

The Writer's Life

www.sdwritersguild.org

February, 2016



The crime novel has increasingly become the novel of social history, social commentary. They deal with subjects that seem ripe for addressing.

Val McDermid, author of *Splinter the Silence*, SD U-T 2/17/16

Marnie Freeman, Writing Coach, Will Tell All

Marnie Freeman, MS, LMFT, a graduate of USC School of Filmic Writing, will address members February 22nd on the topic of "A Writing Coach Tells All—The Five Biggest Mistakes Made By Writers." Marnie is an author, screen writer, coach, script doctor, ghost writer, and part therapist for writers. Her workshops and classes, often found at Writers, Ink, include tools for story structure, scene creation, plot, voice, and character as well as character archetypes, elements that will ensure you have a compelling story idea, and explanations of anti-heroes and anti-villains.



Information about her two new read and critique groups can be found on her website, which may be accessed at <http://www.thewriterinyou.org/#>! Her new book *7 Essential Writing Tools that Will Absolutely Make Your Writing Better* is scheduled to be published Feb. 20, 2016. Join us and welcome Marnie and her new book.

50th Annual Local Authors Exhibit

Several SDW/EG members attended the Local Authors Exhibit at the downtown San Diego Library on January 30th: Marcia Buompensiero, Joanna Charnes, Larry Edwards, Ruth Leyse-Wallace, Mardie Schroeder, Charlotte Thompson, Gary Winters, and Sandra Yeaman. Over 300 books published by individuals in 2015, as well as the *The Guilded Pen*, are on exhibit during the month of February. To see the listing of all books on exhibit, go to <http://online.flipbuilder.com/tyny/sair/>

The featured speaker was Brian Selznick, author and illustrator, who won the San Diego Public Local Author Literary Achievement Award. The movie *Hugo* was based on his book *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*.

A new program at the library will feature a local author each month. For information on how to be considered for selection as a featured author contact Misty Jones, director of the library.

Submissions for the 2017 Local Authors Exhibit of books published in 2016 will begin in the fall.

News from the Board of Directors:

Anne Janda Elected President

Congratulations to the new president of SDW/EG Anne Janda, elected at the January 13th meeting of the Board of Directors.

The Board welcomes Laurie Asher as the new Secretary of the Board of Directors. Simone Arias will continue on the Board as a Member-at-Large. This fills the ten elected positions of the Board of Directors for 2016.

Are Your Dues Due?

Membership can become active and dues prorated to Dec. 31st at any time during the year. However, the deadline for having a listing in the Membership Directory is February 29th. For convenience, the end of February is also the time for pruning the newsletter mailing list. If your dues are still due, and you intend to join, NOW is the time. ☺ Thank you.

Rick Peterson, Membership Chairman
Ruth Leyse-Wallace, Newsletter Editor

Writer's Symposium By the Sea will be February 16-19th at Pt. Loma Nazarene University. Go to www.pointloma.edu/writers for details of the conference and evening speakers.

Tip of the Hat to

Bill Barrons for the Feb. 1, 2016 release of *The Homeless Homicides*, Book 6 of the San Diego Police Homicide Detail featuring Matt Morgan. Feb. 1st is Bill's 90th birthday! Happy Birthday, Bill.

Rick Lakin for his new podcast, "The Rick Lakin Podcast," at ricklakin.podbean.com. The podcast will promote authors and books published by iCrew Digital Publishing as well as other authors. Contact Rick at rilakin@gmail.com if you would like to be interviewed for an upcoming episode to promote your project.

Phil Pryde for his slide show and presentation, "San Diego: an Introduction to the Region," along with a book signing, held on January 17 at the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park Visitors Center.

Ruth Leyse-Wallace for an invitation from the Cabrillo-Diego Chapter of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) to lecture on her book *Nutrition and Mental Health*.

What You Missed . . . by Mardie Schroeder

Our own Gered Beeby addressed the issue of writing creative nonfiction. He used four books to illustrate his points.

General Chemistry by Linus Pauling, who won two Nobel Prizes. It is a first-year college textbook that used creative writing.

Up the Organization – How to Stop the Corporation from Stifling People and Strangling Profits by Robert Townsend is considered among the 80 books every manager must read. It deals with how to run a company and a new, creative way of looking at something.

Guns, Germs and Steel by Jared Diamond is a history book that won a Pulitzer Prize. In nineteen chapters it tells the story of human civilization, describing how societies that produced food advanced rapidly and developed religion and weapons of war. It outlines provocative ways of looking at things.

Connecting by James Burke shows how seemingly small things have a big effect. At the Battle of Hastings, saddles had stirrups. Therefore the soldiers could stand up in them to launch weapons more successfully.

Gered suggested a rule of thumb for easy reading, what's known as the "Fog Index," i.e., the degree of difficulty in comprehension. He said it's advisable to write at an eighth-grade level. Simpler words and shorter sentences make a better read. For example, Shakespeare, Mark Twain and the Bible have a Fog Index of six—easy reading. Our Constitution is very readable at 4,000 words including the amendments.

A short discussion ensued with Larry Edwards pointing out that creative/narrative nonfiction is a specific discipline in writing, particularly as it relates to journalism and personal essay/memoir. In it, fiction techniques are applied: Show, don't tell; use active voice rather than passive voice, and integrate scenes that involve dialogue and action, reaction, and interaction among the characters. Others noted >>

Read-and-Critique Group Seeking New Members

Spring Valley Writers Workshop is seeking two new associates for its writing group, which was begun thirty years ago. The group meets on alternate Saturdays from 9 AM to 1 PM. No fees of any kind are charged. The group focus is fiction – all genres. Yvonne Nelson Perry and Will Greenway are the experienced moderators of the group. This is not a group for people still building rudimentary skills. Interested parties should send an inquiry to wcrnway@cox.net with a two- to three-page sample of their work.

