

Happy Father's Day!



Ink Spots



The Newsletter of Fremont Area Writers

The "Centennial" Branch of the California Writers Club

Nancy Guarnera – Editor-in-Chief

inkspots@cwc-fremontareawriters.org

Vol. 5 No. 6 June 2026

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



Visual Prompt

Photograph by MP Smith

June General Meeting

* June 27th * 2 to 4 PM * ZOOM * FREE *

Humor Hacks from a Sitcom Veteran

with Guest Speaker

Ellen Byron



www.ellenbyron.com

Sitcom writer and award-winning humorous mystery author Ellen Byron will share more than twenty easy-to-apply tips on how to mine the funny in a manuscript. These tips have been culled from years of experience writing popular TV comedies like *Wings*, *Just Shoot Me* and *Fairly Odd-Parents*. Ellen will provide a handout of the tips and simple exercises, for attendees to utilize when writing on their own. If you've got a yearning to add some humor to your mystery, romance, sci-fi, fantasy, horror...pretty much any genre...don't miss this opportunity to learn from an award-winning author and sitcom vet.

Byron is a bestselling author, Anthony nominee, and recipient of multiple Agatha and Lefty awards for her Cajun Country Mysteries, Vintage Cookbook Mysteries, Catering Hall Mysteries (as Maria DiRico), and Golden Motel Mysteries. She is also an award-winning playwright and non-award-winning writer of TV hits like *Wings*, *Just Shoot Me*, and *Fairly OddParents*. Ellen's written over 200 articles for national magazines and her award-winning plays, published by Dramatists Play Service, have been performed throughout the world. But Ellen considers her most impressive achievement working as a cater-waiter for Martha Stewart.

A native New Yorker, Ellen is a graduate of Tulane University and lives in the Los Angeles area with her husband, daughter, and a rotating crew of rescue pups. When she's not writing or hanging with friends or family, she's dancing or needlepointing.

For more about Ellen and her books, visit her at <http://www.ellenbyron.com/>.

PLEASE NOTE: To get your link for this event, email a request with "FAW Zoom" in your Subject line to 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. FAW is one of 21 branches of the **California Writers Club (CWC)** www.calwriters.org. All CWC branches welcome new members.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

Join us on Zoom at 2:00 on June 27th!



Scott Davidson
FAW President

President's Message

It is June, and a not-so-young President's thoughts turn to FAW membership renewals. The CWC, and thus FAW, membership year is from July 1 to June 30, but we will open renewals on June 1. You can renew on the Join Us page (<https://cwc-fremontareawriters.org/join-us/>). Be sure to go to the renewal page for your \$20 renewal discount. I'll send everyone a direct link to the renewal page also.

CWC voted to keep dues constant for this year. Our dues have not gone up for as long as FAW has existed. You will hardly find a better bargain in this time of rising prices.

As a further incentive, all those who renew before July 1 will be entered into a raffle for a free membership. The winner will be announced

at the FAW picnic, scheduled for July 11. Keep the date open. You'll be getting more details as we get closer.

The CWC board also voted to reduce the period during which you can renew at reduced rates to just July and August, dropping September. (If you renew in June, you'll be officially renewed July 1.) So, after August 31 you will have to pay an extra \$20. Renew early! You can do it by credit card online or by sending a check.

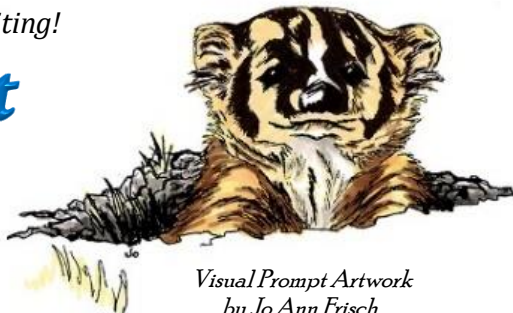
Also in June are elections for FAW board members. If you are interested in running, let me know. Offices up for grabs are President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. At the April Build Better Branches meeting we heard that the two biggest problems for CWC clubs are money and finding people to fill all the roles needed to keep a club going. We're good on money (assuming you all renew) but would love to have more helpers.

