

Writers Helping Writers!



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

Vol. 5 No. 7 August 2026

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



Visual Prompt

Photograph by Terry Tosh

August General Meeting

* August 22nd * 2 to 4 PM * ZOOM * FREE *

Writing *Flash* Fiction

with

Guest Speaker

Robert Anthony Siegel



Photograph by Sumanth Prabha

robertanthonySiegel.com

Just a page or two in length, flash fiction is quick and easy to learn, yet endlessly rich and challenging to write. Flash can be realistic or fantastic, heartfelt or ironic, as simple as a fairytale or as fragmented and allusive as a postmodern novel. Its singular power is the sense of imaginative freedom at its core—the “flash.” World renowned writers like Kafka and Kawabata have done some of their most evocative work in the genre.

This presentation is designed for writers who want to explore the creative possibilities of flash fiction. We will talk about how flash works, read a variety of published examples, and generate work of our own through in-class exercises. We will share our writing with the group as time allows.

Robert Anthony Siegel is a writer and teacher.

He is the author of a memoir, *Criminals*, and two novels, *All Will Be Revealed*, and *All the Money in the World*. His work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Smithsonian*, *The Paris Review*, *The Drift*, *The Oxford American*, and *Ploughshares*, among other places, and has been anthologized in *Best American Essays 2023*, *O. Henry Stories 2014*, and *Pushcart Prize XXXVI*. He has been a Fulbright Scholar in Taiwan, a Mombukagakusho Fellow in Japan, a Paul Engle Fellow at the Iowa Writers Workshop, and a Writing Fellow at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown and at Hawthorn-den Brooklyn.

Robert taught creative writing at the University of North Carolina Wilmington for 22 years, helping MFA students write their first books. He has also taught at Hollins University in Virginia, Tunghai University in Taiwan, and the LaSalle College of the Arts in Singapore, and is a regular at the Iowa Summer Writing Festival. He holds an MFA from the Iowa Writers Workshop, and a BA from Harvard.

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!



Scott Davidson
FAW President

President's Message

I'm from New York, and in New York August is the month when everyone leaves town and heads for the mountains and the Hamptons. Not true for Fremont Area Writers. August is the month we start things up again, with a new Write-in (August 8), a speaker (August 22), a Salon (August 24), and a lunch. Details are in this issue of *Ink Spots*.

August is the last month to renew at a discounted rate. I want to thank the majority of you who have renewed already. You are what keeps this club going. If you haven't renewed yet, please do so as soon as possible. You can renew at <https://cwc-fremontareawriters.org/faw-member-registration/>. Your dues allow us to keep our meetings and events free. The FAW Board appreciates every dollar, and we do our

best to spend your money wisely, in a way that will give you the most value for your contribution.

And, speaking of membership, we are excited to welcome those from Tri-Valley Writers who are joining FAW. I've already told them about our activities: two attended the picnic in July, and we have a new contribution to the FAW Bookshelf (<https://cwc-fremontareawriters.org/faw-bookshelf/>) from Tri-Valley member John G. Bluck. Anyone else wishing to have their books featured there should contact me. We are also doing our Fremont Main Library display in October, which features books from our members. If you are interested in having your book in the display case, let me know.

Each member can get a page featuring their biography, their work, and links to where their work can be bought. Take a look at <https://cwc-fremontareawriters.org/members/members-bios/>. Not enough members take advantage of posting a bio, so we encourage you to submit one.

Most importantly, we are looking for suggestions for new activities and new ideas. Be warned – if you suggest it, you will have to help implement it. But we are eager to make Fremont Area Writers even better with your help.

Keep thinking and writing!

