

SLO Night Writers

**WORDSMITHS**



January 2020

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# President's Letter

by Janice Konstantinidis

Dear Fellow NightWriters,

If your New Year's resolution is to write more and better, you are not alone. Modern life seems to deprive us of time to reflect and practice our wordsmithing craft. Now might be a good time to reconsider your approach to writing. Here are a few ideas I am thinking about as this new decade begins.

- Do you write in a location that calms you?
- Do you establish a time to write, uninterrupted, even if you sit the entire time and don't write a word?
- Do you know when your brain is most open to creativity?
- When you have an inspirational idea or phrase, do you write it down (or record it) immediately?
- Do you actively study words and language structure, so as to expand your "tool box"?



And the list goes on. The point is that we write to satisfy a passion in ourselves, but our efforts are validated when someone else reads our words and says, "I get it." As in any other art form, writing requires learning, hard work, inspiration, hard work, curiosity and - you guessed it - hard work.

I hope 2020 is your best writing year ever!

*Janice Konstantinidis, President*

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## WELCOME SWALLOWS

With wings spread out wide,  
me mate by me side,  
I look with great wonder,  
at the big world there yonder;  
a happy event at Yuletide.

*Janice Konstantinidis*



Photo by Lorraine Flakemore

## January 14, 2020 General Meeting: The True Story of A Professional Chinese Athlete

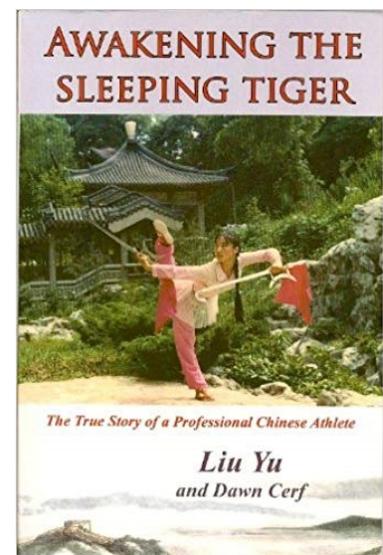
As an impressionable Chinese girl, Liu Yu witnesses the venomous public trial of her mother's coworker and friend during the Cultural Revolution, changing her life forever. The incident silences her voice but not her desire to escape from poverty and the wearisome fate her mother endures.

At age eleven, Liu Yu grabs her chance to avoid being sent to the countryside in the government's plan to reeducate its young people even though it means leaving her supportive family behind. She catapults to the top of Communist society by becoming an elite professional athlete, living the dream of every child in China. Prestige and material comfort, however, are quickly overshadowed by loneliness and a brutal training regimen.

After Liu Yu endures nearly ten years of rigorous martial arts training, feuding coaches threaten her dreams of a national championship. She then must decide whether to follow her family's values and her heart or push for the championship she feels is within her grasp.

Guided by her grandmother's wisdom, the young woman realizes what she wants more than fame and fortune is the chance to control her own life. Liu Yu risks everything, finding the courage to turn against the cultural tide in China to seek her own destiny. In the process she rediscovers her voice, the one she lost as a child of the Cultural Revolution.

The program begins at 6:30pm at the United Church of Christ meeting hall, 11245 Los Osos Valley Road, San Luis Obispo.



## December 10, 2019 General Meeting Review

Members were greeted by Jean Moelter.



A lovely table of Christmas season health food was prepared by Mary Silberstein.

