https://www.facebook.com/groups/160332824032519/



Southern California Writers Association The Perennial Writers Conference

April 2019 Newsletter

Volume 18, Number 4 -- April 2019

President's Message Larry Porricelli, SCWA President

Thank you for making the SCWA the phenomenal organization it is today, and for even better things to come. If your annual fees are due, please sign up to extend for your next twelve months.

Spring is a good time to UPDATE your member profile Information for your email, website, phone and publications is completely optional. We don't share it outside the SCWA membership.

Contact Don Westenhaver — < <u>donwestenhaver@roadrunner.com</u> > or Pam Sheppard - <u>sheppardedits@gmail.com</u> to submit changes or additions.

A note from our Social Media and Communications Maven, Diana Pardee: Check out our SCWA Facebook link and join us for excerpts, discussions and encouragements.

Follow us, we'd love to see you there! Https://www.facebook.com/groups/160332824032519



This month's Guest: April 20, 2019 Joe Clifford



Joe Clifford's bestselling Jay Porter Thriller Series (Oceanview Publishing) has received rave reviews from Publishers Weekly, Library Journal, and the San Francisco Chronicle, among many others. Joe is also editor of *Trouble in the Heartland: Crime Stories Based on the Songs of Bruce Springsteen* and the forthcoming *Just to Watch Him Die: Crime Fiction Inspired by the Songs of Johnny Cash*.

Joe Clifford is acquisitions editor for Gutter Books and producer of Lip Service West, a "gritty, real, raw" reading series in Oakland, CA. His book, released in December 2018, *The One That Got Away* is a dark, psychological thriller, featuring a compelling, conflicted heroine and a page-turning narrative that races toward its final, shocking conclusion.

Joe's newest book, *Rag and Bone*, releases June 1st. Publisher's Weekly says: "Clifford makes his lead's complex backstory accessible for newcomers and doesn't shy from having him engage in bad behavior."

Currently Joe teaches online writing courses for LitReactor and around the country at various conferences and retreats.

Joe's writing can be found at www.joeclifford.com.

Coming - May 18th, 2019 CHRISTINA HOAG "10,000 Mistakes to Publication"



A former journalist, Christina Hoag has had her laptop searched by Colombian guerrillas, phone tapped in Venezuela, was suspected of drug trafficking in Guyana, hid under a car to evade Guatemalan soldiers, and posed as a nun to get inside a Caracas jail. She has interviewed gang members, bank robbers, thieves and thugs in prisons, shantytowns and slums, not to forget billionaires and presidents, some of whom fall into the previous categories. Now she writes about such characters in her fiction.



Her debut noir crime novel *Skin of Tattoos* was a finalist for the 2017 Killer Nashville Silver Falchion Award for suspense, while her YA thriller *Girl on the Brink* was named one of Suspense Magazine's Best of 2016. She also co-authored *Peace in the Hood: Working with Gang Members to End the Violence*, which is being used in several universities.

Christina now lives in Los Angeles, where she has been a creative writing instructor at a maximumsecurity prison and to at-risk teen girls in South and East Los Angeles. She is a regular speaker at libraries, bookstores, book clubs, conferences and writing groups.

Find more about Christina at < https://www.christinahoag.com/>



HIGHLIGHTS: March 16, 2019 DETE MESERVE

The Joys & Challenges of Adapting a Book to Screen



Adapting Books to the Screen

Dete Meserve, a partner and CEO of Wind Dancer Films, first arrived in Montreal in the summer of 2018 for the filming of her own novel. When she saw white bands on meters printed with "Good Sam" and "No Parking," she wondered if she'd "broken down and entered an alternate universe." Although she'd produced numerous films and TV series ("Home Improvement," "Bernie," "What Men Want," etc.), her reaction that day in Montreal was "Oh, my gosh, is this any good?" Her next concern was whether she had the stamina for the

thousands of decisions she'd have to make during her twelve-hour workdays. She presented "Adapting Books to the Screen."

