



Gold Country Writers

Forging Better Writers

August 2025 Dispatch Newsletter

About Us

Gold Country Writers is a 501(c)(3) 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 gcwmembership@gmail.com to join or find out more.

Website: goldcountrywriters.com

Facebook: Gold Country Writers

Mailing address: P.O. Box 5991, Auburn, CA 95604.



President's Message

When I joined Gold Country Writers in 2020, the world was in a state of confusion, uncertainty, and division. But one thing I was sure of – I would finally write a book. After all, how hard could it be? I'd been writing since I was old enough to hold a pencil, and I'd been thinking about some ideas for scenes and snippets. In a couple of weeks, maybe a month or two, I'd have a book that would be snapped up by a big publisher. After that, I'd appear on evening talk shows and spot people reading it in airports. I just wasn't sure how to get started. And so my online search led me to this group.



For five years, you, the members of Gold Country Writers, have guided me in creating what will be my debut book. And along the way, I've learned more than I thought possible, shared many laughs, and even (despite my solitary nature) formed friendships.

I wanted to contribute to the organization that provided me with so much value. I served first as Director of Membership, then as Website Manager. Now, as your incoming President, I continue to be just one player on a team of Officers, Directors and other Leaders—all helping our members benefit as much as we have.

If you have ideas to support our organization, please let us know. And while you're

thinking about that, submit a story to the Nonfiction 1,500 Word Short Story Contest that opens on August 6. And plan to come on August 20 when we talk about Mentoring and Spin-Off Groups.

Keep Writing,
Nicolle Goldman

Calendar of Meetings August 2025

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

Tuesday, August 5	
Memoir Critique Atwood Business Park, 11768 Atwood Road, Auburn. <i>Currently full.</i>	
Wednesday, August 6	
General Business Meeting	10:00 a.m. - Noon
<i>Story Writing Contest Opens: 1500 Words Nonfiction (Open to the Public)</i>	
Evening Mixed Genre Critique Pizza Factory, 13470 Lincoln Way, Auburn	5:45 p.m.
Wednesday, August 13	
Drop-in Critique	10:00 a.m. - noon
Poetry Group	noon - 2:00 p.m.
Inspirational Group	noon - 2:00 p.m.
Children's Lit	noon - 2:00 p.m.
Novel Group	noon - 2:00 p.m.
Tuesday, August 19	
Memoir Critique Atwood Business Park 11768 Atwood Rd., Auburn. <i>Currently full.</i>	
Wednesday, August 20	

Special Program: "All About the Mentor Program" Susan Korn, Mentor Director "Honoring GCW Spin-off Critique Groups" Rebecca Inch-Partridge and Sarah Pressler	10:00 a.m. - noon
Wednesday, August 27	
Drop-in Critique	10:00 a.m. - noon
Novel Group	noon - 2:00 p.m.
Poetry Group	noon - 2:00 p.m.
Sci Fi and Fantasy Group Flames Restaurant, 3434 Lincoln Way, #3215, Auburn (Raley's Shopping Center)	2:30 p.m.

Upcoming Events: Save The Dates!

by Margie Yee Webb

The Speaker Programs, scheduled on the 3rd Wednesday of the month (except in August and December), are free and open to the public. Writers, readers, and guests are invited! Join in for these engaging events!

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

3rd Wednesday Special Program.

"All About the Mentor Program" with Susan Korn AND

"Honoring GCW Spin-off Critique Groups" with Rebecca Inch-Partridge and Sarah Pressler

<https://goldcountrywriters.com/upcoming-events/>

Wednesday, September 17, 2025

3rd Wednesday Speaker Program

Sacramento Poet Laureate Emeritus **Bob Stanley**

"Why Is This a Poem?"

Saturday, October 4, 2025

GCW Nonfiction 1,500-Word Short Story Contest CELEBRATION

Winners will be announced at a celebration hosted by Gold Country Writers.