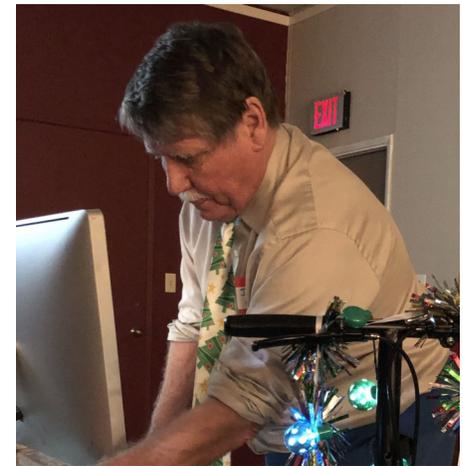
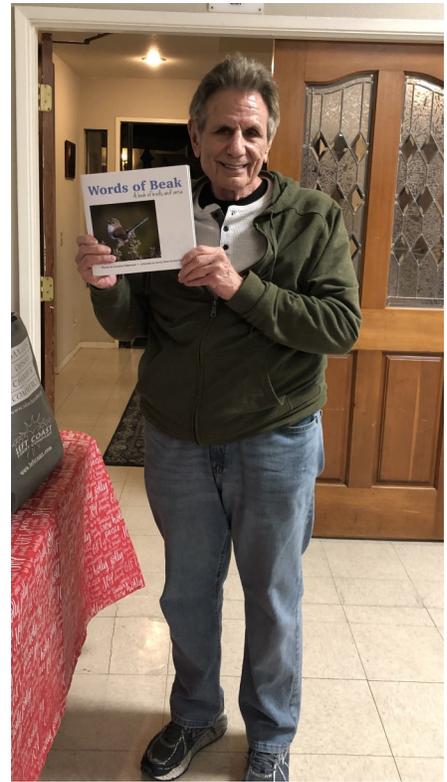


A very serious Critique Group got down to business. Words were exchanged.

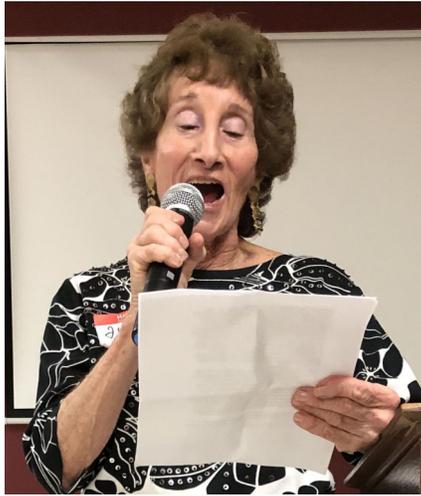


Steven Mintz showed off his new copy of Janice's book. He was not paid to do this. →

Finally, the meeting got underway with storytelling by our own members. Shown on this page are: Martha Stromberg, Dorothy Pitkin, Jean Moelter, Ruth Starr, Jim Aarons, Susan Tuttle, Kit Johnson, Jane Granskog.



Storytelling continued with Judith Bernstein and Jim Livingston.



The meeting culminated in a visit by our own Santa Jim, exhibiting his prototype Nimbus 2000 sled. We are looking forward to *that* story.

We hope you enjoyed our Christmas Party!

Happy New Year to all!



## SLO NightWriter Toys for Tots Drive a Success!

At our December 10 General Meeting, many of our attendees brought a toy for a child who might not have much under the tree on Christmas morning. Thanks are due our generous members for their contributions. Thanks to Jean Moelter for taking the toys to a collection point in San Luis Obispo.



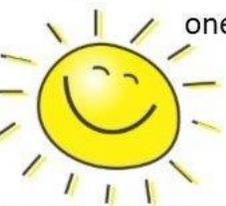
### Sunshine Corner

Need a Little Sunshine?

Into every life a little rain might fall, times when we long for sunshine, but no one notices.

NightWriters would like to send a card to any of its members who are ill, have lost a loved one, had surgery or an accident, but we don't always hear about it.

So, Fellow Writers, we need you!



Please email me, Judythe Guarnera: [judy.guarnera@gmail.com](mailto:judy.guarnera@gmail.com) and let me know when someone you know needs a little sunshine.

# WORD PLAY

by Morgann Tayllor

## WOTY Winner

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary has announced **they** is their 2019 Word of the Year (WOTY). Why **they**? This third person plural pronoun has been a mainstay in the English language since the thirteenth century. Today it is still the workhorse that simplifies and unifies the masculine and feminine antecedents (he, she): *Whoever rings in the New Year can welcome a fresh start, whether **they** are in a festive mood or not... That badger is as belligerent as **they** come... Anyone can sing if **they** want...*



Now there is a new kid on the block. Or at least **they** has a new sense that opens the closet door. The *nonbinary they* is an umbrella term referencing a single person whose gender is unknown or to a person who prefers **they**. (*Nonbinary*: not restricted to two things or parts) A *nonbinary they* can be a person who is neither male nor female; or is someone anywhere on a sliding scale of the male/female spectrum or who prefers the word agender (without gender). Also transgender, gender-neutral, etc.

