



BOOKSHOP>ORG

MAY 2020

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SCWA

Southern California Writer's Association

The Perennial Writer's Conference

President's Message for May 2020 from Larry Porricelli

MAY IS FULL OF PROMISES AT SCWA

Whenever May arrives, I am reminded of the song, *June Is Bustin' Out All Over*, from the fabulous Rogers and Hammerstein Broadway musical, *Carousel*.

The song comes to mind, first, because May was full of promises when I was born into this world, on a wonderful Tuesday afternoon at 5:20 p.m. in Pelham Bay Hospital, Bronx, New York. I grew up with a lifetime affinity for May as it has always been a month of hope and freshness and a great feeling of putting the past in the past and galloping up new mountaintops.

What has perturbed me ever since I sang this song as a member of a sixth-grade touring chorus was that May did not live up to the promises expected. I always took it personally. We always saw May Day celebrations around the world, but I never knew what the hell they were for except to celebrate May.

In May, the weather was delightful, every day. The roses bloomed, canopies of verdant branches covered us with shade, the water warmed and invited once again. And floating along on the Spring breeze, like a lazy bullfrog on a lily pad, was the ever-present gift of May—dreams. Dreams big and beautiful. Dreams we knew we will attain. Summer was on its way to deliver them to us.

Perhaps it seems as if in this Summer of 2020, this lifetime is on hold.

If you can, no matter your music taste, go to Spotify, or YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0l-790dGx-o> or wherever and play the song above. It will lift you out of your seat, and you will find yourself at a window, looking to the outdoors, to realize May is glorious, and June is coming.

June is coming, a great June, perhaps the biggest of your life! And while we are in a beautiful May, revitalize your dreams, stand with your hopes, and prepare for great and wonderful things to explode with joy in your life.

SCWA has had an explosion of ideas, speakers, Craft Chats, and helpful connections for each other. We have contributed to feeding people in need in our community, and we have reached out to go beyond the expected.

We are here for each of you, and please be a part of all we are sharing. Be a leader. Be a help. We are all together in this time, and we are prepared, for SCWA has always been together for each other, during all times.

Our board has gone above and beyond with extra effort and offerings for you: from Craft Chats to Zoom Training to Living Room Chats with Wendall Thomas, and more. I offer a special thank you to Board members Maddie Margarita, Diana Pardee, Sharon Goldinger, Pam Sheppard, Steve Jackson, Don Westenhaver for their constant support and creativity with new ideas to offer to you.

This month, we are returning to our May Monthly Saturday Morning Meeting, and have a phenomenal and inspiring speaker for this meeting, to be held on Zoom on May 16, with writer **RUFİ THORPE**. Please make a reservation on our website.

Rufi is such a wonderful fresh voice who has taken the literary world by storm! Rufi grew up in OC, and one of her first novels was *The Girls from Corona del Mar*, a funny, gritty story of life in the fast lane of OC. Her latest novel, just released last week, *The Knockout Queen*, has been reviewed and praised by so many sites and individuals. Look up and read some of those reviews and you will definitely want to read *The Knockout Queen*, and to meet and hear Rufi at our May meeting.

A link on our website takes you to Bookshop.org, which connects you to SCWA Member **Joe Anzenberger's** new bookstore: Sleepless in Laguna.

Even better, by purchasing *The Knockout Queen* through Joe's bookstore on Bookshop.org, Joe's store will get the sale, and part of the purchase price goes back to local independent bookstores from a Bookshop.org fund.

And we at SCWA are proud to also offer an opportunity for you to help those in our community who may be struggling. Our virtual food drive to support Second Harvest will multiply every dollar we contribute.

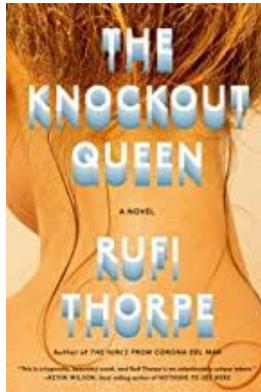
You can see the donation of \$1 buys 3 meals for our Orange County neighbors! Please help. Every small donation has an enormous impact.

Again, we are so excited at SCWA to be here with you, sharing this experience of our lifetimes together. We want to offer you all the encouragement you need for your writing and your own dreams and hopes.

If you need to, please renew your membership, or possibly think about being a patron, just as there were in the Renaissance, that reached out and up by giving above and beyond in support.

We appreciate you and hope to see you at the May 16 Meeting with Ruffi Thorpe!

