



# Suburban Scribe

November 2016 Newsletter

Newsletter of the Sacramento Suburban Writers Club

[sactowriters.org](http://sactowriters.org)

## Join us for *Creative Tips for Killer Sales*



**Our November 14 guest speaker, [Cindy Sample](http://www.cindysamplebooks.com), has sold over 125,000 books and will be sharing her *Creative Tips for Killer Sales*.**

Cindy Sample is a former corporate CEO who decided plotting murder was more entertaining than plodding through paperwork. Her national bestselling mystery series, described as Erma Bombeck meets Agatha Christie, features single soccer mom, Laurel McKay. The series, set in the California Gold Country, includes *Dying for a Date*, *Dying for a Dance*, *Dying for a Daiquiri*, *Dying for a Dude* and *Dying for a Donut*.

Cindy is a four-time nominee for the LEFTY Award for Best Humorous Mystery and winner of the NCPA Best Fiction Award. Cindy describes *Dying for a Donut* as a lip-smacking mystery. It definitely involved the most dangerous research!

[www.cindysamplebooks.com](http://www.cindysamplebooks.com) • [www.facebook.com/cindysampleauthor](https://www.facebook.com/cindysampleauthor)  
[www.twitter.com/cindysample1](https://www.twitter.com/cindysample1)

### Holiday Potluck Readings

Planning for our holiday potluck is moving along. One of our traditional activities is readings by our members. Per tradition, Penny will be taking names at our November meeting.

This year we are asking that all readers submit their material in advance to ensure the strict five-minute limit (about 650 words) is met due to the Book Launch being combined with the Holiday Potluck, and to eliminate political and inappropriate content. We have not had issues with content in the past, but with this year's political mess, we are trying to avoid the possibility.

Please send your proposed readings to Brittany Lord ([tealya@hotmail.com](mailto:tealya@hotmail.com)) so she and a small committee can review them. The number of readings is limited (again, time restraints), so send them early. After three have been accepted, with two alternates, the review process will stop.



### Anthology Launch

The board decided to have the Anthology Book Launch celebration at the December potluck because not everyone submitted corrections (or an "all clear") for their stories in time to get the printing done before the November meeting. Plus, we want plenty of time to invite members of other clubs to the party.

Orders for the books will be taken at the November meeting. Order as many books as you'd like. They would make fantastic Christmas and Hanukah and Kwanza gifts. Please be prepared to pre-pay for the books (\$6 each – includes shipping and taxes).

# Canine Newsletter Heist



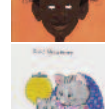
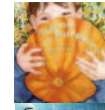
Hi! My name is Chopper and I'm a dog. I'm black and white, hairy and short, and my belly is full of freckles. I am ALSO taking over the Suburban Scribe now since Bonnie had to go back to obedience school. It's a ton of work, but also lots of fun. AND mommy is paying me in peanut butter!

I hope you like all the changes I've made AND that you send in lots of creative, original submissions so I can make sure to put them in future newsletters. You can also send upcoming event information, or peanut butter, to me at:

[ivebeenlicked@gmail.com](mailto:ivebeenlicked@gmail.com).

*Licks & kisses,  
Chopper*

## Mommy and I will be there!



**CARNEGIE | ARTS CENTER**  
250 N. BROADWAY, TURLOCK, CA 95380 CARNEGIE@ARTS.TURLOCK.CA | (209) 632-5761

## Children's Book Fair

**November 5-6, 2016**

Saturday 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Sunday 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Northern California authors and illustrators will be here to promote their books for children and young adults.

- Meet the authors
- Learn about their techniques
- Purchase signed copies of their newest books
- Activities for children
- Presentations by authors

**Book Fair events are free and open to the public.**

Sponsored by



Keynote Speaker/illustrator/author **Joe Cepeda** will give a talk on **Sunday, November 6th at 3 p.m.** He is the illustrator of award-winning picture books *What a Truly Cool World*, *Nappy Hair*, *Mice and Beans*, and *The Swing*, which he wrote as well. Mr. Cepeda has illustrated for notable authors including Gary Soto, Pam Muñoz Ryan, Julius Lester and Toni Morrison. He was selected to illustrate the cover of Shaquille O'Neal and Reading is Fundamental's *Biggest Book in the World*.