A few months ago, a U.S. Congresswoman announced her child is gender-nonconforming and uses **they**, not he or she, as a self-description. Even though **they** is plural, Merriam-Webster reminds us "that the pronoun *you* was initially plural, which is why it too takes the plural verb even when it's referring to a single person." Ergo: *You are (not you is) aware that language evolves, but*

today's verb usage with the *nonbinary they* might also change in the future.



Merriam-Webster says its Word of the Year "is determined by data: the word must have been a top lookup at Merriam-Webster.com in the past twelve months, and it must have seen a significant increase in lookups over the previous year...Lookups for **they** increased by 313% in 2019 over the previous year." It's *nonbinary* usage in print, social media and speech is becoming increasingly standard.



Early last year at a local DMV office, the word *Nonbinary* was seen on an application form along with gender classifications Male and Female. When asked about their own definition of *Nonbinary*, a DMV employee said "Basically, it could mean anything you want it to mean."

Any one of the lovely guests at a recent holiday party could have been a **they**. Let's be clear. The **they** among us have always existed. Only now, we have an exploding vocabulary of gender identities and sexual preferences, plus the social technology to articulate More Than Fifty Shades of **They**.

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This lexicon can be a minefield to socially and literally navigate. And yet there's the excitement of exploring the history and evolution of **they** as a part of our versatile language.

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## Writers on the Radio

NightWriter Jean Moelter is the host of Artsy People, the radio show that promotes local artists of all kinds, their work and events Thursdays at 2 p.m. with a rebroadcast Mondays at 5 p.m. It's heard on KYXZ Excellent Radio 107.9 FM out of Grover Beach.

Have you just published a book? Would you like to tell the community about it? Consider being a guest on Artsy People. Just send an email to Jean at [artsypeople@yahoo.com](mailto:artsypeople@yahoo.com). Or, if you have an event coming up, such as a book signing, email an announcement to Jean and she'll read it on the air.

Jean interviews a different artist, live, each week at the Excellent Radio station. Many NightWriters have been guests on the show. Jean has also interviewed musicians, storytellers, actors, and comedians.

To listen to past interviews, and to see the list of upcoming guests, go to Jean's website and click on Artsy People in the menu: <https://sites.google.com/view/jeanmoelter> Don't miss this great marketing opportunity for authors.

## TIPS AND TIDBITS

by Judythe Guarnera



### A FLESH WOUND THROUGH THE HEART

I could almost feel the bite of the bullet in my own small chest as I watched smoke curl from the gun. The victim clutched his chest and collapsed to lie still in the prairie dust.

My brother, Joe, a year older than my seven years, turned toward me and whispered, "Arrgh, a flesh wound through the heart."

Back in the late 1940s we'd never heard of 'high fives' or for sure we'd have exchanged them that day. We shared a smile and turned back to watch the rest of the Saturday matinee. (In those post-Depression Days, we could actually go to the movies for ten cents each and bring our own popcorn. (Did I ever mention the time Joe, in charge of popping, bagging, buttering and bringing the popcorn, surprised my parents and me when it turned out he'd picked up the bag of garbage, instead?)

Back to the movie: young though we were, we knew that shooting at such close range would surely have required a hearse, four strong horses and a casket to take the hero to his final resting place.

We had witnessed with our own eyes the hero clutch his chest—a direct hit. But in seconds he performed a double somersault, whipped his gun around and took the villain out. The damsel in distress rushed up,

embraced him and kissed him. When she stepped away, other than being dazed, he looked unscathed. There was nary a drop of blood on him or on her long dress, which had been fashioned from flour sacks. (Of course, she still looked appealing to our hero.)

Ah, just what the audience had expected. Young voices exploded in cheers as the hero and his rescuer rode off into the sunset.

Even at our young ages, Joe and I didn't buy what we had just seen, so months earlier we had tossed a little irony at a similar scene enacted on the screen, and it stuck. We'd watched enough cowboy and Indian stories to know the 'shot' guy should have been dead.

Irony: only a flesh wound would have permitted him to stay on his feet, let alone engage in a feat of gymnastics. The heart, being a vital organ, couldn't have sustained the damage a bullet would have caused. Thus, we had named it a flesh wound—through the heart. That phrase became our secret.

I have a confession to make, so let me pause here and explain. The holidays have overwhelmed me and, until yesterday, I'd totally forgotten about my column for the newsletter.