June will be busting out all over!



An amazing opportunity—via ZOOM on May 16, 2020

Ruffi Thorpe, critically acclaimed bestselling author who grew up in Orange County, will be speaking for SCWA's first virtual meeting on Saturday, May 16, on Zoom.

Ruffi will talk about her new novel, "*The Knockout Queen*," which released on April 28 to stunning

reviews:

"A dazzling and darkly comic novel of love, violence, and friendship in the California Suburbs." Bookbrowse.com

Go to <http://www.southernwriters.org> for more information and to RSVP.

“The first draft is
just you
telling yourself
the story”

-Terry Pratchett

SCWA EVENTS THIS MONTH, MAY 2020

- ❖ **SCWA ZOOM HAPPY HOUR** – Join us with your funny hats and Coronatinis for good news and good cheer. Every Friday at 4:30 p.m. Sign up on our website and we'll email you a link and password.
- ❖ **Rufi Thorpe – MAY 16th Virtual Book Tour.** Her bestselling *The Girls From Corona Del Mar* and *Dear Fang, With Love* have astonished reviewers and won fans across genres and generations. Register for this special event on our website.



Special Virtual Event for May 2020

SCWA Presents: Rufi Thorpe, author of *The Knockout Queen*

Join us May 16 for our virtual monthly event with Rufi Thorpe, with her newly released, *The Knockout Queen*, a “dazzling and darkly comic novel of love, violence, and friendship in the California suburbs.” -Bookbrowse
An Entertainment Weekly, Parade, and LitHub Most Anticipated Book of 2020.

We are excited to welcome Rufi, whose three books have generated an astonishing array of reviews from *Publishers Weekly, Time, Entertainment Weekly*, a starred review from *Kirkus*, and many bestselling authors. Rufi Thorpe is one of the brightest stars on the literary horizon.

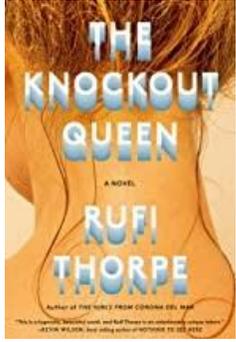
She will talk about her book and about her path through numerous drafts, challenges, and the ups and downs of this remarkable story set in a landscape we know so well here in Southern California.

When: May 16, 10 -11:30 am

Where: Zoom webinar

Cost: Register by May 15: \$10.00 (for members and nonmembers)

Register at www.southernwriters.org



"The Knockout Queen [is] full of verve and sketched in colors as vibrant as a Tilt-A-Whirl David Hockney landscape... Thorpe inverts the more common tale of an impoverished sufferer who is momentarily saved or mourned by a richer, more stable friend. The result is revelatory."

—Hillary Kelly, Los Angeles Times

Rufi Thorpe received her MFA from the University of Virginia in 2009. Her first novel, *The Girls from Corona del Mar*, was long listed for the 2014 International Dylan Thomas Prize and for the 2014 Flaherty-Dunn First Novel Prize. Her second novel, *Dear Fang, With Love*, was published by Knopf in May 2016. She lives in California with her husband and two sons.



"A deeply-detailed, often hilarious novel..." - Huff Post



"...a slim book that leaves a deep impression." – LA Times

Rufi has contributed numerous essays to *LitHub*, *Medium*, *Huffington Post*, the *New York Times*, *Poets & Writers*, and others. Check out "Actually, All Writers Steal" on *LitHub* (<https://lithub.com/actually-all-writers-steal/>) or "The Frightening and Wondrous Things That Will Happen To You The Year You Publish Your First Novel" on Medium.com

To BUY the books:

This link takes you to bookshop.org which connects you to purchase from Joe Anzenberger's new bookstore: Sleepless in Laguna. For more information: email Joe at ocexplorer@gmail.com or visit the store at www.sleepless.love

<https://bookshop.org/lists/author-event-rufi-thorpe>

Grand Opening!

Sleepless in Laguna A Romance Bookstore



Sleepless in Laguna is the brainchild of Joe and Lisa Ann Reed and their love of books and dramatic stories. Joe has a BA in Literature and a MS in Publishing, and Lisa holds a PhD in Holistic Counseling. A Marine Corps vet and retired corporate marketing, communications, and technology whiz, Joe has created with Lisa a haven for booklovers of all genres. Sleepless in Laguna is not just a bookstore, it's a new venue for book club meetings, author lunches and launches, and the perfect place for a deep dive conversation into writing and publishing, and for discussing the nuances of putting handsome, shirtless beefcake on the covers of romance novels.

