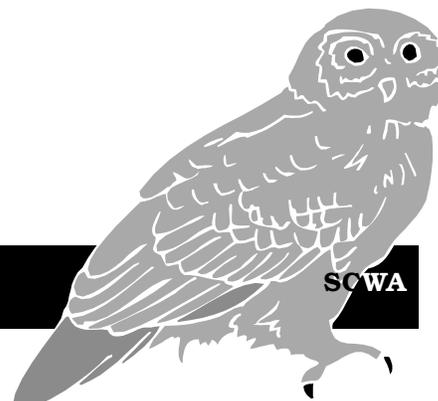


Southern California Writers Association Writers News

Volume 4, Number 1

January 2005



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January 15
Jennifer Leo
travel writer

*The Written Road,
Travel-Style*



President's Message

What!!! New Year again!

Another reminder of all the goals we set for ourselves that we failed to meet, all the promises we made to ourselves that we were unable to keep, the hopes we had that were dashed, the troublesome resolutions we failed to keep!

Hey, welcome, friends, to the world of writing! Not so much different from the real world, is it? Just more of the same?

Every year, we learn of more horror stories— masterpieces overlooked countless times, saved just before meeting the slush pile. (Makes you wonder how many other masterpieces the world may never see because they really did get buried forever!)

Does it bother you that, at least in our vocation/avocation, there are so many failures, so many rejections? I know it bothers me!

Here's a suggestion: maybe we should stop to consider that getting published, particularly in the fiction market, is like getting a part in a Hollywood movie? Of landing a spot on an NFL team? Of winning a Guggenheim? (Well, okay, that last one's pushing it a little!)

Continued on page 2, column 1

January Speaker

Jennifer Leo, travel editor and writer, will present *The Written Road, Travel-Style* at our January 15 meeting. She'll share her experiences from ten years of travel publishing and give fresh ideas on how writers can succeed in this market. This will include an overview of travel writing options; discussion of destination pieces vs. personal essays; market leads for magazines, newspapers, and websites; and salary expectation from travel writing.

Jen is the editor of the best selling *Sand in My Bra and Other Misadventures: Funny Women Write from the Road*, and the sequel

Whose Panties Are These? Jen's writing has also appeared in *Hyenas Laughed at Me and Now I Know Why; A Woman's Passion for Travel; The Adventure of Food; Lonely Planet Best Of Las Vegas; Lonely Planet World Food Guides Hong Kong, Student Traveler; BootsnAll.com; HotelChatter.com; and TIME*. She is the author of *WrittenRoad.com*, an on-line resource for travel writers. Jen lives in California. Her website is jenleo.com.

One of Jen's publishers, Traveler's Tales, promised, "She'll be entertaining, informative and keep your audience laughing."

Catherine Singer, V.P. Programming 2004

President's Message, cont. from page 1

So I will share my personal secret, how I plan to avoid these multitudinous disappointments in 2005: Give up those annoying resolutions! And enjoy writing!

One resolution I am going to forget is worrying about being original in what I say—at least this once.

This is my New Year's Resolution for using always proper grammar. You've all probably seen many variations of this, but we all need to be reminded there are some grammatical rules we should strive to follow! So here are my writing resolutions for 2005:

✓ I resolve to never split an infinitive.

✓ I resolve never to repeat myself or be redundant.

✓ I resolve to remember that a preposition is not what you end a sentence with.

✓ I will always avoid annoying alliteration.

✓ I will not use no double negatives.

✓ I will not never use no triple negatives!

You get the idea? I'm sure we all have our own favorites.

✓ I will always check to be sure I have not any words out.

✓ I will join clauses the right way, like a conjunction should.

✓ Although I will endeavor for a laudable transcendent vocabulary, I will always eschew obfuscation so that my denotation does not become ensconced in obscurity.

✓ I will use commas properly such as listing Peter Paul and Mary.

✓ I will never use commas, when they aren't necessary.

✓ I will remember that a writer should never shift your point of view.

✓ That independent clauses should be joined by a semicolon, that's the way to do it.

✓ That a dependent clause should be joined to the main sentence by a comma; because that's the rule.

✓ I only promise to use "only" in the proper location.

✓ When dangling, I will avoid using participles.

✓ When it comes to selecting a book on the use of modifiers, I will use my head to make the choice; I may just want to leave it on the shelf.

✓ I will avoid run-on sentences they are not the thing to do any English teacher can tell you that.

✓ And last but not least, I resolve to remember every cliché in the book, and avoid them like the plague.

Good luck and good writing!

Roy King, President

The Writer's Tool Box: Journaling: The "As If" Exercise

by Pamela Rocke

I love to journal. I love the way my pen feels in my hand as it scoots across the page. Reading what I've written, I experience again the feelings I had when I first penned the words...even years later.

