

November, 2019

# Suburban Scribe

Newsletter of the Sacramento Suburban Writers Club

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

## Behind the Book Review: Advice from a Professional Book Reviewer

**Do you know what happens when you send an unsolicited book to a professional book reviewer?**

**Ross Rojek does. He will share that information with us at our November 11 meeting.**

As a professional book reviewer, Ross and his staff receive up to 1,000 unsolicited books a month. Out of those, they choose only 300 to feature. How do reviewers pick which books to review ... and which to discard? What exactly is it that makes a book worthy of a prominent review...or a trip to the trash can?

Ross and his wife Heidi have been running a book review business since 2008. In the wake of the Great Recession, Ross and Heidi observed that arts section in local newspapers were either scaling back or being cut entirely. To close this gap, they founded City Book Review. Since then, it has grown to five imprints: Kids BookBuzz (reviews done exclusively by kids), San Francisco Book Review, Manhattan Book Review, Seattle Book Review, and Tulsa Book Review.

Ross is co-owner of the indie bookstore, Capital Books located at 1011 K Street, Sacramento. He spent fifteen years in the comic book industry, working at local shops Beyond the Pale and Comics & Comix. After leaving comics, Ross has spent eleven years in the book business.

Learn more about Ross and Heidi's **book review business** here: <https://citybookreview.com>

Learn more about Ross and Heidi's indie **bookstore** here: <https://capitalbooksonk.com>

(Just move your mouse over one of the sites above and *Click* ... you will be there.)



### For NaNoWriMo Participants

Brittany Lord

Kiriska (<https://www.deviantart.com/kiriska>) on Deviant Art has a computer wallpaper background for NaNoWriMo writers. It's a calendar with what your word count should be on what day as well as some fun little sayings on it.

It's free too.

Just hit the download button on the side. You can find the wallpaper at <https://www.deviantart.com/kiriska/art/2019-NaNoWriMo-Calendar-817825545>.

**Every month we offer:**  
15-Minute Workshop  
Writing Support  
Speakers

**November Workshop** —  
How to Market Your Book:  
Examples from Real People.

**Future meeting dates**—All Mondays:  
November 11  
December 9 — Potluck  
January 13

Meetings 7—9 p.m. 5501 Dewey Drive, Fair Oaks

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

## Waiting

Marleen Hoffman

Waiting.  
A lifetime of waiting.  
You sure did hit that nail  
Squarely on its head.

Thank you so much for this  
Morning's Pick-Me-Up.  
Wait until you grow up,  
Wait until you graduate.

Marriage,  
Broken promises,  
Earn a living.  
Wait. Wait. Waiting.  
Do it this evening.

Phone rings. Can't.  
Do it tomorrow.  
Wake up with great intentions.  
The phone rings.

Wait. Wait. Waiting.  
Still waiting.

Will later ever come? After all it's  
been on its way for seventy-nine  
years now. Wait. Wait. Still waiting.



## News Flash

Laura Kellen

Are you a writer of thrillers,  
mysteries, horror, detective or police  
stories, or you just have an interest in  
true crime?

The Sacramento Public Library is  
hosting a True Crime Mini Con on Saturday, November 16.  
This FREE event will feature authors Lloyd Billingsley,  
William Burg, Paul Drexler, and David Kulczyk.  
The keynote speaker, Dr. Ruth Ballard, will give a  
presentation on how DNA and forensic science caught the  
Golden State Killer.

For more information, see here: <https://www.saclibrary.org/Event/Special-Events/True-Crime-Mini-Con>

## Share What You Love About Writing

If you have a writing topic you'd like to share  
with our members (for only 10 -15 minutes or so),  
we are looking someone to present future  
workshops.

Also, would you be interested in helping get  
names of members who would like to present in  
the future? We need the help ... easy and you get  
to meet so many nice people.

## COPY AND DEADLINES

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

Please keep the submission relatively short, otherwise it will have to be serialized. Also, please 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 member of SSWC.

**Remember to put SSWC Newsletter Submission in the subject line ... PLEASE!**

Contact Mary Lou Anderson 916) 459-0888 [mledsonanderson@yahoo.com](mailto:mledsonanderson@yahoo.com)  
Deadline is about two (2) weeks prior to the meeting date.

