

The Writer's Life

“Only one thing is impossible for God: To find any sense in any copyright law on the planet.” Mark Twain

www.sdwritersguild.org

March 2012



Protect Your Intellectual Property . . . Featured Speaker : Mark I. Reichenthal, Attorney

If you have a web site, have published a book, play or music, or would like to license some of your work for more income, the March meeting with Mark I. Reichenthal will be well spent. Our speaker at the March meeting, Senior Associate at Branfman Law Group, P.C. in Oceanside, will address a topic near and dear to our hearts: our intellectual property.

What is Intellectual Property? IP is divided into two categories: Industrial Property, which includes inventions (patents), trademarks, industrial designs, and geographic indications of source; and Copyright, which includes literary and artistic works such as novels, poems and plays, films, musical works, artistic works such as drawings, paintings, photographs and sculptures, and architectural designs.

Branfman Law Group, PC specializes in trademarks, copyrights, domain names, trade secrets, licensing and contracts, internet law, film and television, book and magazine publishing, and music. Learn about maximizing the value of your ideas, brands, inventions, writings and other creations. Bring your notepad! See also <http://branfman.com/>

Members' Work on Exhibit

Congratulations to ten members of SDW/EG whose books were published in 2011 and were included in the 46th Annual Local Authors Exhibit during February through March 5th. Members with work on exhibit include: Chet Cunningham, Larry Edwards, Dennis Moore, Steve Breen, Linda Loegel, Carl Nelson, Dean Nelson, Iolanda Scripca, Phillip Shafer, Max Sturman, and Sam Warren.

The exhibit is in the lobby of the Central Library at 820 E. Street, San Diego and will also be displayed online along with author photos, biographies and publishing information at <http://sandiego.communityguides.com/localauthors>

Wanted : Book Reviewers

Miriam Raftery, editor, is seeking book reviewers for her online news magazine. If this interests you contact her at [Editor@ East County Magazine.org](mailto:Editor@EastCountyMagazine.org).

Show Your Stuff . . . Sell Your Stuff

You are welcome to display your publications on the new Member Exhibit and Resource table which will be available at each monthly meeting. See also: copies of the newsletter, announcements and opportunities of interest.

Write 1500 words . . . Get Published !

An exciting project for 2012 is in the works: **A SDW/EG anthology** of short stories, essays, poems, fables, or other original non-published works authored by members of San Diego Writer/Editors Guild! Contribute, and add a publication to your list of credits as well as enjoy the fruits of members' creativity. Authors will retain the copyright to their work.

Board of Directors member Linda Loegel will coordinate the project and will contribute her experience in self-publishing online with www.Lulu.com to make our work a reality. There is no charge for submitting your work and having it included, although the Guild will exercise editorial control of the content. The Guild will offer copies for sale. Pick up a copy of the agreement form at a meeting or email Linda Loegel or Ruth Leyse-Wallace.

----- Watch for future developments -----

Don't wait . . . write while you are in the flow!

Coming Soon to SDWEG



April 23rd Peter Rowe, columnist from the Union Tribune will be our speaker.

May 28th – John Wolf will demonstrate how to create a video trailer to market your work on your web site.

Linda Loegel's Tip of the Hat to . . .

Tom Larson, for his three recent published articles: 1) "The Celebrity Author: Fame = Credibility" at *Ontologica*, 2) "Describing Darkness: The Night Photography of Scott B. Davis" at *The Summerset Review*, 3) "Write What You Don't Know." A review of Ann Beattie's *Mrs. Nixon: A Novelist Imagines a Life* at The Rumpus.

Tom Leech, for his article, "How General Dynamics Integrated the Cape," in the current Quest Magazine. This is an updated version of his original 1998 SDUT article. (<http://www.spacebusiness.com/quest>)

Chet Cunningham, who has released *Radiation Wipeout*, his latest e-book in his long-running series of action/adventure novels. It is available at Amazon and Barnes and Noble.

John Davis, for his article published in the March 2012 International Travel News, *Report on Bulgaria*.