<https://goldcountrywriters.com/event/nonfiction-short-story-contest-celebration/>

Friday, October 10, 2025

Read and Review — *The True Story of Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Stevens: The Ghosts of Kennicott* by **Randy Landenberger** (writing as Randy L. Scott)

<https://goldcountrywriters.com/event/read-review-4/>

Wednesday, October 15, 2025

Former Journalist and Author Anne Da Vigo

"Creating Fiction from Real Events"

<https://goldcountrywriters.com/upcoming-events/>

Wednesday, October 29, 2025

GCW 5th Wednesday Social — Details to be announced.

<https://goldcountrywriters.com/upcoming-events/>



GOLD COUNTRY WRITERS

NONFICTION SHORT STORY CONTEST

AUG. 6 - SEPT. 17, 2025

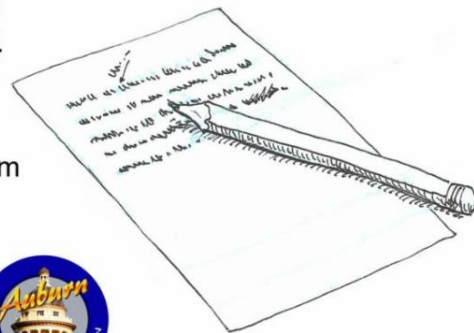
Original, unpublished, true stories
Up to 1500 words per MS Word

Entry \$15 public & \$10 members
Standard manuscript format
The author will retain rights

One entry per person residing in
Placer, Yuba, El Dorado, Nevada,
Sutter, Sacramento counties
Celebration of winners October 4
Auburn City Hall 2 P.M.

ENTER AT: www.goldcountrywriters.com
INFO: goldcountrywriters1849@gmail.com

Cash Prizes
\$100 First
\$75 Second
\$50 Third



**Gold
Country
Media**





GOLD COUNTRY WRITERS

Nonfiction Short Story Contest

Rules

ELIGIBILITY

- Contest open to Gold Country Writers members and to non-member residents of El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, or Yuba counties.
- Short story must be nonfiction, unpublished, with word count **less than 1,500 words** (as shown in Microsoft Word, not including the title)
- No fiction, poetry, essays, opinion pieces, violence, sex, racism, politics, religious doctrine, or AI-generated stories.
- One submission per entrant. Must be 18 or older.

WHEN TO SUBMIT

- Contest opens August 6, 2025, and closes on **midnight on September 17, 2025**.

FORMAT

- Times New Roman font, 12-point, with double-spaced lines and 1-inch margins.
- Title centered at top of each page, and page number centered at bottom.
- Author's name and identifying information must not appear anywhere in the story.
- Story must be a single Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat file.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- Entries will only be accepted through the Gold Country Writers website at <https://goldcountrywriters.com/short-story-contest-entry-form-2025/>
- Entry fees are not refundable, \$15 for Public and \$10 for Gold Country Writers members, payable online using PayPal at <https://goldcountrywriters.com/entry-fee/>
- If unable to pay online, fee may be paid by check at a Gold Country Writers meeting or mailed to P.O. Box 5991, Auburn, CA 95604.
- Story and entry fee must BOTH be submitted before contest closes. No revisions.

FINAL WORD

- The Judging Rubric Overview is available on the Gold Country Writers website at <https://goldcountrywriters.com/short-story-contest-judging-rubric-overview>
- You agree that if you should win, your story may be printed in the Gold Country Media family of newspapers, the Gold Country Writers Anthology, and in the Gold Country Writers newsletter (The Dispatch).
- Contest Celebration—where winners' stories will be read aloud— will be held Saturday, October 4, at Auburn City Hall and will be recorded by ACTV Auburn Community Television.
- Gold Country Writers reserves the right to make the final determination on all rules.

