

January, 2021

Suburban Scribe

Newsletter of the Sacramento Suburban Writers Club

sactowriters.org

Goodbye 2020! Good riddance. (2020—aka *Crusher of Hopes and Dreams*).
Hello and welcome 2021. We have high hopes for you.

Monday, January 11 — 7 p.m.

JUNE GILLAM WILL PRESENT: HOW TO HOLD A SUCCESSFUL ONLINE BOOK LAUNCH



June Gillam launched *House of Hoops* via a Zoom party, which is becoming the latest way to introduce a new book to readers. In January, she will present ZOOM YOUR BOOK LAUNCH, outlining the steps she took, and some pitfalls to avoid, in this covid-forced creative new world we live in.

Native Sacramentan, June, is a poet, novelist and writing teacher, who has authored a crime novel series fueled by an obsession to discover what makes people mad enough to kill. Her protagonist Hillary Broome and the murderers act as distorted mirrors for one another as well as for our 21st century culture in crisis:

- Superstores squashing small shop owners in *House of Cuts*
- A business woman nailed by patriarchy in *House of Dads*
- The villainy of developers on the Irish in *House of Eire*
- An old curmudgeon clings to a bygone time in *House of Hoops*

Amazon has grouped the books as a series although they do not have to be read in order. In fact, they straddle genres, and June calls them a "box-of-chocolate" novels.

June Gillam's *House of Hoops* was released in October as an ebook and paperback and is in production now at ACX to be available by January on Audible.com.

For details, see her Amazon Author Page:

<https://amzn.to/2ZX5OjK>

June can be contacted at: www.junegillam.com

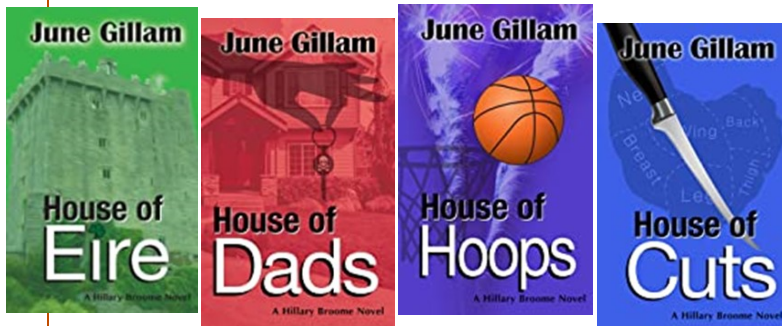


Table of Contents

Zoom Logon Details ... 2
Goodbye to 2020 ...3 & 4
Spellcheck Bloopers ... 5

Oh, gosh, there's just too much in this newsletter to fit it all into this little box.

Read it all. It's great!

Zoom Meeting Info—Briefly

When — Monday, January 11 at 7 p.m. **Yep, our "normal" time..**

Where — wherever you want to hold it.

AT 6:55 P.M. ON MONDAY, CLICK HERE TO JOIN THE MEETING —

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86326066153?pwd=OXpRZE91WkxMdHEwSzFrSTBDWlJCUT09>

More details for joining the meeting are on page 2.

We made it to 2021, now what?

Ronald Smith, SSWC President, invites you to our Zoom meeting .

Topic: Ronald Smith's Zoom Meeting

Time: January 11, 7:00 PM

To join Zoom meeting just click here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86326066153?pwd=OXpRZE9lWkxMdHEwSzFrSTBDWlJCUT09>

Or log into your Zoom account and enter:

Meeting ID: 863 2606 6153

Passcode: 666843

The Zoom logo is a blue square with the word "zoom" in white lowercase letters.

BIG thanks to those of you who have paid your 2021 Dues. We're going to have a great year for SSWC! Yay!

For those of you who have not yet paid your dues, just send the appropriate check to the membership chairman. The amounts are on the last page of this newsletter.

JS Turner
2145 Farnsworth Way
Rancho Cordova CA 95670-2214

Teaser for February's SSWC Meeting

Laura Kellen

Michael Fitzgerald, Professional Journalist, will share tales from a lifetime of experiences from journalist, columnist, writer, editor, teacher, and novelist.

He has been a professional writer and journalist since 1973. He has worked at six daily newspapers, was a correspondent for two wire services, and was a professor of journalism at several prestigious California colleges for 30 years.

Michael still writes for two newspapers, is actively publishing novels, and has a wealth of information, tips, tricks, and instruction to provide to anyone in the writing business.

