

April 2017

Suburban Scribe

Newsletter of the Sacramento Suburban Writers Club

sactowriters.org

Connie Goldsmith Speaker for April 10th Meeting

Connie Goldsmith will be talking to us about how to approach the School and Library Markets. She will discuss such topics as What is the School & Library market? The upside of the S&L market...and the downside. How to break in, whether as a work for hire or advance and royalty contract. Her bottom line is “Nonfiction is the place to be today.”

Connie obviously writes nonfiction books, mostly about history, health, and science for ages twelve and up. Counting her fall 2017 book about addiction and overdose, she has written twenty children’s books (with two more in progress). Her five most recent works are, “Dogs at War: Military Canine Heroes,” “Suicide: a National Epidemic,” The Ebola Epidemic: The Fight. The Future,” “Dietary Supplements: Harmless, Helpful, or Hurtful,” and “Bombs Over Bikini: The World’s First Nuclear Disaster,” about the US nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands after WWII. Her books consistently receive excellent reviews, including starred reviews from Kirkus, and two are Junior Library Guild selections.



She has reviewed hundreds of children’s books for a regional parenting publication and currently reviews teen fiction for the New York Journal of Books. She has written for a number of children’s and adult magazines. She is also a recently-retired RN with a Master’s Degree in Health Care and has written more than sixty continuing education articles for registered nurses on health and professional issues for nursing journals, as well as journals for dental hygienists and physical therapists. She belongs to the Authors Guild and is very active in the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI).



All meetings are held at the Crossroads Community Fellowship Church’s meeting hall, 5501 Dewey Drive, Carmichael — just north of the Madison/Dewey intersection, 7-9 p.m. on the 2nd Monday of each month.

All writers are encouraged to attend.

Membership is not mandatory but brings privileges. See last page.

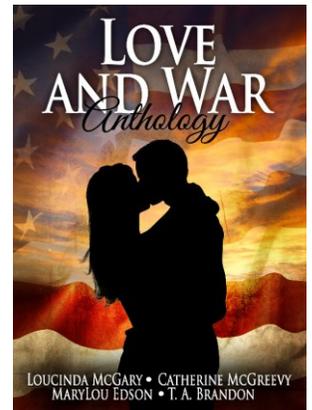
NEWS — — —

Event at the Library

In partnership with the Rancho Cordova Library, Cliff Billings will be discussing crime in the 21st century—cyber crime. Is it possible to write a book today without a bit of crime? Probably not. After all, this IS the 21st century, BUT what is the prevailing crime of the day? Why, of course it is cyber crime! Discover how your criminal can target each potential victim, and what your victim can do to prevent or lessen the damage such crimes can cause. Learn from professionals about ID theft, Denial of Service attacks, theft of personal records, scams requesting money, IRS refund theft, etc. What do you know about phishing schemes? Spyware? Viruses? Worms? BOTs? Key loggers? Ransomware? Now your writing can have 21st century authenticity. Now it can be believable.

The program by Cliff Billings of VFW Post 10125.

Saturday 22 April at Noon
Rancho Cordova Library
9845 Folsom Blvd. Sacramento



Love and War

Thrill to the four romances about soldiers from four different wars and the women they love. This enchanting novel, written by four Sacramento authors (three are from Sacramento Suburban Writers Club!) will be released in April.

Our Life Stories

“Our life Stories,” a cross-generational memoir conference, is coming up soon. Founded in 2007, this annual conference is a collaboration between the City of Sacramento’s Hart Senior Center and Consumes River College. The conference is designed to promote—at a low cost—the creation of memoir through lectures, readings, workshops, and more.

This event showcases nationally recognized writers, including Pulitzer winning political cartoonist and essayist Jack Ohman, poet and short story writer James Cagney, and comedienne Allison Page. Following the great line-up of speakers offering learning, discovery, and inspiration, all attendees are invited to a writers’ resource fair and catered reception at the campus Art Gallery.

For full details and to register, go to www.OurLifeStories.org

Member Authors show their stuff...