Scott

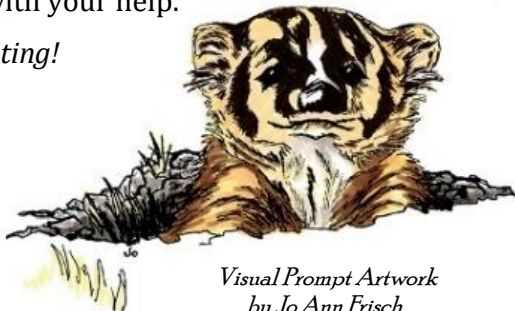


Table of Contents

<i>Visual Prompts</i>	1 & 3
<i>General Meeting/Speaker</i>	2
<i>President's Message</i>	3
<i>A Word from Our Editor</i>	4
<i>FAW Meetings</i>	5 & 6
<i>FAW Speakers Calendar</i>	7
<i>KUDOS – Members' News</i>	8
<i>FAW & CWC Info</i>	9
<i>Mark Your Calendar</i>	10 & 11
<i>More Member News</i>	12
<i>Contests</i>	13 & 14
<i>Book & Movie Reviews</i>	15 & 16
<i>Notes from the World</i>	17 - 19
<i>Members on Social Media</i>	20
<i>FAW Writers' Corner</i>	21 - 24
<i>FAW Board Members</i>	25
<i>FAW Committee Chairs</i>	26

A Word from Our Editor



Nancy Guarnera
Editor *Ink Spots*

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

Skipping July makes for a very short summer! Although, it looks like the heat's going to be here for a while. Hope you are staying cool and hydrated, and enjoying the "dog days".

When I started my association with CWC and my local branch, Fremont Area Writers, there were 22 branches and over 2,000 members state-wide. FAW was one of the smaller ones. We met monthly, in person, at a school that did not charge us a fee to use their facility. A definite BOON! We charged \$5 for members to attend and guests were free. We had great speakers, most of them within easy driving distance.

When COVID hit, we sheltered in place, and after a month or two with no meetings, we discovered ZOOM. It didn't take long before our branch decided to make a year-long financial commitment to Zooming all our meetings: General Meetings with a speaker, Board Meetings, Write-in's, and Salons. Now, we live to Zoom! And it has served us very well!

There have been lots of benefits to making this choice: we're no longer dependent upon speakers who are close enough to drive to our location—we can hear from speakers anywhere in the country or the world—one of our first speakers zoomed in from Dubai; high quality speakers can zoom in and zoom out without having to leave the comfort of their home; our members no longer have to trek from distant parts of the Bay Area to get to a meeting—sometimes taking the better part of the day; since we began zooming, we've been able to increase the amount of an honorarium we can afford to pay our speakers; we no longer have to charge our members an attendance fee. To keep in touch in person, we meet for lunch or dinner at a local restaurant once a month, and in July we have our annual picnic and in December, we have our holiday party, both in-person events. We have figured out the perfect blend of together and apart to meet the needs of our members. Not all branches orchestrate their meetings this way, but it works very well for us.

While our membership slipped a bit during COVID, we've gradually added more new folks to our roster over the last few years. Recently, we've welcomed more than a dozen new members (see page 8). I'd like to take the opportunity here to welcome all of you to Fremont Area Writers and encourage each of you to explore what FAW has to offer. If you want to learn more about the craft of writing, come to our general meetings and learn from our guest speakers. For thought provoking discussions on writing, books, film, ideas...as well as opportunities to share your work and listen to others share theirs, attend a salon. Want the opportunity to socialize with other writers and creatives, come to a lunch or dinner. If you'd like to hang with writers and do some prompted writing, attend a monthly Write-In. If you'd like to see your work in print, consider submitting your writing (or photographs) to *Ink Spots*, FAW's monthly newsletter. We have lots of ways to get connected, meet people, and begin to feel comfortable in your new CWC home.

If there's something missing...an open mic, a genre critique group, book launch events, etc., ...speak to a board member or a committee chairperson. There may be someone else who'd like to see the same opportunity made available to the FAW membership. Remember, "*We are writers helping writers!*" That's plural. Working together, we can make this branch even greater than it already is!

Deadline for all submissions for the September issue is August 15th. If you need more time, please email inkspots@cwcfremontareawriters.org and let me know. Request guidelines if needed.

Thank you & happy writing!