### A Short But Sweet Article

Laura Kellen

Help us grow our Facebook page!

Laura volunteered to take over posting on the Facebook page in mid-June. Since then, the page has gained 19 followers - but we could use more!

If you're not already following the Facebook page, please go to: <https://www.facebook.com/sactowriters>

Be sure to click the "Follow" button at the top of the page! Thanks!

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### The Two-Day Tucson Festival of Books

March, 2020

(Editor's Comments)

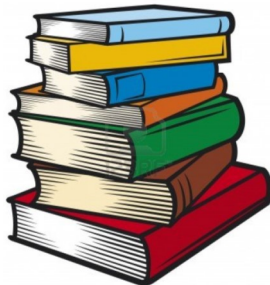
An email arrived in my inbox, and I thought this was a scam at first ... "It's only this many thousands of \$\$\$\$ , but wait! You can enroll for this much less! .... But wait!!! You even get a further discount! ...."

Turns out it's been an on-going book event in Tucson for years. Their website *looks* legit.

Either Google: [tucson festival of books 2020](https://www.google.com/search?q=tucson+festival+of+books+2020)  
Or control/click on this to go their site.

<https://www.google.com/search?q=tucson+festival+of+books+2020>

If anyone knows anything about it or gets more information on it, please send it along to share with the other members.



### Flash Fiction Writing Contest

\$\$\$

Brittany Lord, aka *Tealya*



For December, Brittany would like to do another flash fiction contest with a \$10 gift card to Starbucks prize.

The prompt is "Yes, it's true."

It can be in any genre but should be 100 words in length. All entries should be sent to Brittany. Her address: [tealya@hotmail.com](mailto:tealya@hotmail.com).

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### By Chance We Met

This month's winning Flash Fiction Story

Cle Curbo

Hollywood and Vine. Where Hollywood dreams come true.

A dapper fellow was in my face. "By chance we meet. I'm Lucky Chance of the Chance brothers."

I looked past him. A chick in Greek toga stepped up to us.

She stared at me. "I'm Lady Luck."

She was stunning, beautiful. I was cautious.

"Are you good luck or bad luck?"

A sideways look. "Depends on you, buster."

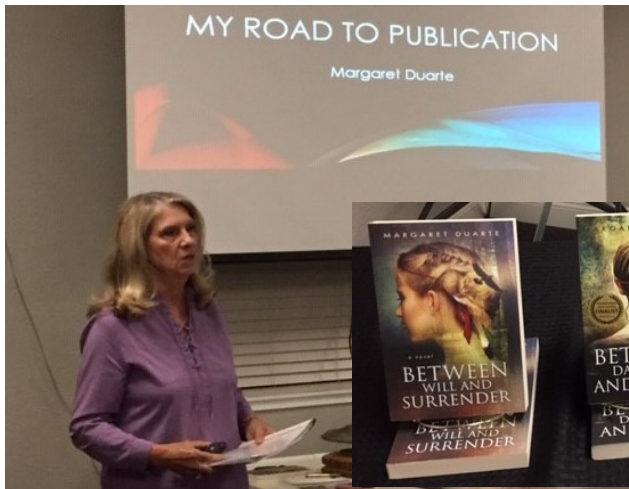
"I don't need you both. I'm making my own chance and luck." I walked away.

I heard Chance say, "Lady, let's move on."

"Go ahead. I'm taking my chances with this bold one."

## WHY YOU SHOULD ATTEND OUR MEETINGS!

Laura Kellen



Maybe you missed last month's meeting. If so, you missed a lot. Speaker Margaret Duarte talked about "My Road to Publication" and all her work as a visionary fiction author.

## November Workshop

Paul Turner

### How to Market Your Book — Examples from Real People.

Paul Turner's presentation will cover stories of some success from a panel of teachers at Sail University in Florida, Andy Weir's path to fame and riches (he wrote "The Martian," which made movie success), and the real story behind which Print On Demand company to publish with.

There will also be a few Twitter facts to think about.

**SALES**

Paul sent this to go along with his workshop at our next meeting. The video is over an hour long, but Paul says it contains some very good information. It's a "panel discussion about self publishing. Dated only by the fact that CreateSpace is now folded into KDP Amazon (Kindle Direct Publishing)."