On view through January 15, 2017



GALLERY HOURS:  
Weds. – Sun. 10-5  
Fri. 10-8

Childhood Classics admission:  
\$10 Adults  
\$8 Students & Seniors  
Free for Carnegie Members & children under 12

**“Build up your weaknesses until they become your strong points.” —Knut Rockne**

## The Empty Nest

**by Jeannie Turner**

I was asked the other day  
“Can you tell me the best,  
The very best that you have found,  
About the empty nest?”

“Why sure,” I said. “I’ll make a list,  
I’ll start right in, this minute!”  
I got my little notebook out  
So I could write all in it.

I grabbed my pen, I clutched it tight,  
I wrote a heading there:  
Best About My Empty Nest  
“Ah, yes, now I can share.”

Well, first there is...now let me see  
What shall I write down first?  
I could begin with “quiet house,”  
but, no, that is the worst.

It could be all the laundry stuff  
I am no longer doing  
No. All those sweet, clean-  
smelling clothes  
My spirits were renewing

It could have been the many times  
To places that were far  
I’d have to drive my children. NO.  
I love to drive the car

The empty nest must be a plus—  
It keeps on getting praises  
I read in articles galore  
That happiness it raises

I cudgel up my brain on that  
The answer I must find.  
I bring subconscious to the fore  
I try to search my mind

I can not, must not, stop this search  
I never will stop trying  
If I don’t find the answer soon  
I’ll probably start crying

Aha, the secret is revealed!  
The kitchen holds the answer!  
I’m so glad I’ve found it now  
‘Twill make me be a dancer

I know the answer, yes I do  
I know what is the best  
I’ve found it out all by myself  
About the empty nest

It’s when I go to make a cake  
For friend, so I can treat her.  
‘cause when I mix the frosting up  
***I get to lick the beater!***

# Monster in the Closet

by Brittany Lord

It started with a simple question: "Can we keep it, Mom?"

I expected to see a filthy puppy or kitten. You can imagine my reaction when I came face to face with that long, scaly face. It was hunched over, covering its ginormous eyes, but if it had been standing tall, it would have been at least as tall as me. I almost fainted on the spot.

"It's so cute," the kids insisted. That was not the word I would have used. Demonic. Evil. Monster. These are the words that came to mind.

Still, it was storming outside and the stringy creature was wet and shivering. I just couldn't bring myself to say no.

"Fine, but only for tonight," I insisted. It clearly needed a dark place to hang (or rather hide) its head, so we put it in a closet. Naturally, it was hungry and the kids gave it sandwiches and dried dates. I didn't think that was really the best choice, but the creature didn't complain. I thought it would want meat, but after watching it for a bit, I realized it didn't have many teeth, and the ones that it did have were small and blunt. Meat was not on its menu.

It stormed for a couple of days, then we got a sudden early snow. I couldn't force them to put it out in that. That would be cruel, so in the closet it stayed. After a week, it started collecting hair from the floor and from hair brushes and building a little nest on the closet floor for itself. At night, it crawled out and curled up on the bed with the children, watching over them while they slept. This frightened me the first time, but soon I realized it was more like a watchdog than a monster. Part of me wondered at times if it had been a dog that suffered from some terrible skin condition. It did scratch itself a lot, but I could never get it in the bath. The poor thing was afraid of water.

By the time Christmas rolled around, the kids were calling him Walter, though I wasn't sure why. Walter got his own stocking to hang by the fire, and we wrapped up

some dog toys for him, which he seemed to like. Actually, I think he really preferred ripping off the wrapping paper more than the toys themselves.

