



June 2023 Dispatch

Gold Country Writers is a non-profit volunteer organization of writers that meets every Wednesday at the Auburn City Hall Rose Room from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Email goldcountrywriters1849@gmail.com to join or find out more. Website: goldcountrywriters.com. Facebook: Gold Country Writers. Mailing address: P.O. Box 5991, Auburn, CA 95604.



Tulips at Ananda Village

[Printable pdf file](#)

President's Message

A phrase sometimes heard in relation to our craft is “wordsmithing.” I’ve

always thought it fell in the same category (of verb) as composing, editing, or revising. I could be wrong.

Wordsmithing could be synonymous with fine-tuning. It more than likely arose from “blacksmith”, or more generally, “smithing.” It brings to mind changing, hammering, beating into shape. In our writing context, it could mean having a very objective, hard-headed approach to evaluating what you’ve put down, and asking yourself, 'Is there a better word to go there?' Selecting the best word—the most effective, the most evocative—will blossom more eloquently in the reader’s imagination.

~ Frank Nissen

Get the Scoop on the Making of a Thriller Novel

by Margie Yee Webb

We are pleased to welcome Richard Meredith for a presentation to Gold Country Writers! On Wednesday, June 21, he will present "The Making of a Thriller Novel."

Richard will discuss his latest thriller novel, *Maskirovka—The Russian Science of Deception*, which made Kirkus Reviews 100 Best Indie Books of 2022. The book draws heavily on his work as an analyst in the petroleum industry. He will do a short reading, provide a brief synopsis, and detail how the story evolved in 2015 even before Russian collusion was on anyone’s radar. He states, “Any similarities with recent events in Ukraine are purely coincidental!”

Richard Meredith, a native of Flint, Michigan, longed for a life at sea. After moving to California in the Navy, he remained to finish college. His career as a marine scientist and wildlife biologist have provided rich fodder for his writing. His years on commercial fishing boats in the Pacific formed the backdrop of his thriller, *The Crow’s Nest*, which won the Silver Falchion Award for the best Action-Adventure novel at the 2021 Killer Nashville Mystery and Thriller Writers Conference. His ecological restoration work in the oil fields of Ecuador was the basis for his thriller, *Sky Dance*. He is married with two children and four grandchildren.

<https://www.richardwmeredith.com/>

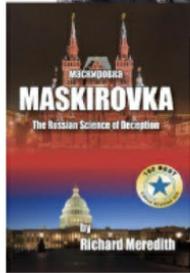


GOLD COUNTRY WRITERS

RICHARD MEREDITH

THE MAKING OF A THRILLER NOVEL

Richard Meredith will discuss his latest thriller novel, *Maskirovka—The Russian Science of Deception*, which made Kirkus Reviews 100 Best Indie Books of 2022. The book draws heavily on his work as an analyst in the petroleum industry. He will do a short reading, provide a brief synopsis, and detail how the story evolved in 2015 even before Russian collusion was on anyone's radar. Richard Meredith's career as a marine scientist and wildlife biologist have provided rich fodder for his writing, including his first novel *The Crow's Nest*, and for his thriller, *Sky Dance*. www.richardwmeredith.com/



JUNE 21, 2023

10 AM TO NOON

Auburn City Hall Rose Room
1225 Lincoln Way, Auburn CA
FREE Public Invited FREE
www.goldcountrywriters.com

Thanks to Guest Speaker Lois Ann Abraham

by Sarah Michie Pressler

I've been asked to write a few words about the workshop Gold Country Writers enjoyed in May, "Feelings, Nothing More Than Feelings" with Lois Ann Abraham. I'm feeling nervous, self-conscious, and reluctant to do it. However, I've decided to face my fears of public writing and take the challenge.

As an author more at ease with the craft of writing memoir, I am impressed with those who can so adeptly fashion a believable story out of only a few ideas. Ms. Abraham's writing activity elicited numerous shares and welcome laughter. Together, we enjoyed an inspirational morning of exploring the art of approaching emotions as another sensory tool through which a writer brings a character or a moment to life.



Lois Ann Abraham lectures.



Book-signing for Allison Arredondo



Book-signing for Nicolle Goldman



Lunch with guest speaker Lois Ann Abraham at the Old Town Grill.

