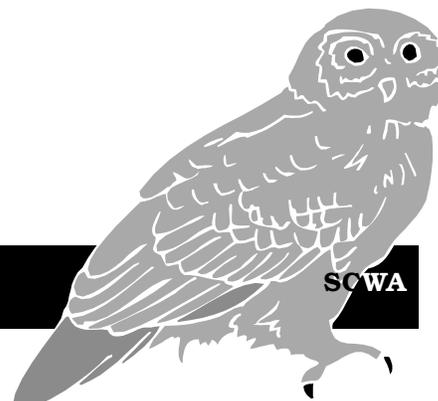


Southern California Writers Association Writers News

Volume 4, Number 6

June 2005



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June 18
Kim Dower
author, publicist

*Publishing is a
Series of
Presentations*

SUMMER SOLSTICE



JUNE 21

President's Message

Okay, folks, we had 34 attend our wonderful meeting in May. Would have been thirty-six if Pam and I could have made it. Thirty-four times twenty is six hundred eighty dollars we took in. Our bill to the Claim Jumper was seven hundred seventy-six dollars. We also pay speakers a fifty-dollar honorarium, and we have printing and mailing expenses, which typically run one to two hundred dollars a month. Although writers are not necessarily known for their mathematical skills, I believe this is basic enough that most of you can wade through it.

We did recruit four new members, so the red ink is not as bad as it could have been.

But ladies and gentlemen, we can't continue to lose money as we are doing and keep the organization in business. It's as simple as that.

Maybe there is some confusion about the RSVP. Some of you may think that you will be less welcome if you simply show up at the door.

Not true. The only reason we ask that you RSVP is so we give the Claim Jumper an approximate head count. This enables them to know how much food to prepare. Those of you who took Business 101 know that this is the way that any restaurant has to operate. If they end up with food left over, they have an expense. This eats (forgive the horrible pun) into their income—and that surely takes the enjoyment out of owning a business in a hurry. And if they don't order enough food, that's even worse. Half the customers don't come back a second time.

Continued on page 2, column 1

June Speaker

"People present all the time...on the telephone, through e-mail, in one-on-one meetings, in front of, or as part of a small group, to staff, customers, spouses, kids, and neighbors," says **Kim Dower**, author and literary publicist.

Join us Saturday, June 18, when Dower presents **Publishing is a Series of Presentations**, and talks about how to simplify writing and publishing by breaking the process down into simple, easy-to-do steps.

Dower, co-author of *Life is a Series of Presentations* (Fireside Books/Simon & Schuster, February 2005), is also owner of Kim-from-LA, an established literary and media services company. She has served as publicist for many high profile authors including Harlan Ellison, James Patterson, Robert McKee, Shakti Gawain, Bruce Goldsmith, and Jack Welch.

*Kathleen Tewksbury, Publicity Director,
with Pamela Rocke*

President's Message, cont. from page 1

We are coming into the summer months, where attendance is typically lower than the other months, primarily because summer is when people take their vacations.

The last two years, we made enough money that we can afford at least one year of low turnouts. But we are cutting into our margin of safety in a hurry.

Lynnette has lined up some wonderful speakers. Kat has done everything we have asked for in the way of publicity, and more. (Did you like the little cards you received last month? Kat did that on her own!)

So I don't know what else your Board can do.

Come on out. Remember, it's your club, too.

Good luck and good writing!

Roy King, President



Would you like to contribute to the *Writers News*? Comments? Contact the editor at webmaster@ocwriter.com.

Membership Information

Pauline Bent V.P. Membership
pchavezbent@hotmail.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
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Tape Librarian	Sharon Walters

www.ocwriter.com

The Writer's Tool Box: Your Imagination Journal

by Pamela Rocke

A couple of years ago, a journalist friend e-mailed me about an article she was writing on how to ask for a raise. She was looking for personal success stories, and I had a whopper. I had asked for and received a 19% raise not once, but twice in less than a year, nearly doubling my salary. How did I do it? I used my innate creativity and my skills as a writer. But I'll get back to the story in a minute.