Winter was extra long that year, and on the coldest of nights, Walter would crawl out of the closet and curl up by the fire. His eyes were very sensitive to the light, so we had to keep the room pretty dark for him to come out. When he did, he would make a sweet little purr sound and let the kids dress him up. His favorites were the hats. Most other things he didn't tolerate for long, but oh the hats. Walter loved when you put one on his head and fed him a sandwich. He would sit up and munch, all proud as can be, looking like a giant scaled squirrel. We'd all laugh and make jokes. I wish we'd had a camera so would could have shown others.

But then again, maybe not. I suspect many would have thought he was some terrible monster, not our sweet Walter that lived in the closet.

Then, one April morning, I came down the stairs and found the closet door open, and Walter was gone. Just like that. I thought he must have been hiding somewhere else in the house, but hours of searching turned up nothing. The kids spread out around the yard, then the neighborhood, then the block. Walter was nowhere to be found.

The kids cried for days. I didn't let them see, but at night, I'd go down to Walter's closet and cry a little too.

We have no pictures of him, so we can't put up lost signs, and even if we did, I'm not sure anyone would take them seriously. Part of me thinks he's dead, but another part wants to hold out hope. I keep thinking he'll appear again in the rain, looking for a home. Even if he never comes back, I hope he is alive and well. Perhaps he is teaching another family that not all creatures are as evil as they appear.

---

# Used To

by Jeannie Turner

**I used to be the first one on the bus to share my seat  
I used to be the first one to help others cross the street**

**I used to grab their groceries and put them in their car  
I used to run to help them no matter where they are**

**I'm finally getting used to, a little more each day,  
Of seeing someone needing help, then going on my way**

**When someone offers help to me I'll not make them ask me twice  
I'm finally getting used to this. "Oh that would be so nice."**

---



# Noises in the Basement

by Anthony Marcolongo

As a young burgeoning teenager, I remember my sister at the breakfast table answering my mother's question about the noises in the basement last night, around 2:00am.

"Noises in the basement usually mean Tony is down there and up to no good," my sister said.

My mother quickly asked me, "Were you up to something in the cellar last night?" My mother never did quite understand me.

Of course, under such on-the-spot pressure, I needed to be able to lie quite quickly, and effectively to fool my mother, but as a crafty teenager, I was up to the task; "Just cleaning the place up as best I could," I said.

"In the dark?" my sister challenged.

*Gawd, I thought, there must be a way to legally strangle her.*

"Dark? What dark? The light was on," I quickly argued. "You can't see anything in the dark, Lizzy."

"I didn't see any lights on," she retorted.

"How could you know? You didn't come down there. Or did you look in the cellar window? I mean, you'd have to be outside to do that." Then I cunningly added, "And I know you weren't outside in the street at 2:00 am, so you must have just assumed the lights were off. Hm?"

I knew she wouldn't dare answer that one affirmatively, and I was right. She just let out a sigh of disgust and left the table. My mother dropped the subject, and I was free from admonishment and punishment ... this time.

What my sister didn't know was that Georgie and I had found an abandoned wheelchair in the park earlier that day. We instantly seized upon the opportunity to have some fun, so we rounded up a red-plaid blanket and took turns pushing each other around the city. We made traffic stop everywhere, and caused people to step aside on the sidewalks and in various stores and office buildings, where we rode the elevators for hours.

When night fell, we met again after supper and retrieved our hidden chariot for more fun. The early hours were spent taking daredevil rides in the thing down the hills of Linean and Prospect Streets.

When we finally tired and decided to quit, it was around midnight. As Georgie pushed me down the middle of Cambridge Street, and we rounded a corner, we encountered a pair of fast moving headlights bearing down on us. It all

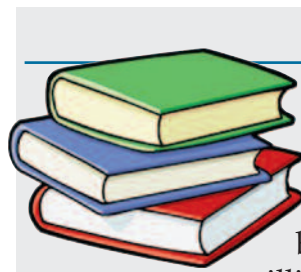
happened so fast there was little time to react. The car steered to its left, tires screeching, jumped the curb and hit a standing mailbox rather hard. The damage to the car was substantial.