<https://youtu.be/UfwY2rI8qAc>



Quoting from this site: "Technology has made it easier than ever to publish your own work. This Full Sail University panel discusses how to successfully self-publish your own work, and how to do it without getting lost in the sea of all of the other content that's out there. "

Editor's note: Having published my books on CreateSpace (now KDP), I know how "fun" it can be ("fun" translates to "challenging"). I'm going to watch it before the

## Scholarship Winner

Ron Smith, SSWC President

I would like to present our 2019 College Scholarship awardee: **Alessandra Arif, from Fair Oaks High School**. Alessandra was referred by her teacher, Anna Serena. Alessandra will receive \$1000 awarded to her college of choice for her to use.

I would also like to thank our gracious SSWC members for giving money so young students like Alessandra can follow their dreams. Growing up has its own challenges, but great people like the members of SSWC do help our future young contributors. Please read about Alessandra's submission:

Alessandra says this about her interests in writing:

Ever since I could hold a pencil, I have been writing. My mind has always been filled with stories, and the only way for me to retain my sanity has been to put them to paper.

When I was younger, I used to play imaginary games for hours at a time. As I grew older and turned away from my terrible acting, I started to use writing as my creative platform. My writing career first started when I purchased a ratty old composition notebook and filled it with small stories and little pictures.

I came to own an extensive collection of diaries and journals. In eighth grade, I wrote a dystopian novelette titled *The Human Improvement System*. Throughout high school, I created a plethora of short stories along with some poems. Half way through my senior year, I completed the first draft of my book, *We'll Get Through This*.

Writing is my life, and I cannot function without it. My writing blocks are pure misery, but when inspiration strikes, I feel unstoppable. I plan to continue writing for as long as I reside on this earth (given a few gaps for those awful writing blocks, of course).

(Her winning submission will appear in a future edition of our newsletter.)



## Advanced Writers Techniques (AWT)

Mike Brandt



AWT group meets at 6:00 PM, an hour before our regular monthly meeting, in the Fellowship Hall of the Crossroads Christian Church. Learn how to be innovative while cultivating your skill set to create a book the readers will love.

**November's session:** we'll discuss – What is the Copyright Act vs. Fair Use Laws as it pertains to writing. This area is often confusing to the writer and the discussion goals are to remove some of the cloud surrounding both issues.

*Copyright* is a form of protection provided by the laws of the United States to the authors of "original works of authorship" that are fixed in a tangible form of expression.

*Fair use* is a doctrine in the law of the United States that permits limited use of copyrighted material without having to first acquire permission from the copyright holder.

Each participant will have an opportunity to express their thoughts. Please respect fellow writer's time and arrive by 6:00 PM.

## The Grandmother Statue

Marleen Hoffman

The gray-haired Grandmother statue stared up at the old lady who was shopping in the Thrift Store. She, too, had fallen and broken her left wrist.

That was the beginning of the end. Surgery to set her bones back together, pinned, really, was done. Two and a half days of bland hospital food.

Happy to be going home!

But, alas, she was driven to a Senior Care Facility.

She protested, "But, I want to go home!"

In the two- and one-half days she was away, her beloved Chihuahuas were given away, her bank accounts were taken over as she was now a Ward of The Court, and her home was cleaned out and put up for sale by what she thought was her loving family. She had a small allowance and her bills were automatically paid out of her accounts by her "Family Conservator."

"But, my home, my puppies, my clothes, my kitchen, my garden, my art studio!" again she protested. "Where are they?"

She cried and cried. And cried. And cried until there were no more tears.

She had been moved into a small 248 square foot studio apartment, a kitchenette/sitting room really, with a tiny bathroom, a twin bed, plus two tiny closets, one on each side of the bed. In the tiny bathroom, there were two bath towels, two hand towels, four washcloths, shampoo, a bar of soap, a tiny shower, and, yes, a toilet and a tiny sink. In the kitchen, there was a small stovetop and a small microwave oven, a small divided sink and a really small refrigerator. All new neighbors. Strangers really. She knew not one of them.