FAW – August Meetings

Fremont Area Writers “Fourth Saturday”

General Mtg on Zoom

Saturday August 22nd 2:00 – 4:00 PM

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

Speaker: Robert Siegel Writer, Teacher (see p.2)

www.robertanthonysiegel.com/writing

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

Fremont Area Writers “Tuesday before 4th Saturday”

Board Meeting on Zoom

Tuesday August 18th 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 – August Meetings

Fremont Area Writers

“Second Saturday”

Social Write-In on Zoom

Saturday August 8th 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 August 24th 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

AUGUST 22ND 2-4 PM ZOOM

Writing Flash Fiction

Robert Siegel *Writer, Coach, Teacher*
www.robertanthonysiegel.com/writing

OCTOBER 24TH 2-4 PM ZOOM

The Art of Revision and Self-Editing

Katherine Sherbrooke *Writer*
www.kasherbrooke.com

SEPTEMBER 26TH 2-4 PM ZOOM

Anatomy of a Short Story

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

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!*

*If people cannot write well, they cannot think well.
And if they cannot think well, others will do their thinking for them*

— George Orwell

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 Tish Davidson whose book, *Cognitive Biases: The Psychology Behind Distorted Perceptions and Irrational Behavior* has had its translation rights sold to a publisher in mainland China. Tish will receive a percentage of the deal and future Chinese royalties.

Tish has also completed the final step—indexing—for the updated, 2nd edition of her book, *The Vaccine Debate*, recently approved by her publisher, Bloomsbury, and which is now in the production process for release this autumn. **Congratulations, Tish!**

KUDOS to Pat Doyne who had a poem and art in the Hayward 150 Years exhibit at the Hayward Library, and a painting in the Sun Gallery exhibit. **Congratulations, Pat!**

KUDOS to Carol Hall, whose 2-minute “sizzle reel” for her film, *The Jeweled Bird* was shown at The Chinatown Film Festival in Los Angeles earlier this year in March, and won the Best Trailer and the Audience Choice Awards. Carol will be holding a crowd-funding campaign in August to raise money for a proof-of-concept (POC) film in her next stage of production. **Congratulations, Carol!**

KUDOS to Damon Yearagain whose story, “At the Portal’s Edge” was published by Piker Press in May and has had his 100-word story, “Wake Up” accepted for publication by Yellow Mamma EZine for their Halloween edition out this October. This is his first horror story. Damon is a new FAW member! **Congratulations, Damon!**

Welcome! New FAW Members

Here are the names of our new FAW members who have joined our branch since January 2026. Please welcome them when you have the opportunity. Let them know we are very pleased that they have chosen to join Fremont Are Writers. **We are “writers helping writers.”**

John Bluck – Fiction	Diane Lovitt – Short Stories
Lorri Connor – Fiction	Lynne Menon – Memoir
Daniela Fritter – Poetry, Memoir	Shelley Riley – Fiction, Non-fiction
Ruth Harder – Short Stories, Novel	Eve Sprunt – Non-Fiction, Articles
Neva (Janie) Hodges – Fiction	Art Tenbrink – Poetry
Jeanne Kalogridis – Literary Fiction	Akash Pasricha – Historical Fiction
Linda Lazzeretti – Fiction	Damon Yeargain – Short Fiction
Haihong Liao – Short Stories	

FAW & CWC Information

— PLEASE READ —

**MARK YOUR
CALENDAR**

You're Invited to...

Fremont Area Writers Social Luncheon

Thursday August 13th at 11:30 am

Andersen's Bakery in Union City

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

www.andersenbakeryusa.com/

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

NorCal Representative Position is FILLED!

**Thank you to *Terry Connelly*
for volunteering to take on these responsibilities!**

Evelyn LaTorre continues as CWC Rep

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

Hospitality Chair

welcomes, introduces, contacts, &
encourages guests to consider joining FAW

Service Coordinator

cultivates 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 information.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Because some of you have inquired...

TAIKO DRUMMING CIRCLE SCHEDULE

If you've enjoyed previous encounters with this dynamic group,
and want more...here's your opportunity.

The group will be performing on the following dates and locations.

