

The Writer's Life

www.sdwritersguild.org

May, 2015

"A word that rises from one heart has no choice but to land in another."

Zoe Ghahremani



Bonnie ZoBell to speak on "Writing What Happens"

Bonnie ZoBell, Creative Writing Coordinator and faculty member at Mesa College, will speak at the May meeting of the Guild. Bonnie received her M.F.A. degree in Creative Writing from Columbia University in New York and been awarded numerous fellowships, including a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Creative Writing and a Capricorn Novel Award. One of her short stories was selected by Joyce Carol Oates for inclusion in the anthology *American Fiction: The Best Unpublished Short Stories by Emerging Writers*. She has published her work in over a hundred venues. Published in May 2014, *What Happened Here*, a novella and set of stories, introduces a cast of characters living on the same block in North Park, San Diego, site of the PSA Flight 182 crash in 1978. It relates how shared tragedy can touch a community and the individuals who live there. Her chapbook, *The Whack-Job Girls*, was published in March of 2013. Please join us on Monday May 18th.

Welcome New Members

SDW/EG welcomes our new members: Joanna Charnas, Mark Clifton, Jessica Cronin, Dick Cummins, Ron Day, James Hortsman, Barbara Weeks Huntington, Donna Jones, Rick Lakin, Francisco Martinezcuello, Muriel Sandy, Jewel Ann Simpson, Patricia Tennesen and Cynthia Watchorn.

New members are encouraged to display and sell their published work at meetings, join the Speakers Bureau, include your work on the Members' Works website page, submit a manuscript for review, contribute to the newsletter, suggest ideas for future speakers, volunteer for the upcoming program to support youth writing, attend the Marketing Support Group, and submit an entry for *The Guilded Pen* anthology.

Renewing Members: Note the Changing Dues Schedule

New or renewing members are encouraged to consult the website for finding the membership fee due for the remainder of 2015. If paid in May, dues to finish out 2015 are \$24; in June, \$21; if paid in July, \$18 will pay dues to December 31st.

Short-form Fiction:

May is Short Story Month

A **novel** is often defined as having ~ 50,000 words. A **novella** usually has about 20,000 to 50,000 words with one main character and one main plot. Examples of novellas are *The Bridges of Madison County* and *The Old Man and the Sea*.

A **novelette** is generally between 7,000 and 20,000 words and they are often found in the sci-fi genre. *The Bicentennial Man* by Isaac Asimov is a novelette.

At 1,000 to 7,000 words, a short story usually revolves around one shattering moment. That moment may come at the beginning, middle, or end of the story.

Flash fiction, or **micro-fiction**, is usually fewer than 1,000 words. Small but telling moments, compression, and use of what is left out are often features of flash fiction. **Twitter fiction**, naturally, has only 140 characters.

Ref: James Scott Bell, *Writers Digest* 2015

To find publishers of flash fiction, go to: <http://www.thereviewreview.net/publishing-tips/flash-fiction-list-resources>

A Tip of the Hat To . . .

Larry Edwards, whose book *What the Private Saw: The Civil War Letters & Diaries of Oney Foster Sweet* was the subject of an interview by John Wilkens in the San Diego Union-Tribune on April 8th and also, along with “The Private’s” grandson Bill Ketchem, the subject of an interview on KPBS Radio on April 8th.

Another of Wigeon’s publications (2014) , *Murder Survivor's Handbook: Real-Life Stories, Tips & Resources*, received the Gold Award for self-help books in the 2015 Benjamin Franklin Book Awards competition sponsored by the Independent Book Publishers Association.

Gary Winters for publishing a limited edition of exquisite fabric art: *Wild, Wacky, Wonderful (and sometimes naughty) Quilts* by Leah Davies.

Ruth Leyse-Wallace for being asked to serve as reviewer of a book to be published by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Richard Lederer, whose documentary of his life as a fly-by-the-roof-of-the-mouth linguist was shown on “Forefront” on April 28, and Friday May 1st. Additional showings will occur on Channel 4 on cable TV or on the www.4SD.com website, on the Forefront page.

Share your good news! Send to RthLys@cox.net

What You Missed by Mardie Schroeder

Zoe Ghahremani is an extraordinary woman from any angle: writer, poet, artist. She was a former dentist with a practice of over 5,000 active patients. She sold the practice to devote full time to writing and painting, as well as being the mother of three children, successful professionals.

Zoe wrote her first novel, *Sky of Red Poppies*, so her children would get an idea of the flavor of Persia. Her collection of many rejection letters from big publishers say there is no market for books on Iran. Yet this book was the 2012 choice for One Book, One San Diego and has been translated into Persian and French. Her second book, *The Moon Daughter*, tied for best literary fiction at the 2014 San Diego Book Awards.

Her words of wisdom: “Write what you know best.” “Everyone has a story that only they can write.” “If you write at the level of humanity, everyone would be interested in it.” “The ‘market’ isn’t what the readers want.”

“You are never done with your first book. Your book is your child. It always needs your attention. Even after you write your second or third book, it is still your child.” Zoe said she personally becomes each character in her books on an emotional level and has shed many tears during her writing process

Zoe spoke without notes stating, “No speech should be written. It should be a conversation. If you write a speech you will make a mistake.” She currently is writing two books: one about domestic help in Iran called *The Basement*, the other is a humorous memoir of her days as a dentist: *Drill, Fill, Bill*.