Upcoming Elections

The GCW nominating committee, consisting of Chery Anderson, Betsy Schwarzentraub and Barbara Young, presented the slate of nominees at the business meeting on Wednesday, May 3. Our By-Laws require that the slate shall be voted by all paid members present at the **June meeting**. **That meeting will take place on Wednesday, June 7**. All members are invited to attend and cast their votes. The nominating committee shall conduct the election process and announce the results. The newly elected officers shall take office at the first meeting **in July**.

Hats Off To 100-Word Story Winners

by Chery Anderson and Margie Yee Webb

The 2023 Gold Country Writers 100-Word Story Contest celebration of winners held May 31, 2023, had over 50 members in attendance to honor the three winning story writers. Margie Yee Webb, the emcee, indicated that the judges made their selections from twenty-three anonymous entries in a blind judging process, unaware of the authors' identities. The third place winning story was "Daddy's Girl" by Del Dozier; second place was "New Beginnings" by Cindy Ruth; and first place was awarded to Jeaninne Kato for her story "Peter's First Camping Trip, 1940."

Contest Co-chairperson Margie invited each writer to read their stories. Amid applause, there were gasps for heartfelt stories and laughter for others.

Stories were scored anonymously by Judges Janis Herbert — who joined us, Catharine Bramkamp, and James L'Etoile. Judges shared that they were "really impressed by the quality of the stories, and touched (often) by the content and (every time) at the effort and care put into the work."

Members and guests wearing hats — fun, funny, and fancy — gathered for the festivities. Contest Co-chairperson Chery Anderson announced that the "Best Hat" voting was underway. After we enjoyed appetizers, Margie announced the winning stories and presented certificates to the winners. To congratulate the winners, Chery led the "Hats Off Salute" and everyone who wore a hat doffed it.

Chery then announced the "Best Hat" winner — Terry Wicks for an especially creative hat with a chicken reading her memoir, embellished with "Gold Country Writers" and dangling books along with other unique details. Congratulations to Terry!

Finally, we wrapped up the contest celebration with cake and other desserts. Another fun, festive, and entertaining event in the books — thanks to everyone attending and those reading stories! Congratulations again to Jeaninne, Cindy, and Del!

The winners' stories are featured in the Dispatch at the end.



From left to right: Jeaninne Kato, Cindy Ruth, Del Dozier

Judges for the 100-Word Story Contest

by Margie Yee Webb, Co-Chair of Contest

Much appreciation to Catharine Bramkamp, Janis Herbert, and James L'Etoile — the Judges for the 2023 Gold Country Writers 100 Word Story Contest!

Catharine Bramkamp is a writing coach, workshop facilitator, and author of 22 fiction, non-fiction, and poetry books. Her poetry collection *UnConscious Words - Poet as Scribe* will be published, eventually, by Dancing Girl Press. She has published poetry since high school and finds inspiration and solace in nature, art, books, and study. She holds a B.A. in English from UCSB and an M.A. in English from Sonoma State University. Catharine currently teaches history and creativity for Sierra College and the University of Hawaii.

<https://catharine-bramkamp.com/>

Janis Herbert is the author of six books for children — *Abraham Lincoln for Kids*, *The American Revolution for Kids*, *The Civil War for Kids*, *Leonardo da Vinci for Kids*, *Lewis and Clark for Kids*, *Marco Polo for Kids* — and the as-told-to memoir *The World Don't Owe Me Nothing: The Life and Times of Delta Bluesman David Honeyboy Edwards*. Her jobs in bookstores, libraries, and schools had one thing in common — books! A lifelong love of history led to her career as a writer. Janis enjoys baking, birdwatching, and spending time in nature. She lives in Northern California with her husband and animals.

