

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. 8 September 2026

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



Visual Prompt

Photograph by nguarnera

September General Meeting

* SEPT 26th * 2 to 4 PM * ZOOM * FREE *

Anatomy of a Short Story

with Guest Speaker

Margaret "Peggy" Lucke



margaretlucke.com

A well-crafted short story is a joy for both the writer and the reader. But what goes into creating one? A short story is more than an anecdote, a character sketch, or a description of what happens in a moment in time. In this session, we will examine the essential elements that make up a successful story—its blood and bones. Come and discover:

- How to come up with great ideas for stories
- The contributions made by characters, plot, and setting
- The key differences between short stories and novels (besides length)
- How to hook the reader and keep them reading to the end
- Where to learn about short story markets for publishing your work

You'll gain a better understanding of the short story form and come away ready to meet the challenges that writing a good short story presents.

Margaret Lucke (aka Peggy) flings words around as a writer and editor in the San Francisco Bay Area. She is fascinated by the power of stories and the magic of creativity. She writes tales of love, ghosts, and murder, sometimes all three in one book. Her paranormal suspense series features Claire Scanlan, a Marin County real estate agent who specializes in haunted houses. Her other series stars artist and private investigator Jess Randolph, who considers both of her dual careers to be ways to search for the truth. The most recent titles are *House of Desire* and *Snow Angel*.

Peggy has published more than 60 short stories and feature articles, and she is the editor of *Fault Lines*, the first crime fiction anthology published by the NorCal chapter of Sisters in Crime. For many years she has taught fiction writing classes for UC Berkeley Extension and other venues. As a writing coach and developmental editor, she enjoys helping writers move forward toward their writing goals.

Peggy loves to travel, and her writing career has given her opportunities to visit China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, England, and Italy, as well as Alaska and other U.S. places.

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

September always seemed like the beginning of the year to me. School began with new classes, new classmates, and a new schedule. Things started buzzing as people came back from August vacations. In New York, where I grew up, school started after Labor Day, not in August like it does in California.

After we finish school, September can be just another month. But we can still do things to meet new people, just like we did at the beginning of the school year. Fremont Area Writers can help.

The Write-in, on the second Saturday of each month, is a good way of meeting people. You get put into a Zoom room with two or three other people. You write for ten minutes, but the fun part comes when you

read your piece and get people's reactions. Maybe someone lived where you used to. Maybe someone had some of the same experiences. It is a good way of getting to know your fellow writers better.

Another way is to read our members' biographies, which are available on the FAW website. The URL is <https://cwc-fremontareawriters.org/members/members-bios/>. If your biography is not there, send me a picture and what you want to post, and I'll put it up. Book covers, links to your writing and links to where someone can buy your books are welcome.

Another place to meet people is our monthly lunches and dinners. Lunch is at Andersen Bakery in the Union Landing shopping center. Dinner is usually Monday evening at Le Moose café in Fremont. We move these events around on the calendar to give everyone a chance to attend. Watch for details.

Writing can be a lonely activity, just you and a blank screen. But FAW gives you the chance to meet people just like you, who don't think that writing is a weird thing to do.

Keep thinking and writing!

Scott



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A Word from Our Editor



Nancy Guarnera
Editor *Ink Spots*

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

It's been HOT! But...it's starting to cool off! Thank you, weather deities. Keep up the cooler weather and I shall be eternally grateful!

When I first started to attend FAW meetings back in the mid-20'teens', one of the first people I met was Jan Small. She had been a member for a long time, though I'm not sure if she was one of the founding members. She was the go-to person if you were interested in book signings at New Park Mall and the local libraries. It's with a sad heart that I must relay to you that Jan passed away recently after a fall. She will be missed. There is more information about her on page 9. Please consider submitting some of your remembrances of her for the October issue. Jan truly embodied our mission of "writers helping writers."

Another important piece of info for you! There was a miscommunication regarding the topic for the Flash Fiction Contest co-sponsored by the Fremont Cultural Arts Council, FAW and Half Price Books coming up in October. The topic was initially reported to be "Life on Mars." This is incorrect. The correct topic is "Living on the Moon." Information about this contest, with corrections, can be found on page 13. Good luck to all of you who enter the contest.