GCW Speakers for August 2025



GOLD COUNTRY WRITERS

10 AM to NOON
AUGUST 20, 2025

All About the
Mentor Program
with
SUSAN KORN



*Honoring GCW
Spin-off Critique Groups
with
Rebecca Inch-Partridge
& Sarah Pressler*



In the Rose Room
Auburn City Hall
1225 Lincoln Way
Auburn CA 95603
VISITORS WELCOME
goldcountrywriters.com

July Speaker - Jennifer K. Morita

by Marla Mion

Jennifer K. Morita spoke on the topic "Querying A to Q — Pitching to Literary Agents." A former newspaper reporter, Jennifer K. Morita is the author of *Ghosts of Waikiki* released by Crooked Lane Books in November 2024. Her debut novel won the Lefty Award for Best Debut Mystery Novel in 2025 and was nominated for an Agatha Award for Best First Novel. Jennifer is a past president of Capitol Crimes, her local Sisters in Crime chapter, and also a member of Crime Writers of Color, Mystery Writers of America, and International Thriller Writers.



Jennifer presented an informative how-to lesson which covered the basics of querying literary agents, including helpful tips for writing the dreaded synopsis. She explained how to craft the perfect "elevator pitch" for your book, and she emphasized the importance of doing your research when finding an agent who fits your needs. Jennifer also provided a highly detailed template for formatting a concise yet effective query letter that will grab an agent's attention. She reminded us that the ultimate objective of any query letter is to make the agent want to request your full manuscript.

Jennifer shared the new trends in querying for the 21st century, including Twitter and Bluesky contests, as well as the importance of having a social media presence, including an author website, before you start querying.

For more info, visit her website: www.jenniferkmorita.com.



Fun lunch at Old Town Grill after an engaging and informative presentation "Querying A to Q — Pitching to Literary Agents" by Jennifer K. Morita to Gold Country Writers!

From left: Chery Anderson, Terry Wicks, Susan Korn, Susan Osborn, Pat Snelling, Margie Yee Webb, Jennifer K. Morita, Mac Daly, Derek Edgington
(photo by Sowsan, Old Town Grill)

Thanks For the Memories!

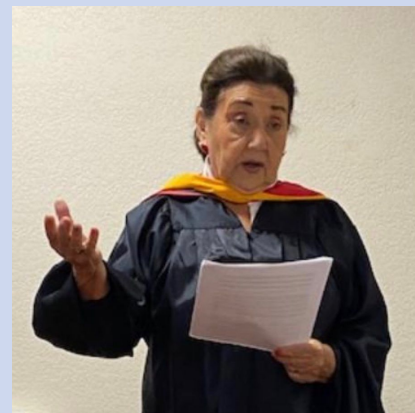
At our July 2 meeting, Susan Korn gave an impactful and heartfelt speech reflecting on her time as both a member and President of GCW. In case you missed it, please take a moment to read her words below.

I recognize and thank the existing Executive officers and Board of Directors, and others of our leadership team. It has been a privilege and an honor to serve as a second time as President of GCW.

I think for me the most valuable aspect of GCW is the friendships that I have made along the way. Many of these friendships will continue to thrive and become life-long. You are my Gold Nuggets. There are too many of you to name but you know who you are.

Second, would be the learning opportunities and that my writing skills have improved. I'm looking forward, God willing, to writing three more books in the coming years.

As I step down from my role as President, I also see it as the end of a long career of being a Leader. I have served GCW to the best of my ability for the past 13 years. I have watch it grow from Grass Roots of eight folks to a beautiful successful non-profit



organization with 80 plus strong members who are intelligent, respectful, and have a passion for writing.

Four years ago, we had no funds and feared we were going broke in a few months. We held a Leadership meeting and solved the problem. Today, we have over \$6000 in our savings funds. We have an Educational Speakers program which is excellent with high attendance every third Wednesday, and Critiques Groups who meet and have won Community book writing awards for their creative content. We are a proud group who must care enough about GCW to see that it never weakens.

It is joyous today that we are a winning team because of the members of leadership who come every single Wednesday to make decisions that keep us successful. Remember the 80-plus members that you represent and why you were you elected.

My hope for GCW was always that anyone who was interested in Storytelling, Poetry, or writing their first book would be welcomed and acknowledged. We have achieved this success as being a kind and welcoming non-profit book writing organization. It is that hope that GCW will always welcome the writer who wants to improve their writing, and that others who are far more advance in the skills of writing will be compassionate and patience with those who may need a little more assistance, and encouragement.