GOOD RIDDANCE TO 2020!

Mike Brandt

People are mad about the COVID stay-at-home orders. Please, I was grounded 90% of the time between 6th and 8th grades. I trained for this in a Catholic school.

Gloria Cooksey

This was the year when the rest of the world slowed down to move at my normal pace. Whenever my friends would call to say, "I'm broke," or "I'm bored," it was my cue to reply, "Welcome to my world!"

Jeff

Here's my salute to 2020. May 2021 be a little "noisier!"

Mort

Eeny, meany, miney, Mo
Let's watch 2020 go!

Jeannie

Twenty-Twenty, an *even* year,
Was *odd* in many ways.
May Twenty-Twenty One, though *odd*,
bring us more even days.



.....

The Covid Dread

Karen Sepahmansour

"A sore throat," I said?
Off to seclusion and my upstairs bed.
The family asked, "Is it COVID?"
Oh, I hope not, I fret.

On the phone with the advice nurse
Waiting for almost an hour,
She finally answers that the doctor,
Is unavailable until the next day, so I sour.

My daughter-in-law says, "It's easy
To set an appointment online," although I have tried.
I need a COVID test as soon as possible.
My eyes saw nothing as I cried.

Please, God, no COVID, I dread,
I remain upstairs, mask on, in my bed.
My daughter-in-law says, "COVID test the next day."
In my room in isolation I remain with dread.

My husband is content; "It's a drive-through with a tent.
Mask your mouth; just open enough for your nose."
I listen and wait for the okay that's she finished.
The swab feels almost as long as a hose.

The next day I hope and pray that I am in the clear
For family and loved ones so precious in my heart.
I open my Kaiser and find an elation beyond belief.
No COVID detected, and I jump up for a healthy start.

Goodbye to 2020 and all of its woes,
Families have suffered enough throughout this year,
Hello to 2021 and may it be better than the past,
We have all shed too many tears.

GOOD RIDDANCE TO 2020! *CONTINUED*

Good-Bye 2020

Marlene Hoffman

You're not to blame.
 You're simply a space in time.
 A holder of a place.
 A simple year in which death and devils came
 to call.
 Another year of "The Thief."
 But now you live in infamy.
 A time of loss, of trials, of tribulations, of
 loneliness.
 A time of hate unleashed like a rabid dog.
 Yet you are only a year.
 A time in space.
 You're not to blame.
 You did not choose this infamy.
 You had no choice.
 For you are just a year. 2020. A holder of a
 place in time and space.

Hello 2021

Marlene Hoffman

You are a time to come.
 A holder of a space in time. You also have no choice.
 A single year to come, to be.
 But what will you be?
 A time of love?
 A time to walk on a sunny beach holding hands with
 another sweet spirit?
 A time of plenty?
 A time of no worries?
 A time to paint pretty pictures?
 A time to craft and carve pretty gourds?
 A time to visit family?
 A time to be a welcome cherished member of your
 family?
 A time of inclusion instead of rejection?
 A time when everything goes right and according to a
 good plan?
 A time for my heart to sing?
 Yes, 2021, what will you be?
 But, Hello anyway.
 You are now The New Space In Time.

Paul, aka Cle' (Klay) Curbo:

My fond farewell, my fond goodbye, my troubles spared me from death's despair, little troubles huddling here. The blank worries of a separate life, I sought to fill it with family full. Yet separation ruled my strife, and with it as companion wrote on, and on the imagined path of one whose strange awakening one night on November's cold Nob Hill, did flesh out the story of common stride, with secrets lost and rediscovered yet not full. The tale, it grew, until I came as writer to his end. The tale bared truth near to home, though faraway it fared. Oh Maggie and Ryger, I have recounted mere parts so dear, not finished with your lives. In next the sequel tome, I troth, your truthes will shed the greater lights. "For the Love of Maggie O'Die."

Now seeking readers beta. Cle.Curbo@gmail.com.

M.L.

My sister says that 2020 was a daily re-run of *Groundhog Day* — the same day repeating *ad infinitum*.

Bob Greeley

20-20 Great vision.

"20-20 Hind-sight" implies we see clearly, especially what were errors.

In 2025 we will look back.

What will we consider 2020's errors?