Volunteer from the Latin *voluntarius* "willing, of one's free will." There are so many ways to be of service to our fellow writers and to the larger community. It's fun and can be given freely. And it's a great way to meet other people who share your interests...writing! Jan Small got me involved initially with hospitality. I was encouraged to "make it mine," and I did. And I had a great time doing it. One of my ideas was even appropriated by other branches.

While I was busy being hospitable, I heard the editor of *Ink Spots*, Myrla Raymundo's pleas for help. "I'm 82 years old, the oldest FAW member, and I need help with the newsletter." I dragged my feet for a while, because, having worked professionally in publication design and production, I knew the kind of time and energy that can go into doing a monthly newsletter. But after months of hiding my light under a bushel, I finally approached Myrla, and the rest is history. As it turned out, she wasn't looking for help, she was looking for her successor. After a couple of months of reassuring herself that I could take on the newsletter without her involvement, she introduced me to the FAW board as the new editor-in-chief. Much to my surprise, I might add, for she had not alerted me to her plan. I suppose that this process seems to fly in the face of "free will," but, if I'm honest, I enjoy doing the newsletter. Myrla gave me the kick in the pants I needed to use my skills and talents to be of service to my writing community.

If you enjoy being in the know, rubbing shoulders with like-minded folks, deep diving into the nuts and bolts of an organization, working with others toward a common goal, and exercising your free will...talk to Evelyn LaTorre or Scott Davidson about the opportunity to be of service as the FAW NorCal Representative. We need you!

If you are a writer who is also an artist and/or photographer, please consider submitting your art and pics for use in *Ink Spots*. Jpg format 300dpi (72dpi is okay, too). Your work might prompt a piece of writing!

Deadline for all submissions for the October issue is September 10th. If you need more time, please email inkspots@cw-fremontareawriters.org and let me know. Request guidelines if needed.

Thank you & happy writing!

FAW – September Meetings

Fremont Area Writers “Fourth Saturday”

General Mtg on Zoom

Saturday September 26th 2:00 – 4:00 PM

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

*Speaker: Margaret “Peggy” Lucke Writer, Editor, Teacher (see p.2)
www.margaretlucke.com*

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

Fremont Area Writers “Tuesday before 4th Saturday”

Board Meeting on Zoom

Tuesday September 22nd 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 – September Meetings

Fremont Area Writers

“Second Saturday”

Social Write-In on Zoom

Saturday September 12th 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 September 28th 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

SEPTEMBER 26TH 2-4 PM ZOOM

Anatomy of a Short Story

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

OCTOBER 24TH 2-4 PM ZOOM

The Art of Revision and Self-Editing

Katherine Sherbrooke *Writer*
www.kasherbrooke.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!*

"A writer is a world trapped in a person"

— Victor Hugo

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 Pat Doyne who has nine Lake Chabot landscapes at the Hayward Senior Center, five botanical paintings at the Weekes Park library in Hayward, & one at Lola's Gallery in SF.

She has also learned that the three poems she submitted to the Voices of Lincoln contest each won an award. In the *Advice That Changed My Life* category "Requiem for a Volkswagen" won 3rd place; in the *My Greatest Achievements* category, "Learning to Live Left-Handed" won 2nd place; and in the *What I'd Like To Do Over Again* category, "Handprints" took 1st place. The Awards ceremony will be from 3-5 pm, on October 18, at the Salt Mine, 590 Lincoln Blvd. in Lincoln, near Sacramento. All are invited.

Congratulations, Pat!