In the last week or so I'd read an article on how to describe pain in fiction. I had planned to do some research and address how a well-designed 'show' describing pain, could be much more interesting than words telling the protagonist's pain—in this case—a 'flesh-wound through the heart.' That's what I planned to write about. Then I became fully engaged with necessary Christmas chores and forgot the not-so-carefully laid out plans.

Once that movie memory, a favorite of mine, popped into my head, I was a goner. As a writer, I'm mostly a 'pantser'—I sit down and write and let the characters decide what they want to do. Normally, I'm a little more disciplined when drafting a writing column or an essay, but I'd been caught up in situational stress for two weeks or more.

Since these many years-old memories took their seats front and center in my brain, I gave in and decided I'd just play around and entertain you, with the hope of sneaking in a relevant writing tip every so often. I promise to write about "How to Effectively Describe Pain in your Writing" in a later column. (If I forget, please remind me: [j.guarnera@sbcglobal.net](mailto:j.guarnera@sbcglobal.net))

Assuming you've been as busy holidaying as I have, I'll put on my pantser hat...Wait a minute—did I just say a 'pantser hat?' Oh, shucks, maybe it's the fault of the glass of eggnog I've been sipping. Can't remember whether Steve said it was spiked or not. Oh well. I feel fine—only slightly unfocused. Come to think of it...

By the way, Dear Readers, I'm counting on you to keep an eye on the clock. After all, I still have many chores to do before company comes on Christmas Eve and

Christmas Day. Let's see, I have three more days until Christmas Eve.

I don't? Seriously, Christmas Eve is tomorrow. That must mean Christmas is two days later and not the four I was counting on. (Speaking of pain—picture me leaning on my keyboard, my hands clutching my head, or more directly clutching it to prevent it from taking off like a Frisbee in the hands of a six-foot teenager.)

Hang on a minute while I grab another sip or two of that delicious eggnog. My head still hurts, but I think my tummy just smiled. Ah, just one more sip. Glug. Oops, the glass is empty again. I'll do another paragraph or two and then I'll fill it—just once more.

Today, movies are much more technical and carefully orchestrated, at least if they're not low-budget films. What Joe and I had observed was a product of the '40s. Then again, my husband, who has recently taken up writing, and I constantly poke each other while watching TV and shout phrases similar to this: "Yeah, like that could really happen!" "Remember he left his gun in his car, but now he's shooting his best friend with it."

It's not just movies which screw up. My husband is an engineer, a teacher and a scientist and he goes nuts when the special effects look great, but are obviously impossible.

Today's authors often must plead guilty to the same crimes of mis-writing. How often do we pick up a book and find ourselves unable to suspend our

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disbelief, because what the writer described wasn't physically possible?

Authors make similar mistakes. And "telling about pain" is one of those mistakes.

SPOILER ALERT: Here comes a writing tip:

Pain is part of the human experience, so it has a role in writing. It heightens the drama, raises the stakes, and gives the writer another rock to throw at the protagonist as he inches along his plot line, until he reaches the climax.

My kids all knew growing up that Mom wanted to hear about their physical and emotional pains. I didn't shy away from their pain. I have less patience reading about fictional pain. I figured out that I became bored when the description is repetitive and endless. Although the pain is endless for the person experiencing it, it gets old to the reader.

Then there's the situation where the protagonist sprains his ankle in one chapter and tears off after his dog in the next. As was the case for the 'flesh wound through the heart,' the author forgot that he'd planned for the hero to rescue said damsel in distress. Dead, he couldn't reach that goal. Make sure his pain isn't so all-encompassing that he can't do the task the whole story has prepared him for.

When you've given a character an injury, do some research regarding his recovery experience so you can help him to act authentically as he heals.

Later, when I write that column on describing pain in your stories, we'll explore the topic more so that you can use pain effectively in your writing and make your fiction more real.

By the time you read this, Christmas will have come and gone. I hope that you all had a wonderful experience with family and friends and didn't do anything reckless to cause you pain.

If you did, let me know about it (see my email above) and do you see a way to use it in your writing. We might even be able to help you write a killer description.

Now, as I fill my eggnog glass (it is a very small one), my husband has informed me that it is, indeed, spiked. So, if you find this unusually hard to follow, forgive me, because I lifted my glass in a toast to all my fellow writers.