<https://janisherbertforkids.com/?page=book;book=AL4K;section=overview;>

James L'Etoile uses his twenty-nine years behind bars as an influence in his award-winning novel, short stories, and screenplays. He is a former associate warden in a maximum-security prison, a hostage negotiator, and director of California's state parole system. *Black Label* earned the Silver Falchion for Best Book by an Attending Author at Killer Nashville. He was nominated for The Bill Crider Award for short fiction. His most recent novel is the Lefty Award-nominated *Dead Drop*. Look for *Devil Within* and *Face of Greed*, both coming in 2023. You can find out more at

<https://jamesletoile.com/>



Catharine Bramkamp



Janis Herbert



James L'Etoile



Dessert table at the May 31st Hats Off Celebration

Prepping for the GCW Short Story Contest

Gold Country Writers will be hosting a 1,500 word short story contest. To help prepare writers, Rebecca Inch-Partridge, contest Chairperson, will be teaching, "The Craft of the Short, Short Story." At this workshop she will go over the guidelines as well as the rubric that judges will use to select the winners.

When: From 12 PM to 12:45 on June 7th (after the GCW business meeting)

Where: Auburn City Hall, Rose Room

The Prize: \$100, \$75, \$50 and publication on GCW's website.

GCW Booth at Gold Country Fair

The GCW entry into the 2023 Gold Country Fair has been approved. The fair will take place from September 7 to September 10. We have a much better booth assignment than last year. Sellers will evenly share the booth fee; therefore, the more that participate, the lower the cost. To date, participants are: Frank Nissen, Michael O'Haver, Kathryn Shields, Barbara Young, Susan Osborn, Bill Haynes, & Marlene.

Contact Michael if interested in selling your books at this fair in Auburn, either at the next GCW meeting or via phone or e-mail at:
209/595-9728 or Godsscribemike@gmail.com

All participants must have current California Seller's Permits.



Best Hat Winner: Terry Wicks

Hands down, Terry Wicks' creative head topper won the hearts and minds of the crowd at the May 31st celebration. She shared that her family members, including grandchildren, helped with the detailed decorations. That's using your head, Terry!



Hat Contest runners-up Pauline Nevins and Lisa Schliff



Bird's eye view of Terry's winning hat

Apology to Margie Yee Webb

Margie Yee Webb produced a spectacular 100-Word Story Contest on Wednesday, May 31st. Everything was pitch-perfect--the food, the camaraderie, the writer introductions, the awards, and the printed stories for the writers to read aloud. This writer owes Margie a huge apology for making her feel uncomfortable when she announced the title of my story. I had forgotten I changed my title at the last minute, so I made a joke about it being a typo. I even told her that I liked her change even better. Margie, you weren't losing your touch. You were dealing with a 'touched' writer. Remember, I owe you lunch. With much

July Read and Review

by Kelly Lardner, Read and Review Chairperson

Please join us for our next Read and Review on Friday, July 14th from 10-12 noon at Depoe Bay in downtown Auburn. Our guest author, Mary Helen Fein, will be sharing her book, *Stitching a Life - An Immigration Story*. A copy is available to borrow from our GCW library, or you can contact Helen and purchase your own copy. Hope to see you there!

KUDOS!

To Gold Country Writers for the collaborative donation of \$150.00 to the Elk Grove Writers Conference of September 23, 2023.

To Betsy Schwarzentraub for being interviewed in June by Auburn local television. In the show, "Staging the Third Act," host (and also GCW member) Jeaninne Kato will ask Betsy about the legacy she seeks to pass on through her writing, including her two latest books, *Tossed in Time: Steering by the Christian Seasons*, and *Growing Generous Souls: Becoming Grace-Filled Stewards*. She will also sell her books at the Sacramento Convention Center June 5-18 (California-Nevada Conference of United Methodists)

To Dorothe Kress for sharing her book, *The Risks: Forbidden Love Behind the Iron Curtain*, to more than 120 people at Sun City Lincoln Hills, for donating half her book sales to Phoenix High School in Lincoln, and for speaking at the Women's Club in Lincoln about her life in East Germany.

To Mary Helen Fein for the acceptance of her second novel for publication by She Writes Press. The working title is *Spark*.

To Mary Boyle for her successful book sales at Ace Hardware in Loomis. She will also be selling books at the California State Fair in Sacramento.

To Lisa Schliff for her podcast interview with Podcaster Joline Lenz on May 19. Joline asked her incisive questions about her debut novel, *Fire in the Springs*. Here is the link: <https://jolinelenz.com/podcast/labor-of-love/>



Mary Boyle's book display in Loomis.