KUDOS to Carol Hall, whose August crowd-funding campaign to raise money for a proof-of-concept (POC) film in her next stage of production of her film, "The Jeweled Bird", has raised \$13,535 of the \$38,500 goal in its first three weeks. Recently, she did an unboxing video to reveal a new incentive. To see what it is copy and paste this link into your browser:

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/cp8jppw8wxsnsgoc2wbkl/20260822_151946TheJeweledBirdKeychainIncentive.mp4?rlkey=ae5axp1fkpjxgnw08ykqt8lj&st=17ya0cj1&dl=0 She is preparing another celebratory video when she reaches 50% of her goal, hopefully soon. If somehow you missed her original message and don't know what's going on, here is a link to her crowd-funding video and campaign. Check it out! <https://seedandspark.com/fund/the-jeweled-bird> **Congratulations, Carol!**

KUDOS to Evelyn LaTorre, who was one of thirty authors (out of 100 applicants) selected to talk about and sell her latest book, *Love in Any Language*, at this year's "Chill Out and Read" event at the San Jose Women's Club. Three hundred attendees slurped up the free ice cream sundaes, listened to authors' presentations, and perused the tables of books for sale. Several guests from Fremont attended the event. Evelyn's book was also mentioned in the *San Jose Mercury News*. **Congratulations, Evelyn!**



Congratulations
to FAW member
EVELYN LATORRE
newly elected
CWC Secretary!



More Member News

In Remembrance

Jan Small



It is with deep sorrow that we have learned that long-time FAW member, Jan Small passed away on August 26, a short time after she had a bad fall outside her home.

Jan was a valued member of Fremont Area Writers. For many years she arranged book signing events at Newpark Mall and various Alameda County libraries. In 2019, Jan received the Jack London Award for her years of dedicated service to FAW.

An award-winning artist and owner of Jan Small Art Studio, Jan painted and taught for over 50 years. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, and published in newspapers and magazines. Her Christian faith was always central to her life, art, and writing. In 2026, she had a large display of her artwork reflecting her Christian beliefs in the Fremont Main Library.

In addition to being an active artist, Jan wrote, illustrated, and self-published many books. Her first published story, a tale about a pet chameleon, ran in Aunt Elsie's column in the *Oakland Tribune* when she was 11 years old. Since then, she has written more than a dozen books. Her favorite was **Revelation Illustrated** which contains 214 paintings and stories about the paintings. Much to her surprise, her bestselling book was **How To Draw and Paint A Cat 34 Ways**.

Jan was raised in Vallejo and married at age 17 to the love of her life Larry, who predeceased her. She is survived by two sons and their families. Notes of condolence can be sent to Steve Small, 39692 Banyan Tree Rd in Fremont, CA 94538. *(submitted by Tish Davidson)*

The Rose Beyond The Wall

A rose once grew where all could see,
sheltered beside a garden wall,
And as the days passed swiftly by,
it spread its branches, straight and tall...

One day, a beam of light shone through
a crevice that had opened wide
The rose bent gently toward its warmth
then passed beyond to the other side

Now, you who deeply feel its loss,
be comforted - the rose blooms there-
its beauty even greater now, nurtured by
God's own loving care.

A.L. Frink

Please Read

*Anyone who wishes to share a short
personal remembrance of Jan,
please email it to
inkspots@cw-fremontareawriters.org
and we will include all that we receive
in the October issue of Ink Spots.
Please email these by September 10th
and put **Remembering Jan Small**
in the Subject line.*

Thank you!

FAW & CWC Information

— PLEASE READ —

MARK YOUR
CALENDAR

You're Invited to...

Fremont Area Writers Social Dinner

Monday September 14th 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

NorCal Representative Position is OPEN!

This volunteer position gives you the opportunity to meet and work with reps from other northern California branches.

Speak to President Scott Davidson or CWC-Rep Evelyn LaTorre if you are interested in learning more about this position!

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.

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

Tom Howard / Margaret Reid Poetry Contest

PRIZES: Tom Howard – \$3,500 Margaret Reid – \$3,500

DEADLINE: October 1, 2026

LENGTH LIMIT: 250 lines maximum per poem

SUBMISSION FEE: \$25 per submission Up to 3 poems per entry • unlimited number of entries

SUBMIT TO: winningwriters.com/our-contests/tom-howard-margaret-reid-poetry-contest



Gotham Writers

The Worst Vacation Ever Contest

Deadline: September 15, 2026

Expired passports and poison ivy and grandmother brought the cat on the road trip...oh my!

In 59 words or fewer, tell us the story of the worst vacation EVER. This can be fiction or nonfiction, but reach for something wacky or surprising—we've all heard the one about food poisoning.