Flying To The Ship—The Adventure Begins

Walt Speelman

Once again, loading up was my lot as it had been since my first day in the Navy. “In the truck, “out of the truck,” “unload the boxcar,” “reload the boxcar.” If I remember, the food store job I had in high school prepared me well for these tasks.

The two well-worn R6D aircraft, otherwise known to civilians as the DC-6, were waiting for us as our bus and truck pulled onto the tarmac at Lakehurst Naval Air Station, New Jersey, the base for HC-2, our helicopter squadron. These two aircraft were to be both passenger and cargo haulers. Our three helicopters had already departed Lakehurst for Norfolk, Virginia earlier with full loads including the officers’ personal servant, known as a steward, and most of the things that were not allowed to us minions, such as booze. I later read an article in the ship’s newsletter how being at sea was tougher on officers than enlisted. What a croc! This benefit must have been part of their plight. Is it any wonder they were hard to stomach?

After loading our aircraft we filed on board with our issued box lunches, took our aft facing seats and buckled in. Seating in a military aircraft faces backward. It is safer, but unusual as far as I knew, having experienced only one other flight on TWA from JFK to Chicago on the way to Boot Camp the previous year. That flight was a brand new Boeing 707 according to the pilot who came into the cabin yelling, “This is MY brand new multimillion dollar 707 jet and DO NOT touch anything!”

The piston engines on our current flight to Norfolk whined and coughed as they rumbled to life one at a time. Smoke filled the air and aviation gasoline vapors filled the cabin. Our shaking and complaining plane headed for the runway and taxied slowly on the tarmac allowing the engines to warm up. The four big piston engines were brought to power as we aligned on the runway and started the takeoff roll. To this rookie, the takeoff seemed to be taking a long time as the old plane rocked and shook and the noise reverberated in the cabin. I was certain we would run off the end of the runway and, as it turned out, might have been right. The airplane lifted and groaned a mighty groan, the big engines seemed to complain even louder as the end of the runway passed under us and the wheels retracted. Dirt and grass passed by the window. When the plane yawed in the wind we were afforded a view of the dust cloud we had created as it began to settle into the New Jersey pine forest. The giant blimp hangars and runways began to shrink in the distance.

As we gained altitude the engines quieted down and eventually became a droning hum. After a half hour we opened our box lunches and started to chow down. As I remember, the baloney sandwich and apple were good. Hard work and adventure make a young man hungry. The early lunch was more than welcome.

Just as the droning started to lull us to sleep, the aircraft banked and started to drop. Our ears popped from the sudden altitude change and we figured we were approaching Norfolk Naval Air Station. As usual, we were told nothing.

A glance out the window gave us our first view of our ship, USS America, with number 66 painted on the deck, empty, except for our three helicopters that had preceded us to Norfolk. Our remaining air wing would join us somewhere at sea as we headed for the Caribbean. Aligned along the same dock, was the USS Forestall, the number 59 partially visible on the crowded flight deck. She proudly displayed her awards and battle ribbons on her Island high above the flight deck where the Captain and Air Boss could observe their kingdom while underway. She would soon depart for the Far East. America appeared naked and junior as she was new on this day in 1965. The ribbons, awards, and associated losses would come later.

Landing at Norfolk was uneventful. However, it would be hours before we would board our ship. For now, it was unloading time and a wait for the busses to take us to the ship where, of course, we could unload and reload again dockside.

However, there wasn't any transportation available for us as our two aircraft taxied away. We sat on our pile of unloaded gear on the tarmac while our officer paced in a circle muttering. He was an Ensign and fairly junior—I suspected he was involuntarily stuck with us peons. We kept an eye on our senior Petty Officers (Experienced men of enlisted rank) looking for signs of concern, but we saw none. It was just another hurry-up-and-wait situation.

Finally a duty driver came by in a pick-up truck. Our officer flagged him down and the truck came to a squeaking halt. After a short chat our officer jumped into the cab of the truck and they drove off toward buildings on the far side of the tarmac.