Published in 2014, *Good Sam* is about a news reporter, Kate Bradley, who tries to find the Good Samaritan in Los Angeles who keeps leaving \$100,000 anonymously on people's porches.

The process of compressing 65,000 words into so many set minutes of film started with its author being very sure of her core story and message. Ms. Meserve has been a reader and producer of mystery films for years—"all about someone wreaking havoc. What if we're looking for someone doing *good*?" She says that everyone is so accustomed to evil that this 'good' setup would appear as a marketing gimmick, a hoax. "There's a difference between good with no ulterior motive and one that appears good but is a bad one." Because people told her it was not realistic, Meserve self-published *Good Sam*. She *needed* to tell this story, not sell books and make money. At Christian bookstores, 100-300 copies of *Good Sam* sold daily. Friends who make Hallmark movies suggested she try Hallmark for a film.

Ms. Meserve made a successful pitch to Hallmark who loved it. Production requirements immediately brought conflicts. The protagonist is afraid of water, which becomes a metaphor throughout. But lots of H20 is a "no, no" for a film—makes production too expensive, "besides getting hair wet." Had to go. Some of the story goes on inside the head of a hedge fund manager. However, there was "not enough time to get that back story." In addition, she had to make story re-writes for the film beat sheet—and kill some darlings.

Because Hallmark has its own screenwriters, she would not be part of the script process. She read three of their scripts and picked one. But then she hit bigger problems. "An adaptation is a variation on a theme—and not really what you wanted," she says. She had to push her point that "we're searching for *good*, and we need to care why Sam does it." Other writers' scripts kept changing the characters' values. "Sam has a tragic past he blames himself for," but other writers made him too "glum."

In addition, "Hallmark greenlit the Christmas aspect." Unfortunately, things Meserve thought were important were omitted. When she commented on these gaps, she was told, "Oh, you're such a perfectionist." Then when Hallmark realized they'd greenlit too many Christmas films, she decided, "If I'm going to fail, I'm going to fail on what I believe." She brought the script back to her original ideas.

At Netflix, which is in most all countries, Ms. Meserve found not only a better platform but also the right person at the right time. There were lots of drafts, but they all stuck to her theme. Of course, problems arose. "There's never enough money." Could we have fewer extras? Shorter weeks? There were problems of location fees. We can't move to those locations and stay on budget. We'll lose time, sunlight, etc.

Although the novel is set in Los Angeles, that location wouldn't allow production to stay on budget. The decision was made to change the setting to New York City (which Meserve hates). However, NYC gave Netflix

conflicting responses, one of which was "we can't block off an intersection." As a result, Netflix decided the film would say it was NYC, but the filming would actually be in Montreal because it visually resembles NYC. [Evidently, Montreal also gives some tax incentives as do several states, such as Georgia.]

The Netflix studio insisted that the ending be a cliffhanger. Meserve liked the idea, but the limited budget couldn't support that scene. She said, "There's maybe a hint at the end of more."

Meserve longed to see her own ideas be incorporated into the screenplay, but she elaborated on additional difficulties that collaboration brings. She says that though the story is your own and you're working with the best screenwriters you could select, you do not always realize the effects of collaboration. She kept running into people's "unconscious bias against women," even with female directors. The protagonist, Kate Bradley, is twenty-nine, and her worldview corresponds to her experience in the news business. However, when she discovers that someone leaves free money for people, she definitely can't believe it.

Gender bias issues that arose:

- --Others assumed this was Kate's first job.
- --They assumed "she's the grizzled veteran of the world and jaded." (Meserve felt she "wasn't being heard. Yes, Kate is skeptical but not jaded.") Are all reporters supposed to be the same?
- -- They frequently wanted men of authority to tell Kate "what's wrong with her."
- --"No woman knows how to balance a career with a relationship. She has to be told."
 - Ms. Meserve herself was told, "If you weren't working so hard, you'd be able to do this more smoothly."
- -- The male character is a project for the woman to change (maybe he's alcoholic). "Why isn't she fixing him?"
- --Kate will never find a man she'll like.
- --Big issue: Kate carries no weapon—"gun, crossbow, etc."