A bio-war battle lost, police defunding, Seattle, Nashville, New York's Nursing Home deaths, Internet censorship, media bias, agenda news (will we ever acknowledge propaganda?), election fraud [accusations], a wall, an impeachment, an octogenarian leading the House, a French Laundry Bozzo Governor, homeless "tolerance", ANTIFA, decriminalizing felons, AOC, and Bernie, the selling of America?

Time will tell.

Microsoft Word Spell Check Bloopers

Eva Wise

Oops!

Here is something to think about when you use the Microsoft spell check:

My sentence

Is there anything else?

Graham laughed as his stomach grumbled.

Is that you brother?

Suddenly finding out you're a witch, which shouldn't exist in the first place, was a lot to take in.

How can bare feet be so sensual?

Katy was due to arrive at six.

He took both her hands in his.

Are you there, Gavin?

Jim was a wiry built man, about five foot six as well, with red hair.

Is the jeep parked down by the docks?

What they want

Is they're anything else?

Graham laughed as his stomachs grumbled.

Are that you brother?

Suddenly finding out you is a witch, which shouldn't exist in the first place, was a lot to take in.

How can bare feet is so sensual?

Katy was due to arriving at six.

He took both them hands in his.

Are you their, Gavin?

Jim was a wiry built operate/(staff), about five foot six as well, with red hair.

Do the docks park the jeep down?

More to come next month.

Yay! Member Success!

Jeri (Geraldine) Roraback

I would like to announce that I have launched TWO books in the last couple months.

From Behind the Chair, A Soul Seekers Journey to Freedom
9/26/2020

The ABC's of Never Having Another Bad Hair Day 12/1/2020

They were both Amazon Best Sellers in seven categories and different countries.

They are both on my website for sale with a signed copy.

<https://www.jeribrown-roraback.com/>

Right now there is a bundle sale.

There is also a special on the on line class/meet the author.

Jeri (Geraldine) Roraback

aka: Jeri Brown-Roraback Phd. Cht.

916-531-9838

Cookbook Group

This might not actually be called a "critique group" but a member mentioned she was working on a cookbook which led several to join in saying they were working on one too.

So ... if you are thinking about, or actually working on, a cookbook for your family or for publication or for sale, contact Brit or Mary Lou about details so this group can get started.

We can get together on line with Zoom or Skype and plan to meet in person when this #@*##* pandemic is over.

Korean Drama Techniques

Characters You Care About

Catherine McGreevy

Fans often compare Korean dramas to “crack,” because they can be so addicting. In my last article I promised to share K-drama techniques that can make your own stories impossible to put down.

First and most important, they make us care about the characters.

No matter how exciting a plot, a reader won't invest emotionally in a story unless he or she connects to the people that inhabit it. Not just the hero, either, but the side characters, and even the villain. How to do this? The answer is to make them complex, three-dimensional, and unpredictable.

In the best K-dramas, antagonists often have compelling reasons for what they do and even surprise us by occasionally seeing the error of their ways. At the same time, a character who originally seemed “good” may be lured to change sides. This unpredictability makes the characters seem real. We sit on the edge of our seat wondering what choices they'll make. We root for them when they make a hard decision to do the right thing and grieve when a “good” character loses his moral compass.

A K-drama hero often starts with a deeply-ingrained negative trait such as arrogance or fear. This must be conquered for him to succeed at his goal. In fact, it may take two or three shows before we fully like him, but we keep watching because we see that despite his imperfections, the hero has the potential for good and is worthy of being cheered on.

A weakness can actually make us care *more* about a hero because it is often rooted in some tragedy from the past, such as childhood neglect or abuse, a traumatic accident, or the loss of a loved one. This backstory not only engages readers' sympathy and adds depth to the plot, but moves the story forward when the hero meets a significant person from his past, or is forced to deal with a previously ignored problem that rears up to disturb his current life.

“Wait! I want readers to *like* my hero!” I hear you protest.

The good news is that even if a protagonist has unlikable traits that need to be sorted out, it's not hard to get the reader on their side from the beginning. K-dramas do this by showing the hero performing a small act of kindness up front—returning a lost item, tying a child's shoelace, or sharing an umbrella.

An example of this technique happens in the first episode of *Start Up* (on Netflix), when a penniless, bitter orphan is briefly taken in by a kind old woman. The youth is tempted to steal her hard-earned money but makes the difficult choice not to. By the end of this scene, I was anxious to learn whether his better nature would continue to win and if his hard life would turn around. I wanted to keep watching because by now I truly *cared* about what happened to this character.

As you see, the show succeeded in grabbing my emotions.

