

# The Writer's Life

[www.sdwritersguild.org](http://www.sdwritersguild.org)

December, 2013

Letter from publisher to Snoopy: "We are sending you two rejection slips, one for your story and one for your next story." Charles Schulz



## Holiday Party for Members and Invited Guests

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS:** The December meeting/party **will be on Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, NOT the usual meeting time of the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday.** (Regular meeting place . . . 7:00 PM.)

If you would like to donate a copy of a book you have published as part of the door prize drawing, bring it to the party *in a gift bag*. In addition, a memorial gift drawing will be donated by Ellen Shaw Tufts to honor two past SDW/EG presidents, Ruth Ritchie and Paul Darby.

This year we will be joined by members of SD/PEN (San Diego Professional Editors Network) to network and foster some organizational mingling. Introduce yourself and get acquainted with another part of the writing community.

Bring your favorite hors d'oeuvre or holiday goodies: beverages, plates, and utensils will be provided.

Copies of the 2013 edition of *The Guilded Pen* will be on hand for sale if you want to buy some Christmas gifts. The price is \$15.00/copy, which includes sales tax..

Enjoy the good cheer of your fellow writers, editors and publishers – See you December 19<sup>th</sup>.

## Freelance Holiday Writing

Most print magazines will purchase seasonal articles at least six months in advance: check their publication guidelines. Holiday features for major newspapers are assigned at least a month before they are due, and sometimes longer. Feature articles which report on holiday events after the fact, of course, have different deadlines.

Think ahead now for Valentine's Day, Easter, St. Patrick's Day or the Fourth of July.

## Marketing to Libraries

According to ALA (American Library Association) libraries buy nearly \$1.8 billion in books annually. Donating a copy of your book to a main library may generate orders from area libraries. Also, obtaining a review in library journals will bring your book to the attention of library buyers.

(Tip #6 from "52 Ways to Sell More Books" - online newsletter from Penny Sansevieri)

### Coming Soon to SDW/EG

**January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014** – Neil Senturia, author of *I'm There for You Baby* and Barbara Bry, author of U-T business column will be discussing using humor in writing a book on business and transitioning to a weekly newspaper column.

**February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014** – Charlene Baldrige will speak on writing as a critic.

## The Prez Says . . .

Congratulations to our new officers for 2014!

**Harry Huntsman** is the newly elected president, and **Simone Aries** was elected secretary. **Bob Doublebower**, vice-president, and **Marcia Buompensiero**, treasurer, were re-elected for the coming year.

Barbara Crothers is leaving the Board and deserves a big thank you for serving as secretary, as well as preparing our speaker's gift mugs each meeting.

I look forward to continuing serving as newsletter editor and working on several projects that are in process. I have thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated the opportunity to serve as president during the past two very busy years; see page two for a review of activities and accomplishments.

*Ruth Leyse-Wallace*, President

### The next meeting is

**Thursday, December 19, 2013; 7:00 PM** – The **Holiday party** Bring your favorite holiday treat. Beverages and utensils will be provided.

**Did you hear?:** A federal judge ruled the Google's project to scan books without the writer's permission to create the world's largest digital library provides a public benefit and is fair use of copyrighted material, ending an eight-year lawsuit. SD UT 11/15/13

## A Tip of the Hat To . . .

**Larry Edwards** for being nominated for the Pulitzer Prize and the Benjamin Franklin Award for *Dare I Call It Murder?: A Memoir of Violent Loss*.

**Tom Larson** for the January, 2014 publication date of *The Sanctuary of Illness: A Memoir of Heart Disease* and his upcoming workshop "Writing About Illness".

**Gary Winters** whose short story "Día de los Muertos" will be published in the international magazine *The Caribbean Writer* in December.

**Sam Warren** for having his intermittent letters to the editor published in the SD UT.

**Tom Larson** for being interviewed on NPR regarding his article "On the Social Authorship of the Bible," just out at *Guernica*.

*If you, or someone you know, has published a book, scheduled a book signing, or has some other accomplishment to share, please submit to [Rtbl\\_ys@cox.net](mailto:Rtbl_ys@cox.net) to be included in our next newsletter. Let your light shine!*

## What You Missed - by Ellen Shaw Tufts

"Why did Frosty decide to live in mid-ocean? . . . Because Snowman is an island!". (from *Have Yourself a Punny Little Christmas*).