All that she had left were six pairs of slacks, six blouses, three pairs of shoes, seven sets of underwear, and seven pairs of socks. In the kitchen, there were three pots of various sizes, one eight-inch fry pan, two plates, two cups, two cereal bowls, plus four each of spoons, forks, and knives for the table settings, two serving bowls, and some paper plates and napkins, plus a roll of paper towels. Yes, paper towels.

Nearby was a loveseat-sized couch for sitting only, a dinette with two built-in benches, and a wall-mounted TV over one of the benches. Her furniture, antiques and all, including her collection of artworks and her paintings on her home walls, were all put into the dumpster — garbage to those who had no clue of their value. Gone. Gone forever.

Yes, she was so alone. How could her "family" do this to her? She had loved them so much. Put them all on pedestals. Admired them. She was so proud of them.

She felt discarded, thrown away. Donated. Just like the little statue in the Thrift Store. Yes, the Grandma statue with the gray hair and the mended broken left wrist next to the Grandpa statue.

In the shopping cart they went. Yes, they both had a new home sitting at the tiny kitchen sink behind the hot water tap. And truly loved and cared for.

"Good Morning Folks!" the old lady greeted them every morning.

At least until the Old Gray-Haired Lady passed on and then they would be donated again or simply discarded. Trashed. Unloved.

Yes, Thrown Away.

Just like she was.



## Join the Club!

We are a vibrant club with active writers and critique groups (with room for more), and we are wonderfully supportive of each other.

SSWC supports local writers and encourages everyone to write and publish. Attending meetings is free, but membership brings benefits, such as publication in the newsletter and anthology, use of our club's library, qualification for grants to attend conferences (limits apply), and ability to join our first-class critique groups.

MEMBERSHIP is paid on a yearly basis. If joining after April, dues are prorated by quarter (unless you are just really late in maintaining your membership!).

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual \$40.00/year

\_\_\_\_\_ Couple \$55.00/year

\_\_\_\_\_ Full-Time Student \$30/year

\_\_\_\_\_ Platinum Senior (70+) \$30.00/year

More information is on our website: [sactowriters.org](http://sactowriters.org)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Genres: \_\_\_\_\_

Published? Y / N (yes, includes self-published) Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Website/other info/address (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

### OFFICERS

#### Elected Officers:

|                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| President      | Ron Smith      |
| Vice President | Brittany Lord  |
| Secretary      | Cathy McGreevy |
| Treasurer      | Julia Beyers   |

#### Chairs:

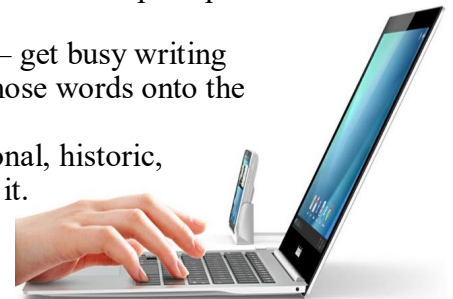
|                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Achievements</b> | <b>Y O U ????</b> |
| Coffee/Treats       | Al Gilding        |
| Conferences         | John Powell       |
| Critique Grps       | Brittany Lord     |
| Historian           | Pat Biasotti      |
| Librarian           | Ron Smith         |
| Membership          | Jeannie Turner    |
| Newsletter          | Mary Lou Anderson |
| <b>Nominations</b>  | <b>Y O U ????</b> |
| Prgm/Speakers       | Laura Kellen      |
| Publicity           | Paul Turner       |
| <b>Raffle</b>       | <b>Y O U ????</b> |
| Sunshine            | Nan Roark         |
| Website             | Wes Turner        |
| Workshops           | Paul Turner       |

### Motivational Prompt

Prompt? We don't need no stinkin' prompt.

It's NaNoWriMo time — get busy writing your next smash hit! Get those words onto the screen then onto the paper.

Make it thrilling, emotional, historic, romantic, fun ... just write it.



### MEETING INFORMATION

2nd Monday of every month

**7:00 - 9:00 PM**

**Next meeting:**

**Monday, November 11**  
**Crossroads Christian**  
**Fellowship Hall**

5501 Dewey Drive

Just north of the Dewey and Madison intersection

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