The next chance to help is with the picnic. If you would like to help set up, get the food, or organize events, let me or Pat Doyne know.

Thanks, as always, for supporting FAW, and we'll see you at our June events. And at the picnic in July!

Keep thinking and writing!

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 June 2026 issue. We hope you enjoy it!

June is bustin' out all over!

Happy...Father's Day, Flag Day, Juneteenth, first day of Summer, and Nancy and Robert's 32nd Wedding Anniversary, and Nancy's 75th Birthday. Hard for me to believe that either of the last two could be real! To quote Wallace Shawn in the film *The Prince Bride*, "Inconceivable!"

I had no intention of ever getting married...so, how did that happen? It seems like just yesterday I kept saying, "No!" Thirty-two years later and I've been married almost half my life! "Inconceivable!"

Earlier today someone in her eighties told me I was a just a baby. I can't really relate to being three quarters of a century old. The same woman graciously reminded me that it's just a number. In dog years, I'll be 525 years old. And that's nothing compared to my 99-year-old neighbor; she's 693 in dog years. Glad we're not dogs! But still...*"Inconceivable!"*

When I was eight or nine, my maternal grandmother gave me a bit of sage advice. I will pass it on to you now. She and my grandfather had just given me a matching blouse and shorts outfit for my birthday. I absolutely loved it. We were not as well off as my grandparents and I rarely got store-bought clothes. My wonderful mother made a lot of my clothes, (by hand...no machine), so clothing from the store was a real treat. I told Grandma I couldn't wait until Christmas to see what wonderful gift they'd give me then.

Grandma looked me in the eye and said, "Don't wish your life away. The older you get, the faster time seems to go. Enjoy today. Tomorrow will be here before you know it. Christmas will be here and gone before you know it. Time is something you can never get back." I think it was that Christmas that she crocheted a beautiful afghan for me. I still have it, and I have the one I crocheted for her and Grandpa, in my early twenties. Her hand-made gift was so much more meaningful than the store-bought clothes.

Of late, I have been avoiding my many writing projects. Some in progress, some still ideas floating about in the ethers of my mind. While looking for quotes for this issue, I came across this one by Dan Poynter, "If you wait for inspiration to write you're not a writer, you're a waiter." I don't want to be a waiter. I'm a writer. Procrastination plagues many of us. It's easy to put things off until tomorrow. I have to remind myself that none of us knows how many tomorrows we have left. I have no guarantee that I'll actually make it to my 75th birthday. Even though it's only a week away. So, time to take time seriously, and wring every drop of juice from every day. So many stories...and who knows how much time is left to tell them.

Have a great summer! Hope to see some of you at the picnic in July. Happy Father's Day to all you fathers out there. Happy Juneteenth and Happy Flag Day! Wouldn't it be cool to create a flag for yourself? I feel a story idea coming on...and maybe a sewing project...

PLEASE NOTE: NO JULY ISSUE! Deadline for all submissions for the August issue is July 10th.
If you need more time, please email inkspots@cwc-fremontareawriters.org and let me know.

Thank you, and happy writing!

FAW – June Meetings

Fremont Area Writers “Fourth Saturday”

General Mtg on Zoom

Saturday June 27th 2:00 – 4:00 PM

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

*Speaker: Ellen Byron Award-winning Humorous Mystery Writer (p.2)
www.ellenbyron.com*

*For details on Zooming, contact Scott Davidson at
scottfrombayside@yahoo.com*

Fremont Area Writers “Tuesday before 4th Saturday”

Board Meeting on Zoom

Tuesday June 23rd 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*

FAW – June Meetings

Fremont Area Writers

“Second Saturday”

Social Write-In on Zoom

Saturday June 13th 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*

Fremont Area Writers

“Fourth Monday”

Writers’ Salon on Zoom

Monday June 29th 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 or 510-745-0761*