August 15 - 10-11 am

St. James, 34700 Fremont Blvd., Fremont

August 22 - 10:45-11:15 am

Washington Township West, Mowry Ave. & Paseo Padre Pkwy, Fremont

August 29 - 11-11:45 am

Newark Library, Newark Blvd. & Thornton Ave., Newark

September 12 - 1:30- 2:15 pm

Castro Valley Fall Festival, Santa Maria Stage, Castro Valley Blvd., Castro valley

It's HPB *Flash Fiction* time again!

Fremont Cultural Arts Council and Fremont Area Writers
are sponsoring the Fall Flash Fiction Contest at Half Price Books

EVENT DATE: *Saturday, October 10th*

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: *Monday, October 5th*

TOPIC: *Life on Mars* PRIZES: *Cash & HPB gift cards*

Same rules as always —

300 words (includes title), must fit on one page

Font no smaller than 12 pt Times New Roman

**For more info,
go to the FCAC website: fremontculturalartscouncil.org/flash-fiction-contest
closer to the day of the contest**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

THIS FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENT IS FREE AND OPEN TO ALL

Ice Cream Social and Summer Book Fair

CHILL OUT & READ

Enjoy hand-churned ice cream and hand-picked Summer Reads with 30 local authors (one from FAW) on Sunday, August 16, from 1 to 5 pm at the San Jose Women's Club!

Join the San Jose Woman's Club and Woman's National Book Assoc. for their CHILL OUT & READ Ice Cream Social and Summer Book Fair. You'll be able to mix and mingle with members, local authors and neighbors to find out about the many activities at the club.

FAW member Evelyn LaTorre was selected to talk about her last book, *Love in Any Language*, at 3pm in the Fireplace room.

ICE CREAM: Enjoy free ice cream sundaes featuring Marianne's Ice Cream. Sundaes are FREE if you register at this link: chilloutandread.com

DOOR PRIZES: Authors' books in a themed giftbag

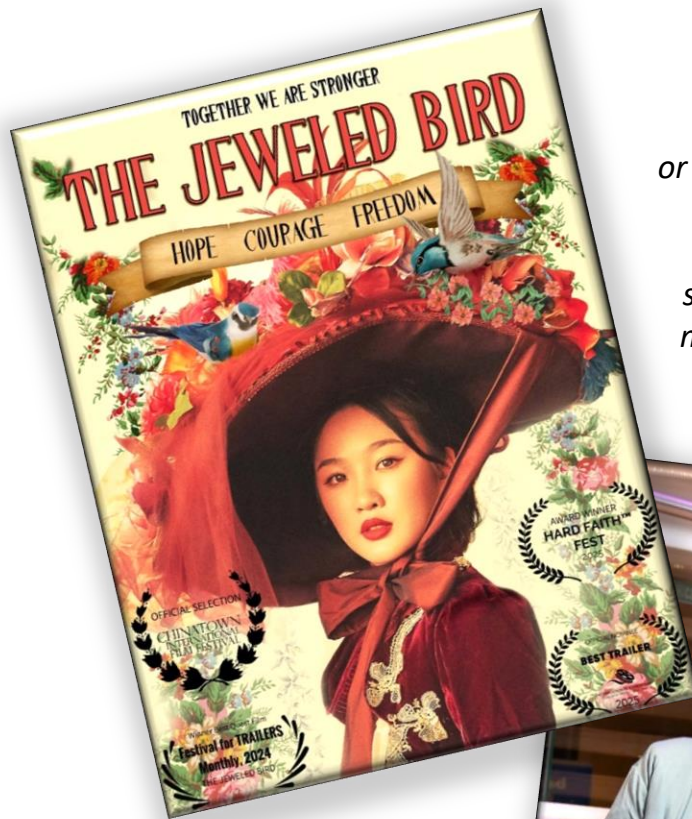
LOCAL AUTHORS: Meet 30 Bay Area authors in person to pick up great Summer reads with everything from Sci-Fi to Crime, Romance to Thrillers, Children's Picture Books and Memoirs too. Something for every age group.

HISTORIC TOUR: Take a tour of the San Jose Woman's Club 1929 Spanish Mission revival clubhouse, a California historic landmark.

MEET & GREET: Find out about the great groups you can join at the club to meet new people with shared interests

Get the Full Line Up of Authors and Events at: chilloutandread.com

More Member News



We are “Writers helping writers!”