I would like to share a statement from one of my personal heroes, Vince Lombardi. He defined American values such as sacrifice, self-discipline, teamwork, and perseverance, likening it to life and war, in its demands for hard work and resilience. He highlighted the importance of leadership, defining it as a blend of commitment, loyalty, mental toughness, and character, which are developed through effort rather than innate talent. Lombardi concluded by asserting that leadership requires sacrifice, self-denial, love, fearlessness, and humility, which distinguish great leaders from ordinary ones. So as I end, I want to say how much I enjoyed knowing all of you, and how much I love our parties and celebrations. Thanks for the memories!

Installation of Officers and Fourth of July Celebration





Read and Review 2025 Book Lineup

Read and Review is our very own GCW book club

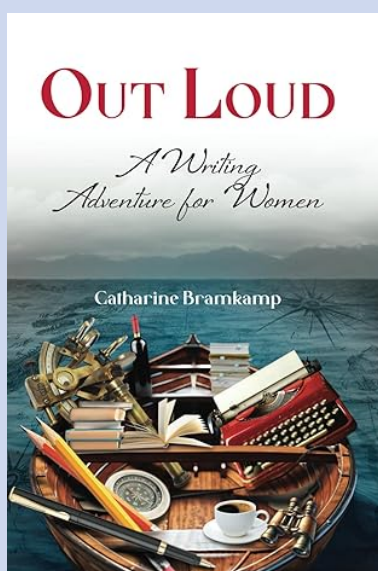
Our members met Friday morning, July 11 at Depoe Bay in downtown Auburn. Thank you, guest authors Heidi Struve Curry and Mary Boyle, for sharing your fantastic books with us and the lively discussion.

Upcoming Books for Read and Review

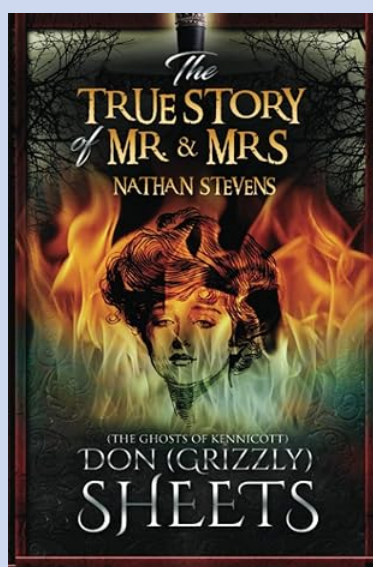
Our next Read and Review will be Friday, October 10 at Depoe Bay in downtown Auburn. We meet from 10:00 until noon in the back room. Please consider joining us.

Kelly Lardner, Coordinator

lrdsn@yahoo.com



Out Loud: A Writing Adventure for Women,
by Catharine Bramkamp



*The True Story of
Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Stevens*
Randy Landenberger writing as
Randy L. Scott served as co-author,
collaborator, and editor.

Kudos to Our Members!

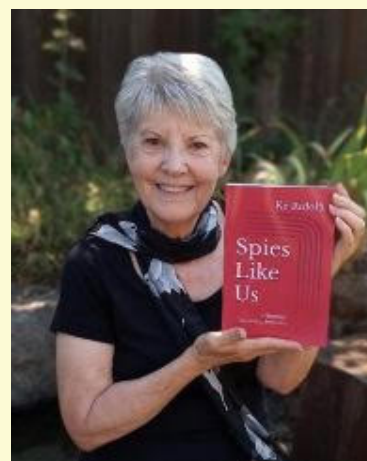
**To Mary Boyle, aka
Mariah Clark Skewes:**

Two of her books were selected as finalists in three categories at the 2025 Next Generation Indie Book Awards. Her children's picture book, *O is for Pig*, is a fun non-traditional romp through the alphabet. *O is for Pig* was a Finalist for both Best Overall Design (Fiction) and Children's Picture Book. Her gift book, *The ABCs of Hope & Healing*, was recognized as a Finalist in the Gift Book category. It is a beautiful book of encouragement and inspiration for teens and adults who are in recovery from trauma or addiction.



