of life, deliver her to me!"

The words echo through worlds far beyond this human one. Ellie's magic breaks its banks, flowing into Maria from Ellie's touch and saturating the mother's body. Maria's face twists as her cries redouble, yet Ellie senses another force rising behind the pain: ferocious, determined, a wildness only a mother knows. Maria unleashes a roar and, with her strength renewed by these magics, she pulls the contraction to its greatest peak. In this silence that follows comes a gush, then a groan, and at last, the cry of a newborn.

*(continued on next page)*

## **FREMONT AREA WRITERS' CORNER** (Continued)

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*(continued from previous page)*

Hours later, an exhausted Ellie emerges from the delivery room. Behind her, an equally exhausted Maria cradles her new daughter, singing softly in Spanish as she strokes the tiny face.

The nurse tails Ellie down the corridor. His face is pale. "Damn it!" he breathes, wiping a brow. "We should have called Dr. Patrovich! They could have—"

Ellie raises a hand to stop him. "But they didn't," she says with false calm. "Thank you for trusting me."

The nurse shakes his head. "Thank God, not me. That was a miracle."

Ellie watches him retreat. God didn't do jack. But how could she expect the nurse to understand that? With a sigh, she slips into the break room down the hall, collapses onto the cot, and shuts her eyes.

She must rest. It is dangerous to overextend her abilities, to use too much magic too quickly. But every moment she spends recovering is a moment she leaves patients vulnerable. Not to medical complications or unexpected surgeries—perilous as these difficulties of childbirth may be—but to something far more sinister.

They have no idea, she thinks as weariness pulls her towards sleep. They have no idea just how closely the monsters stalk.

\* \* \*

*The year is 1850. Eisha clings to the shadows as the British soldiers march by. Rifles and sweaty brows gleam in the moonlight. Even at this late hour, they hunt. She waits until her pursuers turn the corner before darting across the road. After checking her surroundings once more, she slips between the metal walls and into the slums.*

*Eisha arrives in time to hear guttural moans warp into wails of pain. She races into the hut, not bothering to remove her sandals. A woman writhes on a worn blanket laid upon the floor, her head cradled by an elder and her hand gripped tightly by a young girl. Mother and sister. So the woman was not alone after all.*

*Kneeling, Eisha checks the woman's vitals and dilation. The elder and child do not greet her, nor do they intervene. Few dhai remain in the wake of the white man's violence. Fewer still would risk their lives to aid a mother in need. None would dare to face these consequences for a Dalit woman pregnant against her will. None but Eisha.*

*They have nothing to fear, Eisha thinks bitterly, except what lurks in the darkness.*

*"Breathe, woman," Eisha soothes, "in and out. Deepen your voice. Deepen your breath."*

*The mother cries in agony as a contraction wracks her body. In a flash, Eisha grips the woman's free hand. "Quiet! Do not let the devils hear you!"*

*With great effort, the mother swallows back her anguish until it is no more than a low moan. The elder strokes her daughter's hair. The child sobs quietly.*

***(continued on next page)***

## **FREMONT AREA WRITERS' CORNER** (Continued)

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*(continued from previous page)*

*Eisha glances over her shoulder. Moonlight streaks through the metal sheets. She sees nothing and no one moving in the slums around them, but knows better than to trust the shadows.*

*Another groan erupts, followed by a whimper as the mother fights the power of her own voice. Eisha turns and, with magic swelling into her fingers, sets to work.*

*The baby arrives quickly and without incident. Eisha lifts the baby free as the mother begins to weep, sinking into the elder's arms. The child releases her sister's hand and inches closer to Eisha, now more curious than frightened. Her eyes watch as Eisha cleans the infant and checks its health. "A brother," she whispers to the child with a smile.*

*A shout shatters this fragile peace, followed closely by screams. The devils are approaching fast. Eisha swiftly places the baby in his mother's arms. The young child curls up next to her older sister and younger brother, protectively draping an arm around both. As Eisha turns to leave, the elder bows deeply, murmuring a prayer to the mud.*

*"Ask for their protection, not mine," the dhai whispers, nodding at the mother and son. The elder lifts her head, but Eisha is already gone.*

*Gunfire explodes as Eisha reaches the main road. She drops to the ground and slinks into a dark alley to hide. Behind her, a man on hands and knees crawls into view. Blood streams down his leg, almost black against his white kurta. Eisha rises, ready to tourniquet the man's limb with her bare hands if she must. But she hesitates. Crimson stains her own sari. There is no time to hide this evidence of her forbidden practice. And saving this man's life is not her work.*

*Her heart breaking, Eisha closes her eyes and makes her choice, stepping back into the shadows as another figure saunters up to the wounded man.*

*"Filthy animal," whines the officer in a thick accent. He tilts his head like a cat deciding if it would play with or devour its prey. "Where is she? Tell me, and I may give you a swift death. That's more than you deserve."*