FAW 2026 Speakers

2026 FAW GENERAL MEETINGS TOPICS & SPEAKERS

JUNE 27TH 2-4 PM ZOOM

*Writing Comedy or Writing Comedy
into Fiction*

Ellen Byron Author, Comedian, Sitcom Writer
www.ellenbyron.com

SEPTEMBER 26TH 2-4 PM ZOOM

Anatomy of a Short Story

Margaret (Peggy) Lucke Writer, Editor,
Teacher
www.margaretlucke.com

JULY 11 — No General Meeting

FAW PICNIC

11:00 AM — till the cows come home
Community Center Park
35501 Cedar Blvd, Newark
See page 11 for more information

OCTOBER 24TH 2-4 PM ZOOM

The Art of Revision and Self-Editing

Katherine Sherbrooke Writer
www.kasherbrooke.com

AUGUST 22ND 2-4 PM ZOOM

Writing Flash Fiction

Robert Seigel Writer, Teacher
www.robertanthonyseigel.com/writing

NOVEMBER 28TH 2-4 PM ZOOM

*Practical Tools for Writing Layered
Stories, Not Stereotypes*

Angela Álvarez Vélez Writer, Teacher
www.angelaalvarezvelez.com

December — No General Meeting — Date, Time & Place TBD

FAW HOLIDAY PARTY



General Meetings are on the 4TH SATURDAY of the month

(No general meetings in July & December.)

All FAW members receive links to FAW meetings. Non-members can email
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@cwcfremontareawriters.org, or submit it through the **Shout Out for Ink Spots** link at cwcfremontareawriters.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 Scott Davidson who has completed judging for the Next Generation Indie Book Awards. This year he handled 54 humor books and 103 science fiction books. He chose one winner and five or six finalists in each category. **Congratulations, Scott!**

KUDOS to Tish Davidson whose book, *The Vaccine Debate*, updated 2nd edition, has been approved by her publisher, Bloomsbury, and is now in the production process for release this autumn. **Congratulations, Tish!**

KUDOS to Pat Doyne whose Lake Chabot drawings are on exhibit with Bruce Roberts' poetry at the Hayward Senior Center located on North 3rd Street through September 24th. The exhibit is open to the public Mon-Fri 8:30am to 4:00pm. The exhibit title is "You're Never Too Old for Talent." The public is invited to a reception for the exhibit on Thursday, June 18th from 11:00am to 1:00pm. **Congratulations, Pat!**

KUDOS to Evelyn LaTorre who was welcomed by thirty educators at the DKG Northern California Conference, where she was the guest speaker at the Meet the Author session in late April. Evelyn is pleased to report that many of the attendees purchased her books. **Congratulations, Evelyn!**

KUDOS to Rose Owens, whose essay, "The Day We Become Silent," has been published in *Havik*. Her first draft was written during COVID. Rose's essay will appear in a future issue of *Ink Spots*. **Congratulations, Rose!**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

You're
NEVER TOO OLD
FOR TALENT

Works by
**Bruce Roberts
and Pat Doyne**

Poems and ink and color pencil landscapes

May 29 - Sept. 24, 2026
At the Hayward Senior Center

HAYWARD
ARTS
COUNCIL

HAYWARD AREA RECREATION
AND PARK DISTRICT

*“You should write
because you love
the shape of stories and
sentences and the creation
of different words
on a page.
Writing comes from
reading, and reading is
the finest teacher of how
to write.”*

— Annie Proulx

FAW & CWC Information

— PLEASE READ —

MARK YOUR
CALENDAR

You're Invited to...

Fremont Area Writers Social Luncheon

Tuesday June 9th at 11:30 am

Andersen's Bakery in Union City

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

[https:// https://www.andersenbakeryusa.com/](https://www.andersenbakeryusa.com/)

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

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

CWC & NorCal Representative(s) 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.

You can also contact Scott Davidson at 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

— PLEASE READ —

Election for 2026-2027 FAW Board Officers

President • Vice-President • Secretary • Treasurer

at the

June 27th GENERAL MEETING June 27th

If you have an interest in running for a position on the FAW Board and would like to know what these positions entail, please contact current president, Scott Davidson at scottfrombayside@yahoo.com. He will make sure that you get the information you need to make an informed decision about running. Anyone who is a member of CWC and FAW is eligible to run for FAW office.