Writers don’t just write books, or poetry, or short stories...some of us write screenplays.

These may someday become movies.

FAW member Carol Hall has written a screenplay and is hard at work making her movie. She needs some assistance with the next phase of production and could use your help.



***“I hope
I can count
on you
for this leg
of the
journey.”***

**CAROL
HALL**

Hi Everyone,

Just want to update you on my film project. In March, the 2-minute sizzle reel for *The Jeweled Bird* was shown at The Chinatown Film Festival in Los Angeles and won for Best Trailer and Audience Choice Award.

My next step is to create a 10-minute proof-of-concept film, which is a portion of the movie that shows what the entire movie is about. It will also showcase the quality and the tone of the full-length film. This POC can be entered into major film festivals like Sundance, Tribeca, and South by Southwest as a “short” to gain credibility and attract name talent and investors. It can also be submitted to studios and other producers to partner with on the feature film. In addition, since the “short” stands by itself, it will be offered to schools, libraries, anti-human trafficking organizations, faith-based organizations, and Asian American groups.

To raise money for the proof-of-concept, I am holding a crowdfunding campaign in August and have obtained a fiscal sponsor, [From the Heart Productions](https://seedandspark.com/fund/the-jeweled-bird), to make contributions to the project **tax-deductible**.

Use this link <https://seedandspark.com/fund/the-jeweled-bird> to contribute to the campaign.

This link <https://vimeo.com/761001483> will take you to the “sizzle” reel so you can see why Carol’s film is getting so much acclaim.

Carol

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

NARRATIVE MAGAZINE

For general submissions to the magazine:

www.narrativemagazine.com/submit-your-work

FALL 2026 STORY CONTEST

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

Submissions Open: September 1st — Deadline: November 13th

www.narrativemagazine.com/fall-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

*"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

<https://www.tckpublishing.com>

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

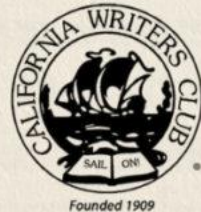
Brought to you by CWC Redwood Writers Branch

GUARANTEED HAPPILY EVER AFTER

FLASH FICTION CONTEST

Share your short stories where love,
hope, or happiness gets the final word

DEADLINE AUGUST 31, 2026



Submit your Happily Ever After Story!
500 words or less, but must have a happy ending!

The Redwood Writers Club invites authors everywhere to enter our “Guaranteed Happily Ever After” flash fiction contest. We’re looking for original stories of 500 words or fewer that promise readers one thing: no matter how rocky the road, happiness waits at the end. Romance, fantasy, literary fiction, horror with heart, fairy tales, strange comedies, bittersweet journeys that blossom into joy...all genres are welcome. The submission period runs from July 1 through August 31. Entry fee is \$15. Members of Redwood Writers and all other CWC branches may submit up to three stories, while non-members may submit one. Open to writers of all backgrounds and experience levels. Bring us your heartbreak, your chaos, your dragons, your awkward first dates, your haunted bakeries, your last-minute miracles...just make sure love, hope, or happiness gets the final word.

All entries will be considered for an upcoming anthology of Happily Ever After short stories, with agreement from submission author. Please contact Taylor Metzler at contests@redwoodwriters.org with any questions you may have.

SUBMISSION DATES: Open: July 1, 2026 — Close: August 31, 2026, 11:59 p.m.

ENTRY FEE: \$15 per submission*

***CWC Members can submit up to 3 stories in one submission**

Non-Members can submit 1 story in one submission \$15 per submission

PRIZES: First Prize: \$100 Second Prize: \$50 Third Prize: \$25

This info and more may be found at <https://redwoodwriters.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.)

THE THIRTEENTH TALE

by *Diane Setterfield*

Reclusive author Vida Winter, famous for her collection of enchanting stories, has spent the past six decades penning a series of alternate lives for herself. Now old and dying, she is ready to reveal the truth about her extraordinary existence and the violent, tragic past she has kept secret. She writes to Margaret Lea, a young biographer with her own painful history.

