

SIERRA WRITERS
P.O. BOX 1595
GRASS VALLEY, CA
95945



Spring 2014

April 2014

President's Message

Happy Spring!

The past few months have been a time of many changes within the Sierra Writers organization, as we've seen old friends step down from positions, and new friends come aboard. As always, I'm appreciative to those who keep the group running, past and present.

Please help me welcome **Nichole Bowden**, who stepped into our Membership Coordinator position last month. She replaces Joanne Brown, who kept fabulous records and summarized our meetings so well. Thanks to both of you.

Next, **Amy Rutten** has recently taken over the Publicity Coordinator position. This was vacated by Shirley DicKard, whose roles as editor of the Camptonville paper, and co-coordinator of the Women's Writing Salon will, no doubt, swallow all of her time. Again, thanks.

This newsletter comes to you via two members who have stepped into editor roles, formerly held by Susan Mone. **Hock Tjoa and Linda Horning** are up and running, and have received training from the best. We appreciate the years Susan put in, and look forward to the work our new editors will give us.

Of course, I haven't managed to drive everyone out yet! :~) Jan Fishler stands by me as my right-hand-woman and Program Coordinator, Babette Donaldson keeps our website free from outside attacks, and Marty Austin manages our books and keeps us honest.

We continue to welcome new members at almost every meeting, and they've typically come to our group because of the community events we've been able to offer; these happen from the generosity of writers and speakers in our area and beyond. As well, many of these members have visited our group for the first time at our Open Reads (just held in March, and again in October). The Open Reads are especially interesting, as writers of all ages share their work, sometimes for the first time ever. On **April 9**, we will have a panel discussion on **self-promotion and marketing**, and this will be especially helpful for those of you consid-

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We're on the web.
www.sierrawriters.org

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President's Message (cont.)

“The person, be it gentleman or lady, who has not pleasure in a good novel, must be intolerably stupid.”

— Jane Austen

“You have to write the book that wants to be written. And if the book will be too difficult for grown-ups, then you write it for children.”

— Madeleine L'Engle

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“The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug.”

— Mark Twain

“It is better to fail in originality than to succeed in imitation.”

— Herman Melville

ering alternative publishing methods. Ron Cherry and Larry Gold will be two of our panelists, and Jan Fishler will moderate. We hope you can join us.

On **May 14**, we welcome Gabrielle Pullen, local writer and teacher, who will lead us in a self-developed workshop method called “**Writing to Heal.**” Gabrielle is actively involved in the Meet-Up community, and offers several writing “circles.” It should be an interesting evening.

Finally, on **June 11**, our last scheduled meeting for this year’s season, we plan to have S.A. “Sam” Jernigan, who will host a hands-on workshop offering the basics in how to get started in the self-publishing journey. If you’ve considered publishing your own work in the past, but didn’t know where to begin, this meeting is for you! She’ll offer lots of tricks and tools, so bring pen and paper.

Meetings are always the second Wednesday at the Madelyn Helling Community Room, 980 Helling Way, Nevada City. For more information, log on to www.sierrawriters.org or call 205-5068.

I hope to see you there.
Susan

Susan Gabrielle
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205-5068

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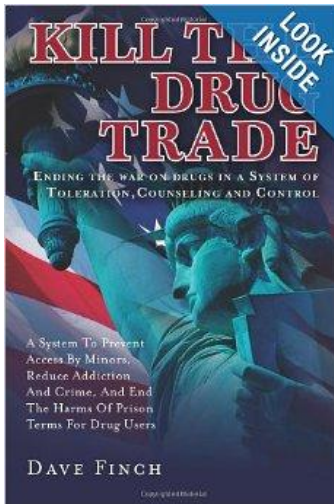
Membership Survey

About once a month, Sierra Writers is asked post information regarding workshops, clinics, writing classes, and other writing-related activities in our local community and sometimes beyond. With enough lead time, we put them into the Newsletter, but since our publication only comes out quarterly now, it is difficult to get the word out within the right timing.

Would you be interested in receiving information about these opportunities on a limited basis? Please respond to Susan at s_gabrielle@sbcglobal.net with your answer:

- I'd like to receive notices via the Newsletter **only**.
- I'd like to receive notices via the e-mail list.
- I'd like to receive notices via the website.

I'd like to receive notices via the Newsletter, the website and e-mail list.