Dr. Richard Lederer, San Diego's distinguished author, verbivore, comedian, professor, columnist, and an admitted 75-year-old grandfather, made his appearance at the November meeting in 16th century Renaissance costume.

A Life member of the Guild and colorful featured guest speaker, he presented his amazing repertoire of puns, anecdotes, observations, palindromes, riddles and other spiels—including the origins of the American crossword puzzle. His chatter officially centered around notable anniversaries including the two-month old San Diego Central Library, the mid-November 150th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address in 1863, and the forthcoming 450th commemoration of the birthday of William Shakespeare in April, 2014.

For a finale, Lederer gave us footwork and a rousing chorus of "Brush Up Your Shakespeare," from Cole Porter's "Kiss Me, Kate" and our illustrious speaker closed the evening with a salute to San Diego and "all the people here who've helped Simone and me become our very best."

Dr. Lederer offered a generous philanthropic proposal: For a \$50.00 donation to the Guild by any attendee(s) at the meeting, the individual was offered a choice of 1) Lederer coming to your home organization, club or retirement village for a performance of "An Evening with Lederer", or 2) Lederer coming to your home and instructing up to eight guests in the fundamentals of what he calls "Texas Hold'em" or "The Great American Poker Game." What a personal donation of time and talent by this dedicated writer and performer!

## Activities/Achievements 2012 & 2013

The Guild has continued, improved, and added many activities and benefits for the members during 2012 and 2013.

The first and second editions of an anthology of member's work were published.

We had our first field trip and toured the new San Diego Library

A new & improved financial reporting system was initiated.

The Writers Resource Table is available at meetings for display of members' work as well as information of interest

SDW/EG mugs are now filled with supplies for writers and are presented to speakers in a gift bag.

The list of contacts for publicity about meetings was expanded to thirteen venues.

A Member Survey was conducted for assessing member's interests

The Manuscript Review Committee reviewed six submissions of fiction. Coming soon: capacity to review non-fiction and memoirs in addition to fiction.

A microphone was added to sound system.

A New Member packet is now available at meetings.

A "Member Resources" section was added to Member Directory.

The website was reviewed and updated.

A virtual library makes members' books available to other members.

A Speakers Bureau was initiated for members to inform interested groups about the guild as well as their own work. An information sheet about the guild – past and present – is available on request.

The SDW/EG newsletter included regular columns Tip of the Hat (Linda Loegel), What You Missed (Ellen Tufts), Writing Tips (Laurie Richards), American History (Richard Lederer and Caroline McCullagh), as well as articles contributed by Catherine Barr, Margaret Harmon, Harry Huntsman, and Ruth Leyse-Wallace, editor.

Monthly programs included agents, editors, journalists, poets, publishers, and speakers who discussed book cover design, self publishing, website development, writing historical fiction, memoirs, and science fiction/fantasy.

Coming Soon: a "Members' Works" page on the website for members to list titles of their published works and their URL.

Ideas, suggestions and volunteers are always welcome. See or call a member of the Board of Directors to share your inspirations or questions.

\*\*\* Appreciate your Board of Directors. \*\*\*

## American Trivia

by Richard Lederer and Caroline McCullagh

SDW/EG members Richard Lederer and Caroline McCullagh are the proud co-authors of *American Trivia: What We All Should Know About U.S. History, Culture & Geography* (Gibbs Smith Publisher, 2012). Over a span of three years, Rich and Caroline will share with you their journey through American history.

### The Land of the Free (Part III)

Some of our ancestors came to the New World to find freedom: freedom of thought, freedom of religion, freedom from the old shackles of caste and class. Others were transported as slaves. Once here, they didn't wait for freedom; they strove to achieve it:

✿ In 1955, Rosa Parks (1913-2005), an African American civil rights activist, refused to give up her seat on a public bus to a white man in Montgomery, Alabama. She was arrested for refusing to move to the back of the bus and was fined fourteen dollars. Her act of civil disobedience sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott led by Martin Luther King, Jr. Blacks in Montgomery boycotted buses for more than a year. In 1956, the U.S. Supreme Court declared segregated seating on the city's buses unconstitutional. The boycott ended, but its success encouraged other protests demanding civil rights for blacks.