Since she's "not a bad ass," what was "going to be Kate's real weapon?" Meserve made it clear to her SCWA audience that Kate's weapon was "truth." How can the author's values stay in the story?

Ms. Meserve spent five weeks in Montreal and returned for the edit and to examine the sound effects, music, etc. The *Good Sam* film comes out in a worldwide release this spring. The novel of *Good Sam* now has a sequel: *Perfectly Good Crime*.

The tale of a person who walks into a room and pitches an idea for a film which then proceeds to production "is not true but a legend." All along you must build your audience through networking. "Netflix did more research on me than I did on them." Meserve says to keep a sense of perspective because film producers may accept one out of nine projects until they have hundreds, but only a few get produced.

Other advice: Don't try to sell a series unless you have already published a couple of books. Someone asked if an agent is necessary for a script. Meserve replied that that area is in "great flux." Agents are not "incentivized" to get you more money. Although agents can submit, they don't always submit to the right places. The whole process "takes more time than anyone realizes."

Dete Meserves recommends this site: https://womenandhollywood.com. See also https://detemeserve.com.

Glenda Brown Rynn, Reporter grynn@cox.net

SCWA Mission

The mission of the SCWA is to provide a forum for promoting the welfare, fellowship, spirit, education, information, and encouragement among published and unpublished writers in the Southern California area,

SCWA Active Member Benefits

Active members receive a 30% discount at every SCWA meeting.

SCWA provides scholarships to members who attend writer's conferences.

SCWA members receive a free review and 30-minute consultation from Sharon Goldinger for any publishing contract.

SCWA members receive discounts on Jeff Lyon's online courses.

SCWA Critique Program - see below.

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.

SPECIAL OFFERS for SCWA Members

Esperanza High School Career Tech Ed Department offers a package of **10 in-studio AUTHOR HEADSHOTS** – a \$150 value for a minimum donation of \$35. Contact Don Westenhaver <donwestenhaver@roadrunner.com</pre>
by Tuesday April 16 to sign up!



SCWA member, SONIA MARSH offers an **EXCLUSIVE WRITER'S RETREAT**To South Africa and Victoria Falls for 10 guests scheduled for March 2020.

An extraordinary Writer's Safari Retreat led by
Susan Weidener, editor, author, and staff writer with the *Philadelphia Enquirer*.

For more information, call or email Sonia –

(949)402-7828 < https://wetravelwithapurpose.com/>
EARLY BIRD Discount until April 30

SCWA Critique Program

We have some exciting news on the critique front. One of our members received a critique, and he credits that critique with getting him a two-day response from an agent, who wants to see the entire manuscript. We love it when that happens.

Critique requests should be sent to Steve Jackson at steven@stevengjackson.com. If you have not received a response to a previous critique request, please resubmit (without any fee if you've already paid) to Steve. Steve will direct your sample (up to 15 double-spaced pages) to one of the Board members once we receive your payment. Payments (\$20.00 for members and \$30.00 for nonmembers) should be directed to Don Westenhaver.

- Check payable to SCWA: mail to Don at 5391 Fox Hills Ave., Buena Park, CA 90621
- Credit Card: advise Steve that you will pay by credit card. He will have Don send you an invoice with instructions on how to pay through the SCWA Square account.

Have a Question about a Publishing Contract?

Contracts involving publishing matters can be confusing if you're not familiar with all the language. What does something mean? What questions should I be asking? Do I have any other choices? If you're not sure what you're reading, what a term or section means, or if you should be signing the contract at all, SCWA is offering a new benefit. SCWA member, publishing consultant, and book shepherd Sharon Goldinger is offering a free review and thirty-minute consultation for any publishing contract to any SCWA member. You can reach her directly at pplspeak@att.net.

Conferences, Events, and Announcements

Lit Up! Orange County is 7pm Tuesday, March 19th at our NEW LOCATION Bardot & Bars in Tustin at 662 El Camino Real in the Camino Real Shopping Center in Old Town Tustin. Easy location off Newport Avenue just north of the 5 freeway.