Member Dave Finch publishes his first book. KILL THE DRUG TRADE: Ending the War on Drugs in a System of Toleration, Counseling and Control.

The book presents a dramatically different approach to dealing with drug use and addiction. Our current prohibition system has fostered powerful criminal cartels and gangs, easy street access of drugs by adolescents, and the motivation to commit property crimes, prostitution and drug dealing by addicts to finance their habits. Yet our forty year war on drugs has failed to stem the tide of irresponsible drug use, overdose death and addiction. The book shows how this failed approach could be replaced by state regulated dispensary systems that allow adult users to purchase drugs of certified purity and potency at below street prices, provided only that they cooperate with counselors on a regular and frequent basis to keep them informed of drug science and affordable treatment options.

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The Coastal Bend Wellness Foundation recently chose poetry by **Susan Gabrielle**, "Two crows" and "Br'er Fox," as two out of the three finalists! She will receive a check for her poems.

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Sierra Writers are privileged to count among our ranks Ms. Claudine Chalmers, Ph. D. She is passionate about documenting the contributions of the tens of thousands of French pioneers who flocked to California's goldfields between 1848 and 1856, the largest French migration of the 19th century. Her Arcadia book "French San Francisco" tells their story, and in particular how there was a "Frenchtown" in San Francisco before there ever was a "Chinatown."

Claudine has a particular interest in the French artists who depicted California in the 19th century, and she has published four Art books on the subject. Last December, she she discussed in Grass Valley the 100-sketch documentary of the American frontier by artists Frenzeny and Tavernier, a subject with which she is intimately familiar, since she is author of the book *Chronicling the West for Harper's Weekly, Coast to Coast with Frenzeny and Tavernier, 1873-1874* published by the University of Oklahoma Press in 2013. Claudine is also the co-author of a catalogue and co-curator of the exhibition [Jules Tavernier: Artist and Adventurer](#) now at the Crocker Art Museum through May 11. She provided an art lecture at the museum on March 15th at 2 p.m. for all those who love the Old West and 19th century painters.

Those who know Claudine well are aware that she received the title of Chevalier of the Order of Arts & Letters at a ceremony held at the official residence of the Consul General of France for California, Monsieur Romain Serman in San Francisco California in 2011. It was attended by many of her friends in Nevada County as well as Marin. This honor is awarded by the French Government's Minister of Culture to distinguished persons who have significantly contributed to the enrichment of the French cultural heritage throughout the world.

Linda Horning wrote her pamphlet-size Blurb Book, "Salmon in the Goldfields." last Fall because she wanted a



Salmon in the Goldfields

Linda Schuyler Horning



memoir of all the good times she'd had floating down the Yuba River from Parks Bar to Hallwood Boulevard. She also wanted to thank her friends for their willingness to lead these trips that meant so much to her.

Consequently, just as she completed her book, she received a letter from SYRCL – The South Yuba River Citizens League. They were asking for a contribution to their “Yuba Salmon Now” campaign. Linda thought, “This is perfect! I should contribute any proceeds from the sale of the book to their organization!”

Kismet. As she had written the story, it evolved that Linda couldn't help but to convey her sense of loss from what had happened on the river. The damming of the river had blocked the passage of fish to the upper reaches. This is just the viewpoint SYRCL supports.

Salmon in the Goldfields is the second short memoir book Linda has written.

The first was written in 2012 in response to a request for submissions to an anthology of stories about the Tahoe Rim Trail. The anthology was never published, but Linda's “Chickadee Ski” found its way to Blurb Books, and what ensued has become a new outlet for Linda's creative passions. Will these pamphlet-size books eventually lead to a full-length book? It could happen.

If you are interested in outdoor pursuits, or if you just want to show your support for Linda's foray into writing about them, you can purchase a hard copy of “Salmon in the Goldfields” for \$10. More thrifty individuals can log on to her storefront on Blurb Books and get an ebook for the IPAD for only \$2.99. Here's the link: <http://store.blurb.com/ebooks/449167-salmon-in-the-goldfields>.

