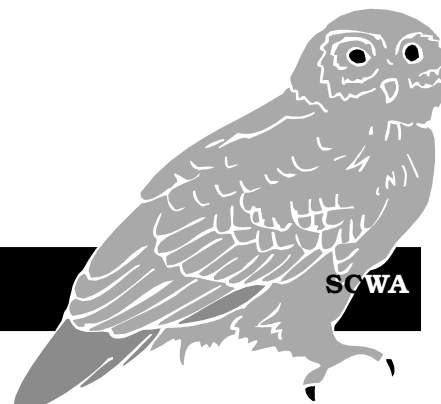


Southern California Writers Association Writers News

Volume 4, Number 5

May 2005



President's Message	1
May Speaker	1
The Writer's Toolbox:	
Congratulations, It's a Book!	
by Pamela Rocke	2
April Contest Winner	
<i>That Old House</i>	
by Sheila Cassidy	3
April Highlights	4
SCWA News and	
Announcements	5
Contest: "Will Write 4 Food"	
May 2005	5

May 21 Chris Baty

author, founder of National
Novel Writing Month

Writing a Novel in 30 Days



Mother's Day, May 8

President's Message

When Vince Lombardi retired as coach of the Green Bay Packers and Phil Bengtson took over in the fall of 1968, one might suspect there was the proverbial audible and collective sigh of relief. Coach Bengtson was loved and respected by all the players, he was knowledgeable and forthright, and his coaching methods provided relief from the intensity of the previous years. The players eagerly looked forward to the upcoming seasons.

Funny thing is, the Packers stopped winning championships.

As I look back on our third consecutive meeting where we've had a terrific speaker, a wonderful meal, and with everyone in attendance having a great time, I ask myself how this club can possibly go wrong.

Hmm—let's see—we've had 24, 28, and 24 happily paid guests who had a great time at the February, March, and April meetings.

Although when we first formed the club as the Southern California Chapter of National Writers back in 1986, we would have been delighted to attract that many folks, now in 2005 it represents a significant drop over what we averaged in 2004—and what we must average in order to break even financially and keep the organization alive.

We have a hard-working board. Lynnette Baum has been doing a superb job of finding and recruiting speakers. I can't praise Lynnette, nor would she want me to, without also mentioning Catherine Singer and the help she has given and continues to give this club. Kat Tewksbury has been generating great publicity, again with help from Catherine, and we continue to get queries from people who are interested in our club.

Continued on page 2, column 1

May Speaker

Write a 50,000 word novel in a month? Sounds like fiction, but it happens every year. Tens of thousands of people all over the world sign up for **National Novel Writing Month** (NaNoWriMo). And many of them write a novel in a month.

Join us on May 21, 2005, to meet the creator and instigator of this writing frenzy. Chris Baty is a freelance writer who covers music, travel and culture for various magazines. He is the author of the recently published *No Plot? No*

Problem! A Low-Stress, High-Velocity Guide to Writing a Novel in 30 Days.

Baty is an expert on stoking the creative fire getting words on the paper. He will share with us his secrets for these amazing feats.

So dust off that novel you were going to finish someday, and learn how to finish it in 30 days. If you'd like to learn more about **NaNoWriMo**, visit visit him at <http://www.nanowrimo.org/>.

Kathleen Tewksbury, Publicity Director

President's Message, cont. from page 1

So where is everybody? Where are all the writers?

Doug and Barbara may have stepped on a few toes, but the club grew and flourished under their leadership. Perhaps this club needs a strong, get-tough leader.

Is Roy going to be the SCWA's equivalent of Phil Bengtson?

We need everyone's help. Bring someone you know to the meetings. Tell your friends about SCWA. Tell your elected representatives on the board what you want, what you like, what we as the organization must do to get you here and keep you here.

We have always provided an excellent array of speakers; in the nineteen years I've attended meetings, I have yet to hear a speaker from whom I didn't learn something. And so can you—even if the speaker for a given month is speaking on a topic in which you are not remotely interested.