So much for that! We were left on our own. Nothing was within walking distance, no Enlisted Mens Club, no chow hall, not even a drinking fountain. Luckily, it was May and the weather cool and sunny. After a winter at Great Lakes Boot Camp in Illinois this was heaven sent.

Suddenly we heard truck engines and watched as a small navy-grey school bus, driven by our officer, closely followed by two smoking stake trucks with US NAVY stenciled on the side, came screeching around one of the buildings. As the vehicles came to a stop, our officer jumped out of the bus and with his young voice shouted, "Hurry up and load the trucks and grab a seat!" "We have to go!" It was almost comical but we quickly obeyed. The senior enlisted men got on the bus and the rest of us loaded all of our gear, climbed onto the trucks and off we went.

After getting to know this officer later in the cruise, I imagined the motor pool chief looking for a missing bus. I don't think Sgt. Bilko had much on this guy. He was handy to have around in our world of shipboard life. But I digress...

After a short drive we pulled up in front of the Enlisted Men's Club, a snack bar and place to get 3.2 beer. Great! Another delay. The ensign told us to wait as he started toward the door of the EM Club. Almost immediately, out popped our Chief, yelling of course, "You clowns get some chow and don't get drunk. Then stand-by!" With that he turned on his heel and walked off without a glance toward us.

Three beers later—one too many for me—a larger bus and our two smoking stake trucks returned sans our officer. The duty drivers honked and we boarded the bus and trucks laughing and joking.

A short while later, fed and thirst quenched, we were full of exuberance and didn't notice we had stopped. The squealing brakes should have alerted us. "Get off," barked the driver, "and standby." We stepped out of the bus into the shade and squinted at our surroundings. Just as the smoke from the bus and trucks started to clear, they drove off creating another dense cloud of blue smoke. Through the haze it appeared that two warehouses flanked our position. Great, I thought, another delay!!

We were bunched up and chatting away when the Chief, again from nowhere, stepped up to us. (Where does this man hide?) His round face was red and his eyes bulged as he glared at us, I think I saw spit as he started yelling. "I told you clowns not to get drunk! Look sharp!" The captain's probably watching your behavior!" (Something I doubted.) Being inexperienced and brash, I chose this unfortunate moment to blurt out: "Hey Chief, where's the ship!" He appeared jolted by a high voltage bolt of lightning; His head slowly turned looking for the origin of this disturbance. I heard a gasp at my side at the same time the others moved away. He found me with his menacing stare and began a purposeful walk toward me. I am sure I turned pale.

His face came so close to mine I could see the veins in his eyes and smell the booze on his breath as he growled, "You! Look up!" I quickly glanced up and could see that the warehouse walls were not walls at all! They were ships' hulls firmly attached to giant flight decks towering overhead and almost touching over the dock. Super Carriers!

I did my best not to make eye contact with our now angry—and only slightly amused—Chief.

I dared not smile. "For YOU! For YOU!" he angrily repeated. Then added, "For YOU this is going to be a LOOONG cruise"

DREAM

Myrl Pardee

The dream was so compelling. Each night, after she was deeply asleep, it would begin. A walk along a tree-lined path, but not alone. Always there would be company—male company. He was always a stranger...and handsome. Sometimes they would talk, but often, he would just take her hand and, in comfortable silence, they would enjoy the beauty of the woodlands.

The dream always ended before the path did, and she would awake, feeling frustrated, always wondering about their destination.

Who was the handsome stranger, and what was their destination?

It became an obsession with her. Each night, as she readied for bed, she would try to determine his face. Was he a movie star? Or someone she knew from school many years ago? Finally, one evening, she recalled a stack of high school yearbooks that her mother had dumped on her, while the older woman was cleaning the family home for sale. Her mother had dropped them in a carton and handed them to her.

"Here, Marilyn!" her mother had said. "Get rid of these. I've stored them long enough, and no one I know is in any of the pictures."

"Oh, Mom. I'm in them, all of them."

"But not the way you are now."