To Kelly Lardner:

Her latest book, *Spies Like Us - A Simone Donovan Mystery*, is now available on Amazon, paperback and Kindle edition. It is also available for checkout from our GCW library. Pinkerton Detective Simone Donovan and her partner are hired by the FBI to hunt down a suspected Japanese spy who escaped from the internment camp during WWII. Sparse evidence hints that he might have had inside help. Set in the tumult of a world readjusting to peace, *Spies Like Us* is a story that is as lighthearted as it is heartbreaking. An exhilarating cat-and-mouse caper to the end. Kelly publishes under her pen name, Ké Ridolfi.



**To Rebecca Inch-Partridge,
Michael O'Haver, and Lisa Schliff:**

Rebecca, Michael, and Lisa were at the California Authors booth at the State Fair last month. Not only did they sell some books, they also promoted GCW to several interested visitors!



Welcome To Our New Members:

Sandy Maggioli: Sandy came to check out the critique groups and joined GCW at her first meeting. She is nearing completion on a memoir.

Dana Fennie: His first chapter book, "The Secret of Sutter Island" was just published. It is a treasure hunt mystery about three sisters and their friends.

Sarah Buxton: Sarah found us online. She joined by mail on July 17th. She's getting started as a writer and is unpublished.

Newsletter Submission Deadlines

Please submit all Kudos, articles, images, and news to Marla Mion at marlamion2100@gmail.com.

All submissions are due by midnight on the 26th of the month. Late submissions may not be included until the following month. Thank you!

Share Your Milestones!

Please send news of your writing milestones and accomplishments to Dispatch Editor Marla Mion at marlamion2100@gmail.com. Your news will be posted in the Kudos column. We want to read about you!

Speaker Programs on ACTV

Click on the blue link to view the Guest Speaker's presentation on youtube.com. Auburn Community Television (ACTV) Studio Manager **Phil Jacques**, a member of Gold Country Writers, has been filming the Speaker Programs since March 2022 when his schedule permits. Much appreciation to Phil!

To view past Guest Speaker videos, visit the GCW website:
<https://goldcountrywriters.com/gcw-videos/>

Jennifer K. Morita, "Querying A to Q — Pitching to Literary Agents," July 16, 2025
<https://youtu.be/Eu184wvSda4>

Jennifer Basye Sander, "Digging for Factual Treasure," June 18, 2025
https://youtu.be/-I93n_PmsRU

Donna Levin, "DIALOGUE: the rules, the revelations, and the room to experiment," April 16, 2025 <https://youtu.be/0a9IWS-nc-M>

Susan M. Osborn and Sarah Michie Pressler, "Lettuce Laugh - Adding Humor to Your Writing," March 19, 2025 <https://youtu.be/uE05FbmBUFG>

Randy Landenberger, "Turning Your Story into an Audiobook: Here's the Reality,"

Critique Group Information

Spin-off Critique Group information can also be accessed on the GCW website:
<https://goldcountrywriters.com/genre-specific-critique-groups/>

Specialty Spin-off Critique Groups Coordinator: Rebecca Inch-Partridge

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 noon at the Rose Room, Auburn City Hall, on the 2nd Wednesday. New members welcome.

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

Evening Mixed Genre: Contact Rebecca Inch-Partridge: rebeccapartridge@att.net. Drop in at Pizza Factory, 13470 Lincoln Way, Auburn, 1st Wed. of the month, 5:45 p.m. Open to new members.

Inspirational Group: Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from noon to 2:00 p.m.. Bring your own lunch. Open to new members.

Memoir Critique: Contact Philip Jacques, philipjacques@gmail.com. The group meets twice a month in Atwood Business Park, 11768 Atwood Rd. Auburn. Currently full.

Memoir Share: Contact Terry Wicks, terryshenhouse@gmail.com. Meets 4th Wednesday each month at 12 noon at the Rose Room, Auburn City Hall.. Emphasizes sharing & caring, not in-depth critiquing. Open to new members.