May your writing journey be fulfilling, and may you find many readers with whom to share it.

*In the Rhythm of Writing,*

*Judythe Guarnera*

## Kudos, Kudos, Kudos...

### **Terry Sanville**

Terry's short story, ***A Dry and Level Space***, will appear in Issue #4 of the print journal [Aleola Journal of Poetry and Art](#).

Terry's flash fiction story ***Waiting for Lorraine*** will appear in the print edition of [The Dime Show Review](#).

Terry's short story ***Math Homework*** will appear in an upcoming online edition of [Founder's Favorites](#), a creative writing journal from Canada.

### Have Kudos to Crow About?

**Do you have a recent article or story published in a local, national or even international print or online magazine? Or a book published?**

**How about a review, or an award, honor or recognition of your writing?**

**If so, we'd like to know about it. To have your literary kudos included in *WordSmiths*, send an email to [slonnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:slonnewsletter@gmail.com) by the 20th of the month.**

Practice doesn't make perfect. Perfect practice makes perfect.  
The only place success comes before work is in the dictionary.

*Vince Lombardi*

# Fish Stories

by Jim Aarons

My dad set up our first aquarium when I was in third grade. Back then, K-mart was one of the few stores open on Sundays, and we went there one day after church. He bought a 20-gallon aquarium and set it up in our living room.

From that day on, he spent a lot of time sitting next to his tank, watching the fish. His favorite feature was a treasure chest that sat on the seafloor. Attached to a pump, it belched out bubbles with clockwork precision.

I jumped into the tropical fish business five years later, when we moved to Arlington Heights. I was in ninth grade. Mrs. Libby, my high school biology teacher, set up an aquarium in the classroom. It was mesmerizing. I was drawn to its natural, serene calmness. A soft algal covering settled into the tank, giving it a warm green glow. There were floating plants that caused the light to scatter into different hues. It was much more natural than Dad's setup.

And it was quieter. There was an occasional air bubble burping from the substrate, but I realized this tank did not have an external filter to keep it clean. Mrs. Libby explained that I was witnessing a natural transformation of organic garbage into bubbles through the effects of microorganisms living in the substrate. It was my first introduction to the biological decomposition of waste material, you know, feces and urine.

I worked with Mrs. Libby on two projects. With one experiment, we grew yeast cells in test tubes to follow the dynamics of overpopulation. The yeast population first grew exponentially, then leveled and died off as the cells used up the sugar nutrients in their test tubes. The other test involved watching how pea plants thrived under different color lights. Did you

know the worst light to raise a plant in is green light? The green chlorophyll in the plant reflects green light, the plant cannot photosynthesize, and it barely survives.

I borrowed an aquarium book from Mrs. Libby, reading, and rereading it. One afternoon I stayed past the last bus, and she asked me if I needed a ride home. I told her no, I could walk. Because it was raining and freezing outside, she insisted and I let her take me home. I felt embarrassed to be walking to her car in the teacher's parking lot, but appreciated the extra effort she made. Possibly I had a crush on Mrs. Libby. But, in reality, she was another cheerleader who guided my ADHD brain.

In Arlington Heights, my fish thoughts solidified into action when my neighbor and schoolmate, Michael G, took me with him to the local tropical fish store. He was an on-again, off-again friend. During an 'on' period, I went to the store with him and his Mom, who was an excellent haggler.

She was mean, too. That day, after buying a fish tank and a piranha, she got extras items by berating and downgrading the merchandise until the price was right. Michael G. set up an aquarium in his bedroom and delighted the entire family when it was time to feed Pete, his pet piranha.

"Watch this!" He exclaimed with much fanfare, dropping in a hapless goldfish.

Pete sucked the entire goldfish into its mouth...

"Wait... wait..." Michael G. urged. The piranha needed a moment to work on his meal. A few

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moments later, small golden fish scales were expelled from the piranha's gills. The little glitters floated gaily around Pete's head. These scales from the goldfish were the only things left of it.

The episode reinforced my tropical fish interest. I set up a 20-gallon tank in the den, but soon expanded it to raise fish for-profit and built a setup of four aquariums in the basement. I grew Swordtails, which bear live young, and Blue Gourami, which create a nest of bubbles in the corner to bring up their babies. But I was unsuccessful at coaxing Zebrafish to lay their eggs on a marble substrate in another tank.