After high school, she had worked very hard to change her appearance. She had exercised, dieted, and bleached her hair. Today, with skillfully applied make-up, she was now the photogenic weather lady on a popular local news program. Her mother had wanted her to get married and produce grandchildren, and often complained that her daughter's career had intervened. It was a frequent point of discussion between the two.

Grabbing the box of forgotten yearbooks, she began to leaf through the photo pages. At last she saw the stranger's face—but it was not a classmate. Suddenly, she recalled the student teacher in her senior history class, Mr. Andrews. A graduate of the local college, he was just getting his credential at her high school. Hmm, she thought. I wonder what Mr. Andrews is doing today?

The next morning, at the office, she Googled his name. She wasn't surprised at the number of "Andrews, history teacher" responses, after all, it was a common name, but carefully scanning through and discarding the ones dead or too old and the ones too young to have been her teacher, she settled on three: Tom, Dick, and Harry. More computer search revealed that Tom was teaching in Denmark, Dick and his wife had seven children, so she thought she might look up Harry. She gathered more information: his school, his address, and his criminal history (none). On her next day off, she headed toward the high school where she had discovered he taught. In the school office, she introduced herself and, fudging the truth a bit, said she was doing a story on influential teachers.

"Oh, sorry. Mr. Andrews has been very ill. Would you like to talk to his substitute? If not, you might call his home."

Marilyn agreed that a phone interview might be good enough and took his number. Then using it to verify his address, she drove there as soon as she left the school.

The apartment house was in a well-kept neighborhood, across from a city park. She noticed a small, balding man raking leaves under some trees and thought he might be a source of information about the neighborhood denizens.

She left her car. "Hi. I wonder if I could ask you some questions."

The man looked up. His bright blue eyes sparkled. "Oh, I know you. You're the weather-girl from KRAW news. You're prettier in person."

Marilyn blushed. "Thank you. I wonder if you know any of the residents in that apartment building." She gestured toward the apartment building across the street.

"Only a few. Many are too busy to use the park, but there are some children here during good weather and vacation times. Of course, Harry, my best friend and chess buddy lived there."

"Lived there? Harry Andrews was your friend?"

"Yeah. He died just a short time ago. I miss him. While we were playing chess, he would spin such wonderful tales. He used to talk about a girlfriend. Said they went on long walks together. Said he would bring her to meet me one day. Wonder what happened to her? I wonder if he was making her up."

Marilyn smiled. She looked at the trees and the chessboard set out underneath them. "Oh, she'll be okay, but she'll miss him a lot. Thanks for telling me about him."

That night, for the first time in ages, Marilyn slept a long, dreamless sleep.

Glimpses by a Guest

March 13th wasn't my first time at the Sacramento Suburban Writers Club while in town visiting my sister, Jeannie Turner. However, I would say that it was definitely my favorite time! The speaker that evening was Constance Hale, and she was that combination we all hope for in a speaker—both interesting and informative. As I sat entranced in the front row, I realized that I was listening to someone who had “made it” as an author, and it wasn't as “glamorous” as one might suppose. Interesting, yes. Rewarding, yes. But not easy, not glamorous. I have always been impressed by how many of your members actually are aiming to be published. Me? I write for myself and a very limited audience, yet I was fascinated by Constance Hale's words. I can only imagine how much those words must have meant to the aspiring writers in the room!

I don't know what was most fascinating—the saga of *Sin and Syntax*, and its revisions, or the story of Hale's university professor who was fascinated by her deep knowledge of “pidgin English” from the “back country” of Hawaii. I do know which moments I wish I could have recorded on video to play and replay and to share with my friends—those moments would definitely be her re-telling of “Little Red Riding Hood” in that most melodious pidgin English.

Perhaps that is one of the main ideas I took away from her presentation—the melody of language. As a high school teacher of creative writing, I don't remember pointing out to my students the great importance of “melody.” Word choice, of course. But not a deep emphasis on melody. If I were still teaching, I would most definitely incorporate this idea into my presentations. And yet, not being a native speaker of Hawaii's pidgin English, how could I reproduce Hale's rendition of “Little Red Riding Hood”? Frankly, I couldn't. And so I am deeply appreciative that we in the audience of the March meeting of your club were able to hear her do just that—once again I see that no matter how wondrous books are, there is no substitute for actually listening to a real live person speak!