Linda Schuyler Horning

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The Value of Critique Groups Tracy Deliman

Each time I meet with my critique group, I feel inspired and fully connected with the human race. It's not just that we read one another's work and offer thoughtful critique; the joy is that we are each whole heartedly contributing to another writer's success. Every one of us brings precious pieces of unique life experience to our writing. When we share the background from which the written piece arose, I feel like an honored guest being given an intimate tour of the writer's life and mind. Thus, I understand the thread of Chinese ancestry in Hock's play, “The Ingenious Judge Dee,” I see in Paul's “Mindworkers” his unwavering drive to teach despite absurd political obstructions, and I know Dave's passion for justice in “Kill the Drug Trade.” And, I'm given that warm nudge of confidence through my group's authentic enthusiasm for my screenplay, “Liberation.” We're all in this together. So, writing is no longer such a solitary effort - we have a team behind us contributing to our momentum.

Tracy Deliman is the author of two nonfiction books, *Get the Right People on the Bus*, and *Holistic Medicine*, numerous articles, a short movie, and is currently finishing a screenplay. She is a clinical and organizational psychologist living in Grass Valley.

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Rejections Can Result In Acceptance Paul August

Brian Hamilton's appearance at our monthly meeting reminded me of how I first got published in the San Francisco Chronicle. I had already been published in Rolling Stone, The Oakland Tribune, Songwriter Magazine and as a ghostwriter for a school superintendent. When Herb Caen, the Chronicle star columnist died,

I made it my challenge to get published in the Chron.

I had been a part-time freelancer for 20 years without breaking into the op-ed Chronicle pages. I was also a full time teacher. It took me four years of rejections until an editor phoned me up to give me an assignment.

Perhaps they felt sorry for me. The editor said he happened to hear me talking with students on KPFA-FM, a Berkeley public radio station, about the impact of 9/11 on students here in California. He told me, "I need a teacher to write an opinion piece in contrast to student views on an educational issue. Would you be interested?"

"You bet," I said.

When I sent it in, they almost rejected me again. An editorial assistant called and said, "We can fix it for you or we can tell you how to fix it."

I didn't hesitate. "If I can learn how to write for you I might get my own pieces published." And that's what happened. Over the next four years I had several op-ed pieces appear in the Chron. I knew who to talk with and that made all the difference. Unfortunately, I didn't have the time to compete with the 600 submissions a day the editors received.

So, it took perseverance, a little luck and a willingness to learn from the pros but those rejections finally resulted in acceptance.

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Life Begins on Bessie Avenue

Carole sat with her granddaughter late one Sunday morning on her porch while young Abbie asked innumerable questions about her childhood. History was her favorite subject in school and the fifth grade class had recently been studying World War II. She couldn't pass up an opportunity to interrogate her grandmother.

"Tell me more, Grandma! Do you remember the war at all? What was it like growing up back then?" she questioned.

"I was only a baby! How do you expect me to remember things like that? Don't you know by now I'm old; my memories are fading?" Carole laughed.

"Well tell me everything you remember!" begged Abbie.

"Oh, alright. The story begins when my parents met just before the war. They were young and they fell in love quickly (as was the custom back then). A short time later they were married with a baby on the way. Before they knew it, the war had begun and my father, William Emde, was drafted into the Army. My mother, June, unable to support herself and afraid of being alone, went to live with her parents in their house on Bessie Avenue. My father was sent to Minnesota where he began his training. Time went by, my mother anxious for my arrival, requested that Dad be allowed to return for my birth. One afternoon she was sitting by the window watching the young children play across the street when a taxi pulled up and a soldier stepped from the car. Overcome with emotion she leapt from her chair and ran out the door only to see the soldier walking away up the street. An hour later, she went into labor. It was a long and grueling labor and my mother lost a lot of blood, barely pulling through. I was born on May 22, 1942 in St. Louis Missouri, in my grandparent's house. Gram and Gramp took great care of my mother and me and my grandmother and I were very close, much like you and I. I was two months old when my father held me for the first time. He was granted leave and came home for just a couple of days before he was shipped overseas where he would remain indefinitely. His infantry

was sent to a small island off the coast of Japan called Si Pan. We lost all communication with him from then on except for an occasional letter.”

“You didn’t talk to him at all?” Abbie questioned.

“Well, do you know where Si Pan is? It’s an island way on the opposite side of the world! It’s a miracle we received anything at all,” Carole laughed. “Do you want to hear my favorite story Dad used to tell me?”

“Will I like it?” Abbie said with a smile.