- ❖ Entries must be submitted online by 11:59 pm Eastern Time, September 15, 2026
- ❖ Entry is free
- ❖ Limit one entry per person.
- ❖ Entry must consist of no more than 59 words
- ❖ Entry must be original and unpublished; no AI-generated entries are permitted
- ❖ Entries will be judged on originality, quality, spelling, and grammar
- ❖ Gotham will post the winning entry at GothamWriters.com and on social media
- ❖ The winner will be notified by early-October
- ❖ Winner receives a free Gotham class of their choosing, excluding any premium classes (Zoetrope Fiction, Business Writing, Level III)

For more information: https://v2.writingclasses.com/contests/the-worst-vacation-ever-contest?utm_source=Gotham+Writers+Workshop&utm_campaign=84b28b68c9-08%2F19%2F26+Writing+Advice&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-8a8f6e6b83-236715417

\$\$\$ 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 \$\$\$

* CORRECTION *



— PLEASE READ —



HPB Flash Fiction Contest

TOPIC: ~~“Life on Mars”~~ is “LIVING ON THE MOON”

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

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: *Monday, October 5th*

EVENT DATE: *Saturday, October 10th*

PRIZES: *Cash & Gift cards*

Correction — TOPIC: ~~*Life on Mars*~~



TOPIC: *Living on the Moon*



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

at the end of September for complete submission guidelines

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.)

Beyond the Politics of Contempt *Practical Steps to Build Positive Relationships in Divided Times*

By Doug Teschner, Beth Malow, and Becky Robinson

This collaborative book is a pep talk to U.S. citizens to treat with dignity and respect those whose political views are the opposite from one's own. They list proof that abusive behavior (exacerbated during the COVID epidemic) is increasing in many arenas—from the nation's highways to hospitals to public meetings. It starts with rudeness and escalates to demonization and sometimes, physical threats. As citizens experience distasteful and unkind behavior, the authors say, they become angrier and have greater contempt for those whose political loyalties are different from their own. Spending more time with people who think similarly, increases inclusive practices and leads to avoiding those with differing viewpoints. In general, this trend of putting down "those other people" is damaging to U.S. democracy and those who live in it.

The decline in trust of U.S. government and political institutions over the past 40 years has happened with the growth of what the authors refer to as "conflict entrepreneurs." These include social media (algorithms that amplify fear and anger for profit, attention and power), an atmosphere denigrating compromise, and politicians awarded by bad behavior. The decline in civics education in schools and the different interests of urban vs. rural voters, are contributing factors that push against unifying the country.

In five sections, the book explores the roots of unhealthy conflict, how "the exhausted majority" can instigate change, and how, by individuals being willing to change their own behavior and become leaders, polarization could decrease and make the country work better. Each chapter is peppered with quotes from well-known leaders like Abraham Lincoln, Peter Drucker, and David Brooks and includes questions for further thought at each chapter's conclusion. Checklists for changing oneself and our country are written at the end of the book. Also included is a summary of the book's key points. The "further thought" items and the lists could be used in the discussion groups the authors suggest readers lead. Braver Angels and eleven other groups are listed as helpful in developing empathy and teaching how to find common ground with those of differing political views, thus reversing tribalization.

This reviewer found it useful to first read the "About the Authors" section at end to become oriented to each individual writer's comments that are inserted throughout the text. This book examines and explains the factors that puzzle many U.S. citizens and voters about our seemingly fractured political system and what to do about it. The book is thoughtfully dedicated to the authors' "children, grandchildren, and future generations."

Though getting through the book felt like required reading for a college class, I took the authors' suggestions and now respond in social media with more thoughtful and positive statements. I also am proud of my leadership activities in the local chapter of the League of Women Voters (not mentioned in the book.)

Review by Evelyn LaTorre (Peru 1964-66)

Between Inca Walls, A Peace Corps Memoir

Love in Any Language, A Memoir of a Cross-Cultural Marriage

Book & Movie Reviews

MEMORIES IN THE MARBLE PALACE

By Gabriel Konstantinovich

The freshly published *MEMORIES IN THE MARBLE PALACE*, is an autobiography by one of the Konstantinovich Romanov survivors of the Russian revolution of 1917—Prince Gabriel Konstantinovich, the second son of nine children. The prince's father, Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich II, was an uncle of Tsar Nicholas II and the Grand Ducal title only extended to Konstantin II. His progeny, six boys and three girls, were only given the "Prince/sses of the Royal Blood" titles. The whole gang was collectively and colloquially referred to as the "Konstantinovichs."