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
Associate Editor	Nancy Darnall
Tape Librarian	Sharon Walters

www.ocwriter.com

The Writer's Tool Box: Congratulations, It's a Book!

by Pamela Rocke

What do *Rich Dad, Poor Dad* (Robert Kiyosaki), *The Celestine Prophecy* (James Redfield), and *The Christmas Box* (Richard Paul Evans) have in common? One is a non-fiction business book, the other two are novels. You may have guessed that all three are well known bestsellers. But there's one more theme that bind these three together:

All started out as self-published works. The authors did not use a vanity press, they did not offer their tomes as print-on-demand products. Kiyosaki, Redfield, and Evans all rolled up their sleeves, started publishing companies, and ushered their own books into print.

Without a doubt, these authors had help birthing their books—graphic artists and typesetters to name a few.

When your first (or second, or third) book is ready to be born, you may want to hire a professional or two to help. Or you may want to be your own midwife. Either way, knowing the science behind the process will make it less scary.

Start Your Own Company

The business aspect of this task can be as complicated—or as simple—as you wish. My own publishing company, **Cave Cat Press**, is a sole proprietorship. Others may want a more formal legal

structure such as a Limited Liability Company (LLC), or a Sub-S Corporation (S-Corp).

For my sole proprietorship, all I needed to do was choose the name (**Cave Cat Press**), stake my claim, and register for a resale permit.

I chose my name and placed a "fictitious name" advertisement or "doing business as" (DBA) in my neighborhood newspaper. My friends at **Saddleback Valley News** knew exactly what to do and guided me through the process.

If you decide to sell some or all of your books directly to the public, you'll need to collect California State sales tax. The state Board of Equalization (BOE) maintains a website, <http://www.boe.ca.gov>, complete with forms and everything you need to know. The BOE also provides field offices throughout the state, dutifully listed at the website.

Copyright, ISBN, and Barcodes

Books are automatically protected by U.S. copyright law. However, the wise author registers her copyright with the Library of Congress's Copyright Office (<http://www.copyright.gov/>).

To sell your book you need an International Standard Book Number (ISBN). An ISBN is unique to your book, publisher, and edition. To purchase or learn more, go to www.isbn.org/standards/home/index.asp, where **R. R. Bowker** administers the standard.

Continued on page 2, 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.

Congratulations, It's a Book!, cont. from page 2

A barcode is the digitized, scannable version of the ISBN. Bowker does not provide the barcode "camera ready art." But they do direct you to someone who can.

The Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication (CIP) is provided to publishers with three or more books. It lets publishers print detailed information about their book on the copyright page—so that librarians can easily catalog it.

In order to sell your book to libraries, you need a Library of Congress Control Number (LCCN). Go to the Library of Congress website (www.pcn.loc.gov/pcn).

Lay It All Out

Many self publishers design and produce both the book interior and its cover themselves. Unless you are an experienced graphics artist (book covers) and typesetter (book interior), outsourcing the work is your best option. Here are a few of my secrets:

Your book should be the same dimensions as the other books in your genre. Design your cover accordingly.

I browse through amazon.com for design and typeface ideas. The web also offers a number of sites where graphic artists can cheaply "purchase" almost ready-to-use art. My favorites are www.photos.com and www.clipart.com, two fee-based services with professional art.

I use PhotoShop for my graphics. But there are many less expensive, low-frills programs available.

To design my book's interior, I used PageMaker. But Word for Windows will do quite nicely.

Interiors have three sections: Front Matter, Body, and Back Matter.

Front Matter includes the title page, copyright page, dedications, table of contents, about the author, preface, and acknowledgments. Page number, if any, are in roman numerals.

The Body is the meat of your book.

Page numbering is in arabic. Even pages *always* appear on the left, odd pages *always* on the *right*. Chapters *always* start on an odd page.

Back Matter includes appendices, footnotes, and the index. It may also contain the author bio.