INVITATION TO ALL GCW MEMBERS

by Dora Cividino

Please join Board members and Committee chairs at our monthly business meetings on the first Wednesday of each month. These meetings are open to all members of Gold Country Writers. You will hear and learn about the issues that confront us as an organization such as the budget, updates on location, upcoming events and results of past events. And we will get to know each other more. Bring your ideas, questions and comments!

Thanks from the Elk Grove Writers Conference

Thank you (Frank Nissen) and the Gold Country Writers so much for the collaborative donation of \$150.00 to the Elk Grove Writers Conference of September 23, 2023.

The Gold Country Writers Sponsorship will be honored with their logo appearing in all future 9/23/23 Elk Grove Writers Conference marketing materials, including a revision to our current flier, any subsequent conference fliers, and of course, the Conference Day Program, and signage. The \$150.00 will be used to help cover the cost of all-day coffee service during the Conference.

~ Loy Holder, President



Thinking of becoming a member of Gold Country Writers? It's easy to join. Email your name, address, and telephone number to: goldcountrywriters1849@gmail.com
Please put GCW Membership in subject line
We will mail you a more comprehensive membership questionnaire.

Gold Country Writers is here to support and encourage writers of all levels and all genres — whether Novels, Poetry, Science Fiction, Fiction or Memoirs or your own creative genre. Whether you are a beginner or an established writer — WELCOME.

Membership gives you: Critique groups, monthly speakers, networking, mentor program, Read and Review quarterly book club, monthly newsletter, website with your bio, and much more!

Requesting Photos of Critique Groups

by Sarah Pressler

I'd like to post pictures on our Facebook page of GCW critique groups hard at work. They can be posed or candid. Please send them to: Sarah Pressler at: sarahpressler2@gmail.com.

Also, if you visit the Facebook page regularly, that will generate more traffic and interest in Gold Country Writers. Please visit our FB page!

FOR KUDOS IN DISPATCH: Blow your own horn!

Please send news of your writing milestones and accomplishments to Lisa Schliff, Dispatch Editor, for recognition in the newsletter: onthebeamlisa@gmail.com. We want to hear from you!

Possible New Critique Groups

by Jody Brady

Several people have voiced interest in forming a new group of members working on memoirs or full-length books. When working on an ongoing story, it works better if the readers are familiar with the story up to that point. If you are interested, email a note to Jody Brady at: jodyjojody@aol.com.

Calendar of Events

Tuesday, June 6

12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Memoir Critique at Round Table Pizza, 370 Elm Avenue, Auburn. Currently full.

Wednesday, June 7

10:00 a.m. - noon Combined Executive and General Business Meeting and Election of Officers
noon - 12:45 p.m. - Workshop, "The Craft of the Short, Short Story"
5:45 p.m. - Evening mixed genre, Round Table Pizza, 370 Elm Avenue, Auburn

Saturday, June 10

1:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Novel Group, Mary Helen Fein's home. Currently full

Wednesday, June 14

10:00 a.m. - noon - Drop-in Critique
noon - 2:00 p.m. - Poetry Group,
noon - 2:00 p.m. - Inspirational Group
12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. - Children's Lit Group
2:30 p.m. - Sci Fi and Fantasy Group, Rebecca Inch-Partridge's home.

Wednesday, June 21

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Speaker Meeting: Richard Meredith, Thriller Novel
1:00 p.m. - Mystery/Thriller Group

Saturday, June 24

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. - Open Mic for the Spoken Word, Auburn Library, Beecher Room, 350 Nevada Street

Wednesday, June 28

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Drop-in Critique
noon - 2:00 p.m. - Poetry Group
noon - 2:00 p.m. - Inspirational Group
noon - 2:00 p.m. - Memoir Share Group.
12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. - Children's Lit
2:30 p.m. - Sci Fi and Fantasy Group, Rebecca Inch-Partridge's home.
Flash Fiction - Via e-mail only.

***All meetings take place at the Rose Room, Auburn City Hall, 1226 Lincoln Way, Auburn, unless otherwise indicated.**

***See Critique Group List in this newsletter for group leader, contact person and more details.**

GCW SPEAKER PROGRAMS ON ACTV

Lois Ann Abraham, "Feelings, Nothing More Than Feelings," May 17, 2023.