During the summer, I saved money on fish food by feeding mosquito eggs, larvae and pupae I collected in a water container I set up outside the house. This free food source intrigued me. It was no cost nutrition and helped rid the world of mosquitoes.

We lived in the humid Midwest, and mosquitoes loved my breeding setup. They were plentiful and easy to raise. I poured a

cup of milk into a fifty-gallon barrel filled with water. The soured milk smell attracted mama mosquitoes by the dozens. Soon I had floating rafts of eggs. The excitement revved when the eggs hatched into larvae. These little guys rose to the surface to suck air through siphon tubes. When danger loomed, they pulled in their snorkels and dove to the murky bottom.

After the larval stage, the baby skeeters change into fat, black pupae that look like rat turds, dark and small. But there is a young mosquito inside. It was satisfying to watch my fish come up to a larva or pupa, suck the strange bug into their mouths, and eat until their bellies bloated.

But, feeding fresh mosquito larvae has drawbacks. If I harvested too many for my fish to eat, the uneaten larvae hatched into adults and flew around the place, looking for their first meal. Mom always complained the house was full of mosquitoes. She was sure one of us was leaving the door open. No one ever knew it was me.

## Nonessential Appendages

by Patricia Gimer

I don't always know my tipping point. It sneaks up on me, hidden within a song, a poem, a happenstance. Like today. I drag myself out of bed to make a quick trip to the corner store and, as the garage door opens, the afternoon glare assaults my tear-swollen eyelids like a cruel therapist forcing me to confront the truth.

Looking over my shoulder, I back out onto the driveway and glance to check that the door is closing when, on the adjacent patio gate, I notice something.

*Is that a brown rag draped over it, a sweatshirt, maybe? Not mine—did the gardener leave it there?*

I pull forward to get a closer look and can't believe what I'm seeing. I moan, turn toward the empty street and realize—I'm alone.

My mind scrambles.

*I can not deal with this!*

I rest my forehead on the steering wheel.

My first impulse is to call my former fiancé for moral support, but he lives over an hour away and it has been six weeks since we last spoke on that awful night when he abruptly ended our engagement.

Taking in a deep breath, I decide to call my adult son.

"I'm at a birthday party, Mom," he whispers, "and we're about to say 'Surprise!' I'll come after that."

In the meantime, I decide to complete my errand and drive away, hoping no one passing by will have to see what I have just seen.

When I return, my son is standing near the gate, cell phone in hand, calling the number on the hot-pink collar of the dead cat.

Our neighbor in the cul-de-sac is

heartbroken and over the speakerphone, I hear her tearful request, "My grandson is visiting. I don't want him to know we lost her this way. Please put Bisky in a box. My husband will come over to get her in the morning."

Putting Bisky in a box isn't as easy as it sounds. A little piece of her right rear foot is wedged between the top of two wooden gate slats - just a few toes.

She must have tried to jump up there, must have slipped and gotten herself stuck, must have been there a long time, hanging face-down from that one tiny paw.

There are scratches and fur and blood on the weathered, dog-eared boards. The thigh of Bisky's trapped leg is ripped open. I see muscles, I see tendons, bone.

*Oh, God, she must have tried to chew it off to free herself!*

Her lifeless body is fully extended, stretched down along the boards, head dangling just a foot above the congealed pool of gore on the concrete below, her blood-stained mouth gaping wide.

My stomach turns. It must have been horrible for her, this futile attempt, from an upside down position, to rid herself of the limb that betrayed her, to chew through the only part of herself she could reach, the part she ultimately deemed non-essential as she slowly bled out.

I don't want to see any of it, and I can't seem to make myself touch Bisky to take her down.

After the past six weeks of trying to survive the sudden loss of my fourteen-year relationship, after struggling to understand behavior that invalidated

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*(Continued from page 16)*

everything I thought we stood for; after suffering through silent, sleepless nights; the pain of shingles; and the effort required sometimes to simply continue breathing, I feel exhausted. Powerless.

I'm grateful for the strong, calming presence of my son who gently tries to lift Bisky's paw up out of the crevice that imprisons her. He tugs hard, harder, really hard, but it is firmly wedged and won't budge.