SDW/EG Youth Mission

The mission of SDW/EG includes support of youth K-12, as well as adults, in the writing arts. Simone Arias, SDW/EG board member, has elicited interest from the local library mentoring programs and the Oasis Tutoring program in partnering with SDW/EG to develop student voices

Simone will meet with Guild members interested in developing writing exercises on Saturday, May 30 from 10 to 11:30 a.m. at University Community Library at 4155 Governor Drive, San Diego 92122. Contact Simone at sarias2@earthlink.net or (858)-483-5043 for more information.

Mark Your Calendar

- May 18st - 3rd Monday due to Memorial Day Holiday. **Bonnie ZoBell**, writing instructor at Mesa College, will speak.
- June 22nd - 4th Monday - **Donna Eckstein** from SD City College will speak on “Telling Your Story.”
- July 27th - Open Mic night. Sign up to be on the schedule to read.

The latest study from the Pew Research Organization reports that 75% of those surveyed spend several hours per week reading.

Formatting Your eBook

Are the terminology and the basic requirements of preparing your ebook for publishing confusing? Tips from Steven Spatz at BookBaby.com include:

* Common text formats for digital books include: 1) **.epub** is an open standard format used by all major retailers except Amazon/Kindle; 2) **.mobi** is a format that allows insertion of a blank page at any point for notes, drawings, etc.

*Upload/ Submit files in .doc, .html, or .txt formats.

*Use standard fonts such as Times New Roman or Courier New; 12 pt font size for text and size 14-18 for chapter titles.

*Don't use the space bar or tabs to make paragraphs; use the format paragraph button or toolbar alignment button in your text-editing program.

*Images should be in .png .jpg or .tif format, 72 dpi, in RGB color mode.

*Don't wrap text around images; set in-line with text unless full-page.

A free download of more tips can be found at <http://www.bookbaby.com/free-guide/how-to-publish-ebook>.

Query Letters – A Formula

A query letter can be boiled down to the following three paragraphs:

The Hook: genre, log line, word count

The Book: the premise in 4-5 lines

The Cook: Why this book? Why me? Why now?

from Barbara Poelle, *Writers Digest*, May/June 2015

Sign Up for Open Mic

If you want to read a three-minute selection of your work at the July Open Mic meeting, sign-up is now open. Send your name and title to RthLys@cox.net.

Website Tip for May

from Sandra Yeaman, Social Media Manager

www.sdwritersguild.org

Do you want to know when the next meeting will be? Check out the left column of the SDW/EG website where the date and speaker for the next meeting can be found.

Classes at Oasis - Mission Valley

SDW/EG members will be teaching the following classes at Oasis-Mission Valley:

Creative Writing: Caroline McCullagh, 10 sessions beginning May 22, 2015.

Editing Made (Almost) Easy: David Feldman, May 15, 2015

Monsters Unchained: Richard Lederer, July 17, 2015. Kids welcome

Sprinkles From Heaven: Carolyn Jaynes, June 2, 2015.

For more information call 619-881-6262 or go to www.SanDiegoOasis.org.

Marketing Support Group

Welcoming several new participants, the group heard from Larry Edwards the details of the local, distant, and digital pre-planning, timing, and social media marketing activities for his two latest books. Questions from writers at all stages of writing and publishing were fielded by Larry. Marketing planning needs to start early and seemingly never ends.

It's Never Too Late

Researchers at Stanford found by studying 400 famous people that 64 percent of the world's greatest work has been achieved by people over 60; 23 percent of the group's achievements came between the ages of 70-80, and 8 percent of the achievements came when they were over 80 years of age.

“When you sell a man a book, you don't sell him 12 ounces of paper and ink and glue – you sell him a whole new life.”

Christopher Morley

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<p>The Writer's Life is published by The San Diego Writers/Editors Guild P. O. Box 881931 San Diego, CA 92168 Telephone: (858) 571-0201</p> <p>Meetings: The Fourth Monday of each month except: May, 2015: 3rd Monday: May 18th</p> <p>General Meeting: 6:30-9:00 PM Marketing Support Group: 5:30-6:30 PM</p> <p>Location: San Diego County Health Services Complex 3851 Rosecrans, SD, CA 92110</p> <p>Visit our website for a map www.SDWritersGuild.org</p> <p>Membership: \$36.00 per year Guests: \$5.00 per meeting</p>	Board of Directors		2-year Term Expires 12/31
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<u>Mission Statement</u>			
The San Diego Writers/Editors Guild shall promote, support, and encourage the writing arts for adults and youth.			
Benefits of membership: SDW/EG supports members and promotes the writing arts through the following: educational meetings with speakers on timely topics for writers; networking with writing/editing professionals; manuscript review services and the opportunity to submit your work for publication in the annual anthology; information about community-wide writing/editing classes, conferences, and other events; links to writing/editing resources on the website; publicity for your published creative work on the "Members' Works" web page; and the opportunity to be included in the Speakers Bureau.			