My journal serves many purposes. It is my confessor, my idea factory, and dream analyzer. I use it to write about my hopes and fears, my goals and dreams.

As Julia Cameron recommends in her book, *The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity* (Jeremy P. Tarcher, 2002), I believe in journaling by hand, preferably three pages without pause. It's like meditating, really.

I use my journal for many things. My favorite is the *As If Exercise*.

The rules are quite simple, if you want to play. Here is what you'll need: Your favorite pen, at least three pieces of blank paper—preferably unlined, a quiet place to write uninterrupted, and time.

Now, begin by thinking for a moment. Think of your most favorite goal. It might be selling your memoir to Knopf, meeting your soul-mate, or sudden wealth. For this exercise, it need not be realistic.

Next, write, in freehand without stopping, at least three pages describing that first day when your goal comes true.

Continued on page 3, column 1

Membership Information

Pauline Bent V.P. Membership
atarque1@yahoo.com

Meeting Reservations

Roy King H (760) 955-5027
3kings@urs2.net

2005 Executive Committee

President	Roy King
V.P. Programming	Lynnette Baum
V.P. Membership	Pauline Bent
Secretary/Treasurer	Joan Cordova
Publicity Director	Kat Tewksbury
Webmaster	Pamela Rocke
Newsletter Editor	Pamela Rocke
Associate Editor	Nancy Darnall
Tape Librarian	Sharon Walters

www.ocwriter.com

SCWA Critique Committee

Open to members of SCWA

Nonfiction & Fiction Roy King 3kings@urs2.net

Roy will take any amount of writing for critique. He prefers to see the entire ms at one time. *Mail* your ms to Roy at 15772 Heatherdale Rd., Victorville, CA 92394.

Poetry Dr. Joyce Wheeler

Joyce will critique up to five poems. Please *mail* your work to Joyce at 3801 Chestnut Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90807.

Journaling, cont. from page 2

It's five a.m., you awake to the phone ringing. It's your agent in New York (does he/she have a name?). Knopf wants to buy your book. In reality, you may not have written it yet, but continue as if you already have. What happens next? Don't worry about sentence structure, organization, or grammar. Just write.

At the end of the exercise, take some time to think about what you've learned. You may want to reread these pages often, for the energy and emotions will be a great tool in propelling you towards your goals.

Pamela Rocke is a writer, author, and web designer. Her nonfiction book, Behind the Scenes: Managing a Trade Show Without Losing Your Mind is available at amazon.com.



The January 2005 "Will Write for Food" Contest!

The contest is open to members of SCWA. Look carefully at the photo at the top of this column and write a short-short story (maximum 250 words) about what is happening. To facilitate fair judging, put the story title on the top of the page with your daytime phone number underneath. (*No names, please!*) Only the winning author will be contacted.

Where Did the Years Go?

by Connie Nanasy

Where did all the years of my life go?
They didn't just vanish for I remember them so
I remember them down to my heart's deepest core.
Except what happened yesterday or maybe the day before.
It feels more like the years just melted away
Like a snowman in the sun of an unusually hot day.
But my long-term memories
Remain forever in my heart.
Memories of my children when I gave them their first start.
At times they were the only kids who lived on the block
Who ate green eggs and ham, while I read Dr. Spock.
Surely, I am not 72 years and becoming a sage.
Though secretly I believe it, for it can happen with old age.
I remember it especially when I walk up the stairs
Or even sometimes when I arise from a chair.
Or look in the mirror when I'm standing nude,
I could say a few choice words, but they might seem crude.
Don't pity me. I have much to do, day in, day out.
I am not one to sit home, twiddle my thumbs, or pout.
There are still new places to go, new people to meet,
And new things to see.
But when the cycle is sapping the breath out of me,
I will work to smooth my affairs in this winter of my life,
I will try to do it so that later,
There will be no quarrels or any strife.
My legacy could be that I did my best.
And my family and friends will have to fill in the rest.

Write: a short-short story
(maximum 250 words)

Submit: Via e-mail: Lynnette
Baum, therightwriter@cox.net.

Via snail mail, L. Baum, 17595
Harvard, Ste. C-144, Irvine, CA 92614.

Subject line: *January 2005
"Will Write for Food Contest"*

(Warning: without this subject line, the e-mail or snail mail may be deleted or tossed) with your daytime number underneath. Remember, no author name, please.

Deadline: Stories must be received on or before January 12, 2005.

Winner: Attends their next SCWA meeting for free. He or she will also be presented with a winner's certificate.

Criteria: Contestants must be members of SCWA. The story must be 250 words or less. No evaluation or comments will be offered on stories submitted for the contest.

Lynnette Baum

February 19, 2005

Beverly Gray, Ph.D.