✿ César Chávez (1927-1993) was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom posthumously in 1994 in recognition of his nonviolent activism and support of working people. A labor organizer, he started the National Farm Workers' Association, which later became the United Farm Workers. He led strikes and successful nationwide boycotts of grapes and lettuce to win better working conditions for field workers. His birthday, March 31, has become a holiday in a growing number of states.

✿ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968), an African American Baptist minister, was a leader of the civil rights movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968, when he was just thirty-nine years of age. He was instrumental in establishing the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, which promoted the right to vote for blacks and nonviolent demonstrations to protest racial discrimination. A powerful and charismatic orator, King, from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on August 28, 1963, delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech to more than 220,000 civil rights supporters. Many scholars rank that oration as the most important American speech of the twentieth century. His efforts helped lead to the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. He received the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize. In 1983, *continued* >>

## Eight Dialogue Shoulds . . .

by Laurie Richards

### 1. Listen to How People Talk.

Having a sense of natural speech patterns is essential to good dialogue. Start to pay attention to the expressions that people use and the music of everyday conversation.

### 2. Don't Strive to Make It Exactly like Real Speech.

But dialogue should *read* like real speech. How do you accomplish that? A transcription of a conversation would be completely boring to read. Edit out the filler words and unessential dialogue.

### 3. Don't Provide Too Much Information at Once.

It should not be obvious to readers that they're being fed important facts. Let the story unfold naturally. You don't have to tell the reader everything up front, and you can trust him or her to remember details from earlier in the story.

### 4. Break Up Dialogue with Action.

Remind your reader that your characters are human beings by grounding their dialogue in the physical world. Physical details also help break up the words on the page: long periods of dialogue are easier for the reader's eye when broken up by description, and vice versa.

### 5. Don't Overdo Dialogue Tags.

Veering too much beyond "he said/she said" only draws attention to the tags. You want the attention centered on your brilliant dialogue, not your ability to think of synonyms for "said."

### 6. Stereotypes, Profanity, and Slang.

Be aware of falling back on stereotypes, and use profanity and slang sparingly. These risk distracting or alienating your reader. Anything that takes the reader out of the fictional world you're working so hard to create is not your friend.

### 7. Read Widely.

Pay attention to why things work or don't work. Where did you stop believing in a character? How did dialogue help the character jump off the page?

### 8. Punctuate Dialogue Correctly.

The rules for punctuating dialogue can be confusing. A reader should get lost in your prose—not feel lost trying to follow your dialogue.

**Summarized from:** <http://fictionwriting.about.com/od/Crafttechnique/tp/dialogue.htm>

Wishing You a Happy Holiday Season

>> *continued The Land of the Free (Part III)*

Congress created a federal holiday — the third Monday in January — honoring Martin Luther King, Jr.

**San Diego Writers/Editors Guild**  
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<p><b>The Writer's Life</b> is published by  The San Diego Writers/Editors Guild  P. O. Box 881931  San Diego, CA 92168  Telephone: (619) 445-6656  General Meetings:  The Fourth Monday of the month  <b>The December 2013 Meeting (Holiday party)</b>  <b>Will be the Third Thursday (Dec 19<sup>th</sup>)</b>  6:30 P.M. - Sign-in and Networking  6:45 P.M. - Business Meeting  7:00 - 8:30 P.M. - Speaker/Program  Location: 3851 Rosecrans, SD, CA 92110  San Diego County  Health Services Complex  Visit our web site for a map  <a href="http://www.SDWritersGuild.org">www.SDWritersGuild.org</a>  Membership: \$36.00 per year  Guests: \$5.00 per meeting</p>	Board Of Directors		Term Expires December 31st
	President	Ruth Leyse-Wallace	2015
	Vice President	Bob Doublebower	2014
	Secretary	Barbara Crothers	2013
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	Directors-At- Large	Simone Arias	2015
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		Harry Huntsman	2015
		Ellen Shaw Tufts	2015
Past President	Sam Warren	2013	
<u>Mission Statement</u> The San Diego Writers/Editors Guild shall promote, support, and encourage the writing arts for adults and youth.			