We hope that whether you run for office or not, that you will make sure you attend the June meeting to vote for our '26-'27 Board.

You must be a member of FAW to vote.

JUNE IS CWC/FAW MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL MONTH

Everyone who renews in June will be added to the “hat” for a drawing for a free membership. The winner will be announced at the picnic in July. Go to the FAW website to pay your dues —

<https://cwc-fremontareawriters.org/join-us/>

Renewal period runs from June 1st to August 31st.

*“I kept always two books in my pocket: one to read,
one to write in.” — Robert Louis Stevenson*

FAW & CWC Information

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

FAW ANNUAL PICNIC

SATURDAY • JULY 11TH • 11:00AM

COMMUNITY CENTER PARK

35501 Cedar Blvd, Newark

JOIN THE FUN!

Come early and help with set-up

Stay late and help with clean-up!

Contact Scott at: scottfrombayside@yahoo.com

VITTLES

CHICKEN & PIZZA & H₂O provided by FAW

**Picnickers, please bring a SIDE DISH, SALAD or DESSERT to share
& your favorite NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE**

ENTERTAINMENT

A pub quiz, a writing prompt & an opportunity to read!

COME ONE, COME ALL!

**This is an opportunity to reconnect, visit, have some fun,
do a bit of writing & reading, and recommit to another year with
Fremont Area Writers!**

\$\$\$ CONTESTS \$\$\$

NARRATIVE MAGAZINE

For general submissions to the magazine:

www.narrativemagazine.com/submit-your-work

SPRING 2026 STORY CONTEST

Fiction, Non-fiction, Essay, Memoir, etc. / First Prize: \$2,500

Deadline: June 26th

www.narrativemagazine.com/spring-2026-story-contest

Story of the Week

www.narrativemagazine.com/story-week-guidelines

Six-Word Stories

www.narrativemagazine.com/sixwords

Poem of the Week

www.narrativemagazine.com/poem-week-guidelines

Photography

www.narrativemagazine.com/photography

DEADLINES: Continuous...check your category

TCK Publishing.com

TCK Publishing Mission Statement

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 & markets — non-fiction and poetry

2026 TCK Publishing Poetry Awards Contest

Deadline: June 30, 2026 Prize: \$1,000 and publication

<https://www.tckpublishing.com/2026-poetry-awards-contest/>

FREE classes and webinars

www.tckpublishing.com

\$\$\$ CONTESTS \$\$\$

North Street Book Prize

Self- or Hybrid-Published Books



TOTAL PRIZES: \$23,500 Grand Prize: \$10,000 plus various publishing and marketing tools

DEADLINE: July 1, 2026

GENRE: All styles & themes – genre fiction • creative nonfiction • memoir • art books • etc.

ENTRY FEE: \$ 95 per book • Length: 200K words max

SUBMIT TO: <https://winningwriters.com/our-contests/north-street-book-prize>

Visual Prompt



Photograph by nguarnera

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.)

LORD OF MISRULE

Tales of Little MacClow series

by Gail Eastwood

Tales of Little MacClow is a sweet Regency Romance series. I first read *Lord of Misrule* (© 2018) three years ago and recently re-read it. I made the acquaintance of the author, who, due to her kind entreaties, introduced me to the Rhode Island Romance Writers (RIRW). We became friends. She passed away this month and I will miss her. This is in homage to her writing.

Adam Randall, Lord Forthhurst, gets stuck in this little, out of the way British town on his way home to apologize to his parents for the scandal he's just caused in London, when the wheel on his carriage breaks. He meets the vicar's daughter, Cassie Tamworth. The way he appears on Christmas Eve, Cassie is sure he is the devil himself, come to test her. Before the night is over, he becomes entangled in the village's celebration of Christmas and intrigued by Miss Tamworth.

What a fun read! The first meeting between Adam and Cassie tingles with sexual tension, in a very old-fashioned way. Adam Randall plays such fun pranks on the people of Little MacClow, and they enjoy his misdeeds as the Lord of Misrule in their Twelve Days of Christmas festivities. *Lord of Misrule* is a 2019 Maggie Award Finalist for Best Historical Romance.

