

The Writer's Life

The pen is mightier than the sword; so in this dangerous world, I always carry a pen – Ashleigh Brilliant

www.sdwritersguild.org

May 2012



How To Create a Trailer for Your Book: A Virtual Demonstration

At the May SDW/EG meeting John Wolf, the creator of the online e-magazine <http://foxandquill.com>, will demonstrate with a PowerPoint presentation what it takes to create a book trailer. Adding action with trailers will enhance the presentation of your book or personal resume as an author. Extending your reach by placing a book trailer on YouTube is not as difficult as you might think.

John comments, "Low end software does all the necessary actions to create a decent book trailer including adding audio and clever transitions between video segments." His presentation will be geared for beginners, and John recognizes your video or still shots will probably be simple segments and not professional moviemaking. Using PowerDirector as an example of a video editor, the presentation will give you a visual view of the components that make up a basic video. Step-by-step handouts will be available for your use when you try making a trailer on your own and making decisions regarding software.

Find out how to escalate to your next step in applying new technology to marketing your work. (**Note: May meeting has been changed to the 3rd Monday: May 21st.**)



Anthology Submission Forms Available

Forms for submitting your work for inclusion in the 2012 SDWEG anthology will be available at the regular meeting and may also be requested from anthology editor Linda Loegel at noirons@cox.net. If needed, authors who submit early will be given an opportunity to make minor changes as recommended by the review committee, and re-submit for acceptance in the anthology.

Writing Class by Caroline McCullagh

A seven-week creative writing course for those 50 years and older is being offered through Oasis. It will begin July 13. For more information see www.oasisnet.org

Hay House Vision Contest: Win a Publishing Contract

Hay House Visions fiction writing contest is inviting submissions of 50,000-word fiction manuscripts to the new imprint, Balboa Press. The Grand prize includes a contract plus a \$5000 advance, 1st prize and 2nd prize each include a publishing contract. The deadline is June 1, 2012. Go to www.BalboaPress.com for details of the contest.

Words That Changed the World

Democracy is not a spectator sport -

League of Women Voters

I do not wish them (women) to have power over men; but over themselves." - Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797)

A self-educated English woman, Mary became a teacher, governess and well-known intellectual. Inspired by the French Revolution and by her employer's lack of independence, Mary wrote *A Vindication on the Rights of Women*, a guide for the good wife.

In this first such published document, Mary urged both men and women to respect women for all their qualities, not simply their beauty. Mary, being a free spirit, saw no reason to marry but rather had liaisons with two men and mothered two children. Her second daughter, Mary Shelly, married Percy Shelly and authored "Frankenstein."

During this same period, Abigail Adams encouraged her husband John to include women's voting rights into the new U.S. Constitution. One hundred twenty-four years later, the 19th amendment to the Constitution was passed on June 4, 1919 and ratified on August 18, 1920.

The difference between the *almost*-right word and the *right* word is really a large matter – the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning – Mark Twain

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

Tom Leech, who was a featured author at the Read Local San Diego event at Warwicks on April 14, 2012.

Larry Edwards, whose article, "Living History: Mountain Man Rendezvous Links Past to Present," appeared in the April 2012 edition of *Dezert Magazine.com*.

Chet Cunningham, for his ebook, *SAVE GAS!: 175 Ways to Get More Miles Per Gallon*, published by Wigeon Publishing, an ebook service of **Larry Edwards**.

Lawrence Carleton, who has released *Big Oil and Beer Berries*, his latest satire, as an e-book on Amazon Kindle.

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

What You Missed. . . by Ellen Shaw Tufts

During our April 23 general meeting, *San Diego Union-Tribune* staffer/columnist Peter Rowe presented an absorbing look at the local daily before and after its recent purchase (December '11) by local hotel magnate Douglas F. Manchester for a reported \$100 million (*NY Times*, April '12).

