



Suburban Scribe

Newsletter of the Sacramento Suburban Writers' Club

How Real Is Too Real?

Incorporating True Crime Elements Into Crime Fiction—



Learn about choosing the right setting for your story—how and why James L'Etoile has used Sacramento as a setting in his series.

James L'Etoile's crime fiction work is recognized by the Creative World Awards, Acclaim Film, the Scriptapalooza Television Script Competition, Killer Nashville Reader's Choice, and The American Book Festival Awards. *AT WHAT COST* was released by Crooked Lane Books in 2016 and *BURY THE PAST* (a 2017 Best Book Award finalist in the mystery/suspense category) was published on December 12, 2017.

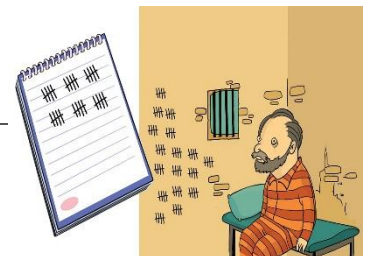
James L'Etoile worked in prisons and jails for twenty-nine years before turning to crime fiction. He is an experienced correctional administrator, facility captain, associate warden, chief of institution operations, and director of California state parole. He draws upon his experience to bring his crime fiction to life. He consults in prisons, jails and community

corrections across the country and when he isn't writing, he and his wife, Ann-Marie participate in therapy dog programs for seniors in memory care and *Read to A Dog* children's reading programs.

Find out which of us is most likely to become a felon as we play Prison Trivia. --- Do you really *want* to know?

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

All writers are encouraged to attend. Membership is not mandatory but brings privileges.



Just keep writing!

*(Mothers' Day is gone and past, but Mothers, they just last and last,
so we will include some Mothers' Day poems here)*

My Mother's Hands

© 2018 Barbara Grace Lake

So downy soft with tender care
Returned a nestling to its tree
To see the worried mother bird
Fly home to nurture, help it grow

As gently lifting me
From cradle to her breast
To suckle till I fell asleep
And dream warm baby dreams

Accepting, loving, strong
How able as I grew
At shushing tears as anger burst
Or bandaging a knee

Black garden dirt they wore with pride
Ingrained in every crease
But rainbow blossoms graced our home
The gift her hands displayed

Long years they spent in usefulness
Till gnarled, blue veined in age
Still soft and loving, loved as her,
My Mother's hands

An Ode to Mother's Day

Al Gilding

Mothers are
a charming breed
They give so much
of what they need

They nurture their young
and do it best
When they clasp them closely
to their breast

They raise them up
and before too long

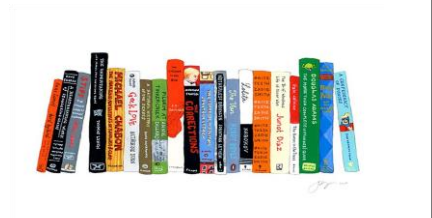
Their young pull loose
they feel so strong

She lets them go
in a sacrifice of love
Second only to
that from above

She's brought you this far
by doing her best
So show her your love
by doing the rest

A Helpful Hint

by Mort Rumberg



Follow a Blog to Perk up your Writing

aprildavila.com

Here's a blog full of advice for bettering your craft, creating community, staying committed and more.

davidvillalva.com

Learn the intricacies of creative storytelling—whether in short fiction, novel or screenplay form— and apply them to your own work with David Villalva's insightful visual guides. Check out the Create a Villain infographic or The Storytelling Blueprint for examples of his lucidity in action.

blog.janicehardy.com

Spearheaded by award-winning novelist Janice Hardy, Fiction University will school you in the *hows* of writing. A rigorous weekly schedule—from Writing Tip Monday to Writing Prompt Sunday—makes the site ideal for those trying to develop discipline. The cumulative result is more than 1,000 articles on all aspects of the fiction writing

Vintage Views: The Old-Timers

By Pat Biasotti

Several of the SSWC old-timers are in their 80s and 90s and have been, or were, members for 30-40 years. They can recall some unique moments in the club's history. Following are some of their contributions and memories.

When I moved to Sacramento in 1972, Jackie (Margaret) Krug was one of the first neighbors to greet me. As fellow writers we immediately bonded and she introduced me to Ethel Bangert's classes. Ethel was one of the original founders of Suburban Writers. Encouraged by both Ethel and Jackie, I joined SSWC, probably about 1973 or 74. Thus, over the past forty-plus years I have valued the delightful writer friends I've made and the members so generous in sharing their wisdom. I have visited other writers' groups and found that the friendliness and willingness to share set SSWC apart, as do the invaluable critique groups.