Visit the website at www.sleepless.love. Joe or Lisa will order any books you wish, not just those in the romance genre. Order directly in store, by phone, or on the website.

Sleepless in Laguna also has a source for ordering at www.bookshop.org/shop/sleeplessinlaguna.

****Bookshop.org is an online commerce hub offering book lovers an alternative buy button that supports and promotes indie bookstores. Bookshop.org offers an additional way to support your local bookstores without leaving the house. Stores can create their own curated page; orders are fulfilled by Ingram and shipped directly to you.**



From the SCWA Speaker Archives

While our monthly meetings are temporarily cancelled, we have a chance now to mine the riches of the highlights from our Speaker Archive. So many fine speakers, many who have become friends have shared their experiences and their knowledge. Let's revisit some of them! (Special THANKS to Glenda Rynn for access to her highlights files.)

SCWA Highlights with Sam Weller, Author of *The Bradbury Chronicles* January, 2006



[NOTE: Ray Bradbury was scheduled as SCWA's January speaker, but was ill on that day. Sam Weller, Bradbury's biographer graciously took his place as he was in town to drive Bradbury to meet with us. Bradbury rescheduled; highlights of his visit follow Weller's.]

Although Ray Bradbury fretted that "his bibliographer would have him stuffed and mounted when he dies," he had refused all offers to write his biography, even from renowned writers and Harvard professors. When he developed a friendship with writer and teacher Sam Weller, whom he recognized not only as "a fellow enthusiast" but also as one who loved and knew his work well, he relented. Thus, Weller's *The Bradbury Chronicles* does not portray this American icon as "stuffed and mounted" but as an idea factory who learned how to nurture imagination to copious fruition.

Weller's collaboration with the writer who "brought mainstream respectability to the fields of science fiction and fantasy" began in 1999 when Weller interviewed RB for magazine articles. A discovery of intense mutual interests sparked a lively bonding. Scholarly treatises aside, Weller asked why no biography existed. "A biography means 'You're dead,'" RB replied.

But the resonance between them and Weller's "chutzpah" of saying "I'd like to write your life story" convinced RB that Weller was the right person. The 80-year-old writer made only one stipulation: "You need to call me everyday because I get lonely."

Upon returning to Chicago from Los Angeles, Weller felt his jubilation morph into a panic attack. “What if people hate what I say?” However, he awoke the next morning with the conviction of no turning back. Weller had taken up RB’s guiding principle of “Jump off the cliff and build your wings on the way down.”

The next five years found him flying to LA every two to three weeks to tackle the “incredibly disorganized stacks of paper” that RB, also a prolific essayist, poet, and screenwriter, had accumulated. In addition to the novels were 700 published short stories, 400 unpublished ones, personal papers, and tax records.

Reconstructing RB’s chronology was Weller’s most difficult challenge. A serendipity worthy of “The Twilight Zone,” all 65 scripts which Bradbury had written, occurred when, from behind a drawer, Weller fished out RB’s annotated pocket calendar of 1953, “his golden year.” That year RB had published in *The New Yorker*, written the screenplay in Ireland for John Huston’s *Moby Dick*, and published *Fahrenheit 451*. Best of all, it contained the notes from his calls to a chemistry lab, a physics lab, and finally a Fire Department to get the temperature at which paper burns. Fahrenheit 451 trumped its equivalent of Centigrade 233 for the title of RB’s masterpiece and sci-fi classic.

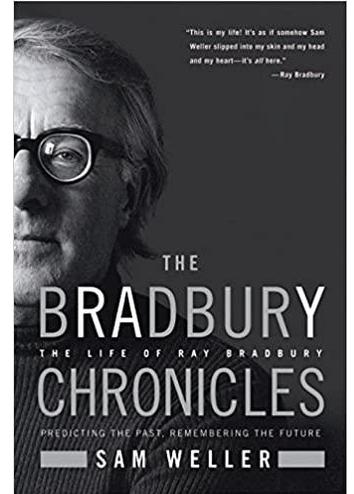
A near-second panic attack seized Weller when RB, hospitalized for two weeks, requested the manuscript. Weller nervously brought all 623 typed pages. “Be gone,” the 84-year-old commanded. “I’m going to read your book.” The next day, almost swooning, Weller received RB’s judgment: “You, my son, are a beautiful writer.” He asked only that two separate words be changed.