Screenwriter, author,
educator

Fast and Cheap: Writing the Low- Budget Screenplay

Gray has worked with Roger Corman, Joe Dante, Jonathan Demme, and Paul Bartel.

Her film credits include *Beyond the Call of Duty*, *Immortal Sins*, *Fire on the Amazon*, and *Hellfire*.

Gray is author of *Roger Corman: Blood-Sucking Vampires, Flesh-Eating Cockroaches, and Driller Killers* and *Ron Howard: From Mayberry to the Moon...and Beyond*.

She writes about movies for the *Hollywood Reporter* and teaches screenwriting at UCLA extension.

December Highlights

“Avoid how-to-write books and books on archetypes; use these to prop up your table,” says Brian Alan Lane. Why? Because “analysis is by people who wish they could write.”

Lane’s rapid-fire exposition on *Breathing Life into Characters* hurtled through such ideas as how talent translates into consciousness, what is reality, how a sociopath operates, what is emotional truth, how can women avoid serial killers, through which paradigms do we see the world, and how the existentialist Kafka embedded his theme in *Metamorphosis*.

...drama is “a continuous unfolding of revelation leading to inevitable surprise.”

This author, screenwriter, lawyer, and educator says drama is “a continuous unfolding of revelation leading to inevitable surprise.” As Professor of Writing through the College of the Arts, Department of Film and Electronic Arts at California State University, Long Beach, he gives would-be writers his mantra: What do you want to say? Why do you want to say it? How do you want to say it?

Scoffing at writer’s block, Lane says it is “when you don’t know how to tell your stuff.” First, you must pin yourself down with “What’s triggering me”? WHY? Lane insists you’ll find your answer based on some memory of yours—in the emotional truth of that long ago imprinting.

Now, years later you must rebuild that emotional truth by re-creating it in a story. “You can consciously then

defend this subtext” in your manuscript. Since there are a limited number of emotions we have—greed, love, etc., “deconstruct and boil [them] down to this essence, which is not the same as plot; it is theme.”

To stay focused on this truth, “summarize each page with one sentence to help you.”

To stress its importance, Lane uses several terms for this essence: emotional truth or reality, theme, wisdom, insight, and even palimpsest [“A written document . . . that has been written upon several times, often with remnants of earlier, imperfectly erased writing still visible.”] As “uber narrator,” you must have your truth on each page, so to speak. To stay focused on this truth, “summarize each page with one sentence to help you.”

Not only the author but also each character in our story must have his/her own rhythm and inner truth. Lane suggests writing out the character’s background and then choosing relevant scenes from his life that mirror the theme. Whether by dialogue or interior monologue, the character’s worldview may change but not his inner truth.

For consistency, think about what happens to the character after the story ends. Come up with two possible alternative endings. However, the right ending is the one which validates the emotional truth of the protagonist. “There’s only one right ending to a book, only one right person tied to the theme.”

Lane disliked *The Da Vinci Code* because “its writer’s voice is pedestrian.”

Lane disliked *The Da Vinci Code* because “its writer’s voice is pedestrian.” Neither vernacular nor idiom, voice “separates the poor from the good.” He explained that **voice** is melody, flow, word sense, the five senses, intellectual thinking, and especially the author’s personal theme and rhythm of his own life. “Even if we all write about tying our shoe laces, we’d say it differently according to our own resonance.”

Altogether, the writer is trying to create resonance in the reader with the writer’s own emotional truth. In fact, Lane says, “Only for ten minutes of one hour of any TV story are people really paying attention—for the resonance.” A writer knows he/she has successfully created that resonance when he receives letters, as Lane has, that say “This [story] changed my life.”

Although it will not be operative until sometime in January, Brian Alan Lane is gathering donations to run his new website, Talestold.org. Posted each month, it will feature “extraordinary stories of ordinary people.”

Lane’s 1997 best-seller was *Cat and Mouse: Mind Games with a Serial Killer*.

Glenda Rynn is a freelance writer and editor, and educator. She earned her MA in English from the University of California, Irvine.

Members may purchase taped copies of this presentation from SCWA Tape Librarian Sharon Walters. Contact Walters at swwaltz@surfside.net.



SCWA News & Announcements

Member Published Works

Stacia Deutsch announces the publication of her new middle grade reader from **Simon and Schuster**—just in time for President's Day.

Lincoln's Legacy (Blast to the Past Series; **Aladdin**, January 2005) is a work of historic fiction geared toward students aged 7-10 and tied to school curriculum for second to fourth grade.

Premise: four third grade students travel to the past and meet Abraham Lincoln. The twist: the students arrive just as Abraham Lincoln has decided to give up his dream of freeing the slaves and has quit the presidency. The students must convince President Lincoln of the value his work will mean to future generations.