If you, or another Guild member, has published a book, scheduled a book signing, or has some other accomplishment to share, please contact Linda Loegel at nlroons@cox.net to be included in our next newsletter. Let your light shine!

What You Missed by Ellen Shaw Tufts

'Twas a wild and stormy night on February 27 when assistant acquiring editor Jill Marr of the Sandra Dijkstra Literary Agency gave a dynamite talk to our packed house (about 35 members/guests) at the SDW/EG monthly meeting. The prestigious Dijkstra group continues as a nonpareil cultural force on both coasts, influencing what Americans read, write, blog about and purchase---on line and commercially.

Cool and buoyant, Marr detailed current house editorial procedures such as weekly submissions--- "about 1500, but we read a lot fewer"--- and she fielded audience questions on topics including submissions, proposals, platforms, royalties, contracts, blog tours and e-books.

She detailed the "big six" publishers, (MacMillan, Penguin, Doubleday, Harcourt, Random House, Simon & Schuster), noting how, along with hundreds of smaller houses, fewer editorial risks are taken, with *marketing* a top priority.

"Be forthright to agents about your other submissions," she advised, recommending conferences such as the San Diego State University (SDSU) Writers Conference (January 2013), also lauding local read-and-critique groups.

Write Your Way to Better Health

"People who write about their experiences go to the doctor less and are psychologically healthier", says James Pennebaker, author of *Writing to Heal*.

Work in Progress Anne Casey

First You Steal One Chicken, is approximately 90% complete. What began as a small collection of family recipes to give to my children has grown to include most of the Hungarian recipes I learned as a child. A colored photograph accompanies each entry and, where possible, the Hungarian or German name is also used. I may produce two separate editions of the book. The first will provide only a small amount of my family background, the second will have more inclusive genealogy and will be only for my family members. After two years of occasionally steady progress followed by large gaps of no productivity, I hope to have this in press by June

Work in Progress Fred Crothers

Why did I buy this tavern? Why did the owner sell? What kinds of problems did I encounter? How did I cope with problems? What made Freddie's Bungalow a unique tavern? Why did I opt to drop "live" music? What equipment did I lease or own? Why did I choose to tend bar? Did I have robberies? Did I make a profit in this business? These are some of the questions I will answer in this interesting, quite humorous, often aggravating, true account of owning and operating a workingman's tavern in a small logging town called Carson, Washington

Words that Changed the World

by Anne Casey

"Like the resource it seeks to protect, wildlife conservation must be dynamic, changing as conditions change, seeking always to become more effective." from *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson

The year 2012 marks the 50th anniversary of publication for *Silent Spring*, Rachel Carson's seminal work that documents ecological and environmental changes brought about by large-scale use of pesticides. Ms. Carson's passion for the physical sciences was shown also in her three earlier books, all products of her marine biology studies. When she began writing, ecology was not a word in common usage and the environmental movement had not been formed. Carson's work gave rise to the Environmental Protection Agency and elevated global awareness of the need for judicious management of pesticides and protection of native species.

The next meeting will be March 26th

Making Sense Out of Nonsense Words

by Richard Lederer

The word *balderdash* reaches back to the time of William Shakespeare and originally meant a “hodge-podge of liquids,” such as milk mixed with beer, beef with wine, and brandy with mineral water. Gradually, *balderdash* came to stand for “pretentious, bombastic, and senseless prose.”

And of course, *balderdash* can also mean “a rapidly receding hairline.”

Words that describe words that befuddle and obfuscate possess some of the most fascinating etymologies in the English language:

***gibberish.** In Julius Caesar (1604), Shakespeare wrote, “The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted dead / Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets.” As the sound of “gibber” indicates, the verb means “to utter incomprehensible prattle.” From, *to gibber* we get the verb *to jabber* (Whence Lewis Carroll’s “Jabberwocky”) and the noun *gibberish*.

***Double Dutch** is a Briticism that denotes a meaningless jumble of sounds. We say, “It’s Greek to me,” but the English loved to pick on the Dutch with such expressions as “Dutch treat” (no treat at all), “Dutch courage” (alcohol), and “in Dutch” (in trouble). From the Dutch *pappekak* we also get *poppycock*, literally “soft poop”, or “baby poop”.