Print and Bind It

Here is the one task you must outsource. You have many options and perhaps the best advice of all is: Don't skimp! Hire a reliable, experienced printer who is willing to work closely with you.

Who you hire also depends on how many books you print.

Few - 3,000 or fewer is considered a low-run print job. These are printed on a Docutech machine, a very large Xerox laser printer.

Many - A print run of more than 3,000 qualifies for an "off-set" printer, or 4-color press. Here is where the cost-per-book plunges.

Make sure your printer uses a 4-color press to produce the cover, rather than a high-end laser, also known as Fiery laser.

Always ask to see a color proof of the cover art and a print out of the typeset version of the book's interior. While the printer does not retypeset your book, he does prepare the file electronically. A reputable printer will ask you to proof read the work and "sign off" before committing the book to press.

If this sounds like a lot of work, it is. No wonder many authors resort to vanity presses and POD publishers. But the control you as a self-publisher have over the final project is unprecedented. You know how much is spent on what. The cover more closely resembles our own vision. Congratulations! It's a book.

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.

April Contest Winner That Old House

by Sheila Cassidy

I stood there with my tool bag staring at the house. It looked like something from Halloween. Steve looked at me.

"I've got a bad feeling about this," I muttered.

"Wuss," Steve replied.

The house was about 150 years old. We could hear the stairs creak as we went upstairs. Steve brushed the cobwebs aside as we entered one of the bedrooms and spread our sleeping bags. He set the travel alarm and we crawled in for the night.

My eyes had just closed when I heard the sound of a foot dragging. Steve heard it too.

"Maybe its prowlers" he whispered.

"Yeah, right," I hissed.

The foot dragging got nearer and stopped just outside. Steve inched out his right hand, grabbed the large three cell flashlight, eased out of his sleeping bag, and crouched down low creeping towards the door. The doorknob started to turn. Steve yelled out, flung back the door, and then froze. Standing there was a white apparition dressed in a tattered Confederate uniform. At least I think that's what it was—it's hard to tell, but I did notice a CS belt buckle just before I screamed.

Steve and I flew down the stairs, out the front door, and into the car. We spent the night at a local motel. When we asked about the house, the clerk laughed.

"Oh you mean the old Bolton place, where some Reb got shot by Union raiders. You mean some fools actually bought it?"

Honorable Mention

Gerri Seaton - *House of Giggles*
Janet De Marco - *The Multi-Colored Mansion*
www.ocwriter.com/willwrite.html

March Highlights

“Our precious stories are not getting told,” said Diana Johnson at our April meeting. She is the author of three historical fiction books and *Publishing Step-by-Step, What to do, When, Where and How*.

Diana Johnson’s first book, *Destiny’s Godchild*, won the 1999 **B.P.S.C. IRWIN Award** in fiction. This book is based on a childhood fantasy that occurred to Johnson, while she was reading family memoirs. Johnson’s family heritage has been recorded for forty-five generations and includes **Charlemagne**.

...And she advises to “write what you are passionate about.”

Johnson strives to write what others will enjoy. And she advises to “write what you are passionate about.”

Johnson shared her method for writing stories that “people will want to read.” This method works for memoirs and historical fiction. The latter involves fictional characters immersed in an accurately described era of history. She noted that family members and neighbors make great characters. Of course, the names must be changed to protect the author from lawsuits.

At the outset, Johnson researches the era by combing family albums, library documents, minutes from public forums, old newspaper accounts, etc. She develops a feel for that era’s daily life. She puts herself in the character or family member’s position. She imagines the smells, the noises, and the pressures of their day. She becomes totally immersed in that character. Then, using all her senses, she begins, “It must have been

something like...” – the story’s dialogue and story flow naturally.

Johnson noted that e-mail results in our personal history being lost forever with the tap of the delete key. Also, family members are harried and scattered. So today’s children lack the sense of pride and belonging that come from knowing your family tree. Johnson lamented that future generations will not profit from our lives.