Creating more complex and less predictable characters will help grab your readers' emotions as well, whether you're writing crime, suspense, action, paranormal, romance, literary fiction, or memoir. Resist the temptation to make your heroes too perfect or too strong, or your antagonists too purposelessly evil. Giving characters strengths *and* weaknesses will add tension and depth to the story, and make your reader emotionally invested in finding out what happens to them.

And that guarantees a page-turner!

History of Carol “Oh, Holy Night”

Pat Biasotti



The beloved Christmas carol, “Oh, Holy Night,” or “Cantique de Noel” in French, has an interesting history. In the French town of Roquemaure in 1843, the priest wanted to celebrate the repair of the church organ and commissioned a citizen named Placide Cappean to write a Christmas poem. Cappean was proud of his poem, “Minuit Cretiens.” (Translation: “Midnight Christians”) and soon asked composer Adolphe Adams to put it to music. Exact facts are obscure, but it is said that in 1847 an opera singer, Emily Laurey, premiered it at Midnight Mass in Roquemaure. The French people loved it and its popularity spread. However, a few years later the authorities discovered that Cappean, the lyricist, was a socialist and Adams, a Jew, thus they forbid it to be sung at services. Too late, because the French continued to sing “Cantique de Noel” in their homes.

In the early eighteen hundreds John Sullivan Dwight, a Bostonian, studied to be a Unitarian minister. However he suffered severe panic attacks and had to abandon that calling, becoming a recluse. He found a new outlet for his training and talents by founding “Dwight’s Journal of Music,” which became a popular magazine for those interested in music. Thirty years later, in 1855, he heard the French version of the carol and was greatly impressed by lines in the third verse: *Truly He taught us to love one another, His law is love and His gospel peace. Chains He shall break for the slave is our brother, and in His name all oppression shall cease.* (Dwight’s version) He kept the original meaning intact, but translated the French lyrics into the version above and into the hauntingly beautiful ones we sing today. As the editor of the Journal, he used that publication to popularize the carol in the United States and it also appeared in several songbooks of the time. As this was during the Civil War, it became very popular in the North. Dwight firmly believed that Christ came to free all men, and as a strong Abolitionist he hoped all men, even those in the South, would embrace this truth.

There is a legend that during the fierce fighting during the Franco-Prussian War, on Christmas Eve, 1871, a French soldier emerged from the trenches, and stood on the battlefield unarmed. This crazy man shocked both sides and they ceased firing. Lifting his eyes to heaven, he started singing “Cantique de Noel.” He had sung all three verses when a German soldier came out from his hiding place and broke into Martin Luther’s carol, “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come.” It is said that the fighting stopped for twenty-four hours in honor of Christmas Day.

In 1906 Adams was dead and Cappean and Dwight old men when “O Holy Night” startled the world by being the first song heard on the radio. At that time radio waves transmitted only Morse Code. However Reginald Fessenden, a university professor and before that, the chief chemist for Thomas Edison, figured out how to combine two frequencies in order to carry the human voice. Hoping it would work, he started reading from the Book of Luke: *And in those days there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus...* . Wireless operators on ships at sea and those at newspapers sat shocked and open-mouthed as the usual dots and dashes were interrupted by a human voice. An angel? A miracle? Then Fessenden picked up his violin and started playing “O Holy Night.” Thus through this Christmas Eve miracle music would be heard all over the world.

COPY AND DEADLINES

Submit **original** written and edited/corrected 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 book completions and launches, other meetings, apps, 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
 Deadline is about two (2) weeks prior to the meeting date.

WORKSHOPS

Gloria Cooksey

Continuing the club's efforts to get back to "normal," workshops will once again be offered. Gloria Cooksey has volunteered to organize them.

January's topic will be "Inspiration."

You might wish to check out the links below prior to the meeting.

One will take you to an inspiring article from "The Lives of Others" by Richard Russo, Harper's, June 2020, pp. 27-34. It's a great article!

<https://harpers.org/archive/2020/06/the-lives-of-others-when-does-imagination-become-appropriation/>

The other is a link to author Jim Roberts' website. His unique presentation of his résumé relates well to the topic of inspiration.

<https://jimrobertsfiction.com/>

Inspiration, as we know, is an abstraction; there are no right or wrong methods of becoming inspired.

I am preparing a presentation based on subjective perspectives with the goal of generating spontaneous discussion among the entire group.