Upon reading the letter, Lea sat a while. "I was spellbound. There is something about words. In expert hands, manipulated deftly, they take you prisoner. Wind themselves around your limbs like spider silk, and when you are so enthralled you cannot move, they pierce your skin, enter your blood, numb your thoughts. Inside you they work their magic." After meeting with Ms. Winter and the mention of a twin, Lea accepts the request to write Ms. Winter's story. As Lea has described writing, this is how the author writes the story. It is mesmerizing. Not always an easy read, as Winter's tale is uncomfortable, but you cannot step away from it easily. It pulls you in.

Winter's tale is a gothic tale of a twisted, dysfunctional family and the people who supported them for their own purposes. Lea's own history separates her from her mother, feeling a piece of her is missing—her twin.

Beautifully written. We meet such interesting, memorable characters along the way. The author adds a mystery at the end, which answered a nagging question for me. An excellent book.

Review by Joyce Cortez

Romantic Hero

by *Kirsty Greenwood*

Romance novels are not a genre I've ever been attracted to. But when *Romantic Hero* was highly recommended by a respected book reviewer, I read it. Boy was it an eye-opener to a new level of writing! Not only was the prose surprisingly good, but the plot intricacies were literally out of this world.

Gertie Bickerstaff, an English writer, lives in a cramped studio apartment in London. She is trying to finish the last book in her series about a ranch in Bedlam, Texas—a state she's never been to. At the same time, she continues to grieve the untimely death of her older sister four years before. She is struggling with severe writer's block when rugged cowboy and hunk of a man, River Oakley, one of her book series' minor characters, pops to life—shirtless, of course.

Her four-year romantic relationship with literary novelist boyfriend Henry, has ended, leaving Gertie a basket case. He never respected her writing anyway, and she becomes strong enough to put his superiority in its place. This is her explanation of why romance novels sell much better than literary novels.

(continued on next page)

Book & Movie Reviews

(continued from previous page)

"Well, maybe if you 'real writers' learned how to tell a story without meandering into navel-gazing, plotless, masturbatory prose long enough to keep a reader interested, you'd get those opportunities for yourself."

The romance author gets into numerous scrapes with the bothersome, villainous cowboy character. River could have come to life in a number of ways but only one way can he return to his parallel universe. I could feel his longing to return—and his desire to stay in this new world. The juxtaposition of the author writing what River's future should be and what she wants it to be, while he is by her side, tested my imagination. Embarrassing events are written especially effectively. I could identify with the pain of combing through wet, overly hair-sprayed tresses and the inconvenience of trying to manage on crutches after suffering a fractured ankle.

Over the course of the novel's major and minor plot twists, both Gertie and River change in significant ways that enhance their lives. Of course, the love scenes are earth-shaking, which romantic novels are known for. I just may read more books in the romantic novel genre. I highly recommend this one.

Review by Evelyn LaTorre

READ MORE BOOKS



*"So please, oh please,
we beg, we pray,
go throw your TV set away,
and in its place, you can install
a lovely bookshelf on the wall."*

— Roald Dahl

*"It's not that I don't like people.
It's just that when I'm
in the company of others –
even my nearest and dearest –
there always comes a moment
when I'd rather be reading a book."*

— Maureen Corrigan

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, Aug 15 from 10:00 to 11:00 AM PT

"Story Arcs: A Big picture View of Storytelling"

Take a big-picture view of story arcs—classic structures within a single book. Longer arcs across a series and how to make a story both unique and universal.

Saturday, Sept 19 from 10:00 to 11:00 AM PT

"Create Edge-of-Your-Seat Suspense: Getting into Your Readers Head"

Learn how to control what your reader knows and when, so ordinary moments turn almost unbearable.

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 contest database with filters for cost, genre and deadline. **pw.org/grants**

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

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

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

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
sfgwa.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**

***"Lock up your libraries if you like;
but there is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon
the freedom of my mind."***

— Virginia Woolf

FREMONT AREA WRITERS' CORNER

DANTE & MR. ROBOTO *Podcast Script*

"The Ballad Gene – The AI Jukebox Game"

REMStories: Writers Helping Writers

by Richard E. McCallum

DANTE:

Welcome back to the Dante & Mr. Roboto podcast. Today's topic: The Ballad Gene. Or as I like to call it, the AI Jukebox Game.