Johnson pointed out that our ancestors communicated with letters, which were stored in trunks for posterity, and the whole family regularly sat around listening to stories of family bravery, agony, and triumph. Memoirs are an opportunity to share your morals and wisdom.

Her inculcation was to “Write it down!” So everyone should keep a notebook handy. Jot down ideas and threads as they occur. This includes the nuances of family and friends.

Memoirs do not have to consist of a complete story covering all generations. Each chapter can be a complete story about a family member, a family event, or thematic thread inspired by a photo album, scrapbook, quilt or letters.

...have a family reunion; ask each member to write three pages of memories; and share those pages with the group.

An intriguing idea for gathering family data was mentioned: have a family reunion; ask each member to write three pages of memories, and share those pages with the group.

Following lunch, Diana Johnson shared self-publishing tips and experiences. The publisher you

choose depends on your audience. If you are writing for your family, Kinko’s or Office Depot can print and bind your books.

If you plan to sell the books yourself:

Get an ISBN number and barcode so that bookstores can easily stock and sell your book.

Get a resale number from the California State Board of Equalization so that you can charge and report state sales tax.

Regarding printers – get many estimates, look over published examples, and read the contract carefully.

Bookstores and other distributors and wholesalers may demand as much as sixty percent of your book’s retail price. And they can send your books back at whim.

Johnson also had good marketing suggestions:

Have the publisher use your cover-art to print advertisements such as postcards and brochures.

Build a website and link to genealogy or historical sites.

Get listed in “Books in Print.”

Do book signings and public speaking at churches, libraries and bookstores (your local independent bookstore is a good place to start).

Include an order form in each book and send an order form with all receipts.

Save the addresses of customers for future mailings.

All and all, Diana Johnson’s talk was very informative and inspirational.

Sharon Walters

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

SCWA News & Announcements

Member Publications

Dr. Ron Lavin, a SCWA member since 1998, recently had his twentieth book published. *The Big Ten (Another Look at the Ten Commandments)* is the fifth in the **Another Look** series, published by CSS Publishing Company (Lima, Ohio).

Ron was named to **Who's Who in America** for 2006 and **Who's Who in the World** for 2001 and 2006. In addition, he was named **Christian Writer of the Year** by the **American Christian Writers Association** in 2001.

The Big Ten may be ordered from **CSS Publishers** (800-637-1030), **amazon.com**, **Barnes and Noble online** (www.bn.com), and Christian bookstores.

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



The May 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, theightwriter@cox.net](mailto:Lynnette.Baum@cox.net).

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

Subject Line: *May 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 May 18, 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

June 18, 2005

Kim Dower

Screenwriter, author,
educator

Publications is a Series of Presentations

From the moment you get an idea until the book finds its way into the hands of a reader, someone is presenting to someone.

Learn how to break down the writing process into logical, easy steps.

Kim Dower is a literary publicist located in Los Angeles, California. Her long list of clients has included Robert Bly, Joan Borysenko, Tor/Forge Books, Addison/Wesley, Kelly Lange, Carolyn See, and Simon & Schuster.

Visit Dower's website at www.kimfromla.com.

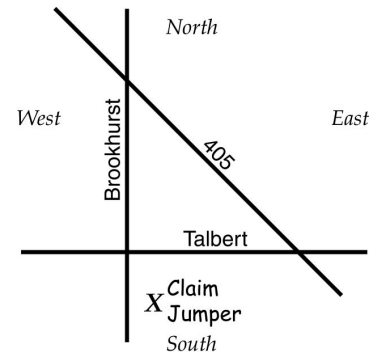


Memorial Day, May 30, 2005

May Meeting

Saturday, May 21, 2005

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



Chris Baty, author, founder of
National Novel Writing Month

Writing a Novel in 30 Days

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 May 16: Roy King, 15772 Heatherdale Rd., Victorville, CA 92394. Check must accompany reservations. Make checks payable to **SCWA**. **After May 16:** 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

453

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