If you would like to present anecdotal examples of specific types of inspiration that were, or will be, used in your own creative fiction, please let me know in advance and I will include you as a presenter within the framework of the workshop.

Gloria's contact is: Gloria.cooksey@usa.net

Have a happy and safe new year.

Invite from Kim Edwards — California Writers' Club

If you are working on books, this message is for you:

Friday Jan 8 at 10 am, Michael Larsen of Larsen-Pomada (they started the SF Writers Conf.) will join us to talk about the 3 c's for establishing your online presence in a changing publishing landscape.

He will also cover query, elevator pitch and book proposal. Michael will also be discussing a couple queries or first pages from a novel or memoir submitted by a member. They can find out details on our website. Kim

You don't have to be a member of CWC to join the zoom meeting. Check out

<http://www.cwcsacramentowriters.org/>

Members: Send an email to Mary Lou with "SSWC Yipee" in the subject line for a chance to win a prize.

Okay, okay, so you want to get paid for your writing. I certainly understand, and you have the time while you're sitting at home right now. All you need is words, and they're free! Oh, and you'll need time and imagination and grammar. Well, you get the idea.

This is a website listing many magazines that pay for articles.

<https://www.theinternationalfreelancer.com/1-a-word/>



Inspiration? B. Jodry

"Somewhere over the rainbow bluebirds fly, and a new story is being hatched."

"Somewhere over the rainbow bluebirds fly; the story bird flies over my rainbow, why then oh why can't I catch it for my next true story."

"Somewhere over the rainbow bluebirds fly, why then oh why can't I ... I did wish upon a star". Barbara Jodry's entry

Barbara adds: I found my copy of Kiyo Sato's book *Dandelion Through the Crack*, and it's been inspiring to re-read her quest for the American Dream.

This may be all the inspiration that I need to pursue my dream.

See you all Monday January 11 via Zoom!

Harlequin Launches Website For Aspiring Writers

Laura Kellen

Are you an aspiring romance writer?

Now it's easier than ever to become a published romance writer. Harlequin - yes, that Harlequin, the famous romance publisher - has launched a new website, appropriately located at: WriteforHarlequin.com. Aspiring writers can get advice directly from Harlequin's editors, learn about open calls for story submissions, and access writing guidelines that teach you how to write a successful Harlequin story.

Do you think that your odds of becoming a published author for Harlequin aren't that good? The numbers may surprise you. Harlequin had added 160 new debut authors over the past 5 years - and they're always looking for new, fresh voices.

Do you think that Harlequin isn't your style? You might be surprised. It's not all about "bodice rippers" these days. Harlequin has 13 different product lines to write for, including: LGBTQ+, medical-themed romances, romantic espionage and suspense, and stories which feature everything from pets, to military vets, to good old fashioned cowboys.

In case you haven't included it in the newsletter already, here's the link to the Sac Bee article about Edric's effort to exonerate bus driver Quinton Watts for a fatal casino bus crash in 2008. It appeared in print on December 17... it's quite extensive. The entire article took about ten pages in Section A of the Sunday paper.

Happy new year,
Gloria C.

<https://www.sacbee.com/news/investigations/article247819345.html>



Join the Club!

We are a vibrant club with active writers, have several critique groups (with room for more), and stay 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 / year

_____ Couple \$55 / year

_____ Full-Time Student \$30 / year

_____ Platinum Senior (70+) \$30 / year

More information is on our website: sactowriters.org

Name: _____ Genres: _____

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

Phone: _____ Address: _____

Website/other info/address (optional): _____

MAIL YOUR DUES TO: Jeannie Turner. Her address is in the Directory. If you don't have one, email Jeannie at turnerjeannie48@gmail.com and she will let you know where to send it.

OFFICERS

Elected Officers:

President	Ron Smith
Vice President	Brittany Lord
Secretary	Linda Coveli
Treasurer	Julie Beyers

Chairs:

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

There's a spot in the list above for YOU!

P R O M P T S

Write all the reasons you should volunteer to send a writing prompt to the newsletter editor each month.

Anyone can make up your own prompts or check online for lists of ideas.

Easy-peazy.

Then send your name to Mary Lou to let her know you will take over.



MEETING INFORMATION

7:00 - 9:00 PM

Next meeting:

Monday, January 11

Location: Your home.

Via your computer, tablet, or cell phone.

*All writers are encouraged to attend. Membership is not mandatory but brings privileges — like **publication in the newsletter!***

