

# The Writer's Life

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

June, 2014

Writing is play the same way that playing the piano is playing, or putting on a theatrical “play” is play. Just because something is fun doesn’t mean it isn’t serious.

Margaret Atwood



## Character-Building: Literary Games for June 23 Meeting

Playing and creating are two fruits from the same tree. And all writers need to create powerful characters.

\*Literary fiction is “character-driven.”

\*Plot-driven bestsellers’ characters must be so appealing that we’re eager to spend time with them in a series of books.

\*Non-fiction uses vignettes whose characters live the points the author is making.

If every writer must create powerful characters, then all Guild members will want to play three literary games with Margaret Harmon, to trigger our own original, irresistible characters. Bring your favorite pen and paper or laptop and plan to have fun.

Author of *The Genie Who Had Wishes of His Own: 21st Century Fables*; *The Man Who Learned to Walk in Shoes That Pinch: Contemporary Fables*, and *A Field Guide to North American Birders: A Parody*, Margaret has written over 200 essays, humor pieces, features, and reviews published nationally. She was Books Editor for *Herself Magazine*. Her fables are taught in college literature and oral interpretation classes, aired on National Public Radio; and analyzed in a French doctoral dissertation. A former college English and French teacher, she believes we do our best work when we’re enjoying ourselves.

## SDW/EG members Finalists in the 2014 San Diego Book Awards

The Twentieth Annual San Diego Book and Writing Awards will be held on Saturday, June 21, 2014, 6:00-10:00 P.M. Author Mark Clements will be master of ceremonies.

*Dare I Call It Murder?: A Memoir of Violent Loss*, by Larry Edwards is a finalist in the Published Memoir category. *The Genie Who Had Wishes of His Own* by Margaret Harmon is a finalist in the Published Anthology/Short Story Collection category. All entries were reviewed by at least three judges.

The awards ceremony will be held at the AMN Healthcare Building, 12400 High Bluff Drive, San Diego, CA 92130. Tickets are \$29 per person. Go to <http://www.sdbookawards.com/> or send a check and name(s) of attendees to San Diego Book Awards, PO Box 501943, San Diego, CA 92150-1943. The deadline for reservations is June 18.

## The Guided Pen: 2014 Edition

As of June 10<sup>th</sup>, there are 82 days until the September 1st deadline for submission to the 2014 SDW/EG anthology.

Surely that is enough time for you to get that idea that has been buzzing around in your head organized into 1500 words, get it formatted and edited, complete the Author Agreement form and send it to Marcia Buompensiero, editor. That is 19 words a day, if that is how you like to schedule your writing. Or, start now, get it down in one day and have 81 days to edit, format, edit again, complete the forms and hit the “send” key. ([Lonzahn2@cox.net](mailto:Lonzahn2@cox.net)) You’re not the only one that will be glad you did. ☺

### The next meeting will be Monday, June 23, 2014:

6:30 PM sign in and networking,

6:45 PM business meeting,

7:00-8:30 program: Margaret Harmon

## A Tip of the Hat To . . .

**Ron Howeth** for publication of his book *Final Return*.

**Richard Lederer** for publication of his book *Monsters Unchained*.

**Catherine Barr** for her presentation on creating an index at the May SDPEN meeting.

**Gary Winters** for having his novel *The Deer Dancer* included in the San Diego County Library catalog.

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

## What You Missed . . by Ellen Shaw Tufts

Supposing you were in the house at the May 19 "Open Mic Night", you could be mentally transported – in three-minute glimpses – to a Boston Fine Arts Gallery or a Mission Beach bonfire, a 20th century Arkansas farm, or you might hear an impassioned plea for peace.

Sixteen readers used the chance to show off both published and in-progress writing. In order of appearance: Margaret Harmon, "*But What Will Happen to Humans?*"; Marie Dimercurio, "*From Birth until Sunset*"; Rick Peterson, "*Grey Ladies*"; Harry Huntsman, "*Farewell to Punishment*"; Bob Doublebower, "*Circling Bench*"; Ruth Leyse Wallace, "*The Greatest Power in the Universe*"; and Norma Posy from "*Wrestling*." Also Mardie Schroeder, "*The Watering Hole*"; Corey Lynn Fayman, "*Border Field Blues*"; Carolyn Jaynes, "*Jerome's Serenade*"; Ty Piz, "*In Two Seconds a Lot Can Happen*"; Lisa Hunt, "*One Salute Too Many*"; Mark Fogg, "*A Father's Love*"; Gered Beeby "*Forward – A Memoir*"; Anne Hoiberg, "*No Boots on the Ground*"; and Dave Feldman, "*Next Up—Lettuce Roulette*."

Audience comment cards were later turned in, giving our participants cheers and other comments.

## Forensic Linguistics

How You Write vs What You Write—  
Forensic linguistics is an investigative technique that helps experts determine authorship by identifying quirks in a writer's style. Software can analyze 1) sequences of adjacent words, 2) sequences of characters, 3) most common words, and 4) preference for long or short words. Forensics linguistics deals in probabilities rather than certainties and was used in concluding that J.K. Rowling (author of Harry Potter series) was the author of *The Cuckoo's Calling* which she wrote under a pen name. She later confessed, yes, she was the author.

Ref: David Zax. *Smithsonian*, March 2014

## One Book, One San Diego

The One Book, One San Diego selection for 2014 is *Monstress*, stories by Lysley Tenorio.