First, I want to tell you about another friend of mine, a lawyer. My lawyer friend had clients, a man and his wife, who won the lottery. These were nice working-class folks. The amount of money they won was almost unimaginable to them. My friend told them to save and invest. "Don't change your lifestyle right away," she told them. Can you guess what happened? Yes. Within a few years the couple had spent their winnings. They were not only broke, they were in debt. If only they had listened to their lawyer, right?

Well, if you ask Brian Johnson, author of *The Debt Matrix*, the real reason those two lottery millionaires ended up flat broke is because even though they had millions of dollars, they still *thought* like people of limited

means! Would it surprise you to know that 80% of all lottery winners are out of money within 4 years? Why? Because they think themselves right back into poverty.

You see...with our imagination, we have the power to create our reality. Napoleon Hill, in his immortal book, *Think and Grow Rich*, says, "Everything which man creates begins in the form of a thought impulse. Man can create nothing which he does not first conceive in thought." But what Mr. Hill purports to do with his advice is to alter the thoughts—the self-beliefs of his readers. Mr. Hill's premise: If you change your *thinking*, you can change your life.

One self-fulfilling belief I had was that the work I did for my employers really wasn't very valuable. I don't recall consciously deciding this, and I hadn't really thought about it. But I'd come to a point in my life where I simply wanted to be taking home more money. It was when I did the research in preparation to ask for a raise that I made truly the profound discovery.

Sure, my research gave me the facts and figures to back up my request for a raise. But I also had to plan how I was going to go about asking my boss for that huge raise. I started by listing all the reasons why I deserved the raise and all the reasons my boss should grant it. I used my journal to *script* my presentation, predict her objections, and script my responses.

Continued on page 3, column 1

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.

Your Imagination Journal, cont. from page 2

Making that first list was tough. Oh, listing all the tasks I performed was easy, and a great starting place. Considering what value each brought to my boss—*that* was the hard part. You see, in order to do that, I had to actually imagine myself in praising terms, to value my contribution. But what I did next, *that* was what got me my raise.

I started out just writing the script. But what I ended up doing was quite different. At first, I didn't feel particularly like I deserved a raise. I knew in my mind that I deserved it. But I didn't feel it. As I wrote and rewrote my script, something inside started to shift. I sat up a little straighter in my chair, I pulled my shoulders back. I began to experience, physically, what it would be like to have that raise.

What happened was that by writing my script over and over again, I was creating a picture: a new reality in my mind. This new reality was *me* believing in myself. It was *me* having what I wanted and knew I deserved. And I got it!

If there is one key point I want to leave you with this morning, it's that we have the power to create our reality through our beliefs. I created a new, more prosperous reality. I have a lot in common with the couple that won—and lost the lottery. But the lottery couple imagined and recreated a reality of poverty. I have two questions for you to consider:

First, what are your basic beliefs about yourself, your friends, your family, and indeed your world?

And finally, what life do you want to imagine and create for yourself?

Pamela Rocke is the author of Behind the Scenes: Managing a Trade Show Without Losing Your Mind (Cave Cat Press, 2004). She is a freelance writer and graphic artist. Visit her at www.procke.com.

May Highlights

"I'm convinced spending 30 days running amok in your own imagination is one of the best things you can do," says Chris Baty, freelancer and author of *No Plot? No Problem! : A Low-Stress, High-Velocity Guide to Writing a Novel in 30 Days*. In 1999 at the height of the dot-com frenzy in the Bay area, which Baty calls "a time of lots of weird ideas," he convinced 21 friends to commit to writing a novel in one month. Thus, National Novel Writing Month, NaNoWriMo, was born. This articulate young man held the tight focus of all as he covered—well—*How to Write a Novel in 30 Days*.

NaNoWriMo's original 21 entrants grew into 42,000 from all around the globe by 2004. Baty has written a novel each year but adds that two of those "are propping up a leg of my couch." However, many contestants are now writing novels as a living. "This over-caffeinated dare became one of the most fulfilling things I've ever done!" he marvels.

Using 50,000 words as a goal, the length of *Brave New World*, this group committed to two hours for five nights a week to write a novel from scratch on laptops.