“Oh, I think you’ll like it very much,” She responded. “So when Dad first arrived in Si Pan he sent us a letter. They had invaded the Japanese camps and were now living in them themselves. He told us all about the island, and the food, and the men whom he spent most of his time with, but my favorite part was when he told us about their mascot. It was a snow white cockatoo. The bird had belonged to the Japanese so it didn’t speak English, and it was mean. One of Dad’s friends understood some Japanese and he said that the bird would cuss at them and call them dirty names!”

“The bird did? But how?” asked Abbie.

“Well Cockatoos only repeat what they hear other people say, so it was probably just imitating what the Japanese said about Americans,” Carole explained.

“But why would they say such mean things?” she asked.

“Well honey, we were at war. Many unkind things go on during war and there isn’t anything we can do about it,” Carole continued.

“Did Great-Grandpa ever get shot?” Said Abbie, as she casually changed the topic.

“No, he never got shot, but he did lose his finger. Did I ever tell you about that?” Carole asked Abbie.

“No! Tell me now!” Abbie begged.

“Well after a while in the infantry, Dad got asked to be a mechanic on the planes. So one day he was up inside a plane repairing the engine when he heard the planes coming-”

“What planes?” Abbie interrupted.

“Well let me finish and you’ll find out! Carole laughed. He heard the planes coming, Japanese planes. It was a raid, and he knew he had to find shelter from the bombs that were already beginning to fall. He jumped from the plane, but not before catching his wedding ring on the latch. It tore his finger clean off. After the bombs stopped, he went back and found his ring, but his finger was gone.”

“That’s disgusting!” Abbie cried. “How did he wear his ring after that?”

“You know, I don’t know. He probably just wore it on a different finger,” Carole responded.

“Did your dad ever tell you any war stories?” Abbie asked.

“No, he didn’t like talking about it and my mother and I didn’t want to hear about it. We did however hear stories on the radio. Every night Gramp would sit by the radio and listen to the news of the war, and often we all sat and listened too. It was horribly depressing and none of us liked it much, but we still listened, just to stay informed.”

“Did they ever talk about Great Grandpa?” she asked.

“Oh no sweetie, they only ever mentioned Si Pan once, and that was to say that it was now in Allied possession,” Carole responded. “Did I ever tell you about my uncle Mickey?”

“No, who’s Uncle Mickey?” Abbie inquired.

“Well he wasn’t really my uncle but he was my momma’s cousin and he was stationed on Si Pan with my dad. He had the best singing voice I have ever heard and he used to sing for the men while Daddy would play his harmonica.” Carole explained.

“Is that why you have that old harmonica sign up in the kitchen? Because Great Grandpa used to play?” Abbie asked.

“It is indeed, you’re a smart little cookie!” Carole laughed.

“Speaking of cookies, may I please, please have one Grandma?” Abbie begged.

“After lunch, don’t you want to hear more about Uncle Mickey?” Carole said with a smile.

“Oh yes, tell me more,” Abbie said with excitement.

“Well he had a wife and her name was Agnes. She lived right down the street from us, and she had two kids. Joan and Johnny were twins and they were just a few months younger than I was. We were the best of friends, just like you and your cousins,” Carole explained.

“I love my cousins!” Abbie agreed, but after a little pause she said. “Grandma, when is lunch? I really am hungry.”

“Oh alright, let’s go inside and I’ll make lunch,” Carole nodded.

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After lunch the two sat down on the couch to continue their ongoing game of Monopoly. They had started the game a few months ago and hadn’t ever finished it. Whenever someone seemed to be winning a few rounds changed the whole game giving the other person the lead. It was Abbie’s favorite game, but she soon lost interest.

“Grandma, tell me about when Great Grandpa came home from the war,” Abbie said.

“Well, I was almost four years old when Daddy came home. Amazingly enough I still remember him picking me up and holding me tight. We were still living with Gram and Gramp when he got home so there wasn’t a lot of room for all of us. It wasn’t two months before Momma was pregnant again. She had my brother, William Jr., when I was five, she had Edward when I was six, and she had Robert when I was eight. We would play for hours and hours and I took care of those boys like they were my own children. Because I was the oldest, I was always in charge. We had a basement that was completely empty that we used to play in when the weather was bad. I remember one time we put our skates on and we roller-skated until we couldn’t move our legs anymore. We spent most of our time with Johnny and Joan and we grew up like all children do, or used to. The lingering depression affected us like everyone else, but Dad got a job easily with his experience from the war and it wasn’t long till we moved out of Gram and Gramp’s house.”