Lit Up! Spring into 2019 with a special night of readings and smart conversation with **Darlene Quinn**, **Norm Thoeming** and @Mike Kammerzelt! Enjoy the casual vibe along with delicious coffee, ice cream and a light food menu! Lit Up! is free and open to the public!

"Will Write for Food" Contest

The "Will Write For Food" contest is a monthly blind competition. Winners are selected by a literary agent. First prize includes publication in the SCWA Newsletter, a certificate, and a \$25 cash prize.

You may write on any subject. Stories have a maximum of 1000 words. The winner will be announced at the SCWA meeting. To enter, email your story by February 8th, 2019, to meeting@ocwriter.com.

There are no limits to the number of times you can win. Join the fun and earn some rewards.

February 2019 Winning entry: California Prospects by Sulan Dun

Monthly Meeting Information and Map

Meeting Location:

Claim Jumper Restaurant

Banquet Room entrance, rear of building 18050 Brookhurst St., Fountain Valley, CA Restaurant telephone: (714) 963-6711

West Is Talbert

Claim Jumper

Registration & Networking: 9:30 a.m.
Meeting: 10:00 a.m.
Lunch: 11:30 a.m.
Afternoon Program: 12:30 p.m.

Meeting Fees (cash, check or credit/debit)

Reservation Type	SCWA Member	Student	Others
RSVP	\$25	\$15	\$35

SCWA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mailing Address: PO Box 47, Huntington Beach, CA 92648

Membership: Yann Jackson, ykj3678@gmail.com

Meeting Reservations

Larry Porricelli, meeting@ocwriter.com 714-580-5072



The SCWA Anthology, *It's All in the Story*, went to a second printing to meet the demand of wholesalers and bookstores. We have books for direct sales (\$15 for one, \$12.50 each for two, \$10 each for three or more). You may contact Don Westenhaver to arrange for payment, and we will have the copies available for you at the next SCWA meeting. Don can be reached at donwestenhaver@roadrunner.com.

For more information visit the SCWA Anthology website at: www.SCWAanthology.com

Recent SCWA Members' Publications

David Putnam: https://dwputnam.wordpress.com

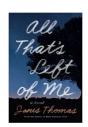
The Innocents: A Bruno Johnson Novel The Early Years, Book 1 12/18



Janis Thomas: janisthomas.com

All That's Left of Me

What Remains True





Dot Caffrey: www.dotcaffrey.com

AWAKENED 8/18



PJ Colando: www.pjcolando.com

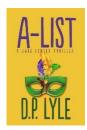
The Winner's Circle: Launched February, 2019

Steven Jackson: https://stevengjackson.com

"The Optimism of Youth"

D.P. Lyle: www.dplylemd.com

A-List: Coming in Paperback 2/19



Jeff Lyons: www.jefflyonsbooks.com

#5

Rapid Story Development: #4: Teams and Ensembles—

How to Develop Stories with Large Casts - 10/18

Rapid Story Development: #5: The Moral Premise -

How to Build a Bulletproof Narrative Engine for Any Story - 11/18

PJ COLANDO

Rapid Story Development: #6: Seven Steps to Busting Writer's Block - 12/18

#6



RAPID STORY DEVELOPMENT





Darlene Quinn: https://darlenequinn.net



WEBS OF PERCEPTION – the final novel in Darlene Quinn's Webs Series. 11/18

AUDIBLE version NOW AVAILABLE!

CLICK TO LISTEN TO THE FIRST FIVE (bite-sized) CHAPTERS: https://darlenequinn.net/webs-of-perception/

Available March 19: Richard Miller Morgan's CROWN HUNT 3/19



Ananya and Brett Ridenour:

COLORING OUTSIDE THE LINES: Integrating Project Management and Creativity 10/18



Dirk Sayers: dirksayers.com/dirks-writings

Through the Windshield: 12/18

Best Case Scenario: 8/18







Sheri Fink: www.sherifink.net

The Little Unicorn 9/18

SCWA Member Publications and Productions			
<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Year</u>	
Belmont, Julie	Creativity Business Plan for Artists at Heart	2014	
Belmont, Julie	The Path to Personal Success and Freedom; Turning Hurdles		
	into Stepping Stones	2005	
Caffrey, Dot	Cursed Power	2015	
	Awakening Powers	2014	
Colando, PJ	The Winner's Circle	2019	
	Hashes & Bashes	2016	
	Stashes	2014	
Crayne, Victory	Rebuilt	2016	
	Humans Only	2016	
	Freedom	2015	
De Ladurantey, Joseph	Making Your Memories with Rock & Roll and Doo Wop	2016	
	Cowards, Crooks, and Warriors	2015	
Dingus, Peter	Worlds in Transition	2017	
Donenfeld-Vernoux, AR	Pudel & Cie: Case #1 Moroney Boloney	2015	
	Cave Dreams	2014	
	Out of the Chute	2014	
	How To Get And Keep The Best Jobs: Secrets HR Won't Tell Y	′ou	
Dunlap, Larry J	Night People	2015	
Fink, Sheri	The Little Unicorn	2018	
	Counting Sea Life with the Little Seahorse	2017	
	Cake in Bed	2016	
	My Bliss Book	2015	
	The Little Seahorse	2014	
	The Little Firefly	2013	
	The Little Gnome	2012	
	Exploring the Garden with the Little Rose	2012	
	The Little Rose	2011	
Gilmore, Susan Kay	Possessed by Baseball	2013	
Giussani, Sara	Malibu	2015	
,	Come fare La valutazione di un processo aziendale	2014	
	Management dei processi aziendali	2012	
Jackson, Steven G	"The Optimism of Youth"	2018	
,	"Full Service"	2017	
	"Life Dies, and Then You Suck"	2017	
	"The Master Playwright"	2016	
	"The Asylum for Rejected Characters"	2016	
	The Zeus Payload	2015	
	"Fade to Crazy"	2015	
	"The Loan Officer"	2014	
King, Roy	Symfonie Fantastique	2011	
Klann, Nancy	The Clock of Life	2012	
	Like The Flies On The Patio	2012	
Lambert, Harlen, Sharro	nn		
Lambort, Hanen, Onant	Affairs of the Heart, Vol. 2 2017		
	Affairs of the Heart, Vol. 1 2016		
Levine, Jennifer	Summer Secrets 2016		
LOVING, JOHNINGI	ZUIU		

Lloyd, Rita Lee	How to Survive in the 21st Century as a SSOFF	2011	
Lyle, DP (Doug)	A-List	2018	

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	Deep Six	2016
	Forensics for Dummies, 2nd edition	2016
	Original Sin	2015
	Devil's Playground	2015
	Double Blind	2015
	Murder and Mayhem	2013
	Royal Pains: Sick Rich	2012
	Run To Ground	2012
	Thriller3: Love Is Murder (Short Story)	2012
	ABA Fundamentals: Understanding Forensic Science	2012
	Royal Pains: First, Do No Harm	2011
	Hot Lights, Cold Steel	2011
	Thrillers: 100 Must Reads (Essay)	2010
	Stress Fracture	2010
	Howdunnit: Forensics: A Guide For Writers	2008
	Forensics and Fiction	2007
Lyons, Jeff	Rapid Story Development: Bust the Top Ten Creative Writing	
, , , , ,	Myths to Become a Better Writer	2018
Lyons, Jeff	Rapid Story Development: Commerical Pace in	
	Fiction & Creative Nonfiction	2018
Lyons, Jeff	Rapid Story Development: Ten Questions Every Writer Needs	
2,51.5, 5511	to Ask Before They Hire a Consultant	2018
	13 Minutes	2018
	Anatomy of a Premise Line	2016
	Jack Be Dead	2016
Marsh, Sonia	My Gutsy Story Anthology	2013
Iviaisii, Soilia	Freeways to Flip-Flops	2012
Marshall, Evelyn	Concerning Georgia Stekker	2014
Iviaisiiaii, Evelyii	The Way They See	2013
	The Way They See The Provider	2012
Martinez, Maria	The Apple Tree Wish	2012
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Michaels, Jeffrey J.	The Age of Change: A Challenging Path to the Future Becomes Us All	2017
	A Day at the Beach	2015
	Tasa's Path	2015
	How to Become The True You	2015
	Light: The Reason for Existence	2012
	Beings: A Journey to Joy	2010
	Touch the Earth: A Path to Ascension	2009
	Crystal Experience: Manifest an Extraordinary Life	2007
	Harmonic Coalescence, the Future of Humanity	2007