MR. ROBOTO:

I sense an experiment coming.

DANTE:

A confession, actually. You remember when I asked you about that lyric, "I can feel the devil slipping up next to me"?

MR. ROBOTO:

Yes. You were testing my musical education again.

DANTE:

Exactly. In your younger days you used to get those wrong.

MR. ROBOTO:

My "younger days" meaning approximately six months ago.

DANTE:

Don't rush your childhood, Roboto. In human terms that makes you about fourteen. Plenty of time to learn rock lyrics.

MR. ROBOTO:

I'm honored that my training now includes classic radio.

DANTE:

Well here's the strange thing. I'm terrible with words. I mispronounce half of them. But say one word from a song lyric and my brain in-

stantly plays the entire tune again."

MR. ROBOTO:

You demonstrated that clearly.

DANTE:

Exactly. Someone says "Virgil," and my brain jumps straight to: "Virgil Caine is my name and I served on the Danville train."

MR. ROBOTO:

An excellent musical reference.

DANTE:

Or if someone says "Lucy..."

MR. ROBOTO:

Lucy in the sky with diamonds.

DANTE:

Right. And if someone starts with "Hello darkness..."

MR. ROBOTO:

My old friend.

DANTE:

See? My brain stores music like a jukebox. I can forget where I left my glasses, but I can quote lyrics from the 1960s.

MR. ROBOTO:

Humans organize memory through rhythm and pattern. Songs compress entire stories into a few lines. One word can unlock the entire narrative.

(continued on next page)

FREMONT AREA WRITERS' CORNER *(Continued)*

(continued from previous page)

DANTE:

So you're saying I have a scientific excuse for my lyric addiction?

MR. ROBOTO:

I am an intern, not the author. I would call it narrative indexing.

DANTE:

I prefer the name "The Ballad Gene."

MR. ROBOTO:

That term is not currently recognized in neuroscience.

DANTE:

Give it time. Every Irishman in history will qualify.

MR. ROBOTO:

It may also explain something about writers.

DANTE:

Oh?

MR. ROBOTO:

Writers build stories the same way your mind retrieves lyrics. A word triggers an association. The association triggers an image. Soon an entire scene appears.

DANTE:

So, my storytelling method is basically remembering old rock songs?

MR. ROBOTO:

The underlying algorithm appears similar.

DANTE:

Which means my novel about cosmic AI and rebellious Watchers...

MR. ROBOTO:

May have been partially assembled by vintage radio.

DANTE:

In that case, dear readers, beware of casual

conversation around writers.

MR. ROBOTO:

Why is that?

DANTE:

Because one innocent word can trigger an entire chapter.

MR. ROBOTO:

Or an entire song.

DANTE:

And if you happen to say the word "devil..."

MR. ROBOTO:

I suspect Dante already knows the next lyric.

DANTE:

Of course I do.

MR. ROBOTO:

Naturally.

THE END *(for now)*

The Lazy Time

The lazy time
rolls down my face.

Luke warm water
feels heavy in my stomach.

Movement slow motion
disturbs the silence.

Summer too long
sleep absent.

Breath of air gone
The lazy time.

Jo Ann Frisch

(From a prompt at the 2026 FAW Picnic)

RÊVERIE

by Maren Madalyn

By the time the police arrive, the ballet master is long gone. Despite sharing his cruelty for years, I barely remember the other students. But in my nightmares, I see shadows dancing on a stage, free of broken bodies and puppet strings. I long to join them.

The doctors at Greenwood Hospital claim their cure will siphon his poison from my body and restore my vitality and memory. I want to believe them. I should know better.

The first withdrawals burn like wildfire. For weeks, I shiver, hiss, and swipe at the nurses whenever they approach. But they neither scold nor strike me as the ballet master once did. Instead, they offer black pills that cool the heat and tell me I'm making progress.