In its eighth year, One Book, One San Diego is a community reading program; a partnership between KPBS, San Diego Public Library and the San Diego County Library. The purpose of the program is to bring together our community in the shared experience of reading and participation in related events. Members of the community can choose any of the 82 city, county or college library locations to check out the book.

From more than 800 nominations representing 350 different titles, the committee chose this book of quirky short stories set amongst Filipino-American communities in California and the Philippines. A children's and middle-grade companion book to complement the adult selection will be announced in June.

## A Good Time Was Had By All: Open Mic night May, 2014



## Have An Opinion? Write an Essay

In general an essay is a piece of writing based on an author's personal point of view. Criticism, strategic declarations, learned arguments, observations and experiences from daily life, and recollections are often presented in essay form. While they are essentially opinion pieces, op-eds are balanced with factual information. Since op-ed pieces are longer than letters to the editor, authors have the opportunity to more fully develop their arguments.

Milos Jenicek, MD, PhD.\* defines five types of essays:

1. A narrative or expository essay tells a story. An expository essay may be the opinion of the author, a how-to-manual, or an explanation of a process.
2. A classification essay illustrates how a subject may be organized, using scales or groupings.
3. Descriptive essays provide a less-structured subjective portrait of events or phenomena.
4. Cause and effect essays may be argumentative or persuasive, presenting evidence for the argument, establishing a position, or proposing a solution to a problem.
5. A literary essay may be seen as a subcategory of critical essays; an essay about other essays. Book reviews may be presented as literary essays.

The New York Times web page\*\* has this to say about op-ed writing: "People certainly don't write for us for the money; the payment, frankly, is peanuts. They write for the influence, for the chance to reach an audience, to say something that's been bothering them, driving them crazy, something that no one else seems to be saying. We're not only interested in policy, politics or government. . . . We are especially interested in finding points of view that are different from those expressed in Times editorials ... Most pieces we publish are between 400 and 1,200 words. They can be longer when they arrive."

The NY Times advises "write in your own voice. If you're funny, be funny...Your most important responsibilities have to do with originality and truthfulness...You can't plagiarize yourself, or someone else...nothing is accepted that has appeared in another publication, either print or digital. Disclose anything that might be seen as a conflict of interest, financial or otherwise. The writer always gets to see it before we run it, but never gets to choose the headline, or the art that goes with a piece."

\* Writing, Reading and Understanding Modern Health Sciences by Milos Jenicek, Professor of Epidemiology and Statistics at McMaster University Montreal, 2014. Canada. CRC Press. Boca Raton, FL.

\*\*Excerpts from [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/14/opinion/op-ed-and-you.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/14/opinion/op-ed-and-you.html?_r=0)

## Members' Works to be on Website

Market your own publications as well as join the showcasing of Guild members' talents by listing your work on the upcoming "Members Works" page on the SDW/EG website.

Submission forms and directions were included in the May newsletter and may be printed from the website

[www.SDWritersGuild.org](http://www.SDWritersGuild.org). Send completed forms to SDW/EG, PO Box 881931, San Diego, CA 92168.

## Events in June

### eBooks

June 21st at Cardiff Library from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM, Andrea Glass will be presenting information on writing, publishing and strategies for selling ebooks. For more information call (858) 350-5235 or go to [info@theebookacademy.com](mailto:info@theebookacademy.com).

### Professional Writing

Also on June 21st, starting at 9:00 AM, the University of Phoenix is holding the 2nd Annual Writers Expo. The Expo workshops will promote professional writing and fees will raise money for scholarships. For a fee of \$20.00 twenty-five authors may arrange for a display table. Contact Tony Vianna at (760)931-9695 or [simpatico1@juno.com](mailto:simpatico1@juno.com) for more information.

In April 2014 The Authors Guild asked a federal judge on the appeals court in New York to reinstate its lawsuit against Google, saying Google, Inc. is stealing business from online book retailers and violating copyright laws with its massive book digitization project.

### Coming Soon to SDW/EG

**July 28th, 2014:** Ingrid Croce and Jim Rock will share their experience of writing as a couple about musician Jim Croce.

**August 25th, 2014** - Playwright Alan Kilpatrick will share his experiences trying to please actors, directors, and audiences. Not necessarily in that order.

**San Diego Writers/Editors Guild**  
**Post Office Box 881931**  
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| <p><b>The Writer's Life</b> is published by<br/> The San Diego Writers/Editors Guild<br/> P. O. Box 881931<br/> San Diego, CA 92168<br/> Telephone: (858) 571-0201<br/> General Meetings:<br/> The Fourth Monday of the month<br/> 6:30 P.M. - Sign-in and Networking<br/> 6:45 P.M. - Business Meeting<br/> 7:00 - 8:30 P.M. - Speaker/Program<br/> Location: 3851 Rosecrans, SD, CA 92110<br/> San Diego County<br/> Health Services Complex<br/> Visit our web site for a map<br/> <a href="http://www.SDWritersGuild.org">www.SDWritersGuild.org</a><br/> Membership: \$36.00 per year<br/> Guests: \$5.00 per meeting</p> | <b>Board<br/>Of<br/>Directors</b>     |   | 2-year<br>Term<br>Expires<br>December<br>31st |
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|  | <u>Mission Statement</u>              |   |   |
| The San Diego Writers/Editors Guild shall promote, support, and encourage the writing arts for adults and youth.   |                                       |   |   |