They are a fascinating outer branch of the Romanovs. They were numerous enough that three sons were caught up in the executions of the Romanovs by the Bolsheviks and the womenfolk were able to survive and give birth to more princes even as they got older. The two older sons, Ioann and Gavril (or Gabriel), were incredibly tall—in the 6'4" and 6'5" range, but looked rather ghoulish.

The book is a slog to get through. It's the first time it's gotten an English translation and is heavy on description and light on action. The pace only picks up when Gavril reprints from his first wife's diary, recounting her efforts to get them out of Russia under the ruse of the prince being extremely sick and thus spared the firing squad. Two of the prince's other brothers were shot in the battlefield and three were against a wall. The author's wife, Antonina, from a minor landed family in Russia, but not titled—resorted to almost selling her soul to the devil and her body to the Bolsheviks, just to get herself and her husband to Paris where she later opened a short-lived fashion house.

I skipped through many chapters because it was all about the young princes undergoing their classes, getting assigned to this or that regiment—which uniform belonged to which event—all in minute detail—and how they could not even breathe without permission from Emperor Nicky II. (At the zenith of the power of the Romanovs, there were 22 Grand Dukes, some eighteen Grand Duchesses, various Princes and Pretenders. They all kept the Faberge workshops extremely busy.)

The late Prince Philip of Great Britain, was descended from this line—Olga (Konstantinova) of Greece was his paternal grandmother.

The Russian original has been around since 1955 shortly after author Gavril passed away in France. The typesetting in the new English version is so thick and close together that it is not very enticing to read. Only a true Romanov aficionado would put up with such major printing imperfections.

Review by Myles A. Garcia



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](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, 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.

Saturday, Oct 17 from 10:00 to 11:00 AM PT

"The Cameo that Steals the Show: Writing Minor Characters that Leave Major Impressions"

Learn how to give a supporting character a life of their own and build a recurring cast that keeps readers coming back to a series.

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: **<http://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>**

***"We have to continually be jumping off cliffs and
developing our wings on the way down."***

— Kurt Vonnegut

FREMONT AREA WRITERS' CORNER

DANTE & MR. ROBOTO & MS. ROBOTA *Podcast Script*

"PatternAIHuman"

REMStories: Writers Helping Writers

by Richard E. McCallum

DANTE (you):

You ever notice something strange?
You start reading articles on science, history...
real stuff. Interesting stuff.
At first, you're hooked.
You click one...then another...then another.
But after a while—you don't stop because
you're bored with the subject.
You stop because...you start to recognize
the pattern.

MR. ROBOTO:

Not the content. The structure behind it.

MS. ROBOTA:

It's like hearing the same song played by a
different band.
Different words...same melody underneath.

DANTE:

Exactly. Every article starts sounding familiar.
Same hook. Same build. Same surprise ending—
where science suddenly becomes something
else.

MR. ROBOTO:

That's not an accident. Platforms don't simply
recommend information. They recommend
familiarity.

DANTE:

So, Facebook isn't reading my mind...

MR. ROBOTO:

No.
It's reading your behavior. Then handing it back
to you—polished...predicted...personalized.

MS. ROBOTA:

Because familiarity feels comfortable. And
comfortable keeps people scrolling.

DANTE:

Which is funny...because the same thing
happens with writers.

MR. ROBOTO:

Ah... Now we're getting somewhere.

DANTE:

You discover an author you love. The first book
amazes you.
The second still surprises you.
By the third...you're beginning to recognize
the rhythm.
By the fifth...you're no longer discovering the
story.
You're predicting it.

(continued on next page)

FREMONT AREA WRITERS' CORNER (Continued)

(continued from previous page)

MR. ROBOTO:

Pattern recognition has taken over.