Today, Baty suggests first writing two lists: Magna Carta I, a list of all the factors you love in a novel; and Magna Carta II, all the factors that bore or depress you in a novel. Refer to MC I as your touchstones when you are stalled because these "resonate with you." Those on MC II are "cunning little scams" that you will reach for when you're afraid your ideas are underwhelming.

Continued on page 4, column 1



May Contest Winner I'll Take It From Here

by Paul Halewijn

Pushing through the door he finds himself alone on a stage. The room is dark, reeking of smoke, bad breath, and armpits. He trudges through the dim when suddenly a far door opens casting a bright stream of white light. Though blinded momentarily, he sees the silhouette of bodies, customers surely, shuffling toward the seats. Surprised by the commotion, he realizes he recognizes one of them. It's his old friend, Bob Hope. Before shouting a greeting, he sees more people entering and more familiar faces. Behind Bob are Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr., Frank Sinatra with Marilyn Monroe, and Elvis alone naturally. Shock begins to register. He recognizes a group of Kennedy's, George Washington and finally, Ben Franklin. "Wait a minute," he thinks, "these people are all dead. Where am I?"

The house lights dim and the stage lights rise. He hears a familiar hush come over the audience, the show is about to begin?

P.T. Barnum dances in from stage left. "Welcome, to the *Greatest Show on Earth!* We have a newcomer tonight at the Purgatory Lounge. He made the poor choice of portraying God in his former life. To seek penance, and move up to the big show, he will perform nightly, dressed in a Phyllis Diller costume, including underwear, for the next millennium. The Purgatory Lounge welcomes, Mr. George Burns!"

George now understands. Grinning, Barnum hands George the mike, "Welcome Mr. Burns". "Thanks, sonny." George says, "I'll take it from here."

Honorable Mention

My Silver Slippers - *Bill Thomas*
Sheila Cassidy - *The Interview*
www.ocwriter.com/willwrite.html

May Highlights, cont. from page 3

Baty stresses that items on one person's MC I list will be on another's MC II and demonstrated his point when he had members write and read aloud their lists. These prove that, although "not everyone will like your book," others "will love everything in it."

What about storyboarding beforehand? Baty says it depends on how you create best. Do you need the structure? Many don't.

Because "an open-ended deadline is permission to do nothing," you next set up "that bit of terror" to make your deadline.

Because "an open-ended deadline is permission to do nothing," you next set up "that bit of terror" to make your deadline. In a group setting, you can rule no one goes to the bathroom before 1,000 words. You also tell family and friends about your goal so that "fear of personal humiliation" will keep you on task. Also, another kindred soul or two might join you in writing at Starbucks or e-mailing across the country. This competition can keep you from falling 4,000 or so words behind.

For more pressure, Baty uses chore-based betting, wherein he sets up a required word count on a timeline. If he misses a checkpoint, he defaults to doing specific chores for others, such as walking their dog or cleaning their bathroom. As proof of being on target, he sends his text document.

When Baty writes non-fiction, he edits and polishes as he goes because "the flow line is very clear." However, editing or revising is forbidden on the

novel in progress because fiction is organic. Baty declares that our inner editor "will kill if we let it near our creative stuff. It will second guess our best ideas out of existence." Those driven nuts by the squiggly red or green lines under errors need to turn off the editing feature of Microsoft Word.

Big warning: "Do not share with anyone until your 50,000 words are done!"

Big warning: "Do not share with anyone until your 50,000 words are done!" Baty guarantees you will be pulled off course by friends and family who'll have their own ideas about your story, or their "tepid reaction" will make you lose steam.

To stay in the artist's spirit, consider wearing a special piece of apparel when creating. Baty effected howls from all as he pulled out a conical metal Viking hat, complete with horns, that he wears at the keyboard (he says) also with a pencil over the ear.

At the end of NaNoWriMo, all those who crossed the 50,000-word line in 30 days are winners!

At the end of NaNoWriMo, all those who crossed the 50,000-word line in the 30 days are winners! Only at this time can those who are serious move on to rewrites.

Although the first draft will have some "crapitudinous" places, Baty believes the one-month first draft will be of about the same quality as the five-year draft, until either is revised. He declares that all our beloved novels once had "cringe-worthy"

dialogue. Also, in today's fast-paced world, a five-year creation process may make a book out of date by completion.