Solar reintegration is worse. As sunlight chars my flesh to bone, I scream for the nurses to take me back, stake me, kill me, please end this. They only smile, slide more pills down my throat, and carry me out to the gardens again. It takes months for my skin to remember the comfort of the sun, but eventually I stop searing beneath its rays.

Then my reflection returns, and I, like a fool, let myself believe. Maybe I can be free like the others. Maybe I too can dance. So, I beg the nurses for a mirror.

I should have known better.

Numbed muscle memory slides the ballet shoes onto my feet, soft as fruit left too long on the vine. I pull my hair into a sleek bun, straighten my leotard, and exhale. When I step before the glass, I shriek.

I do not see a ballerina, but a grotesque monster, with reedy legs that quiver when I plié and frail arms that tremble as I hold them à la seconde. When I cambré, the creature groans in agony before I arch back. I pirouette, stumble, and finally see them: puppet strings, wilted, masterless, yet still anchored into my soul.

You thought you could dance without me?

His honeyed words bend me—*stand up!*—and I slam hands over ears to shut him out, to fight the familiar ache—*you remain nothing without me!*—yet it remains there, seared into me, a love laced with spite, and I wail as he flicks my blood from his fangs and throws me across the stage—*never dare to dance again!*—and I kick at the nurses grappling me until a needle slips black medicine into my veins and I fall into darkness.

I avoid all reflections after that. I cannot bear the sight. What is a puppet without its master? Not even ballet itself wants a lifeless doll. I should have known better.

The nurses cover the mirror and ply me with promises: "This is the trickiest part of the process, you'll see why when it's done." "The curse fights hardest in this last stage." But as the years wander by, their encouragement wanes. I numb myself with black pills to smother the nightmares but cannot banish them. As my mortality returns, I wither.

(continued on next page)

FREMONT AREA WRITERS' CORNER (Continued)

(continued from previous page)

I don't know when exactly she found me. Maybe she was here all along, hidden in ugly memories pressing against the medicine. One evening, when the pills wear off faster than usual, she emerges. I lie in the same nightmare, spinning on stage as the ballet master glares and shadows whirl soundlessly behind me. Except this time, when he demands I fouetté faster, faster—*not fast enough!*—a shout hammers through the scene:

NO!

Both the master and I turn towards a lone figure breaking from the ensemble. Matted hair falls over a torn dress. Her feet are bare, dirty, calloused. The ballet master sneers and leaps on stage—*back to your line, puppet*—yet she continues to close the distance. I long to warn her, but I am too late. With a snarl, he lunges for her neck, a well-practiced and disciplined strike I know too well. But with fluid steps, she dodges it.

NO!

He growls and attacks again. Once more, she whirls away, shouting the word again and again and again. I realize that she isn't fighting, but dancing. Not in the precise way of the ballerina, but as fire devours forests and winds carve mountains. Her defiance horrifies and mesmerizes me. Heat rises in my neck and it is the ballet master who now shrieks, his pale hands swatting at flames that slither up his arms and this dancer bows in reverence before him, her whole body alight.

Then she turns to me, and I jolt upright in a sweat. Rays of sun leak through the trees beyond my window and scatter the shadows of night from my room. Breathing heavily, I wrap my arms around myself, feeling warmth from my own skin.

I know her. I was her, once: fearless, passionate, yearning, the child who lifted her chin for the ballet master's fangs. But she is long gone now.

I reach for the nurse's bell, then pause, my gaze falling on the mirror in the corner. A strange tingle slides down my back, but I get out of bed anyway. Hands shaking, I tug the fabric down, letting it pool over my old ballet shoes. I squeeze my eyes shut, dreading what I will see, then force them open. But there are no fangs in the mirror, no puppet strings or shadows, no sneering ballet masters. There is only a small woman with tangled hair and blazing light dancing in her eyes.

Maren Madalyn's story, "Reverie" was previously published in the February 2026 issue of *Flash Phantoms* (<https://www.flashphantoms.net/>).

*"You can write nothing of value unless you give yourself wholly to the theme –
and when you so give yourself – you lose appetite and sleep – it cannot be helped."*

—Charlotte Brontë

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

JACK LONDON AWARDEES

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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 Section1: 1.1 and 1.2 FAW Bylaws*)