

GCW Dispatch



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Happy New Year



Holiday Party

The GCW Holiday Party was held on December 11th. Above is the group photo of those who attended minus Gerold Cavallo, who is behind the lens. The songsters were fabulous, led by Choir Master Kathryn Shields, with piano accompaniment by Betsy Schwarzentraub. The food was delicious and the stories that members associated with favorite holiday ornaments were entertaining. Another successful Gold Country Writers social event.

Gold Country Writers is a club for writers of all genres. We meet regularly each Wednesday from 10 a.m. to noon at the **Auburn City Hall Rose Room**, 1225 Lincoln, Auburn, CA 95603, unless otherwise noted.

To contact us:

e-mail: GCW5991@gmail.com

Web: goldcountrywriters.com

Facebook: Gold Country Writers



**No GCW Meeting January 1st
in Celebration of the New Year**



PROSE



FROM THE PRES



Happy New Year 2020!

Many thanks to all who participated in our annual GCW Holiday Party. It was a festive atmosphere with the GCW Choir singing Christmas Carols, and all the many holiday decorations. The food table was filled with delicious finger foods and yummy desserts. Thank you all for making the GCW Holiday Party another memorable event. The Clean-Up Crew organized by Karen Clay, VP of Internal Affairs, did an outstanding job of leaving the Rose Room in perfect order.

Well, it's a New Year: 2020. We here at GCW "are pencil sharp" in planning GCW calendar events. So save the dates, and mark your calendars for event postings in our newsletters because you will not want to miss out on the good times. Besides our passion for writing and telling stories, we love to have a party, so do not miss out on our 5th Wednesday special events. The winners of our first GCW Poetry Contest celebration will be in January 2020. Thanks to Kathy Ward, Terry Wicks, and Michael O'Haver for leading this exciting event.

I hope to see all members at the GCW January Business Meeting on January 8th. The agenda will include the 2019 GCW End-of-The-Year Report, GCW Mentor Program evaluations, and GCW goals for 2020.

Cheers to a happy, healthy, and safe 2020!

Susan

GCW Meeting Schedule

Unless otherwise noted, our regular monthly schedule is:

First Wednesday: Business Meeting to discuss organizational business. All are welcome to come. This is followed by a closed meeting of the Lead Team.

Second & Fourth Wednesday: Drop-In Critique. Members present samples of their writing to the group (a maximum of five pages, double-spaced), and everyone at their table gets to offer his or her critique.

Third Wednesday: Special educational programs of general interest to all; open to the public. Topics change each month. See Page 6 for the Speaker of the Month.

Fifth Wednesday: On the rare occasion that there is one, we have a special program at the City Hall, or meet at a local restaurant for brunch. Join us for fun and socializing.

Special Events

Jan. 1-NO MEETING –HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Jan. 8-Business & Executive Meeting at City Hall, 10 a.m.

Jan. 15-Special Guest Speaker, Shelley Wagner, 10 a.m. at Auburn City Hall Rose Room, Followed by Read & Review

Jan. 22-Drop-in Critique 10 a.m.; **Poetry Group** 12 noon

Jan. 25—Auburn Storytelling Fest. See ad below & Page 4

Jan. 29-Poetry Contest results and rewards, 10 a.m.

Auburn Storytelling Fest—January 25, 2020

Heard a good story lately? On January 25, 2020, the Auburn Winter Storytelling Festival is scheduled to bring Auburn a whole passel of stories; enough to fill your ears for the entire year! The event, sponsored by Gold Country Writers, Placer Arts and the Auburn Arts Commission, starts at 10:30 a.m. with an hour of children's stories. After the lunch break, Ruth Stotter, a nationally famous author and teacher will lead a "Tellers Toolbox" workshop where she will give storytellers tips for picking and presenting a story. The afternoon consists of Open Telling where anyone can stand up and tell a five minute story and the Liar's Contest, where the winner takes home a Golden Shovel trophy. At 6:30 p.m. five professional storytellers take over with 20- to 30-minute stories to tickle your funny bone, scare the dickens out of you, or just plain inspire you to do better. The entire day is free to the community. Gold Country Writers will staff a table of authors' books for sale throughout the day. The event is at General Gomez Art Center, 808 Lincoln Way, Auburn, CA 95603.