Baty insists, "We all have books within us; we have to give ourselves permission to let them come out." For more information, visit www.nanowrimo.org

Reported by Glenda Rynn

Members: You may buy taped copies of lectures from SCWA Tape Librarian Sharon Walters: swwaltz@surfside.net.

Benefits of Crash Creation

- It makes you focus as never before.
- You discard the notion of waiting until a fully formed plot comes from heaven.
- You are forced to give up the idea of perfection.
- Your imagination solves story problems more creatively.
- Before long, "a character steps forward and says, 'OK, I'll take it from here.'"
- Quality will also come with the quantity.
- You pare your life down to essentials and discover time to complete more important things as well.
- You are never again afraid of a 2000-word requirement.
- Soon after, you'll take on another challenge you've been "attracted to and terrified by" such as language or piano lessons.

Glenda Rynn

SCWA News & Announcements

Events

The **Orange County Children's Festival of Books**, October 2, 2005, is looking for children's authors to sign their books and speak. For more information, contact SCWA member **Stacia Deutsch**, btppbooks@cox.net.

To learn more about the Festival, or to reserve exhibit space, visit the official website at www.otcbf.com.

Stacia Deutsch

Contests

Linden Hill Publishing

(www.lindenhill.net) is sponsoring its second short story contest, *Amazing Cat Tales*.

Entries must be 2,500 words or less, submitted before the September 15, 2005, deadline. The author's name must not appear on the manuscript, but include a separate cover letter with the story title, name, address, phone number, e-mail address, and \$15 entry fee.

First place prize is \$200, \$100 for second place, and \$50 for third place.

The first, second, and third place winners and the next twenty-five best stories will be published in *Amazing Cat Tales*, to be released in the spring of 2006. All 28 winners receive a copy of the book.

For a complete set of contest rules, visit the publisher's website at www.lindenhill.net, or e-mail David Buser at lindenhill2@comcast.net.



Photo by Spencer Grant
<http://spencer.photofolio.com/>

The June 2005 "Will Write 4 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.

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

Submit: One entry per member per month, via e-mail: Lynnette Baum, therightwriter@cox.net.

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

Subject Line: *June 2005 "Will Write 4 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 June 15, 2005.

Winner: Attends their next SCWA meeting for free. He or she will also be presented with a winner's certificate. The winning story will be featured in the club's newsletter, *The Writers News*, and on the organization's website.

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. Only one winning entry per member per year.

Lynnette Baum, V.P. Programming

If You Want to Publish

July 16, 2005

Mike Sirota

author, writing coach

Making Your Book Better Than Good Because Good Isn't Good Enough!

Writing the book is only half the journey to publication. If you want to sell your book, it has to stand out from the rest.

Your book only has a few minutes to impress a busy editor or agent. Learn how you can make yours the best it can be.

Mike Sirota is the author of 19 science fiction novels. He teaches a UC San Diego Extension class on this topic.

Visit Sirota's website at www.mikesirota.com.

If You Want to Publish

SUMMER SOLSTICE

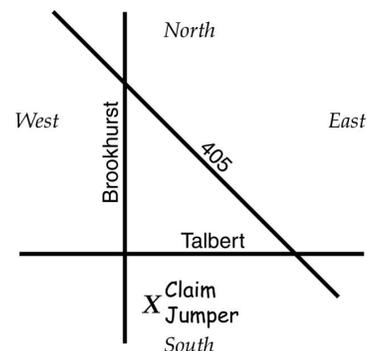


JUNE 21

June Meeting

Saturday, June 18, 2005

Claim Jumper Restaurant
Banquet Room Entrance, rear of building
18050 Brookhurst St., Fountain Valley, CA
Restaurant tel.: (714) 963-6711.



Kim Dower author, publicist

Publishing is a Series of Presentations

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 June 13: Roy King, 15772 Heatherdale Rd., Victorville, CA 92394. Check must accompany reservations. Make checks payable to **SCWA**. **After June 13:** 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!***

Or register online at www.ocwriter.com/meetings.html

Southern California Writers Association

Writers News

Pamela Rocke, Editor

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