Two additional books in the series will be coming out in 2005. *Disney's Dream* (Blast to the Past Series; **Aladdin**, June 2005) and *Bells' Breakthrough* in the fall.

Aladdin is an imprint of **Simon & Schuster**.

Stacia Deutsch is a rabbi. Her writing partner, Rhody Cohon, is a computer engineer.

For more information about the series or to obtain a free teachers guide, visit their website at blasttothepastbooks.com.

Seminars and Events

The San Diego State University 2005 Annual Writer's Conference.

This top writer's conference runs from January 21-23, 2005. It is never too late to register, but register as early as you can to save money.

The conference features more than 35 editors and agents including Betty Amster, Jillian Manus, Angela Rinaldi, and B. J. Robbins.

Screenwriting specialists Madeline DiMaggio and Taylor Van Arsdale are also featured.

SCWA's **Shirl Thomas** will be a featured presenter.

Barbara DeMarco-Barrett, featured speaker at SCWA's November meeting, will deliver a keynote speech.

For more information, visit the conference's website at <http://www.ces.sdsu.edu/writers/speakers.html>.

2005 Big Bear Writer's Retreat

Mike Foley's popular annual writer's retreat will be held on an Alaskan Cruise, July 3 through 10, 2005.

For more information, go to Foley's website at www.writers-review.com.

Introducing Lynnette Baum and Kat Tewksbury

After three fabulous years of serving as SCWA's V.P. of Programming, I pass the baton to the very enthusiastic **Lynnette Baum**. I am also passing the Publicity baton to the bubbly **Kat Tewksbury**. Thank you both! Thank you!

I know that both of these ladies will do a super job. Watch out! Their enthusiasm is catchy. We might find people clamoring to assist this great new board of ours. That includes the everlasting Pam, Roy and Pauline, and our new Secretary **Joan Cordova**. They will continue on to keep growing this club.

I have very much enjoyed serving SCWA in these positions. Through my being Programmer, I've met many wonderful, bright, and powerful authors. It's been great to see our membership grow at each meeting and to have such a variety of authors in one room.

I know both Lynnette and Kat will do a great job and will infuse

their own unique style into the club. What a great way to start 2005!

Catherine Singer, VP Programming and Publicity 2002 - 2004

Lynnette Baum

After 15 years of California living and ten years as a Utah resident, Lynnette Baum, freelance writer, is still a self-proclaimed Oregonian. With more than 20 years of marketing writing experience, her accolades range from **Golden & Silver Microphone Awards** to an **Odyssey House International Award** that earned her an invitation to join **Who's Who of Women in America**.

An amateur painter, Lynnette was the primary freelance writer for **The Festival of Arts/Pageant of the Masters 2004 Summer Season**.

Lynnette recently finished ghosting-writing a novel, is completing a collaborative screenplay. She will be entering a short story in the fabled **Writers of the Future Contest** by year's end.

Lynnette is also an expert voiceover artist, avid outdoors-woman and sci-fi addict. She is eager to contribute to the growth and development of SCWA in her new role as V.P. of Programming.

Kat Tewksbury

Kat Tewksbury comes to writing from the technology field, sliding over from website design and programming. She has written for the commercial sector for several years and has gained a reputation for translating geek-speak into something that the rest of us can understand.

Kat looks forward to helping the Southern California Writers Association as Public Relations Chair for 2005.

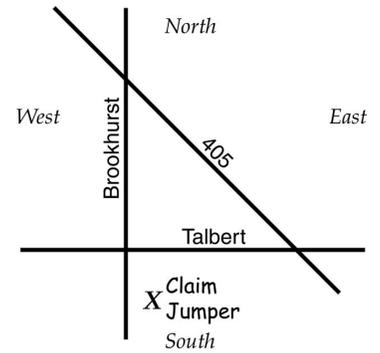


January 15 Meeting Saturday, January 15, 2005

Claim Jumper Restaurant
Banquet Room Entrance, rear of building
18050 Brookhurst St., Fountain Valley, CA

For directions, call (714) 963-6711.

Jennifer Leo
travel writer



The Written Road, Travel-Style

Registration & Networking: 9:30 a.m.
Meeting & Program: 10:00 a.m.
Lunch: 11:30 a.m.
Afternoon Program: 12:15 p.m.
Members & Non-Members: \$20.00

**Walk-ins & Guests
always welcome**

RSVP before January 10: Roy King, 15772 Heatherdale Rd., Victorville, CA 92394. Check must accompany reservations. Make checks payable to SCWA. **RSVP on or after January 10:** Roy King *home* (760) 955-5027; *e-mail* 3kings@urs2.net — bring check to door. For more information, go to www.ocwriter.com. ***Be sure to RSVP whenever possible!***

Southern California Writers Association

Writers News

Pamela Rocke, Editor

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