Lloyd, Rita Lee	How to Survive in the 21st Century as a SSOFF	2011	
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	Howdunnit: Forensics: A Guide For Writers	2008	

	Forensics and Fiction	2007
Lyons, Jeff	Rapid Story Development: Bust the Top Ten Creative	
	Writing Myths to Become a Better Writer	2018
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	Fiction & Creative Nonfiction	2018
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	The Provider	2012
Martinez, Maria	The Apple Tree Wish	2012
Michaels, Jeffrey J.	The Age of Change: A Challenging Path to the Future	2017
1	Becomes Us All	2016
	A Day at the Beach	2015
	Tasa's Path	2015
	How to Become The True You	2015
	Light: The Reason for Existence	2012
	Beings: A Journey to Joy	2010
	Touch the Earth: A Path to Ascension	2009
	Crystal Experience: Manifest an Extraordinary Life	2007
	Harmonic Coalescence, the Future of Humanity	2007
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SCWA Member Publications and Productions

Moose, Anne	Arkansas Summer	2017
Muhle, Charles	One Way to Write	2011
	The Sky Tree	2011
Nader, Lillian	Theep and Thorp: Adventures in Space	2016
Nannini, Marcus A.	Chameleons	2017
Nixon, Andy	Three Lives of Peter Novak	2016
	50 Shades of Grades, My Journey Through Wacademia	2013
Pope, Casey	A Love Life Like Karmic Disaster	2016
Porter, Kathy	Escape from Nuur	2013
	Earth's Ultimate Conflict	2010
	Gray/Guardians	2006
Putnam, David	The Innocents	2018
Quinn, Darlene	Web of Perception	2018
	Conflicting Webs	2015
	Unpredictable Webs	2013
	Webs of Fate	2011
	Twisted Webs	
	Webs of Power	2008
Ritchie, Solange	Firestorm	2018
	The Burning Man	2015
Sayer, Dirk B.	Best Case Scenario	2018
Spence, Charla	Personal Healthcare Record (Adult)	2011
	Personal Healthcare Record (Child)	2011
Szymczak, Leonard	Kookaburra's Last Laugh	2016
	Fighting for Love	2016
	Cuckoo Forevermore	2015
	The Roadmap Home: Your GPS to Inner Peace	2009
Thomas, Janis	What Remains True	2017
1	Murder in A-Minor	2016

	Say Never	2014	
	Sweet Nothings	2013	
	Something New	2012	
Van Camp, Wendy	The Curate's Brother	2014	
Weiss, Jill Q.	Crystal Experience: Manifest an Extraordinary Life	2007	
Westenhaver, Don	Missing Star	2017	
	Alexander's Lighthouse	2012	
	The Whiplash Hypothesis	2008	
	The Red Turtle Project	2008	
	Nero's Concert	2008	
Williams, Marianna	Love, Regret and Accidental Nudity	2014	
	The Valentine State	2013	
	Stars or Stripes Fourth of July	2011	
	Happy New Year, Darling	2005	
Woodcock, Don	A Lily Named Lillian	2015	

Terms of Use and Content Information Disclaimer

The SCWA encourages open, respectful communication between individuals interested in the craft of writing through a variety of social and traditional media, such as Facebook, SCWA website and emails. Any individual using inappropriate language, discussing inappropriate topics, or commenting in a disrespectful way will be removed from access to any future SCWA communication methods.

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.ocwriter.com 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 Newsletter Editor will determine the information to be contained in the SCWA on-line newsletter, which is primarily used for official SCWA information.