

## JUNE 2021

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 4  
[www.Southerncalwriters.org](http://www.Southerncalwriters.org)

- ✧ pg. 2: President's Message— A Remembrance of Darlene Quinn
- ✧ pg. 5: June Events
- ✧ pg. 6: Featured Monthly Speaker: Shawn Reilly Simmons
- ✧ pg. 7: Lit Up OC
- ✧ pg. 8: Hump Day Book Tour
- ✧ pg. 10: Good News!
- ✧ pg. 11: SCWA Cookbook
- ✧ pg. 12: SCWA Showcase
- ✧ pg. 13: Highlights: Catriona McPherson
- ✧ pg. 16: Resources for Writers
- ✧ pg. 17: Member Benefits
- ✧ pg. 18: Board & Terms of Use



## Southern California Writer's Association

### June 2021

- **President Larry Porricelli's Message**
- **June's Featured Monthly Speaker: Catriona McPherson**  
<https://www.southerncalwriters.org/meetings>
- **Craft Shop for June with Nancy Cole Silverman**
- **Hump Day, Every Wednesday**
- **Debby's Room, Wednesday 10:20 a.m.**
- **Such Good News!**
- **Highlights: Catriona McPherson**
- **SCWA Cookbook**



### Have you subscribed?

Check out our new YouTube channel at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLrqSfwTMaCi139ISRV50KQ>

Through the 2020 challenges SCWA has risen to new heights with a wide range of talented presenters and programs who will inspire, educate, and motivate writers and readers alike through our online programs.

Our best and brightest authors and guest speakers' presentations have now been uploaded to our own YouTube channel. Our content includes the Hump Day Book Tours, Pub Shops with insights into book publishing and marketing, and our monthly author spotlights and workshops.

## President's Message for June 2021 from Larry Porricelli



### **In memory of Darlene Quinn**

**Novelist, philanthropist, benefactor, friend, wit, Bon Vivant, award winner. Darlene touched so many lives and made us all better. Her passing on May 21 hurts all of our hearts.**

Darlene Quinn, a longtime member of SCWA and successful novelist with her series of "Web" books, was a Renaissance woman; a woman who began as a teacher, then a model, led the West Coast fashion icon Bullock's into becoming a leader worldwide in fashion, and became a hugely successful best-selling novelist.

Darlene was so talented and diverse. She even directed the *Miss Universe Pageant* for several years and always assisted the women in getting an education.

Of course, it is Darlene's writing that made her a giant. She wrote Buddy Ebsen's biography and also wrote the Barnaby Jones series of novels.

When she began her series of "Web" novels, they went right to the top. They won the Independent Novel of the Year Award several times. And Darlene had fans around the world and traveled from Alaska to Florida to New York constantly to meet with them. Her Facebook group has more than 5,000 members. To hear some of the stories about signing books in airports (her books were always an airport feature) and on literary cruises are prime pictures of her dedication and value in setting the stage for others.



Darlene Quinn helped to build SCWA into a vibrant family with her love not only for writing but her love for people.

When SCWA was struggling, Darlene would bring tables of writers to the meetings. And Darlene would provide teachings and free editing services to SCWA members and saw those writers improve. People say SCWA is so friendly and helpful to each other—Darlene was the inspiration for that tone of style of SCWA.



Darlene spoke at conferences around the world and always came back to SCWA sharing the wealth of experience with all of us. And she was so philanthropic to many of us who needed assistance with publishing. She was quiet about it and never asked for anything in return except that we keep writing.

How do we say goodbye to a person who was a legend in life? It is hard.

Larry Porricelli

## SCWA Events THIS MONTH: June 2021

- **SCWA Featured Monthly Speaker: June 19, 10 a.m. PDT.**  
We are happy to welcome **Shawn Reilly Simmons** who will speak on “Secrets to Crafting Impactful Short Stories.”  
<https://www.southerncalwriters.org/>
- **SCWA VIRTUAL HAPPY HOUR: Every Friday at 4:30 p.m. PDT** Join us with your funny stories and Summer Libations for good news and good cheer. Sign up on our website and we'll email you a link and password. <https://www.southerncalwriters.org/>
- **SCWA HUMP DAY BOOK TOUR:** You can access previous interviews on SCWA's YouTube channel or see it LIVE streaming on SCWA's Facebook group page at 10:00 a.m. PDT **every Wednesday in June (except June 12).**
- **Debby's Room:** Every Wednesday at 10:20 a.m. PDT following the Hump Day interviews, join Debby Chase and Dot Caffrey for casual conversation about the writing craft and anything that you wish to bring for discussion. Look for **Debby's Room** on the SCWA Facebook page.