“Why did you move out?” Abbie asked.

“We were a family, and we didn’t need to be living with them so Dad decided it was time to move out,” Carole answered.

“I wish my whole family lived with you in your house Grandma,” Abbie stated.

“Where would you all sleep? This house is barely big enough for me!” Carole laughed.

“Well I still wish it,” Abbie said. “What was your favorite part about growing up?”

“Hmm that’s a hard one,” Carole responded. “My favorite time was when we got to borrow this cabin from one of Dad’s friends and spend a couple weeks there in the summer. Bill, Ed, Bob, and I always slept out on the porch under the stars. There was a beautiful garden, a fresh spring, and a stream that we could swim in.”

I loved going there and it's probably the reason why I love to swim so much."

"I love to swim too, Grandma!" Abbie chimed in.

"I know, and you do it so well!" Carole laughed. "Why don't you go put your suit on now and we can go to the river to go swimming."

"Okay!" Abbie smiled. "I'll be right back!"

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After several hours at the river, Carole was not surprised when Abbie fell asleep in the car on the way home. So when Abbie spoke, it caught Carole off guard.

"Grandma, can I stay at your house tonight?" Abbie asked

"Sweetie, you have school tomorrow, it's Tuesday, and we'd have to ask your mom. I'll call her when we get home, okay?" Carole responded

"Okay," Abbie managed before falling back asleep.

After dinner Abbie could hardly stay awake to watch her favorite movie. Carole put Abbie to bed and soon found that she was falling asleep as well so she retired to bed. She had no idea what she would wake up to.

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When Carole awoke she was still tired, but this wasn't that unusual for her, so she got up anyway and made her way to the kitchen. While making her morning coffee, she turned on the television to watch the day's weather. It was then that she saw the burning buildings and her mug slipped from her grasp. With a crash it hit the floor shattering instantly, though she did not care. She stood there, frozen in place, watching the screen when the building collapsed. It was more than she could bear and she collapsed on the sofa, a cry escaping her lips. The commotion had woken Abbie and she wandered out to see just what she was missing out on. The sight of her Grandmother's tears was unfamiliar to Abbie and she was scared.

"Oh, Grandma what's wrong?" she said flinging herself into Carole's embrace. "Who's that on TV? What happened to them?"

"A plane flew into the World Trade Center and the whole building collapsed," she uttered just before the second plane hit.

They both watched with disbelief as the second building caught fire just minutes after the first building collapsed. Tears were rolling down Carole's cheeks when she spoke.

"I never believed this day would come," she said.

"What day, Grandma?" Abbie asked.

"The day when the world would go to war again," Carole said wrapping her arms around little Abbie, praying that they would keep her safe.

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authonomy.com

Members wishing to expose their work to comments might want to try authonomy.com. It has a wide-range of genre and forums. Comments can be sometimes sobering! Free to join; any work uploaded for criticism must be more than 10,000 words long. Ask Hock.

Groups

Note: Critique and writing support groups are open only to members of *Sierra Writers*

Poetry Critique Group

Contact Susan Gabrielle
s_gabrielle@sbcglobal.net

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Fiction critique group

For information, contact Ron Cherry (530) 478-5616; romuluswolf@comcast.net
This group is actively seeking new members. Critique includes editing comments as well as structural and narrative suggestions. We hope you'll join us!

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Nonfiction critique group

For information, contact Jan Westmore (530) 265-0718; jwestmore@sbcglobal.net

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Nonfiction etc. critique group

For information contact Tracy Deliman at tracy@tealhouse.net or (510) 725-5454.

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If you want help starting a critique group, or want to be in touch with members with similar genres, information may be found at: <http://sierrawriters.org/events/critique-groups/starting-a-critique-group>

Get involved with *Sierra Writers*

Sierra Writers Sierra Writers in looking for Board members and volunteers to help with publicity, programs, and a variety of other opportunities. The publicity position is a great well to strengthen your PR skills as well as to help our organization grow. All of our board and volunteer positions are rewarding and without a huge time commitment.