For more info or to watch videos from past years:

www.auburnwinterstorytellingfestival.com

Specialty Spin-off Critique Groups

Coordinator - Pauline Nevins

Books: Contact Betsy Schwarzentraub by email. Five to 20 pages. When possible meet in person. Closed to new members at this time.

Children's Lit: Contact Norma Lehr. They meet the 4th Thursdays of each month, 2-4 p.m. Temporarily closed to new members.

Science Fiction/Fantasy: Contact Rebecca Inch-Partridge. Temporarily closed to new members. Starts up again on Jan. 22. Call Rebecca for time and place.

Memoir: Contact Susan Thompson. They meet at Northridge Restaurant, 21515 Higgins Rd, off Combie Road between Auburn and Grass Valley, the 1st & 3rd Thursday of each month at 2 p.m.

Memoir (monthly): Contact Theresa Cote. Meets 4th Thursday of each month from 1 p.m., at 600 Auburn Ravine Road--Library of apartment building on the frontage road parallel to Auburn Ravine. Members share longer works. Email, Dropbox, and other Internet-sharing platforms being considered. Skype may also be an option. Note: Not a drop-in group.

Novel: Contact Mary Helen Fein. Closed to new members. Email Mary Helen for more information.

Evening Mixed Genre: Contact Rebecca Inch-Partridge. Meets 1st Wednesday each month at 5:45 p.m. at Round Table Pizza, in Elm & I-80 Center, Auburn, CA. Group One does five pages; Group Two does 15 pages, emailed first.

Flash Fiction: Contact Chery Anderson. Meets 4th Tuesday of the month, 1 p.m. at Jeanine's house in Rocklin. Five members share feedback on one- to two-page stories, around 500 words. Temporarily closed to new members.

Poetry: Contact Kathy Ward. Meets 4th Wednesday of each month, following Drop-In-Critique, at the Rose Room of Auburn City Hall. Bring seven to eight copies of your poems.

Spiritual/Religious/Inspirational: Meets 2nd Wednesday after Drop-In Critique 12 Noon at the City Hall Rose Room, Contact Betsy Schwarzentraub.

For group leader contact information, consult your membership roster.

If any member is interested in beginning a **Nonfiction Spin-off Critique Group**, please contact Pauline Nevins.

If any are interested in forming a **Suspense/Thriller Spin-Off Critique Group**, please contact Robin Deley.



GCW Officers, Lead Team & Committee Chairs

President: Susan Korn

Genres ~ Self-Help & Corporate Culture

V P - Internal Affairs: Karen Clay

Genres ~ Nonfiction & Memoirs

V P - External Affairs, Marketing &

Events: Frank Nissen

Genre ~ Historical Fiction

Treasurer: Kate Luce

Genre ~

re ~ Memoir

Secretary: Kathleen Ward

Genre ~ Short Stories

Assistant Secretary and Author

Opportunities: Betsy Schwarzentraub

Genres ~ Christian Nonfiction, Devotions, & Book Reviews

Guest Speakers: Margie Yee Webb

Genres ~ Gift Books & Flash Fiction

Membership: Jody Brady

Genres ~ Short Stories & Self-Help

Public Relations & Read & Review: Chery Anderson Genre

~ Short Stories

Web Master, Graphics & Cyber Security:

Skip Michael

Genre ~ Science Fiction

Spin-off Critique Groups Coordinator:

Open

Newsletter Editor: Michael O'Haver

Genres ~ Christian Children's, Memoirs, Non-Fiction, Historical Fiction & Science Fiction

Submit newsletter material by the 15th of each month to GodsScribeMike@aol.com

For Contact Info. see GCW Roster

Famous Writer's Quote

"A writer without interest or sympathy for the foibles of his fellow man is not conceivable as a writer."

- Joseph Conrad

Gold Country Writers is a nonpartisan, nonprofit group whose mission is to support local writers. As such it does not endorse or support the policies or philosophy espoused by any other organization or entity. Contests or events sponsored by other organizations are listed for information only, and rely on individual discretion.