Immediately several things occurred: first, I instantly recognized that the car was an orange and white, 1957 Olds Starfire 98, four-door hardtop; second, I leapt from the chair, sending the blanket flying to places unknown; third, Georgie ran so fast, still pushing the chair, that I could hardly keep up with him; and fourth, all four doors of the car opened and several angry guys were exiting and shouting all manner of expletives. I didn't hear all of it, but I did hear: "When I get my hands on you two !@\$%#^^ kids, I'm gonna tear your !@\$%#^^ hearts out!" And, "Run, you little !@\$%#^^. We will find you ... RUN!"

And run we did. Right down into my basement, where, for the next several hours, cloaked in the cellar darkness, we peeked through the street-high window and warily watched as that Oldsmobile, smashed bumper, grill and all, passed by stealthily patrolling the streets, with its lights out, searching for us.


By daybreak the hunt ceased, but Georgie and I stayed close to home for several days, not daring to venture out, especially at night. We had almost gotten away with it, almost that is, until at breakfast again, my sister smirked and smugly mentioned that she found a wheelchair in the basement.

*Gawd, I thought, there must be a way to legally strangle her.*



## Book Marketing

We authors are always looking for more ways to market our books, so if you know anyone who has a business and might be willing to allow members to set up a table (and take a cut of the sales price??), please let Mary Lou know or tell anyone else on the board (the list is on the back of every newsletter).





# Sacramento Suburban Writers Club

P.O. Box 4134 • Citrus Heights . CA 95611



## ELECTED OFFICERS

President	Mary Lou Anderson	Secretary	??????????
Vice President	Brittany Lord	Treasurer	??????????

## CHAIRS

Achievement	Mary Lou Anderson	Newsletter	Chopper Steedley-Tolan
Chairs Chair	Wes Turner	Nominations	Wes Turner
Coffee/Treats	Walt Speelman	Publicity	Cathy McGreevy
Conference Coordinator	John Powell	Raffle	Paul Turner
Critique Groups	Brittany Lord	Speakers	Tammy Andrews & Cathy
Directory	Nan Roark	Sunshine	Eras Cochran
Historian	Pat Biasotti	Youth Mentorship	Tammy, Wes & Cathy
Librarian	Ron Smith	Website	Wes Turner
Membership	Jeannie Turner	Workshops	Eva Wise

## Newsletter Copy & Deadline

Submit original written material such as poems, book excerpts, articles, book reviews, humor, general information and fun stuff to share to [ivebeenlicked@gmail.com](mailto:ivebeenlicked@gmail.com) by the 20th of each month. Also, share info about other meetings, contests, books, book signings, classes, etc.

Please keep your submission relatively short and submit electronically. There is no pay, but byline credit is given — and that looks good to agents and publishers. This is a benefit of being a paid member of SSWC.

## SSWC Meetings

All meetings are held at the  
**Crossroads Community Fellowship Church**  
in the meeting hall

**5501 Dewey Drive • Carmichael**  
(just north of the Madison/Dewey intersection)

**7:00-9:00 p.m.**  
**Second Monday of each month**

**Writers of all ages and levels are encouraged to attend.**

**Membership is not mandatory, but brings privileges.**  
(see details below)

## Sacramento Suburban Writers Club Membership Form

**Membership is not required to attend meetings, but provides additional benefits such as:**

**Publication in SSWC Newsletter • Participation in SSWC Author Events & Critique Groups • Grants for Writing Conferences & more!**

### MEMBERSHIP FEES

Individual	\$40.00/year	Full-Time Student	\$30.00/year
Couple	\$55.00/year	Platinum Senior (70+)	\$30.00/year

Name ..... Phone .....

Email .....

Genre(s) ..... Published? Y/N

Website/other info/address (optional) .....

**SSWC Membership Dues are paid on a yearly basis. If joining after March, dues are prorated by the quarter for new members. Please visit [sactowriters.org](http://sactowriters.org) for more information.**