Members may have their own web pages, which they may use in a variety of ways. Members may use their page to introduce themselves, to link users to information on how to purchase their books, or to link back to their own website. A new feature of the *Sierra Writers* website is a page listing links to our members' blogs. To add your info, contact Babette Donaldson, babettedonaldson@sbcglobal.net



Our Board

President, Susan Gabrielle, s_gabrielle@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer, Marty Austin, homebookkeeper@yahoo.com

Membership Coordinator, Nichole Renee Bowden, novnika@msn.com

Publicity, Amy Rutten, sdickard@gotsky.com

Webmaster, Babette Donaldson,
babettedonaldson@sbcglobal.net

Program Coordinator, Jan Fishler, janfishler@gmail.com

Newsletter Staff

Please send all newsletter submissions to

Linda Horning, hornings2@gmail.com

Hock G. Tjoa, hgtjoa@gmail.com

Summer Issue Pub. July 1st, Deadline – June 1st Theme: Poetry and Non-fiction. (Theme is suggestion only at this time.)

Submission guidelines can be found at www.sierrawriters.org

If you have ideas for events you'd like to see sponsored by Sierra Writers, please contact s_gabrielle@sbcglobal.net

Sierra Writers offers speaker meetings, critique groups, a newsletter, a membership directory, the young writer contest, and our ever-expanding website. Sierra Writers supports the Nevada County library and other community activities. Membership in Sierra Writers provides peer support and a venue for all of us to grow as writers.

Calendar

Unless noted otherwise, all meetings are held at the Madelyn Helling Library Community Room 980 Helling Way, Nevada City at 6:30 PM

Upcoming Meetings: *second Wednesday in each month*

April 9, 2014— *Panel on marketing and promotion*
See President's letter, page 1

May 14, 2014— *Gabrielle Pullen, workshop on "writing to heal"*
See President's letter, page 1

June 11, 2014— *S.A. "Sam" Jernigan, workshop on self-publishing*
See President's letter, page 2

ANYONE FOR A BOOKSIGNING? - - -

Are you frustrated about not getting your book out there to readers? If you are self-published or published by a small house, you've found out that it's up to you to toot your own horn. Several writers in the Sierra Writers want to be a part of a book signing in a local book store, maybe more at other locations. Details are still to be worked out, but we are looking to start this in May. If you want to be a part and/or you have ideas, **contact Ron Cherry** at romuluswolf@comcast.net. That is I. Oh, heck, that's me. I will handle getting coverage in the local paper and radio.

*If you have ideas for events you'd like to see sponsored by Sierra Writers, please contact s_gabrielle@sbcglobal.net *

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Wanted: Gently-used or new books for raffle. All the proceeds go to our Young Writers Contest. Bring books you'd like to donate to any meeting or email sier-rawriters@gmail.com

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Our meetings – **the second Wednesday of the month** -- begin at 6:30 in the Madelyn Helling Library Community Room; we hope you can make it.

If you have ideas for **events** you'd like to see sponsored by Sierra Writers in the coming year, please contact s_gabrielle@sbcglobal.net

“The man who does not read has no advantage over the man who cannot read.”

— Mark Twain

We're on the web.
www.sierrawriters.org

If you want to join our members-only Yahoo group, visit <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sierrawriters> and click on the button, “Join this Group.”



What Kind of Newsletter Do You Want?

Sierra Writers have a new Board and a new opportunity to redefine what we expect from this organization. Specifically, what do you want the newsletter to be? Showcase your accomplishments. Inspire other writers. Come on. Make the newsletter the best representation of who we are as an organization!

Linda Horning
Hock Tjoa
Co-Editors

Consider submitting **your** writing for the quarterly Newsletter. Perhaps you attended a notable workshop or class and it helped your writing blossom.

Submissions do **not** have to be long. Small “sidebars,” tips, publication notes, or snippets from your current work-in-progress are always considered.

Members Like You Keep us Strong!

Remember, Sierra Writers is a **member-run** organization. There are many ways you can help keep Sierra Writers strong:

Pay dues

Attend the monthly meetings

Promote Sierra Writers' monthly events and special events verbally or through advertisement at your place of business (ask how!)

Get “physically” involved. We are all busy with our daily lives. It is easy to stay in the shadows and just assume an organization will keep running on its own. Ask yourself: if Sierra Writers went away tomorrow, would it be missed by you or by someone in the community? For some, SW is the only connection with writing they have, so it *is* important. Ask me how YOU can be involved.

Susan Gabrielle, s_gabrielle@sbcglobal.net