I became hooked on reading the other books in the series as well, and she does not disappoint. Her well-developed characters allow you to immerse yourself in their town and lives. Eastwood writes heartfelt stories of love during a time when a mere touch of hands could stir passion. Scandal happens as readily.

Lord of Her Heart is the prequel to *Lord of Misrule*, followed by *Her Perfect Gentleman*, and *His Lady to Love*. Although these can be read as stand-alone books, she wrote *Lord of Misrule* first, and I think it is the best book to start with. She almost finished a fifth book to the series, and the members of RIRW have stepped up to finish and publish it on her behalf. Although there will be no more books by this lovely person, they are worth a read.

She published 11 critically acclaimed Regency romance novels, as well as co-authoring a reference book on the Regency time period. If you enjoy Regency Romance, you will enjoy reading Eastwood's *Tales of Little MacClow* series.

Review by Joyce Cortez

READ MORE BOOKS

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-
nonfiction/](https://authorspublish.com/25-magazines-accepting-creative-nonfiction/)

[https://authorspublish.com/
40-specialized-manuscript-
publishers-that-accept-direct-
submissions/](https://authorspublish.com/40-specialized-manuscript-publishers-that-accept-direct-submissions/)

... 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. You'll receive a link for the workshop shortly before, and on the day of the event. Don't miss these...register early.

Saturday, June 13 from 10:00 to 11:00 AM PT

"The Anatomy of a Bestseller: Discussing Suspense, Structure & Plot w/ Chris Pavone"

Drawing on real life to build complex plots & manage tension between the known & the concealed.

Saturday, July 25 from 10:00 to 11:00 AM PT

"The Perfect Enemy: Crafting Antagonists Your Readers Will Love to Hate"

Main characters need opponents worthy of a challenge. Focus on the craft of building fully realized villain-characters with their own goals, logic & methods, who pose a risk to your main character.

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

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

Poets & Writers. Website. Searchable con-test 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

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

FREE Online Workshops

scriptwriters check out
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

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 *(also open to men)*

Mystery Writers of America mysterywriters.org

Golden State Romance Writers
goldenstateromancewriters.org
(open to all genre fiction writers)

Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers Association
sfwa.org

Inspire Christian Writers inspirewriters.com

Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators
scbwi.org

Women's National Book Association wnba-books.org
(also open to men)

Academy of American Poets poets.org

Poetry Society of America poetrysociety.org

National Association of Memoir Writers namw.org

American Society of Journalists and Authors asja.org
(nonfiction writers)

CineStory cinestory.org (screenwriters)

Scriptwriters Network scriptwritersnetwork.com

Historical Novel Association historicalnovelsociety.org

Horror Writers Association 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.

The subscription is FREE.

Do like 27,000 others and simply go to **FundsforWriters.com** and sign up. We'll keep your contact information private.

Look forward to you joining us!

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**

"I would advise any beginning writer to write the first drafts as if no one else will ever read them — without a thought about publication — and only in the last draft to consider how the work will look from the outside."

— Anne Tyler

FREMONT AREA WRITERS' CORNER

In the May issue, we highlighted the Fremont Cultural Arts Council's Flash Fiction Contest that took place in April. Two of our members submitted to the contest and their entries were featured here in the May issue. One of our new members, Linda Lazzeretti, also submitted her flash fiction to the contest. Her work was not included with the pieces in the May issue, so we are sharing it here. Welcome Linda, we look forward to receiving more of your writing for publication in *Ink Spots*.



First Love



by Linda Lazzeretti

Long before this lifetime, we shared another where Angie buried her head in the center of a gigantic sunflower. It's blazing, breezy yellow color was filling her ears with the most magical sounds, subtle and lithe like the lyre Orpheus played in the story of Vega.

"Nick," she said softly. "Come here, listen."

He came up behind her, putting his arm around her and his head next to hers.

"Do you hear?" Angie whispered. He nodded "Yes."

"It's magical isn't it, like being carried off to heaven," she mused, lost in its sound.