I want to help but still can't bring myself to touch that cat. I just stand there, paralyzed.

I try to remember who I was. I picture the working mother of three children—one of them her sister's; the school volunteer, the caregiver of my disabled ex-husband *and* eventually both parents. I envision the woman who dug ditches and laid sprinkler pipe, replaced toilets, and stood alone on tall ladders painting cathedral ceilings.

I feel compassion for the optimist who, fourteen years ago, risked so much to engage in a relationship with a man she thought was the answer to her prayers. I see an image of the grand house on the hill she helped him build and the elusive "life in paradise" they tried so hard to create.

I close my eyes and say to myself, "Goodbye to that."

When I open my eyes, I am filled with an immense surge of energy.

I grab a hammer from the garage and my

son stands wide-eyed, as I take it to the top of the adjoining gate slats and whack each one hard and loud repeatedly in opposite directions until finally they separate enough to let Bisky fall free.

As she drops, my son catches her rigid carcass in a plastic bag. He lays the bag in a long cardboard box and folds over the flaps.

Desperate for a cleansing, I immediately snatch up a hose, open the nozzle to full blast, try to rinse away the thick, maroon puddle beneath where she had been dangling. It's sticky and will require scrubbing, but not now. Now I need to quickly remove as many traces of the cat's suffering as possible.

I aim a powerful torrent at the gate. Waves of blood wash down. Tufts of hair fly off in all directions, as do my thoughts.

*What could I have done to prevent this? Why didn't I hear Bisky's cries? Wasn't I paying attention? What about this is so familiar? Were the grievances of my fiancé' valid, after all?*

No answers come. But in this moment, I know I am no longer that person who was left dangling, life turned upside down because, unlike poor Bisky, I freed myself before I bled out.

Sunshine warms my face. Ocean air fills my lungs. I rest my palm over my heart, thinking, *I've got you.*

## Moved or Changed Email?

Please notify NightWriters of any change in address or email: jkon50@gmail.com. Join NightWriters and send dues or renewal checks (payable to SLO NightWriters) to: SLO NightWriters, PO Box 2986, Paso Robles, CA 93447. Or join/renew online through our website: [www.slouightwriters.org](http://www.slouightwriters.org) and pay with a credit card.

## Monthly Meetings

NightWriters' Evening Meetings: the second Tuesday of every month, year round. We encourage interested visitors to join us. Admission is free; refreshments served. Next Meeting: January 14, 2020, at United Church of Christ, 11245 Los Osos Valley Road, San Luis Obispo 93405.

General meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. Round Table presentations start at 5:15 p.m. Writers' Critique Groups: Free for members, \$5 for non-members. These groups read and critique each other's work and discuss the business of writing. Visitors are always welcome. For details, visit our website: [www.slouightwriters.org](http://www.slouightwriters.org).

## Have You Checked Out Our Website Lately?

### Control Your Own Information

Post your bio, picture, book covers and ordering links. Contribute a writing blog post-free publicity!

### MEMBER SITE LINKS

List your website(s) and blog(s) with live links — makes it easier for the public to find you and helps build your platform.

### BOOK REVIEWS

Get your book reviewed. Write a review—it's a valid publishing credit.

### WRITERS SERVICES

Do you have a writing or professional skill? Get listed on our new Services Page. (Returning next issue.)

### FACEBOOK

Become a "Fan" of NightWriters! Visit NW's Facebook page and sign up today! Also, link your Facebook page and your websites and blogs to NW sites.

### LINKEDIN

Connect with NW on LinkedIn. Help build your author platform with writing professional connections.



*Complete Editing Services*  
*Let me help you Write It Right*  
 Susan Tuttle, Award Winning Author

**Proofreading:** spelling, punctuation, and grammar only. The last step before publication.

**Cost:** \$5/3 pages

**What you get:** a corrected document. Turnaround time @ 1 week for a 250-300 page manuscript.

**Line Editing:** spelling, punctuation, grammar, word usage, sentence construction, consistency of voice / style.

**Cost:** \$5 / page

**What you get:** two documents, one corrected (spelling, punctuation, grammar only), one with suggestions in track changes. Turnaround time @ 1-1/2 weeks for a 250-300-page manuscript.