Have you missed an SCWA event? Find the replay on SCWA's YouTube channel at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLrqSfwTMaCi139ISRV50KQ>

where we will upload replays as they are edited and ready.

**If you're interested in these and all SCWA events, please check out our website for membership details at:**

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

## Featured Monthly Speaker: June 19, 2021 Shawn Reilly Simmons Secrets to Crafting Impactful Short Stories

Join us Saturday June 19, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. PDT when SCWA welcomes **Shawn Reilly Simmons.**

**When:** Saturday, June 19, 2021

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. PDT

**Where:** Zoom, RSVP for your link at:

<https://www.southerncalwriters.org/meetings>

**Cost:** Members \$10.00

Nonmembers \$15.00



**Short stories aren't about word count. Short stories are about making your words count!**

Award-winning, short story writer and editor Shawn Reilly Simmons talks about the basics of short story writing and making your story resonate.

Shawn Reilly Simmons is the author of seven novels in the Red Carpet Catering Mystery series featuring Penelope Sutherland, chef-owner of a movie set catering company. She's also written several short stories which have been published in various anthologies including "Burnt Orange" in *Passport to Murder*; the 2017 Bouchercon Anthology; "The Prodigy" in *Mystery Tour*, the Crime Writers' Association Anthology; and "Now is the Hour" in *Writers Crushing Covid-19*.

Shawn's story "The Last Word," appearing in *Malice Domestic 14: Mystery Most Edible*, won the Agatha Award for Best Short Story in 2020. Shawn also won the Anthony Award for Best Anthology or Collection for co-editing the same anthology.

Shawn serves on the Board of Malice Domestic and is co-owner/publisher and editor at Level Best Books. She is a member of Sisters in Crime, Mystery Writers of America, the International Thriller Writers, and the Crime Writers' Association in the U.K. She lives in historic downtown Frederick, Maryland, with her husband and son.





Read more about Shawn and her books at: [www.shawnreillysimmons.com](http://www.shawnreillysimmons.com)



**Lit Up Orange County with Maddie Margarita**

**FACEBOOK LIVESTREAM**

<https://www.facebook.com/litupoc>

**When:** Tuesday, June 22, 2021

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. PDT

**Where:** Go to <https://www.facebook.com/events/244648510460472> and drop a note in the comments to receive a Zoom link for this very special event.

**Jonathan Santlofer**

**Amy Stewart: *The Kopp Sisters Novels***





Look for our SCWA group on Facebook. Click on the Events tab to join us!

If you can't join us, look for replays on the SCWA Facebook group page and on SCWA's YouTube channel.