For the first time, Nick understood what was stirring his body when he was with Angie. He was in love with every part of her drawing him now to kiss her full on the lips. She responded full on herself. Something bigger was bonding between them than they ever thought possible, a bonding of love in all its dimensions, through all the lifetimes, so strong that it had survived them all and brought them here to this one where the sunflowers and magic converged now in this one moment of intense beauty.

Then suddenly seeing it, Angie said in a whisper, "We are beautiful to each other, Nick. Maybe in the reflection of each other's beauty, we will each find our own. Maybe that's why we are here now to find it together." Nick nodded, feeling her soft touch on his hair curling it round her fingertips.

He fell asleep comforted by her touch. Not long after, she did too, her head resting lightly on his shoulder with the sun's rays warming them both. It had been a big day for the two youngsters; not so young anymore as they moved from the wild dare of children to the even greater one of young lovers.

"No author dislikes to be edited as much as he dislikes not to be published." — Russell Lynes



Modern Shoe Hospital

by Rose Owens

The hole in the sole of his shoe made walking difficult—especially when a pebble volunteered to hitch a ride. He wiggled his foot and the pebble migrated up and settled itself in the curve at the toe. He shook his foot. The bell on the tip of his jester shoe rang angrily. It just didn't sound the same with that pebble stuck in there.

Gigioria stopped by a stream, sat down on the ground and twisted his leg, pretzel style, to remove his shoe and dig the pebble out. The pebble had a frown crack across it, so he got the message that this was one angry pebble. He threw it across the stream. Then he maneuvered the shoe back onto his foot. The stream rippled merrily on its way. But was that a splash, splash, splash he heard? He ignored it, stood up and wiggled his foot back and forth. Oh, that felt so much better!

He smiled and returned to the path. The pebbles beneath his feet moved aside with every step he took. Except. . . except there it was again—that pebbly hitchhiker. There was no solution except to find a cobbler and get his shoe repaired.

The gravelly path gave way to a hard black surface. It was wider now and there were buildings on both sides. Strange monsters with round legs and glowing eyes rushed past him. He saw signs on the buildings that he didn't recognize —McDonalds, Kohls, Walmart. Oh, what was wrong with this dimension? Then he saw it—Shoe Hospital. He rushed inside, removed his shoe and shook it. The angry pebble bounced out.

Gigioria slapped his shoe down on the counter. "I need this fixed."

"Sorry," the cobbler said. "Didn't you read the sign? Modern Shoe Hospital. Your shoe is too old-fashioned."

(This piece was inspired by a visual prompt —see above—at the March 2026 FAW Write-In.)

"Many people hear voices when no one is there. Some of them are called mad and are shut up in rooms where they stare at the walls all day. Others are called writers and they do pretty much the same thing."

— Margaret Chittenden

HUBERTUS THE APRIL FOOL

Every April I was a hard-drinking fool
guzzling and dragging
Like a commoner's mule

But stopped by a stag in a darkened wood
It was silent and solemn, and over its head
Was a sign declared "You're life isn't good."

My hardworking buddies laughed at my story
And went back to drinking
On their way from the quarry

But, I, a noble, could more easily say
"I will change my life now
And find a good way."

Now I am a patron of hunters
A priest, a bishop
Who converted confronters

This legacy now I'm leaving behind
Started with a stag in a darkened wood
And allowed me to see when once I was blind
A life of light where a white stag stood.

Tony Pino

LEAVES

My words drop like leaves,
from the branches of my mind,
Sometimes bright green, and dense,
when my thoughts are in a rainforest,
vibrant with melancholy?
leathery and vulnerable.

Sometimes like the pearls of fall,
spitting out colors of the rainbow,
words from my dreams,
like leaves bring an autumn of hope.

Sometimes leaves are dry and jaded,
Always to learn from something that's faded,
I reach out for the light of tomorrow.

Sometimes leaves are covered by snow,
a cold blanket of nestled hope,
tussles with the tresses of my mind,
I know I'll see spring again.

