

The Writer's Life

www.sdwritersguild.org

November, 2016



"Books permit us to voyage through time, to tap the wisdom of our ancestors."
—Carl Sagan

THE GUILDED PEN ANTHOLOGY LAUNCH



Join us Monday, November 28, for the launch of the fifth edition of *The Guided Pen*, an anthology of the works of members of the Guild. Because the program will include selected readings of pieces in the anthology, the meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m., earlier than usual.

Copies of *The Guided Pen* will be on sale for \$15 per copy. Payment may be by cash, check, or credit card. If paying by cash, please bring exact change.

Registration will be open at 6:15 p.m., with time for networking until the program begins at 6:30 p.m. A Marketing Support Meeting precedes at 5:30 p.m. Admission for all attendees this month is free, and light refreshments will be served, so bring a friend!

BOARD ELECTIONS

Congratulations to the Newly Elected Board of Directors!

At the October meeting, four members were elected to two-year terms on the Board of Directors, beginning in 2017:

- Bob Doublebower
- Marcia Buompensiero
- Rick Peterson
- Gered Beeby

Congratulations to the four Board Members on their re-election.

NATIONAL NOVEL WRITING MONTH EVENTS

During the month of November, San Diego Writers Ink is hosting free Come Write In/Room to Write events. Drop in to write your novel at any of the following times:

- **Mondays:** 1 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- **Tuesdays:** 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- **Fridays:** 9 a.m. to Noon

Both members and nonmembers are welcome at the Ink Spot (located at 2730 Historic Decatur Rd. #202) throughout National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo).

TIP OF THE HAT TO...



❖ **Phil Pryde**, whose book, the fifth edition of *San Diego: An Introduction to the Region*, was selected to be the table prize for the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy's recent dinner and fundraiser, attended by about 300 guests.

❖ SDW/EG members **Gered Beeby, Lawrence Carleton, Tom Leech, Muriel Sandy, Sandra Yeaman** and **Amy Zajac** all have works featured in the 2016 *Oasis Journal*, published by Imago Press. Published pieces include short stories (*A Christmas Surprise* by Amy Zajac and *BJ* by Lawrence Carleton), poems ("Tackling Life's Early Dilemmas" by Tom Leech), essays

(*The Elements of Trust* by Gered Beeby), and memoirs (*Kindness Is Universal* by Muriel Sandy, and *Boys Will Be Boys* by Sandra Yeaman).

❖ **Sam Warren**, whose book, *A Hot Time in the Cold War*, was translated into Russian.

WHAT YOU MISSED BY MARDIE SCHROEDER

At our October meeting, speaker **Jonathan LaPoma** presented points to consider on screenwriting.

You need strong characters. People have to care about them. What are their inner and outer goals? What's going on underneath? And goals can change.

You need a theme. It should be concise, structured, and short (100 pages). If you have these, then you have a story.

When getting started, consider working in **layers**, i.e. rough drafts. Just get the ideas down, and don't try to write it perfectly at first. Consider the ending first and work backward.

Dialog should move the story forward, communicate information, create conflict, and move the audience to tears, laughter, or other emotion. Dialog should reveal the characters in the way they speak. Don't have huge chunks of dialog (3 lines max). Show and don't tell. Do as much as you can *without* dialog. Don't repeat anything the audience has just watched happen onscreen.

Being Successful

Write a great script. Enter contests, competitions, and go to film festivals (a great way to network).

Write a short film. Horror and thrillers are easier to get produced than dark dramas.

Learn how to pitch your work. Research production companies that film your kind of script. You don't need an agent.

Final Note

No matter how well crafted the script, it will end up entirely different on screen once the director, producers, actors, and others put in their two cents' worth.

Resources

- *Story* by Robert McKee
- *The Screenwriter's Bible* by David Trottier
- *Save the Cat* by Blake Snyder
- *Adventures in the Screen Trade* by William Goldman

Websites

- The Black List: <https://blacklist.com>
- Filmfreeway: <https://filmfreeway.com>
- Inktip: <https://inktip.com>
- Movie Bytes: <http://www.moviebytes.com>
- Nicholl Fellowship: <http://www.oscars.org/nicholl>
- Stage 32: <https://www.stage32.com>

LOCAL WRITERS' CONFERENCES

- The 33rd annual SDSU Writers' Conference is scheduled for Jan. 20-22, 2017 at the San Diego Marriott in Mission Valley. For more information, see <http://www.ces.sdsu.edu/wc>.
- The Southern California Writers' Conference is scheduled for Feb. 17-20, 2017 (Presidents' Day weekend) at the Crowne Plaza San Diego. For more information, see <http://writersconference.com/sd/>.

EVENTS FOR WRITERS & READERS

- Mysterious Galaxy presents Small Business Saturday and Indies First Day on Saturday, Nov. 26 from 10:00 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- San Diego Writers, Ink hosts their annual holiday party on Friday, Dec. 2 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.
- Mysterious Galaxy presents Pamela Samuels Young, reading and signing her book, *Anybody's Daughter*, on Saturday, Dec. 3 at 4:00 p.m.
- Jonathan Maberry hosts The Writers Coffeehouse at Mysterious Galaxy on Sunday, Dec. 4 from noon to 3:00 p.m. Writers of all levels are welcome to attend.
- Warwick's presents Anthony Award-winner Matt Coyle, reading and signing his new book, *Dark Fissures*, on Tuesday, Dec. 6 at 7:30 p.m.
- Mysterious Galaxy presents Local Author Meet & Greet on Sunday, Dec. 11 at noon.
- Warwick's presents *New York Times* bestselling author Anne Rice with Christopher Rice, signing *Prince Lestat and the Realms of Atlantis* on Friday, Dec. 16 at 7:00 p.m.
- San Diego Writers, Ink is offering a Winter Solstice Writing Retreat hosted by Judy Reeves on Tuesday, Dec. 20 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. For more information, see <http://www.sandiegowriters.org/1220-winter-solstice-writing-retreat-with-judy-reeves/>.

NANOWRIMO TIPS

If you're competing in NaNoWriMo this month, you should be about halfway through your book by now. (November 15th = 25,000 words) But if you haven't hit the magic number yet, never fear! Here are three tips to help increase your word count:

1. **Write out all contractions.** Never write "don't" or "won't" when "do not" and "will not" each add an additional word to your total. Sure, it's a cheap trick, but it boosts your daily totals when every word counts.
2. **Try word sprints.** What's a sprint? Just like in the world of competitive running, word sprints involve timers and moving as quickly as you can. Set an alarm for 10 minutes and see how many words you can rack up. If you need even more encouragement, check Twitter or Facebook groups to find sprinting buddies. Race each other for the highest word count, and keep trying to outdo your writing pals throughout the day.
3. **Name your chapters.** Just like in the olden days, when authors like Charles Dickens were paid by the word, they often provided descriptive indicators about what was going to happen in each chapter. You can use this trick to boost your word count, too. Don't be afraid to get wordy, like "Chapter the Third, In Which Our Hero Discovers An Empty Well, Falls Into Said Well, And Tries Desperately to Escape His Predicament."

UPCOMING GUILD EVENTS

December 12, 2016: Holiday Party (note this is the 2nd Monday, not the 4th!)

IN THE NEW YEAR...

February 2017: Diana Hinds on launching your book, PR, and top tips for social media.

March 27, 2017: Mark Reichenthal, attorney for literary matters, to discuss contracts between authors and agents, publishers and others.