<https://youtu.be/vIBHahFBang>

Susan M. Osborn, "Creating Flash Fiction," April 19, 2023.

<https://youtu.be/5O3JNYOJi7Q>

Barbara Young, "Manifesting Your Book," March 15, 2023.

<https://youtu.be/tlv972i2ZE0>

Georgette Unis, "Sounding the Metaphor," January 18, 2023.

<https://youtu.be/STtdiepCfa4>

Amy Rogers, "Write a Thriller Novel Using Craft Tips From the Pros," September 21, 2022.

<https://youtu.be/VmJ4wBKLrA0>

Dierdre Wolownick, "How to Succeed at Anything," July 20, 2022.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=8e9EiQksIVQ>

Joan Griffin, "Spice Up Your Writing With Sensory Details," June 15, 2022.

<https://youtu.be/F5m34xaTWOo>

James L'Etoile, "Exploring Character," May 18, 2022.

<https://youtu.be/rgB4jBclBvk>

Mary Helen Fein, "Writing Family History ~ A Process," March 16, 2022.

<https://youtu.be/P1jiaqQ0mPo>

Specialty Critique Members: It would be great to see you at the Wednesday drop-in critique meetings once in awhile, as readers and/or listeners.

Specialty Spin-off Critique Groups

Coordinators: Jody Brady and Sarah Pressler

Contact group leaders, on your latest club roster to learn the current schedule for your group.

Children's Lit: Contact Sarah Pressler: sarahpressler2@gmail.com. Meets at 12:30 p.m. at the Rose Room, Auburn City Hall, on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays. New members welcome.

GCW OFFICERS, BOARD MEMBERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

PRESIDENT: Frank Nissen

V P - INTERNAL AFFAIRS: Barbara Young

V P - EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, MARKETING & EVENTS: Michael O'Haver

Evening Critique: Contact Karen Clay, karen@karenclay.com. Meets the 1st Wednesday of the month at 5:45 at Round Table Pizza.

Evening Mixed Genre: Contact Rebecca Inch-Partridge. Drop in at Round Table Pizza, 1st Wed. of the month, 5:45 p.m.

Flash Fiction: Meets once a month via e-mail. 100-word stories in response to writing prompts. Contact Chery Anderson: goldcountrywriters1849@gmail.com. New members welcome.

Inspirational Group: Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month after drop-in critique in same location as the general meeting. The group uses the opposite side of room from the Poetry Group. Bring your own lunch. Betsy is the contact person: betsy@generousstewards.com.

Memoir Critique: The group meets on the first Tuesday of the month, at Elm Street Round Table Pizza. Meeting time is 12 noon to 2 p.m.

Memoir Share: Contact Terry Wicks, terryshenhouse@gmail.com. Meets 4th Wednesday each month at 12 noon. Emphasizes sharing & caring, not in-depth critiquing.

Mystery & Thriller: Meetings are via zoom at 1 pm on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Contact Robin Deley: robindeley@gmail.com.

Novel Group: Mary Helen Fein is the leader. Meets 2nd Saturday each month at Mary Helen's home from 1:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Closed to new members.

Poetry: Contact Georgette Unis: georgetteunis@gmail.com. Meets 2nd & 4th Wednesday from noon to 2:00 p.m. Sharing poems after the Drop-In Critique. Open to new members.

Science Fiction & Fantasy: Contact Bill Baynes, bbaynes303@aol.com or Frank Nissen, f.j.nissen@icloud.com. Meets the 2nd & 4th Wednesdays of each month at 2:30 p.m. Meet at Rebecca Inch-Partridge's house..