Literary Events and Conferences

Compiled by Margie Yee Webb

January 11, 2020, San Francisco CA

<https://www.milibrary.org/events/legal-guide-book-publishing-jan-11-2020>

<https://www.sfwriters.org/mil-classes/>

Class co-sponsored by Mechanics Institute and San Francisco Writers Conference/ San Francisco Writers Foundation

How to Sell Your Book to a Publisher and Who You're Really Selling

January 17, 2020, San Francisco CA

<https://wnba-sfchapter.org/how-publishers-think-and-how-best-to-pitch-them/>

Session presented by Women's National Book Association—SF Chapter at the Mechanics' Institute Library

Auburn Winter Storytelling Fest

January 25, 2020, Auburn CA

<http://www.auburnwinterstorytellingfestival.com/>

"An entire day of storytelling on the last Saturday of January" – presented by Foothill Storytelling Guild. Includes Children's Hour, Workshop, Open Telling, Liars' Contest, and Evening Tellers Showcase.

Sierra Writers Conference 2020

January 31, 2020, Rocklin CA

<https://sites.google.com/view/sierra-writers-conference-2020/rocklin-friday-schedule>

February 1, 2020, Grass Valley CA

<https://sites.google.com/view/sierra-writers-conference-2020/grass-valley-ncc-saturday-schedule>

In conjunction with Sierra College, Sierra Writers produces an annual Writers Conference.

<https://sites.google.com/view/sierra-writers-conference-2020/home>

*Poetry Summit

Saturday, February 15, 2020, San Francisco CA

[Poetry Summit — San Francisco Writers Conference](#)

Summit is included with SFWC registration, or register for stand-alone one-day summit. Get inspired, improve your craft, shape your work for publication, learn how to navigate the multitude of pathways to publication, and cultivate your market.

San Francisco Writers Conference

February 13-16, 2020, San Francisco CA

<https://www.sfwriters.org/>

"17th Celebration of Craft, Commerce and Community"

PLUS Optional Pre/Post Event Master Classes (sign up for individual classes)

PLUS Hollywood Screenwriting Summit and Poetry Summit (included with conference registration or register for stand-alone one-day summit)

*Optional Pre- and Post-Event Master Classes

Thursday, February 13; and Sunday, February 16, 2020; San Francisco CA

*Hollywood Screenwriting Summit

Saturday, February 15, 2020, San Francisco CA

<https://www.sfwriters.org/screenwriting-hollywood-summit/>

Summit included with SFWC registration, or register for stand-alone one-day summit. Packed with informative sessions for every aspect of the entertainment industry.

Christmas Art & Craft Faire



This year's Auburn Christmas Art & Craft Faire Nov. 30th to Dec. 1st was a success. 12 club members helped staff the booth. Twelve books were sold for a total of \$149. Mary West, Betsy Schwarzentraub, Skip Michael, Margie Webb, and Michael O'Haver all sold books. There were also numerous contacts to invite new members.

Read & Review

The Gold Country Writers book club, Read & Review, will discuss *India Bound - The Making of a Woman Journalist* by Shelley Buck. The book is a memoir of her time traveling overland to India and Nepal and returning to Europe. Meet with us in the Rose Room at 12:00 following the speaker meeting on January 15, 2020.

Chery Anderson

The Man Who Hated Christmas

It's just a small, white envelope stuck among the branches of our Christmas tree. No name, no identification, no inscription. It has peeked through the branches of our tree for the past ten years.

It all began because my husband, Mike, hated Christmas. Oh, not the true meaning of Christmas, but the commercial aspects of it – overspending and the frantic running around at the last minute to get a tie for Uncle Harry and the dusting powder for Grandma – the gifts given in desperation because you couldn't think of anything else.

Knowing he felt this way, I decided one year to bypass the usual shirts, sweaters, ties and so forth. I reached for something special just for Mike. The inspiration came in an unusual way.

Our son Kevin, who was twelve that year, was on the wrestling team at the school he attended. Shortly before Christmas, there was a non-league match against a team sponsored by an inner-city church. These youngsters, dressed in sneakers so ragged that shoestrings seemed to be the only thing holding them together, presented a sharp contrast to our boys in their spiffy blue-and-gold uniforms and sparkling new wrestling shoes.