***Flapdoodle** is an American southernism. When you cook and then remove a bunch of pancakes (“flaps”) from a cast iron skillet that has not been properly seasoned, the designs (“doodles”) are left at the bottom of the pan. Thus the complaint from Confederate troops: “If it wasn’t for those damn Yankees making such a flapdoodle out of nothing, we’d be eating honey and homemade biscuits right now.”

Let’s shine the spotlight on three rhyming reduplications that signify meaningless prattle:

***folderol.** Picture a medieval minstrel singing a ballad. He makes it up as he goes along, but every now and then his inspiration fails him. Rather than commit the faux pas of silence, he sings something like “fol-de-rol,” the, medieval; equivalent of “la-la-la”. In the late seventeenth century folderol, a nonsense word, came to mean “nonsense words.”

***Mumbo-jumbo** was originally a word in Mandingo that denoted a magician who made the troubled spirits go away.

***Hocus-pocus** is said to issue from the Latin *hoc est corpus meum*—“this is my body”—from the Roman Catholic mass. From *hocus* has issued the words *hoax*, “a mischievous trick,” and *hokum*, “nonsense.”

In truth, one could compile an entire book of “stuff and nonsense” words—baloney, blarney, bosh, bunk, cockamamie, claptrap, cock-and-bull story, codswallop, doublespeak, flapdoodle, fiddle-faddle, flim-flam, folderol, hogwash, hokey, humbug, malarkey, piffle, twaddle and tommyrot. That so many people have been able to come up with so many words to identify and describe

continued >>

Revising Tips by Laurie Richards

What “the?” – Some authors mistakenly use the definite article “the” instead of the indefinite “a” (or “an”). English is one of few languages that has a choice of these two articles. *The* is the article selected for particular objects, while *a* is selected for general objects being introduced for the first time. Suppose a narrator is describing a scene: *Several Oriental carpets were spread across teak floors, and the book lay on a mahogany table in the entry.*

In that example, “the” is the wrong article if the book has not been brought to the reader’s attention previously – unless the author wants the reader to focus all attention on “**the** book.” In this craft we have chosen, even the selection of “the” or “a” can have a meaningful impact on the reader.

Tip: Understand that the selection of the definite article (“the”) or the indefinite article (“a,” or “an”) may lead the reader to pose questions or draw conclusions you did not intend. Make your selection for a story reason so that you do not mislead the reader.

Memoir Writing in New Mexico in April Writing one’s memoir requires answering such questions as: How do I discover the emotional truth of my story? What is my focus? Where do I begin?

Tom Larson’s workshop includes discussions on the significant differences between traditional autobiography and contemporary memoir, truth-telling and self-disclosure, good and bad therapeutic writing, and the importance of metaphor and myth in the personal life. Join SDWEG member and experienced instructor Tom Larson for a week-long workshop devoted to memoir writing April 16-22, 2012 at Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu, New Mexico. See more details at <http://www.thomaslarson.com/memoir-writing-workshops.html> or email Tom at his new email address: tom.larson@sbcglobal.net

A Rare Opportunity

The American Society for Indexing (ASI) will be holding its national conference at the Bahia Resort in San Diego April 19-21, 2012. It is the only professional indexing group in this country and one of only eight in the world, serving indexers, librarians, abstractors, editors, publishers, database producers, data searchers, product developers, technical writers, academic professionals, researchers and readers, and others. Visit www.ASIndexing.org for more information.

nonsensical, insincere, and misleading language shows that there is still hope that one day we may create a pollution-free verbal environment.

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General Meetings: 6:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.
The Fourth Monday of each month

3851 Rosecrans
San Diego County Health Services Complex

Visit our web site
www.SDWritersGuild.org

Membership: \$36.00 per year
Guests: \$5.00 per meeting

Mission Statement: The Guild shall
promote, support, and encourage the writing art for adults and
youth

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