Subscribe anytime at <https://bit.ly/2I890Db>

### **Recent Guests include:**

**Dr. Mary Hill-Wagner   Joe Clifford   Pamela Fagan Hutchins   Dorothy McFalls**

**Shawn Reilly Simmons   Nancy Cole Silverman   Quan Huynh   Wendy Hornsby**

**Kathleen Krevat   David Putnam   Mike Farley   Lani Forbes   Caitlyn O'Leary**

**Janelle Brown   Mary Anna Evans   Kaira Rouda   Laurie Stevens   Matt Coyle**

**Glen Erik Hamilton   August Norman   Tori Eldridge   Ava Homa   Dana Swift**

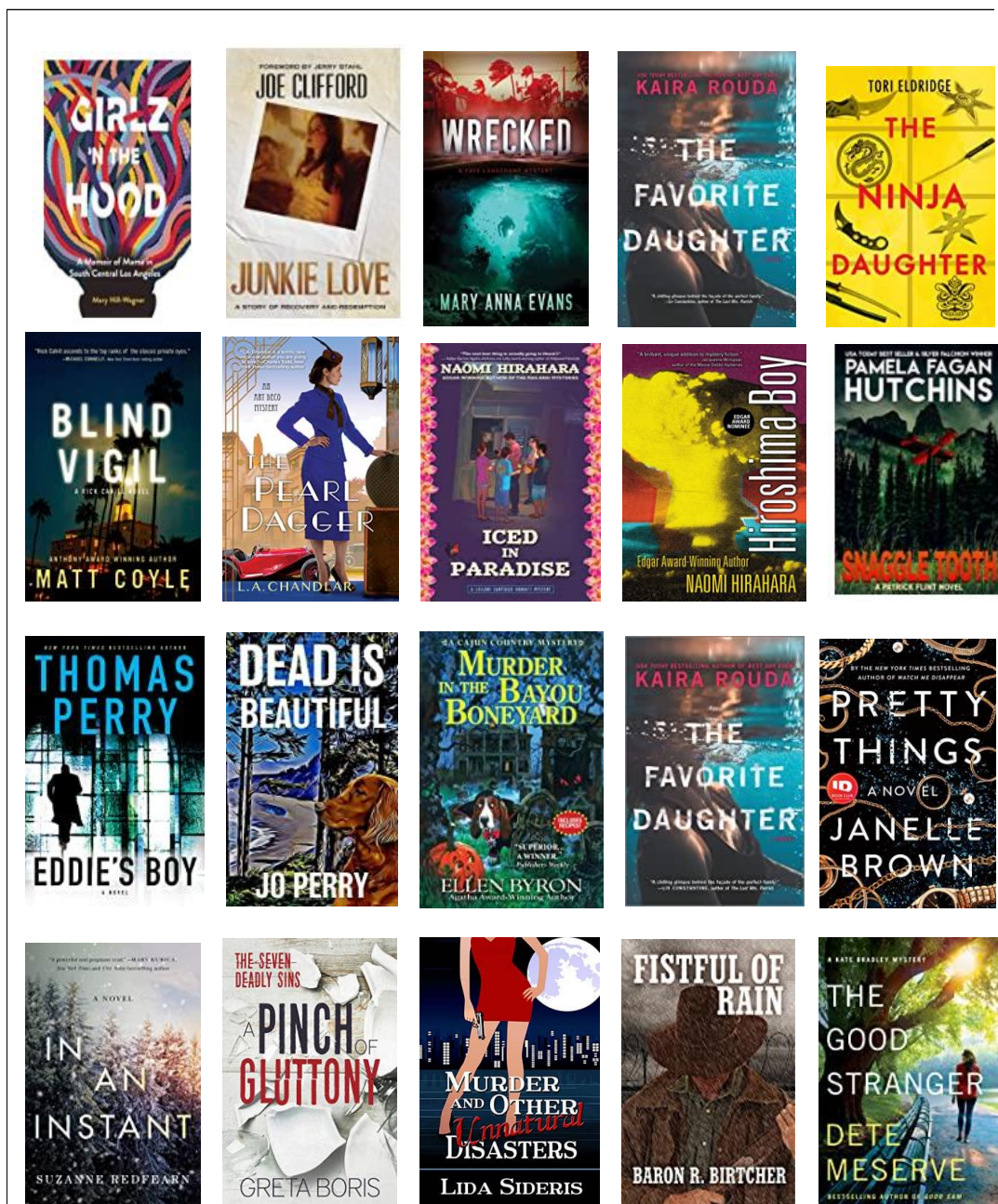
**Naomi Hirahara   LA Chandlar   Greta Boris   Joe Perry   Thomas Perry**

**Suzanne Redfearn   Chris Reich   Baron R. Birtcher   Dete Meserve**

**Anne Cleeland   Cara Black   Christopher Reich   Kaira Rouda   Dorothy St. James**

**PJ Colando   Patricia Smiley   Lisa Black   Johathan Brown   Nancy Cole Silverman**





More to come: Every Wednesday on SCWA's Facebook group page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/southerncalwriters/events>

**Don't forget!** Immediately following Maddie's wonderful interviews on the Wednesday Hump Day program, join Debby Chase and Dot Caffrey at 10:20 a.m. PDT, for an informal get-together for a bit of writer-to-writer good old-fashioned conversation with people who understand and enjoy our world too.

Come and join us by checking the More button on the SCWA group page, and then Rooms for the JOIN button to **Debby's Room** (or copy and paste this link):

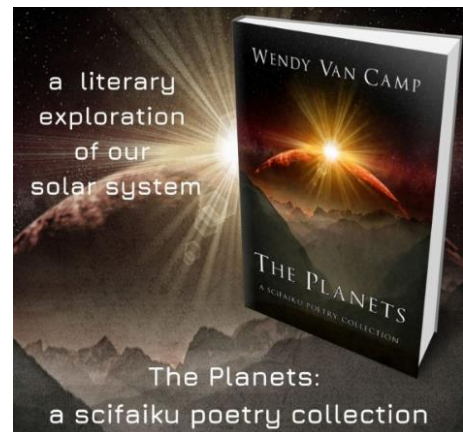
<https://www.facebook.com/groupcall/LINK:mhfmijxkzqkx/?nonce=cr6wv8imps5b>

## CELEBRATE ALL THE GOOD NEWS!

**Wendy Van Camp's** debut poetry collection, *The Planets*, has been nominated for the Elgin Award 2021. Her poetry in this collection is a mix of scifaiku and astropoetry.