As the match began, I was alarmed to see that the other team was wrestling without headgear, a kind of light helmet designed to protect a wrestler's ears. It was a luxury the ragtag team obviously could not afford.

Well, we ended up walloping them. We took every weight class. Mike, seated beside me, shook his head sadly. "I wish just one of them could have won," he said. "They have a lot of potential, but losing like this could take the heart right out of them." Mike loved kids – all kids. He so enjoyed coaching Little League football, baseball and lacrosse. That's when the idea for his present came.

That afternoon, I went to a local sporting goods store and bought an assortment of wrestling headgear and shoes, and sent them anonymously to the inner-city church. On Christmas Eve, I placed a small, white envelope on the tree, the note inside telling Mike what I had done, and that this was his gift from me.

Mike's smile was the brightest thing about Christmas that year. And that same bright smile lit up succeeding years. For each Christmas, I followed the tradition – one year sending a group of mentally handicapped youngsters to a hockey game, another year a check to a pair of elderly brothers whose home had burned to the ground the week before Christmas, and on and on.

The white envelope became the highlight of our Christmas. It was always the last thing opened on Christmas morning, and our children – ignoring their new toys – would stand with wide-eyed anticipation as their dad lifted the envelope from the tree to reveal its contents. As the children grew, the toys gave way to more practical presents, but the small, white envelope never lost its allure.

The story doesn't end there. You see, we lost Mike last year due to dreaded cancer. When Christmas rolled around, I was still so wrapped in grief that I barely got the tree up. But Christmas Eve found me placing an envelope on the tree. And the next morning, I found it was magically joined by three more. Unbeknownst to the others, each of our three children had for the first time placed a white envelope on the tree for their dad. The tradition has grown, and someday will expand even further with our grandchildren standing to take down that envelope.

Mike's spirit, like the Christmas spirit, will always be with us.



Gold Country Writers

Third Wednesday Meeting

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

10 a.m. to 12 noon

~ Gold Country Writers proudly presents ~

Shelley Wagner

The Write Workshops in Community: Invitation to a Creative Writing Workshop



Shelley Wagner tells how she has established a thriving writing community by starting her own business as a Creative Writing Workshop Leader. She invites you to participate in a workshop designed for writers to build community and generate new material. Storytelling is instinctive, she explains, and personal narratives are a mere glimmer of our inborn nature to create.

She will provide an overview of her business, The Write Workshops; notes on networking, and creating a writing community; an example of a successful day-long workshop—Writing on the Train; as well as what is next for The Write Workshops. Shelley will then lead a one-hour workshop using the Amherst Artists and Writers method.

Prior to starting The Write Workshops in Oakland, California, **Shelley Wagner**, studied for her Bachelor's Degree in English Literature with Minor in Creative Writing from San Francisco State, and received a Master's Degree in English from California State University East Bay where she stayed on to teach General Studies, all levels of English Composition, and Academic Writing for international students in the American Language Program. She taught Composition for Ohlone College, ESL for Alameda Unified School District, and subbed at the English Language School in San Francisco. She has volunteered for Upwardly Global, the California Writers Club, and the San Francisco Writers Conference.

Shelley hosts critique groups in her home, and facilitates the Berkeley-based Rose Street Writers as a Meetup organizer. She writes regularly with her Shut-up and Write friends at the Lucky Duck Bicycle Cafe in downtown Oakland. She has finished the first draft of her first novel, *Big River*, a coming of age story set in a fictional logging town on the Pacific Northwest coast about saving the Redwoods and family loyalties. <https://shelleywagner.com>.

Join us! Meetings are free and open to the public.

Auburn City Hall – Rose Room, 1225 Lincoln Way, Auburn, CA (park and enter in back – Rose Room is downstairs)

Gold Country Writers: “Writers Working Together To Promote and Improve Their Work”

~ A 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization ~

Meetings are held every Wednesday of the month. **Third Wednesdays:** guest speaker presentation. **First Wednesdays:** business meeting. **Second and Fourth Wednesdays:** “Drop-In Critique” for members to get feedback on their work. For months with **Fifth Wednesdays:** social event. See website for details. <https://goldcountrywriters.com/>