Since the demand for *The Bradbury Chronicles* would be international, Weller chose one of the big house publishers, William Morrow, an Imprint of HarperCollins, because the big publishers “have the lock on distribution.” In addition, he needed funding for his air travel, which the small presses cannot underwrite. One frustration he is left with, however, is that the book length was determined by “focus groups in the Bradbury readership.” He could have filled another 100 pages. “Maybe there’ll be a Volume II.”

What has been the effect of these five years on Weller as a writer? He can now channel Bradbury for any audience. If they are together, RB quips, “Stand offstage and mouth my speech.” The most awkward moments occurred whenever Weller missed a daily call; RB would be badly upset. The emotional, widowed Bradbury is “an incredibly needy man.” However, these small gaffes made Weller realize he “needed to step back and get objectivity. I needed a break.”

When member Bill Blake asked, “Has your complete absorption in Bradbury stultified your own writing?” “GOOD question!” Weller responded. “Yes, I was copying.” Several times when reading Weller’s work, the famed author remarked, “Too much Bradbury.” Weller added that he had a conscious one-year struggle to “get Bradbury off my shoulder” and find his own voice once more. “However,” Weller concedes, “he has influenced my style since childhood.”

Even bigger has been the impact of RB’s spirit. “I’ve never met anyone who wants to live so badly,” Weller claims. Ray Bradbury is “not afraid of dying but of not creating.”



This biography is a blueprint, Weller says, of how to nurture imagination. Driven by “a vision for the future and a reverence for the past,” RB, as a fledgling thought “to hell with a fear of failure.” He would write for a bit and then allow his subconscious to pilot the rest. “He took a child’s memory and embellished it.” Tucking in some mythology is RB’s trademark as well as embedding a theme for each story, often the search for immortality.

This icon never believed in writer’s block but did believe that quality emerges from quantity. Thus, early on, he wrote a story a week. Finding his own voice took a year, during which he published three of his 52 stories. In the second, he published six. Years later his phrasing became more poetic after his wife insisted he read poetry. All these years and two strokes have not diminished his work ethic of writing daily.

RB himself does not care for collaboration—Hollywood style—because it “intellectualizes” the material. But he does strongly believe in writing communities. With writer’s groups and mentors, there is “that ghostly look in our eyes we have when we’re creating, this DNA.”

Writing Advice from Ray Bradbury

- Don’t over-think your stories or think of the point before you write. Just let it come.
- Free your mind and relax as you did as a child. We question ourselves too much.
- Do not abandon your loves.
- Make a list of 10 things you love and celebrate them in writing.
- Make a list of 10 things you hate and attack them.
- Find two unhindered hours a day to write.

The ailing Bradbury had planned to attend the SCWA meeting. However, when Weller drove to his Los Angeles home to get him, RB did not feel well enough to attend that morning. Weller wanted to get RB during the lunch hour until the group convinced the Chicago resident a roundtrip in that time was impossible. Whenever this younger “enthusiast” apologized for RB’s absence, he was drowned out by instant cries of “No, no, you’re great!”

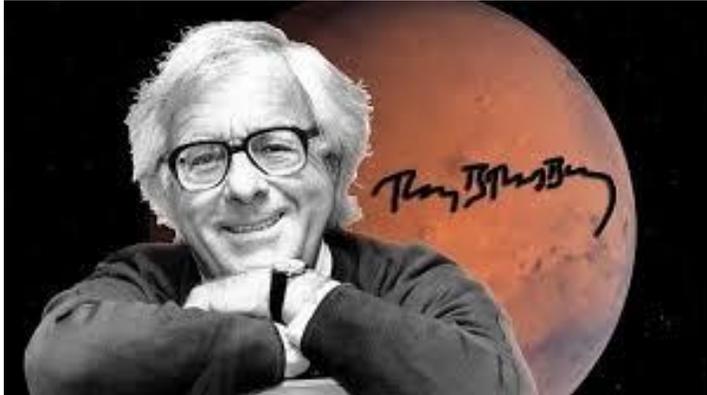
Not only a generous speaker, Sam Weller also personifies generosity itself. Upon learning SCWA had over-subscribed lunches from the restaurant, he immediately donated the honorarium he had received for car and hotel expenses.

At the end, we all felt enthused, inspired, and gratified, ready to take Bradbury’s admonition of “Go home and celebrate your keyboard and your pen.”