Wendy's poetry is also in the Anthology of Science Fiction Poetry, Volume Two, *Eccentric Planets*, which is available in paperback and ebook on Amazon.

See more on Wendy's website: <http://nowastedink.com>



**Sherrie Miranda:** In September 2020, Sherrie released the prequel to her debut thriller, *Secrets and Lies in El Salvador*. *Crimes and Impunity in New Orleans* is a wild ride through the underbelly of 1980 New Orleans.

See the new trailer for the book on You Tube at:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7\\_NL-V9KEi4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_NL-V9KEi4)



Congratulations **Sheri Fink!**

*InstaGrateful* has won the Silver Medal for Best Self-Help book in the Kops-Fetherling International Book Awards. Well done, Sheri!



**Karen Sue Walker's** *Tea Is for Trouble, A Haunted Tearoom Cozy Mystery with Recipes* launched her new series on May 6.

Next in the series, *Tea Is for Toxin* is scheduled for September of this year.

## SCWA Writers' Cookbook Call for Submissions

\*\*\*\*\*CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS\*\*\*\*\*

**Open to all SCWA Members**

**We Want Your Recipes. AND YOUR WORDS!**

We are still collecting your short 250 words or less stories and poems for our writer's cookbook.

Enter your prettiest prose, your finest quips, and your tallest tales for our mix of literature and gastronomy. We know the frozen daiquiri was a great source of inspiration for Hemingway's *Islands in the Stream*. And what about Flannery O'Connor's love for ham and mayonnaise? What about you?

We encourage all our members to submit up to two entries

Each entry must contain both the recipe and a story, in any of these categories: mystery, horror, sci-fi, cozy, humor, poetry, crime, mythology, or fable. This is a writers' cookbook so think of your recipe as your muse to Nancy Klann at [klancy@sol.com](mailto:klancy@sol.com). We encourage your story to have a sense of connection with the recipe.

Please submit your recipes and related short fiction for our upcoming Southern California Writers Association story inspired cookbook. Submissions will be selected based on story quality, recipe quality, and the story's relation to the recipe.

Working titles include

**Blame It on the Osso Bucco**

**Eat Your Words**

**You Have the Write to Eat**

Needless to say, all title suggestions are welcome.

Due to limited space the **story/poem should be 250 words or less.**

The cookbook will be professionally published by SCWA and promoted with all the marketing might at our disposal. Proceeds will further help fund our events, speakers, scholarships, and publication of books, including this one.

We encourage all who want to join in to submit up to two recipes in a Word file along with their stories to Nancy Klann at [klanncy@aol.com](mailto:klanncy@aol.com).

(Please put "SCWA Entry - Recipe" in the subject line.)

## Members' Showcase: OPEN for your Submissions

Did you know SCWA will publish excerpts of your work in our MEMBERS' SHOWCASE on the SCWA website? Yes, we will.

We want to show your works-in-progress, excerpts from your published book, first lines, favorite paragraphs, and anything you would like to share in any genre, even a page of rants from your journal.

The range of creativity among our members is impressive. Take a look at some of the fine work our members have already shared and then share some of your own.

<https://www.southerncalwriters.org/members-showcase-2/>



Here are the details for the SCWA Showcase:

- Send the work you'd like to showcase, for instance, first lines, an excerpt, an essay or a poem or something else (up to 1500 words). Include your byline (your name, the name of the book it is from, if applicable, and your website).
- All current SCWA members are eligible.
- You retain your copyright.
- Submit for free!
- Send to [scwashowcase@gmail.com](mailto:scwashowcase@gmail.com)

Take a look at the Showcase entries by many of our members. It's a terrific way to get acquainted.

Posting in the Member showcase is always Good News for our newsletter as well as for Facebook. We look forward to waving a flag for your books!

## HIGHLIGHTS: Featured Speaker for May 2021 Catriona McPherson Sewing the Seeds of a Killer Mystery



### **Sewing the Seeds of a Killer Mystery**

Before taking up full-time writing in 2001, Scottish Catriona McPherson gained a Ph. D. in Linguistics from Edinburgh University and worked in academia, banking, and public libraries. In 2010 she brought her unique brand of historical fiction and comedy across the ocean to California where among other groups, she became a national president of Sisters in Crime. She's earned awards for several of her stand-alone novels and her Dandy Gilver (an "eponymous well-to-do female protagonist") series. Ms. McPherson discussed how she stitches and sews the seeds of her ideas together with a few red herrings and then sows them into thriller and killer mysteries.