Rekha Ramani



Listening

I listen to the wind whispering through the tiny chimes on the balcony.
The big dog downstairs is barking—his owners have called 911—again!
The small dog downstairs is barking because the big dog is barking; she hates being left out.
The sirens announce the arrival of assistance...they must be on a first name basis by now.
Is it just help getting off the floor...or another trip to the ER?
The dogs are still barking. I offer up a silent prayer.
The wind gusts...the small balcony-bell rings...the chimes sound angry...the dogs are barking.
I sit listening.

nguarnera

A TRIP TO THE DE YOUNG MUSEUM

by Jo Ann Frisch

(Part 2 of 2)

Mommy broke the silence and whispered, "Girls, let's go in." With quiet reverence, we walked through double doors to the interior. She paid at a window and turned toward a long hall leading to glass cases displaying all sizes of jars and pots, jewelry, tools, hammers, and spears. Also, small statues, wearing clothing that looked like painted canvas with symbols, were holding spears and wearing sandals. "These are Egyptian things archaeologists dug up in the desert near the Nile River."

"I remember seeing these things in your little books," I said.

"Yes, there are many stamps in my books you'll recognize here, Jo Annie."

We walked past mummy cases with hieroglyphics and painted faces with their arms crossed over their chests. "How old are they?" I wondered aloud.

"Thousands of years, Jo Annie," she whispered. Carla still held her hand peering into the cases.

We moved on and saw a long boat made of wood that looked like it was floating. There was a painting on the wall behind it of birds and smaller boats, and in the background, among tall grasses, were hunters with spears held high. The blue sky was cloudless. I imagined it moving, an Egyptian scene thousands of years ago.

We rounded a corner that opened into a large room with a bench in the middle. Carla pulled free of Mommy and skipped to the bench and sat down, her feet dangling. Paintings of all sizes hung on the walls around the room. The gold frames glinted in the subdued light. I thought about Mommy's books with the stamps and recognized many of the paintings we were seeing. They looked brighter and almost alive here. I walked closer to read the artists' names. Rubens, Rembrandt, Degas, Van Gogh, and some I couldn't read. Mommy smiled at me and I wondered if she had tears in her shiny eyes.

Carla walked over to us to see what we were looking at. A painting of a rabbit held by its ears over a wooden table with different kinds of fruits and vegetables looked awful to me. The rabbit's eyes were dull looking and I knew it was dead.

Mommy said, "This is a scene of a dinner long ago when they depended on fresh animals for their food."

"I don't like it," I said.

"They didn't have a refrigerator to keep food from spoiling like we have today."

In another room there were flat glass cases about chin high with carvings of small items.

"These are special things made by artists in other countries," Mommy said.

"I like the light green dragons and fishes grouped together," I said.

(Continued on next page)

FREMONT AREA WRITERS' CORNER (Continued)

(Continued from previous page)

"They're made of Jade by Chinese artists who especially liked to carve it because it's softer than marble. It took many hours with small knives to make these things."

I saw a cantaloupe cut in half with the seeds still in it. I knew it couldn't be real but it looked so fresh. The rind and orange color of the fruit were the exact color of a freshly cut cantaloupe.

"How did they get it to look so real, Mommy?"

"They probably had to make several before it looked like this," she said.

"I'm hungry," Carla said.

"OK, we'll eat our lunch in a little while. Let's keep looking right now."

"I'm tired of looking," she whined.

"Can we come back after we eat lunch?" I asked.

"I don't think we can come back without paying again," Mommy said.

"But I want to see more." I could see so many wonderful things we hadn't looked at yet. Beautiful objects waiting for me, I thought.

"We'll come back again, OK?"

Mommy took our hands and we walked to the entrance past the large statues still waiting. We ate our lunch on the lawn and returned to our car.

Visions of times past when we visited the arboretum's white glass building of flowers in full bloom, and the aquarium with alligators at the entrance, and so many fishes filled me with anticipation. Memories of those fun days danced in my mind as our ferry plowed the waves across the Bay. We'd have to wait for another day.



"My aim in constructing sentences is to make the sentence utterly easy to understand, writing what I call transparent prose. I've failed dreadfully if you have to read a sentence twice to figure out what I meant."

— Ken Follett

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- 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**

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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*)