Glenda Rynn, Member

SCWA presents Highlights from March, 2007

Ray Bradbury



Alerted to the possible late arrival of Ray Bradbury, who brought science fiction into the mainstream, President Victory Crayne channeled the crowd's energy into undertaking The Six-Word Challenge. In a few minutes, a story must be implied by only six words. Two of the examples she gave were "Long for him, got him, darn!" and "We kiss, she melted, mop please." Members read their creations aloud. One of the best was "Billy, from infatuation to restraining order."

Ray Bradbury arrived soon after. Years ago, he had inscribed, "Love what you write; write what you love" in a book for Lynnette Baum, SCWA V.P. of Programming. Though 87 now and in a wheel chair, RB still exudes enthusiasm for his craft and other writers: "If you're not doing what you love, you're in the wrong business!" Calling himself a hybrid writer because one-half of his work has been for film, he described the path of love he has taken.

RB says his wife took a vow of poverty to marry a struggling writer. Before marriage, her affluent family had given her a \$100 a week allowance. But since her husband wrote for pulp magazines, her work brought in only \$40 a week for the two of them. Because they couldn't afford a telephone for two years, they used the one in the restroom of the gas station in the alley by their apartment. After twenty years, they could afford a car.

Three weeks of marriage brought pregnancy, and his wife had to quit work in the fifth month. This pressure forced RB to visit New York editors. At Doubleday, Walter Bradbury (no relation) looked at RB's stories and concluded, "I think you've written a novel. These are tapestries. Go back to the YMCA tonight and write an outline. If it's good, I'll give you \$700."

When RB returned the next day with the outline, which became *The Martian Chronicles*, he asked, "Do I have other books I've written you know about?" Yes, he did--*The Illustrated Man*. RB made both sales. Later when Christopher Isherwood reviewed *The Martian Chronicles*, he said RB had written a masterpiece. "That review made all the difference in my life."

This science fiction writer with a fresh style was building a reputation. Aldous Huxley asked to meet him and said, "Know what you are? You're a poet!" Director John Huston asked RB to come to Ireland to write the screenplay for *Moby Dick*, which neither had read. After intense study, RB says, "Herman Melville inhabited my soul." He notes "some authors are easier to get inside their psyche for adaptation." Through the years he did

screenplays for *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* with Lon Chaney, *Phantom of the Opera*, and *Lost World* among others.

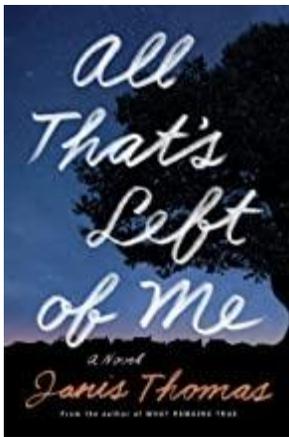
When his work is being adapted for film, however, RB is not as happy. “Stay away from studios. They’re all idiots.” Currently, he is frustrated by the fact that Mel Gibson has sponsored eighteen scripts for a new version of *Fahrenheit 451*. RB says, “Shoot the book!” He makes a comparison to Sam Peckinpaw, who shot *Something Wicked This Way Comes*. “Peckinpaw said he’d ‘tear out the pages and stuff them in the camera.’”

RB feels that “so many writers today don’t like being alive” and is unhappy with the last Academy Awards for director Martin Scorsese [*The Departed*]. “Hatred, melancholy—stay away from these,” he warns. He does not read what the critics say because “they hate you for the wrong reason.” But he does support other writers and for twenty years met every two weeks with others. RB says, “Make a list of your loves. Find your own exhilaration.”

Afterwards Ray Bradbury graciously signed books for members and guests. Find out more at www.raybradbury.com. (Personal note: I bought a copy of his *Zen in the Art of Writing*, 1996, and find it particularly stimulating.)

Glenda Brown Rynn, Member

grynn@cox.net



CELEBRATE GOOD NEWS !

Ron Singerton's new book, *A Blossom in the Ashes* has been released by Penmore Press. On Amazon now. For more info visit: www.ronsingerton.com

WooHoo! **Lilian Nader's** new play, “Tele-Toss, A Moving Experience” is included in the New Voices Playwrights Theatre anthology, available from John Bolen at j,e,bolen@gmail.com.

Have you seen it?? The trailer for **Janis Thomas'** novel, *All That's Left of Me*. You can find a link to it on the SCWA Facebook page on a post dated May 4.

Matthew Pallamary's *Death: (A Love Story)*. A reviewer called it “Brilliant book with a whole new take on love.”

Dennis Palumbo's *Head Wounds*, the fifth Daniel Rinaldi thriller, just passed the 50-plus reviews on Amazon. Posting your reviews pays off!