Your Creative Juices

Prompts are one means of loosening up your imagination and letting the creative juices flow.

Here is a prompt for February:

Write your short acceptance speech for an Academy Award, or the Pulitzer Prize.

Source: *642 Tiny Things to Write About*
by the San Francisco Writers' Grotto

Classes at Osher Institute, SDSU

"**The Crime Novel as Literature**" will be taught Feb. 18 and 25 by Dave Good, an award-winning journalist.

Kathi Diamant, a past speaker at SDW/EG, will teach "**Writing and Critique**" Feb. 11th to March 3rd and "**Editing and Critique**" from March 17th to April 14th.

For more information go to
www.NeverStopLearning/Osher

>> that "brevity is the key," and an average nineteen words to a sentence is suggested.

The Art of Readable Writing by Dr. Rudolf Flesch was suggested to the group as a worthy read.

Enhancing the Mystery: Creating the App Edition of *Border Field Blues*

by **Corey Fayman**

While writing my second mystery novel, *Border Field Blues*, I found myself doing a lot of research on the area where much of the novel takes place – the Tijuana Estuary and Border Field State Park. I wanted my story to help readers visualize this fascinating section of the California/Mexico border, as well as learn a little bit of its history. But, as many a fiction writer has found over the years, you can't put all your research into your novel. You have to edit things out to keep the story moving.

As an interactive designer and college instructor, I was proficient in web technologies such as HTML5 and Javascript. The proposed EPUB3 specification uses these technologies for the inclusion of additional media and interactivity within eBooks. This got me wondering if I might be able to create an eBook version of the novel that included all the stuff I left out.

I'd looked through some early interactive textbooks, but I wasn't sure the interruptive nature of the presented media would work as well in fiction. Textbooks are structured around key chunks of information, but novels are built on narrative and story. One of the strengths of fiction is the prose itself, and the pleasure of getting involved in the story. Hyperlinks, images, music, and videos would disrupt that mental flow.

By taking a quarter-long sabbatical from my school duties, and with my own modest design and programming skills, I took on this challenge and created the app edition of *Border Field Blues*. My design goal was to maintain the integrity of the novel's text and structure, while still providing the reader access to as much extra information as I thought they would find interesting. My other challenge was simply getting it to work.

Early on, I decided on one essential interface design rule: there would be only one button – an “Extras” button that sat at the bottom of each screen of the text. Readers would be able to pop into the “Extras” section and pop back to the text with one simple tap. This “Extras” section provided access to the following:

- Photographs of various locations
- Related videos from YouTube
- Playable audio files of music referenced in the book
- My own notes on each chapter
- Google Maps of the areas
- Email functionality, so readers could contact me
- A way for readers to share comments within the app itself

Another decision was that the “Extras” content needed to be dynamic: I wanted readers to be able to email me with questions or suggestions and to be able to respond individually to readers' email. After some debate, I decided to keep administrative control of the comment system so I could delete obvious trolling and spamming.

One thing I hadn't counted on was how much content would be needed to fill out the “Extras”. At times it seemed like I was writing a whole new book.

Border Field Blues – App Edition is available for Apple iPad and Kindle Fire. A video example and screenshots can be found at <http://www.borderfieldblues.com/app-edition/>

Update on Teen Writing Club

The SDW/EG project on teen writing is teaming with students, parents, and the staff at the University City Library on Governor Drive to support student writing. The meetings, held at 3 p.m. the second Wednesday of each month, feature topics such as essay writing, short story writing, or poetry but also address specific writing questions relative to school assignments and interests of middle and high school students.

Mark Your Calendar

March 28, 2016 – Panel discussion on writing memoirs featuring **Leslie Johanssen Nack** (*Fourteen*), **Lauri Taylor** (*Accidental Truth*), and **Dennis Lynch** (*Shooting Saddam*).

April 25, 2016 – **Richard Lederer** will help SDW/EG join the worldwide celebration of the 450th anniversary of William Shakespeare's birth.

San Diego Writers/Editors Guild
Post Office Box 881931
San Diego, CA 92168

The Writer's Life is published by
The San Diego Writers/Editors Guild
P. O. Box 881931
San Diego, CA 92168
Telephone: (760) 814-2761

Meetings: The Fourth Monday each month

Marketing Support Group:
5:30-6:30 PM
General Meeting:
6:30 PM- Sign-in/Network
6:45 PM - Business Meeting
7:00 PM - Speaker/Program

Location: San Diego County
Health Services Complex
3851 Rosecrans, SD, CA 92110

For a map see: www.SDWritersGuild.org

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

Mission Statement

The San Diego Writers/Editors Guild shall promote, support, and encourage the writing arts for adults and youth.

Board of Directors		2-Year Term Expires 12/31
President	Anne Janda Ajanda55@aol.com	2017
Vice-President	Bob Doublebower doublebower@sbcglobal.net	2016
Secretary	Laurie Asher louloujed@gmail.com	2016
Treasurer	Marcia Buompensiero lonzahn2@cox.net	2016
Membership Chairman	Rick Peterson richard.g.peterson@navy.mil	2016
Directors-at-Large	Simone Arias sarias2@earthlink.net	2017
	Gered Beeby geredbeeby@aol.com	2016
	Dave Feldman feldy88@cox.net	2017
	Mardie Schroeder mardiewho@yahoo.com	2017
	Val Zolfaghari valzolfaghari@yahoo.ca	2017
Newsletter Editor Past President	Ruth Leyse-Wallace rthlys@cox.net	Not an elected office
Social Media Manager	Sandra Yeaman sandrayeaman@gmail.com	Not an elected office