Unlike many metro dailies, the U-T survived the recent economic recession but sustained staggering losses in rack sales, circulation and ad revenues, with a simultaneously troubling editorial disaster scene. According to Rowe, "we closed our Mexico City, Tijuana and Washington, D.C. bureaus" and by 2007, one-half the U-T newsroom editors/reporters had vanished.

He gave a thumbnail of U-T history, detailing recent challenges and changes such as offering more colorful graphics, i-Pad editions and on-line services, plus use of the UT-TV studio facility, with a stronger emphasis on community-story-gathering events.

Hired in 1986, Rowe originally wrote features; later his beat included food features/restaurant reviews, with a recent popular "beer beat." A new "Greatest Generation" series was launched last week with "*Bataan Death March*" (Sunday, April 22, 12) and during the next few years as a tribute to area WW II vets, Rowe and staffer John Wilkens will record oral history chapters with video partners at Media Arts Center-San Diego.

Rowe concluded: "*This is no golden era in newspaper journalism---we still make errors, and publishers still have conflicts of interest. But by and large we still cover the waterfront and uphold our take---with accurate and fair news delivery.*"

In answer to an inquiry Rowe commented that while current UT-San Diego editorial policy doesn't actively seek or encourage free-lance writers, it might be productive to inquire about possible articles or questions from the following staffers: cont.>>>

Work in Progress Bob Doublebower Circling Through the Years

The seed of a horror story can take root in the most benign surroundings. Years ago, I knew I wanted to write. Something. Anything. Just to tell a tale that was mine, all mine, seemed a fine thing. Something conjured from nothing more than imagination. I saw fiction as boundless, its appeal like that of the open road. Once begun, you can't untravel it. But, a viable storyline always eluded me in those wanting, but not having, years. I did find early on that a disciplined concentration was fruitless. I could no more bear down on pen to paper and produce a plot, than you could 'make' yourself fall in love. Ask any romantic. So, by and by, the desire lingered, with no subject in sight.

When my daughter was young, pre-school young, we liked to 'camp out' in our backyard. With the trampoline for a bed, and nothing but stars above, we'd talk as Dads and kids do. So, not surprisingly, one night we fell to telling ghost stories. Back and forth it went. Outlandish was never a concern. Then, as one of the turns passed back to me, I suddenly had it. As if delivered from on high, I saw a concept so horrific, so gruesome, that it became self-sustaining. Characters appeared. "What took you so long", they asked. "We've been waiting." Time frame fell into place. Bits and pieces and sub-plots coalesced. So was born 'The Circling Bench', horror tale of the 17th-18th century. Now came the easy part. Just put it on paper.

To be continued

Book Display and Sales a part of Sicilian Festival

The 2012 Sicilian Cultural Festival will be held in San Diego's Little Italy on May 20, 2012 (Date Street between India and Columbia). Fiction or non-fiction books for sale will be those which have relevance to Italian/Sicilian culture and/or be of local interest. Authors interested in a booth may contact SDWEG member Marcia Buompensiero at lonzahn2@cox.net or go to <http://www.sicilianfesta.com/> for more information.

There were more books published this week than there were in all of 1950. (David Houle, Digital Book World Conference)

Coming Soon to SDWEG



June 25th – In Praise of Poetry: Refresh your knowledge about poetry and enjoy local poets reading their work; meet a local publisher of poetry.

July 23rd – Bettie Youngs, author, publisher, and talk show guest, will explain the new Espresso Book Machines from Xerox and the 8-minute process of going from digital file to soft-cover book. She will discuss the publishing business and her books.

Writer's block:
when your imaginary friends won't talk to you.

Travel or book reviews: lisa.sullivan@utsandiego.com;
Op-ed pages: bill.osborne@utsandiego.com

American Trivia

by Richard Lederer and Caroline McCullagh

SDW/EG members Richard Lederer and Caroline McCullagh are the proud parents of a bouncing baby book, *American Trivia: What We All Should Know About U.S. History, Culture & Geography* (Gibbs Smith Publisher, 2012). Over a span of three years, the co-authors will share with you their journey through American history.