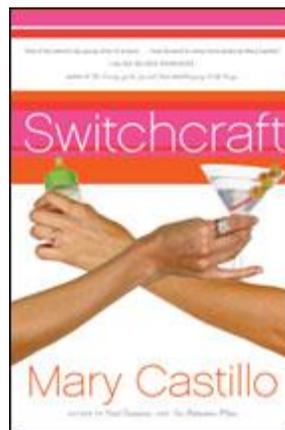
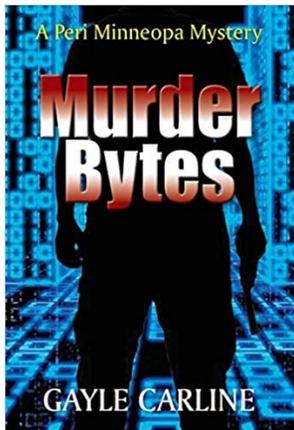
LitUp goes Virtual!

Lit Up! A Conversation with OC Readers and Writers

We miss seeing your faces! So we are taking the leap onto the screen for our first Virtual Lit Up.

Join us Tuesday evening, May 19, at 6:30 p.m. Get ready for a night of mystery, laughs, and bookish conversation with **DP Lyle**, **Mary Castillo**, and **Gayle Carline**.

Register for the event on Lit Up's Facebook page
Or by email to Maddiemargarita@gmail.com



A Very Special Invitation

Since SCWA is a group of writers who mentor and support each other, we asked ourselves, what more can we do to help those in need during this pandemic?

We invite you to join our food drive to support Second Harvest as a way each of us can make a difference. Someone said, "Many hands make light work." Together, each giving a little, we can feed hundreds of people in need.



Your contributions to our food drive will provide more fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy and proteins to our neighbors in Orange County who face food insecurity. Thanks to the food bank's buying power where **\$1 helps provide 3 meals**, we can make an immediate impact!

Each dollar raised through this Virtual Food Drive goes directly to Second Harvest and will be used to buy nutritious food for our community. Every dollar can make a huge difference. No donation is too small. Help us spread the word and reach our goal of 3000 meals.

On the Second Harvest Food Bank website, click on Find a Food Drive and search SCWA. Or click this link: <https://www.yourfooddrive.org/drive.php?SCWA-Food-Drive>

Thank you for your support!

The SCWA Board

Benefits of SCWA Membership



WELCOME, WELCOME, WELCOME!

- ❖ Active members receive a 30% off admission to SCWA meetings including all-you-can-eat lunch and a speaker.
- ❖ Members are eligible for a Free 30-minute consultation from book shepherd Sharon Goldinger on any publishing contract.
- ❖ Discounts are available for active SCWA members for registration for the La Jolla Writer's Conference, and for early registration for the Southern California Writers' Conference, which is held twice annually in San Diego and Orange County.
- ❖ Critiques of your first 20 pages by an SCWA Board member for \$50.00.
- ❖ Access to professional network of publishing, business consultants and editors.
- ❖ Monthly networking with other published, unpublished authors, and writers in all stages of the writing journey.
- ❖ Participation in SCWA marketing platforms on **southernwriters.org** and SCWA social media platforms.
- ❖ Access to up-to-date and cutting-edge articles on craft and the business of publishing.

Attend a mini-writer's conference every month, improve your craft, and learn from bestselling authors and highly sought-after instructors.

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 Southerncalwriters.org**

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The SCWA communication sites should only be used for dialogues related to the craft of writing. Non-writing related topics should be done via other forms of personal communication. Please review the content disclaimer located in the newsletter via the SCWA website www.southerncalwriters.org or on the About page of the SCWA Facebook page. The SCWA does not endorse individual opinions placed of any of its sites.

The SCWA receives information on various services, writing contests, and events. As a courtesy, we will forward the information to our members. Unless otherwise indicated, the SCWA does not discourage, encourage or recommend any of the services, contests or events. Many of these services, contests and events cost money; therefore, we recommend that you evaluate the opportunities based on your individual situation and interest. Because of our membership email protection policy, please do not forward information to the general membership directly. **We request that all members forward any information to the SCWA President for approval and forwarding to the membership.**

SCWA members wishing to share appropriate writing-related information and resources are welcome to do so via the SCWA Facebook page. The SCWA Board members and Newsletter Editor will determine the information to be contained in the SCWA on-line newsletter, which is primarily used for official SCWA information.