**Developmental Editing:** full evaluation of the story and plot, including character development and growth, story arc, use of language, point of view, tense, consistency / believability of story line, subplots, beginning and ending, setting, author's voice / style, etc. Includes spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

**Cost:** @ \$850-\$1,200 for 250-300-page manuscript, depending on amount of work the manuscript needs. Flat rates also available.

**What you get:** a document with track changes for spelling, punctuation and grammar, and comments, suggestions, and examples on ways to improve the work. Turnaround time: 2-3 weeks, depending on amount of work needed.

I will never rewrite your work, I will only suggest ways you can make it better, with examples for clarification. My goal is to help strengthen your unique author's voice while making sure you tell the best story you can write.

Beta Reading Services also available, \$50/book.

Contact me at: [editme1@yahoo.com](mailto:editme1@yahoo.com)

## Submit Stores, Photos and Ads to the Newsletter

We will publish advertisements for NightWriters' books and book or writing related events. This advertising is Free For Members. Please provide the graphic (book cover or other graphic) for the announcement.

We will also accept original photographs, and unpublished Flash Fiction between 400-800 words from current members. Excerpts from published works, if they stand alone as their own mini-story, are also acceptable. We are also interested in articles, kudos and event notices. And if you have any other ideas for content, please let me know.

Send all submissions as attachments to: [slonwnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:slonwnewsletter@gmail.com), and put NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION in the subject line. We're all writers... so, take advantage of this opportunity to be published in your newsletter.

*Steve Derks, Acting Editor*

## NightWriters REVIEW BOARD

As writers, we need to read in order to see what's being done out there. We also learn what works and what doesn't, what we need to avoid and what we want to incorporate into our own bag of skills.

So, as long as we're reading, why not read other members' books and then write reviews for them? It's a win-win for everyone: we learn by reading, and authors garner those all-important reviews for their work.

NightWriters has set up a Review Board, where we connect member readers with member writers' new works. Below you will find a listing of members who are willing to read and review (on Amazon, Goodreads, or their other favorite review site) specific works by other members. You must be a NightWriter member in good standing to take advantage of this new board.

### *Review Board Members\**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Email</u>	<u>Genres</u>
Tina Clark	<a href="mailto:theclarkfour@sbcglobal.net">theclarkfour@sbcglobal.net</a>	sci-fi, creative nonfiction
Jim Aarons	<a href="mailto:jim@jeadv.com">jin@jeadv.com</a>	historical fiction
Steve Bowder	<a href="mailto:sbowder@live.com">sbowder@live.com</a>	historical novel
Jennifer Rescola	<a href="mailto:jkrescola@charter.net">jkrescola@charter.net</a>	autobiography, novels
Steven McCall	<a href="mailto:steven.mccall7@gmail.com">steven.mccall7@gmail.com</a>	literary fiction
Jody Nelson	<a href="mailto:jjnteacher@gmail.com">jjnteacher@gmail.com</a>	fiction, creative nonfiction
Mary Silberstein	<a href="mailto:luvlamas@gmail.com">luvlamas@gmail.com</a>	poetry, fiction
David Brandin	<a href="mailto:dbrandin@earthlink.net">dbrandin@earthlink.net</a>	political, historical, general, science fiction
Martha Raymond	<a href="mailto:mrth.raymond@gmail.com">mrth.raymond@gmail.com</a>	YA fiction, literary fiction
Brian Schwartz	<a href="mailto:brian@selfpublish.org">brian@selfpublish.org</a>	nonfiction
Ruth Cowne	<a href="mailto:abuella10@att.net">abuella10@att.net</a>	memoir, flash fiction
Susan Tuttle	<a href="mailto:aim2write@yahoo.com">aim2write@yahoo.com</a>	mystery, suspense, paranormal suspense
Mark Arnold	<a href="mailto:markarnoldphd@gmail.com">markarnoldphd@gmail.com</a>	historical, science fiction

*\*To be added to our Review Board listing, write to: [slonwnnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:slonwnnewsletter@gmail.com) and put Newsletter Info in the subject line.*

### **We Need Your Help**

The success of non-profit organizations like SLO NightWriters depends on its members. We all have talents other than writing that any organization could make use of. NightWriters has many special opportunities for members to get involved, working "behind the scenes." If you'd like to assist in any capacity, email: [jkon50@gmail.com](mailto:jkon50@gmail.com)

### **SLO NightWriter Officers**

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