How America Got Its Name

Christopher Columbus (1451-1506) is generally given credit for finding America. In grade school most of us learned this ditty:

*In fourteen hundred ninety two,
Columbus sailed the ocean blue.*

And he did. On his first voyage, he sighted the Bahamas and made land on Hispaniola (now Haiti and the Dominican Republic). On three subsequent voyages, he also explored the coast of South America. But Columbus never realized that he had sailed to the New World. He died in 1506, blissfully certain that he had reached Asia.

An Italian, Amerigo Vespucci (1454-1512), working in Spain for the Medici family, helped outfit the ships for Columbus's first voyage. He in turn made three voyages to the New World, but never to North America. When he returned to Spain, he wrote about the wonders he had seen.

His account was widely read, even in the Duchy of Lorraine, where Dutch cartographer Martin Waldseemüller (1470?-1520) was drawing a new map of the world. Waldseemüller decided to write the name *America* across the face of the new continent on his world map. He wished to honor Vespucci because, apparently not having read Columbus's best-selling report of his voyage, he believed Vespucci to be the first man to have set foot in the New World: "And Amerigo Vespucci has found another, fourth part, for which I see no reason why anyone could properly disapprove of a name derived from that of Amerigo, the discoverer, a man of sagacious genius." Waldseemüller published a thousand copies of his map in 1507. As far as we know, only one survives, now housed in the Library of Congress.

By the way, *Amerigo* is the Italian form of the Medieval Latin name *Emericus* which was, in turn, derived from the German Heimirich—Henry in English. This may mean that we all actually live in the United States of Henrietta. Could have been worse: Our nation could have been dubbed Vespuccia!

Revising Tips by Laurie Richards

"Ing"ing It. Gerunds (words ending in "ing") are some of the most misused words in a writer's arsenal. The primary reason to avoid gerunds? They bury a verb, which are the strongest weapon in the arsenal. (Not only do they bury a verb, they often result in a misplaced modifier; see Revision Tip 13.) If you're writing an action scene, don't slow it down by using gerunds.

Example:

A shadowy form was leaping out at him, and he started running away.

That sentence is far too tentative, too passive and even too general. Strike harder with: *A shadow leaped at him, but he ran across the street and down the alley toward the all-night gas station.*

Tip: If you must bury a verb, do so with a good reason that you've thought about and decided on. A conscience decision to slow the pace would be one good reason.

The History of the San Diego Writers/ Editors Guild *

In the fall of 1978 our founder, Rhoda Riddell, returned to San Diego from the East Coast. She yearned to find a group of compatible souls who, like her friends in the Word Guild in New York would share the joys and travails of a freelance writer's life. She advertised for writers in *The Reader* and a dozen or so accepted her invitation to meet as an informal support group. The vision was to allow anyone to join, published or not, and form a network to support writers whatever their various motives were to put pen to paper.

On September 20, 1980 the Guild held their first conference on the subject of "Successfully Cracking the Writing Market." In early 1981 the name was changed to "San Diego Writers/Editors Guild." In 1982 the Guild began having writers' retreats. Early members and past presidents listed on the 2012 SDW/EG roster include Rhoda Riddell, Olin Thompson, John Davis, Judy Edelblute, Bob Doublebower, Carl Nelson, Gered Beeby, and Peggy Lipscomb-Kazwara.

*Excerpts from article with same name by Carl Nelson and additional unidentified authors.

Be careful of your thoughts; they may become words at any moment. (Ira Gassen)

CHANGE of MEETING SCHEDULE:

The next meeting will be **Monday May 21, 2012**

San Diego Writers/Editors Guild
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Telephone: (619) 445-6656

General Meetings: 6:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.

The Third Monday this month

Location: 3851 Rosecrans

San Diego County Health Services Complex

Visit our web site for a map

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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