However, enough of this SSWC commercial and on to some "vintage views," especially one remembered by Barbara Jodry. Barbara joined in the late 1980s and then became the newsletter editor for 11 years. She was so enthusiastic about writing that her two daughters are active writers today. Looking back, Barbara remembers one of the most unusual meetings any club could have and the following is from her original article about this occasion.

Several times over the years SSWC members have arrived for meetings to find doors locked due to some snafu over who was to fetch the keys. However, writers are adaptable and resourceful, thus it was for a memorable Christmas gala in the mid-1990s. This annual event was always a special evening featuring delicious finger foods and delectable desserts, with selected members reading aloud from their works.

People dressed in holiday garb arrived at the meeting place in the pouring rain (making matters more miserable) to find locked doors and no one with a key. A new member, a high school biology teacher, saved the day (or night) by offering his classroom at a nearby high school. We caravanned to the school and traipsed into the classroom, a fully equipped biology lab. One member remembers sitting at a lab table under the watchful eye of a live tarantula safely contained in a nearby terrarium. Ethel Bangert remarks how weird it was to sit all dressed up and eating the lovely food among mounted wild animal heads, a stuffed bobcat, and assorted science specimens. She remembers a huge stuffed eagle hanging above us, and how folks had to dodge hanging plants as they claimed stools normally occupied by students

at work. She laughs, "You almost had to part the leaves and peer through them to see and hear the evening's speakers."

Because Ethel was one of the club founders, newer members may want to know more about her. She was interested in all of her students and generous in helping them (many of whom were SSWC members) with her talent, knowledge, and friendship. Her class topics were always organized, practical, and interesting. As a tireless promoter of our club, she tried to attend every meeting where she lounged in the back of the room on a sofa. An inveterate contest entrant, she won many prizes and urged us to use our cleverest writing skills to also win.

One of her most endearing qualities was her ability to laugh at herself. She once told the class this story. One night she noticed that the entry deadline for the annual Pillsbury baking contest was the next day. Undaunted, and with no time to bake, she simply took a favorite family cookie recipe, decided that she would add red hots (the candy), wrote up and submitted the recipe. She titled it something like "Red-Hot Love Cookies." Thrill of thrills—she ended up as a finalist. On judging day, the finalists made their recipes in a kitchenette with new, gleaming white appliances and ovens, then submitted their baked creations to the judges. She made her recipe, put it in the oven, set a timer, and then visited with a neighboring participant. Her timer went off. She turned back to her work space and froze in horror. Streams of bright red juice were running down the front of her white oven!

I valued Ethel's friendship and visited her many times until her death a few years ago. (She loved my bringing her chocolate milkshakes from Gunther's Ice Cream Shop.) Her home overflowed with souvenirs and mementoes from trips and her full life. However, she also experienced tragedies—an adult daughter's slow death from Lupus, and her beloved husband Nel's murder, but during these traumas she lost herself in her writing and it became her salvation.

Another "old timer" is Barbara Lake, who for years was a critique leader, newsletter assistant (organizing the members list and printing mailing labels). Previously well-published, she now devotes herself solely to poetry. (Read a sample in this newsletter.) However, she deserves quite a salute, because at age 86 she is still working part time as an off-site office assistant.

(to be continued next month with other "old timers," Bud Gardener and his invaluable contributions, and Penny Howard.)

OFFICERS

Elected Officers:

President	Cathy McGreevy
Vice President	Wes Turner
Secretary	Mary Lou Anderson
Treasurer	Chris & David Stein

Chairs:

Achievement	Mary Lou Anderson
Chairs Chair	Wes Turner
Coffee/Treats	[open]
Conference Coord.	John Powell
Critique Groups	Brittany Lord
Directory	Jeannie Turner
Historian	Pat Biasotti
Librarian	Ron Smith
Membership	Jeannie Turner
Newsletter	[open]
Nominations	[open]
Publicity	[open]
Raffle	Mort Rumberg
Scholarship	David Stein
Speakers	[open]
Sunshine	[open]
Website	Westley Turner
Workshops	[open]

Advertise your writing related services in the
Suburban Scribe!

\$3 a month (3-month minimum) for members
\$5 a month (3-month minimum) for non-members

Send your request to newsletter@sactowriters.org

COPY AND DEADLINES

Please 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 20th of each month**. Also, share info about other meetings, contests, books, book signings, classes, etc.

Please keep the 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 one of the many benefits of being a member of SSWC.

Send your submissions to
newsletter@sactowriters.org

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

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 it does provide benefits including

- 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: _____