Mystery & Thriller: "Temporarily suspended" re: Rebecca Inch-Partridge, rebeccapartridge@att.net.

Poetry: Contact David Anderson: dcajla80@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 4th Wednesdays of each month at 2:30 p.m. Meet at Flame Restaurant and Tap Room,

13434 Lincoln Way, #3251, Auburn. Open to new members.

Novel Group: No longer meeting

Snap Your Critique Group

Critique Group Leaders and participants: Please send photos of your critique groups in action to Sarah Pressler at: sarahpressler2@gmail.com. Also, you can visit the GCW Facebook page, like the posts, and generate more traffic and interest in Gold Country Writers.

Out of Town Literary Events

by Margie Yee Webb

Cameron Park Library — Tuesday, August 5, and Thursday, August 21, 2025 - 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Poets and Writers Workshop led by El Dorado County Poet Laureate Emeritus Lara Gualarte and author Beverly Parayno — held on the first Tuesday and third Thursday of every month. "We offer an encouraging space for writers and poets to gather in community. Bring one or two poems or six pages of prose, double-spaced. Read, discuss, critique." *Cameron Park Library, 2500 Country Club Drive, Cameron Park, CA 95682, 530-621-5500*

Face In A Book Bookstore — Sunday, August 17, 2025 - 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

"Drop by for a meeting of the **Writers' Coffeehouse** — a group open to writers of all levels and interests! Meet like-minded people and share writing tips, industry info, and a bit of what you're working on. There are no fees, no registration, and no publishing requirements. All writers are welcome!" The Writers' Coffeehouse meets on the third Sunday of every month. <https://www.getyourfaceinabook.com/event/writers-coffeehouse> *Face In A Book Bookstore, 4359 Town Center Blvd. #113, El Dorado Hills, CA 95762*

Capitol Crimes at Rancho Cordova City Hall — Saturday, October 25, 2025 - 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Capitol Crimes Criminally Good 2025 Writers' Conference — July Speaker Jennifer K. Morita said, "Catriona McPherson will be our keynote speaker. Bestselling authors Simon Wood will be talking about raising suspense and stakes, and Edgar Award-nominated Michelle Chouinard will be discussing humor in mysteries, plus many more. We will also have law enforcement experts, including a missing persons investigator and weapons expert, and literary agent Laurie McLean." For complete details: <https://www.capitolcrimes.org/event-6205013> *Rancho Cordova City Hall, 2729 Prospect Park Drive, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670*

Become a Member of Gold Country Writers!

It's easy to join!

Email your name, address, and telephone number to:

GCWmembership@gmail.com.

Please put 'GCW Membership' in the 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, social events and much more!



[Printable PDF of This Newsletter!](#)

[Printable PDF File](#)

Gold Country Writers Leadership Team

Executive Committee

President (2025-2027).....Nicolle Goldman
VP – Internal Affairs (2025-2027).....Lisa Schliff
VP – External Affairs (2024-2026).....Pat Snelling
Secretary (2025-2027).....Annie Hendrix
Treasurer (2024-2026).....Heike Kutchukov

Directors

Director of Membership.....Vacant*
Director of Communications.....Chery Anderson
Director of Speaker Programs.....Margie Yee Webb
Director of Spin-off Critique Groups.....Rebecca Inch-Partridge

Other Leaders & Coordinators

Mentor Program Manager.....Susan Korn
Newsletter Edito.....Marla Mion
Website Manage.....Sarah Pressler
Read & Review Coordinator.....Kelly Lardner
Librarian.....Kathryn Shields
Social Media Coordinator.....Michael O'Haver

Audio-Visual Tech.....Randy Landenberger/Phil Jacques
Drop-In Critique Coordinator.....Frank Nissen
Historian.....Barbara Young
Security Manager.....Terry Wicks
Greeters.....Kathryn Shields/Terry Wicks

*The Board is following our By-Laws to fill the vacancy and expects to install a replacement Director of Membership in Sept 2025; in the interim, Joan Griffin and Heidi Struve Currey are serving as a membership team.

www.goldcountrywriters.com

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

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!