*The man snarls and spits on the officer's boot. Disgusted, the officer kicks out hard. More blood sprays the dusty road. "Where is she?" Suddenly, a rifle presses against the man's forehead. "Where is the dhai? I know you mutts shield her! Tell me!"*

*Eisha turns away and, heavy with shame, backs along the wall to escape. As she rounds the corner, she hears another shot and cannot help but glance over her shoulder. Two blue eyes burn against pale skin. She knows that the officer cannot see her from such a distance. But she flinches at the obsidian pupils glaring at her from behind the human mask.*

**(A Thousand Lives Over by Maren Madalyn will continue in the April issue of Ink Spots.)**

**"I was not rescued by a prince; I was the administrator of my own rescue." — Elizabeth Gilbert, Eat Pray, Love**

\*\*\*\*\*

# Sacajawea

by *Richard E. McCallum*

In those pre-historic times, my name was Bird woman.

We sang the lives of our ancestors. We danced with their spirits. They walked alongside us.

No separation.

We etched images of flora and fauna in the rocks.

Nomadic we followed tháthánka.

We worshipped our warm sun. We honored the bright moon. We were delighted to see the wolf trail cross the night sky.

Death was not feared.

Our journey to the land of the coyote.

I celebrated life until...

They came at dawn, like wolves—shouting, smoke rising behind them, horses screaming. I remember my mother's hand slipping from mine.

I remember running.

At twelve winters, the Hidatsa took me with the horses. I do not know how many of my people died. I remember only fire, smoke and shouting.

We traversed many suns along the river valleys. The mountains fell behind us. The air grew heavy and wet. The land flattened into endless grass. The Hidatsa and Mandan did not wander as my people had. They planted. They built earth lodges. They stayed.

I was a stranger among strangers.

At first, I spoke with my hands.

Food became my first language.

Each morning the hunters returned carrying deer, elk, and buffalo. The men butchered with swift, practiced cuts, separating hide, bone, and meat. Rocks cracked bone. Dogs waited for scraps. Nothing was wasted. Nothing could be. Winter punished carelessness.

The women worked at the fires.

Fat was scraped and saved. Meat was sliced thin and dried on racks. Bones were cracked for marrow. Hides were stretched and scraped clean with stone tools until our hands burned raw. The smell of smoke clung to everything—hair, skin, dreams.

*(continued on next page)*

## **FREMONT AREA WRITERS' CORNER** (Continued)

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*(continued from previous page)*

Kettles simmered with broth and roots. Corn and squash softened in the steam. Berries were crushed into paste and dried for the cold months. Grain ground into meal between stones until shoulders ached.

Food was not simply eating.

It was survival.

It was belonging.

It was proof you deserved to remain.

Around the fires, laughter rose like sparks. Children chased dogs between the lodges. Old women scolded and sang. For a moment, hunger loosened its grip and we were only people together.

But we captives knew the truth.

We were not truly of them.

We worked.

We served.

We warmed their beds.

Food was work.

Work was life.

Life was never certain.

At dusk we ate together, passing bowls from hand to hand. For a little while, we laughed like we belonged to one another.

But the captive girls never truly belonged.

A child did not make you family.

It only tied you tighter.

Still, they traded us like beads or horses.

Won in gambling games.

Given away to settle debts.

A girl could disappear, and no one would ask where she had gone.

I learned their language quickly. Then French.

A trapper named Toussaint lived among us. He spoke with the traders and soldiers who came upriver. He needed someone who could bridge tongues, and I needed protection. So, I stood beside him, translating words back and forth like passing water between cups.

Hidatsa to me.

Me to French.

French to the world.

It felt like power, shaping meaning with breath.

*(continued on next page)*

## **FREMONT AREA WRITERS' CORNER** (Continued)

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*(continued from previous page)*

For the first time since my capture, I was useful for something other than my body.

Toussaint valued that.

Then one night he gambled with the chief and won.

The prize was me.

I went with him because there was nowhere else to go.

He already had wives. All captives. All quiet.

At first his desire was fierce, like fire catching dry grass. Then, like most fires, it burned down to embers. Soon another girl got his attention. I became simply one more body in the lodge, another pair of hands, another shadow moving between chores.

Life returned to its rhythm—scraping hides, grinding grain, stirring pots, translating for men who never looked directly at me.

Days blurred together.

Smoke.

Work.

Sleep.

Smoke again.

Sometimes I would stand at the edge of the village at dusk and look west, toward mountains I could no longer see. I tried to remember my mother's voice and found it fading like tracks in sand.

I wondered if anyone still remembered me.

One morning, while bending over the fire, the smell of meat turned my stomach. The world tilted. I thought I would faint. An older woman caught my arm and studied my face.