TREASURER & MEMBERSHIP: Bill Baynes
SECRETARY: Dora Cividino

GUEST SPEAKER PROGRAM DIRECTOR:
Margie Yee Webb

PUBLIC RELATIONS: Chery Anderson

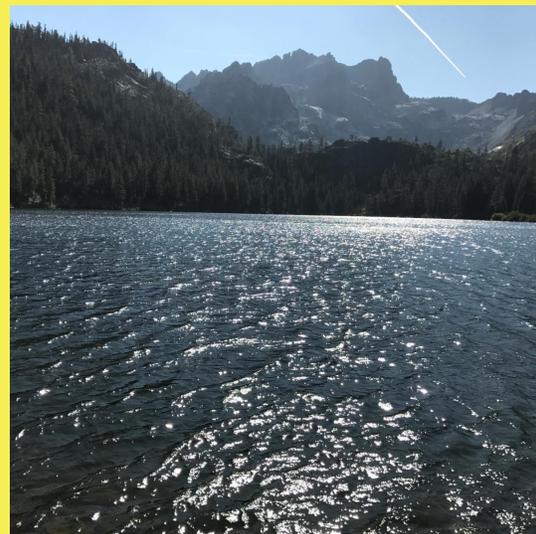
WEB MASTER: Mary Helen Fein

GROUPS COORDINATORS: Jody Brady and Sarah Pressler

READ & REVIEW COORDINATOR: Kelly Lardner

DISPATCH NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lisa Schliff

DISPATCH NEWSLETTER PROOFREADER:
Sarah Pressler



Out of Town Happenings

❖ The 2023 Voices of Lincoln Poetry Contest ❖

The countdown to the July 20, 2023, entry deadline for this year's contest is underway. We only have 78 days until the end of the contest. All poets are encouraged to submit their own poems, encourage a friend or relative to submit a poem, or post a flyer where others can see it. Do not procrastinate or you could miss the deadline.

Anything you can do to make both established and budding poets of all ages aware of this exciting opportunity is appreciated. Attached are the contest "Rules and Entry Form" and the "Contest Flyer."

*For those of you who already have submitted your three poems or have helped us publicize the contest through posting flyers and/or posting contest information on your website, **THANK YOU!!!!***

If you need additional information, please do not hesitate to email or call me at 1-916-408-1274.

Alan Lowe
Coordinator, 2023 Voices of Lincoln Poetry Contest
slolowe@icloud.com
<https://slolowe44.blogspot.com/>

California State Fair Author's Booth

1600 Exposition Blvd., Sacramento
July 14 through July 30

Visit the Author Booth at the State Fair and check out what's selling and who's selling it. It's too late to submit for this year, but next year presents a new opportunity for Gold Country Writers. The booth organizer is M.L. Hamilton, Mystery and Fantasy novelist. Mary Boyle, Barbara Young, Michael O'Haver and Lisa Schliff will be selling at the Author Booth on specific days and times. Contact them for their schedules if you want to come by and say hi.

FIRST PLACE 100-WORD STORY WINNER

PETER'S FIRST CAMPING TRIP, 1940
by Jeaninne (Escallier) Kato

When the cattle car doors slide open, the muted masses face an ice-covered field. Gray smokestacks spew black smoke in the distance. Wiping his runny nose, Peter asks, "What kind of camping trip is this?" Father is herded away with all the other men. Peter yells, "Papa, where are you going?!" Father calls back, "To learn to be a scout guide. Stay with your mother. I love you."

Mother and Peter are shuttled into the shower stalls, ordered to remove their clothes. Mother cuddles her shivering son and whispers, "Soon, we will be under the stars pitching tents with Papa."

SECOND PLACE WINNER

New Beginnings

by Cindy Ruth

The little gray wire-haired puppy smooched his nose on the glass, wagging his tail at the girl on the other side. "Can I have him, Daddy? Can I please?" Katie begged; her hands flat on the glass. Her father smiled at his young motherless daughter. "Your mom said someday, honey. I think today is the day." "Yippie!" The six-year-old jumped for glee. The sadness of losing a big part of their family is gone, for the moment. Riding home in the car, the father laughed as Snoopy wiggled in Katie's arms. He heard her giggle again, music to his ears.

THIRD PLACE WINNER

Daddy's Girl

by Del Dozier

Colored lights swirl around like a kaleidoscope as I skate across the polished, hardwood roller rink. "Fly Like an Eagle" blasts through the overhead speakers. I'm bopping along, crossing one leg over the other around the corners, waving at Daddy. Each time I roll past him, he flashes his handsome smile. I can feel his pride. When "Lost Without Your Love" begins to play, a pang of sadness overwhelms me. I'm missing my sweet boyfriend. Daddy skates over to join me. He takes my hand and kisses my cheek. A warm feeling fills my heart. I'll always be Daddy's girl.

Gold Country Writers | P.O. Box 5991, Auburn, CA 95604

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