After the meeting, I purchased a copy of Hale's beautifully illustrated children's book, *Iwalani's Tree*. My sister purchased the fascinating, and recently published, book on the evolution of hula, *The Natives Are Restless*. She also purchased *Sin and Syntax*, the book that brought Hale success, along with the frustrating result of being pigeonholed as a writer, at least for a while.

The next day, actually even before breakfast, we began delving into these three books. Oh, my! If I were not a happily retired teacher of grammar, writing, and literature, I would be heading off to talk to my Department Head to see if we could order copies of *Sin and Syntax* for all of my students. What a superb book—exacting, helpful, academic, but at the same time so very entertaining! If the members of the Sacramento Suburban Writers Club would take a suggestion from a visiting San Diegan, here is what I would say: Immediately go online and purchase a copy of this book! It is most definitely a book that belongs on the bookshelf of everyone who loves writing—no, make that of “everyone who loves writing that is correct, clear, and full of life!” I hope all of you who were at the March meeting do realize how fortunate you are to have been in Constance Hale's audience! I know that's how I feel. Oh, yes! So glad I was in town on the second Monday of the month!

MEMBERSHIP is paid on a yearly basis. If joining after March, dues are prorated by the quarter for new members.

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

Membership is not required for attending meetings but provides benefits such as:

- 1) publication in newsletter
- 2) participation in club author events
- 3) participation in critique groups
- 4) grants for conferences ... & more

More information is on our website: sactowriters.org

Name: _____ Genres: _____ Published? Y/N

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Website/other info/address (optional): _____

Your name and email are needed to receive the digital newsletter.

OFFICERS

Elected Officers:

| | |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| President | Westley Turner |
| Vice President | Cathy McGreevy |
| Secretary | Mary Lou Anderson |
| Treasurer | Christine & David Stein |

Chairs:

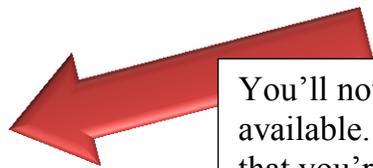
| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Achievement | Mary Lou Anderson |
| Chairs Chair | Wes Turner |
| Coffee/Treats | Walt Speelman |
| Conference Coord. | John Powell |
| Critique Groups | Brittany Lord |
| Directory | Nan Roark |
| Historian | Pat Biasotti |
| Librarian | Ron Smith |
| Membership | Jeannie Turn |
| Newsletter | vacant |
| Nominations | vacant |
| Publicity | vacant |
| Raffle | Mort Rumberg |
| Speakers | Tammy Andrews & Cathy McGreevy |
| Sunshine | Eras Cochran |
| Youth Mentorship | Tammy Andrews & Cathy McGreevy |
| Website | Westley Turner |
| Workshops | Eva Wise |

Do you have a BUSINESS?

Contact the newsletter if you would like to **ADVERTISE** in the SSWC Newsletter for your writing related services.

A small box advert (2x3) is only \$3 a month (3 month minimum) for members and \$5 a month (3 month minimum) for non-members.

(See? Membership pays!)



You'll notice that the Newsletter position is still available. Please let one of the officers know that you're interested in helping out the club by producing just the next few newsletters. If you really like it, we'll let you keep doing it.

SUBMISSIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

Submit original written material such as poems, letters, book excerpts, articles, book reviews, humor, web sites to visit, general information, fun stuff to share—almost anything—***by the 25th of each month.***

Also, share info about other meetings, contests, books, book signings, classes, etc.

Please make certain submissions are properly edited (viewing by a critique group helps).

There is no pay, but byline credit is given which looks good to agents and publishers.

— —Being published in the newsletter is a benefit of being a member of SSWC— —

Send your submissions to newsletter@sactowriters.org



SSWC, P.O. Box 4134, Citrus Heights, CA 95611