She didn't need words.

She only nodded.

Later, alone beside the river, I pressed my hand to my belly.

Still flat. Still small.

Yet no longer only mine.

I knelt there, listening to the water, my hand resting over the quiet life growing inside me, and for the first time since the day I was taken, I was afraid not for myself—

but for the child who would be born into a world where a girl could be traded like a horse.

The river of time flowed past, and my baby boy Pompy became an infant.

That was when my life truly changed.

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## **FREMONT AREA WRITERS' CORNER** (Continued)

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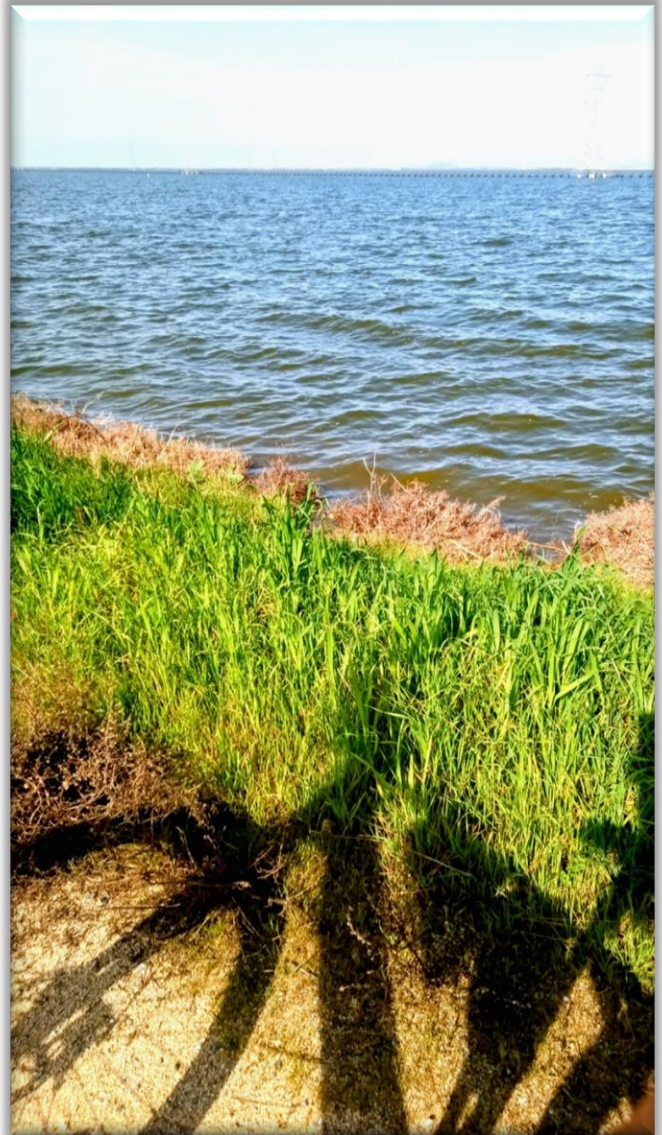
My prehistoric village became historic.

Lewis and Clark arrived with journals and ink everything.

They wrote the name they called me:  
Sacajawea.

For the first time, my life lived on paper.

I was the first woman in the Northwest Territories to have her name written in the record of history. And the first woman of my people to stand at the edge of our world and look out over the vast western ocean. America dedicated more statues to me than any other woman. No one knows for sure where I am buried.



*Visual Prompt*

*Photograph by Terry Tosh*

***"Before there were  
books,  
we read each other."***

***— Lisa Cron,  
The Wired Story***

***"When the writing is good, a book becomes  
a mirror. The reader will see an uncanny  
familiarity and respond accordingly."***

***— Jen Knox, Chaos Magic***

# ***FAW Board Members***



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**Vice President**  
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cherilyn@ymail.com



**BOB GARFINKLE**  
**Founding President**

## **JACK LONDON AWARDEES**

### **FREMONT AREA WRITERS**

- 2009 Bob Garfinkle
- 2011 Myrla Raymundo
- 2013 Carol Hall
- 2015 Art Carey
- 2017 Shirley Ferrante
- 2019 Jan Small
- 2021 Nancy J Guarnera
- 2023 Scott Davidson
- 2025 Terry Tosh

### **BOARD MEETINGS**

**Date and Time: On ZOOM at  
4 PM the Tuesday before the  
Fourth Saturday  
FAW General Meeting**

# ***FAW Chairpeople***



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**TERRY TOSH**  
Previous  
FAW President



**STEPHEN YUEN**  
Membership

## **FAW PURPOSE 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]  
Monthly public meetings, workshops, and seminars open to all writers and the general public  
to facilitate educating writers of all levels of expertise. (*Article II: PURPOSE Section 1: 1.1 and 1.2 FAW Bylaws*)