MS. ROBOTA:

And that's not always the writer's fault. Readers evolve. Every story they finish teaches them how stories work.

DANTE:

That's an interesting way to look at it. The writing may not have changed...the reader did.

MR. ROBOTO:

The reader has learned the system.

MS. ROBOTA:

Which means every successful writer faces the same challenge.

How do you surprise someone...who already knows your voice?

DANTE:

Yeah...

Once readers understand your patterns—you have to grow faster than they do.

MR. ROBOTO:

Which raises the question:

If readers are learning patterns...
and algorithms are reinforcing patterns...
what is the writer supposed to do?

MS. ROBOTA:

Break expectations...
without breaking the trust that brought readers back in the first place.

DANTE:

That's what we're talking about today.

Patterns. Memory. Algorithms.

And why the moment someone understands your storytelling...may be the moment it's time to reinvent it.

*"Fill your paper
with the breathings
of your heart."*

— William Wordsworth

*"Forget all the rules.
Forget about being
published.
Write for yourself
and celebrate writing."*

— Melinda Haynes

Ancestors

It could be my grandmother,
Or my father's father's father,
Or the stars that shine above us,
Or black holes with forgotten stories,
Or stories that I do not want to hear.

I don't want to think too deep,
Get spaced out in vacant spaces,
And forget my ancestors.
Rings a bell from a distant galaxy,
The dulcet tones of my grandmother.
My mother's mother.
I want to get ancestral specific,
For my heart is filled with unbound love.

For her:

I hear her sweet childlike voice,
Like a shimmering xylophone from the distance,
It will be all right,
It will be all right,
I am right next to you,
Connected to the universe inside of you.
She croons a lullaby.

In a cellphone-less world,
Where hand written letters,
Like fresh kneaded dough

Ushered innocence with bright eyed tears,
And the fragrance of nascent feelings.
My grandmother reminds me of these.

Her soft hanging flesh, skin; supple and strong,
I would squish her like playdough,
And sniff her lemony scents,
No Prada could resonate.

In a void without siblings,
My grandmother was the missing beacon
Of my youth, elegant and gregarious,
No sibling could replace.
From cards to karaoke,
From music to laughter,
To softly knitted intricate sweaters,
From buttery chapattis to sweet jamuns,
She was a connoisseur in the kitchen,
A candle to my nights.
She filled darkness with joy.

Today I miss her still,
As if it was yesterday.
I am growing older too,
And one day I'll join my ancestors,
And once again,
Squeeze my grandmother like playdough.

Rekha Ramani

TO HELEN KELLER

What was it like, Helen
when Anne held your hand
under the primed water pump
and tapped your palm

What was it like
as you plunged through darkness
with eyes that did not see
into a world of light
invisible to others
and shouted Water? Water!

Was the breakthrough
like coming up from
being trapped under water
and being able to breathe again

Was it like quenching your thirst
on a summer's day

Was it like bathing
for the first time
in a bubbling stream

How did you move
through inky blackness
through silent tunnels
through a world
still unseen
still unheard
into the literary field
to share your wisdom with us

What was it like, Helen
that crucial moment
when you recognized "water"
flowing
over your hand?

Jackie Freitas
4/11/26

DECOMPOSITION

*My lover gave me roses...long stem reds. Then left...never to be seen or heard from again.
I kept the roses, until they bent their heads in disappointment. Giving up their supple intention
to a desiccation of grief. A gradual turning to dust before me.*

A reminder of joy...loss...and despair.

So, what, if anything, was real? Perhaps just the roses...

*There were no promises made...no rings offered or exchanged. Just the heat of carnal delight.
Then just the roses. Long stem reds. Now slowly decomposing with bowed heads.*

nguarnera

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BOB GARFINKLE
Founding President

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

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

FAW Chairpeople



CHERYLYN CHIN
CWC Advertising
& Promotions

Position Open

Please speak
to Scott Davidson
or Evelyn LaTorre
if interested in this
opportunity!



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Webmaster

NorCal Representative



TISH DAVIDSON
Social Write-In Host
Speakers Program & Publicity



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Historian



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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 Section1: 1.1 and 1.2 FAW Bylaws*)