First, Ms. McPherson discussed **where** to plant clues. Plant a clue among a bunch of details but make the details “match,” that is, be in the same classification of “stuff.” Here is a bad example. An author details a bunch of junk of no value in some litter trays. What stands out too much but should not is “empty Smirnoff vodka bottles.” So, alcohol had been important to a suspect. McPherson said, “This is bad writing. It’s too obvious. Also, don’t use brand names.”

In a good example, McPherson says the clue is *eyeglasses* that were left behind by a suspect among such items as “hand fans, a pack of gum, a paperback novel, a handful of beads, socks, etc.”

Clues may be tucked into humor, for instance in a rant by a motel maid about the mess motel guests leave behind. Tuck clues into an authorial attitude or what had been a sex scene. The comment, “She could have been pretty” indicates the guest had dyed her hair while there.

Other places: Sow a clue into the different descriptions and POV of the same scene as seen by an older person or a child. A clue may also be within another clue. A maid finds insulin hidden in some medicines that belong to a female aristocrat, now in a coma after an insulin dose. The maid is perplexed because their owner is not diabetic. Thus, the female aristocrat has been self-medicating; this fact takes suspicion away from her husband’s being accused of mayhem.

Clues may be hidden in a subplot. During WWII, a detective is watching a suspicious character and doesn’t have time to help some children build a radio set which “has intermittent faults.” But the suspect is a spy and is broadcasting to his own superiors on his own radio.

**Never  
Wrong  
a writer.**

**They get their  
revenge  
in print.**

Next, McPherson illustrated **how** to plant clues by *Presenting*, *Omitting*, and *Signalling*. Presenting: When a detective goes through the clothes a victim had been wearing on the day of the crime, he finds a “small tear in [the] trousers.” Omitting: When going through the miscellany emptied from the victim’s pockets, the detective found that the victim’s ever-present WWII Armistice Flanders Poppy was missing from his jacket. Signaling to a nearby clue: The detective has to follow up on his hunches or an odd factor he notices.

McPherson says although the above **where** and **how** to plant clues are complicated, “*When* is dead easy.” She advises following the Rule of Three. Plant a clue early in the story--“before you know you need that clue.” Plant another in the middle of the plot, and the third at the resolution.



Certain types of clues written in “the early days of mysteries” have now turned into clichés, well-known by “astute mystery readers.” Among those are a “switcheroo with twins” who turn out to be triplets; a death with no body--not dead”; “a suicide note with no beginning and no end”—not really a suicide note; or “a silhouette, a shadow, a hoodie, a baseball cap” that do not relate to the character the reader thinks it did.

McPherson also says to avoid unreliable narration, don't make up information to make the plot work, don't “cheat”—like having something disappear later that the character didn't have in the beginning. However, she says, if you accidentally get some of those wrong, they may not matter if you have “great characters, written enjoyable prose, and conjured a complete world.”

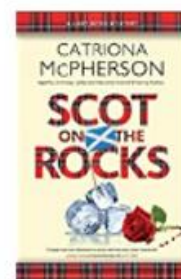
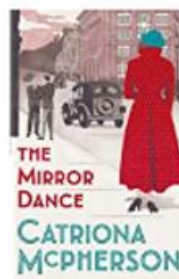
A good red herring [something that seems like a clue but is not] can “arise naturally out of character”—an oddity, perhaps a weird habit that has nothing to do with the mystery. It can also “arise naturally out of setting”—an odd factor but not related to the plot. Another red herring can be part of a sub-plot. Example: Because a woman had special whiteners on her teeth, she ate nothing at a dinner where everyone else was poisoned.

In addition, since all people have secrets to hide, McPherson explained that those secrets can make for effective red herrings. Plant them loosely like Easter eggs. The Rule of Three [for valid clues] also applies to red herrings.

Outside of Catriona McPherson's Dandy Gilver series, some of her popular stand-alones are *A Gingerbread House*; *Stranger at the Gate*, *Go to My Grave*; *House.Tree.Person.* (it's U.K. title is *The Weight of Angels*); *Quiet Neighbors*; *The Child Garden*; *the day she died*; and *as she left it* [lower case on purpose].

Last piece of advice: “Never show a first draft to someone who doesn't matter.”

See also <http://catrionamcpherson.com>.

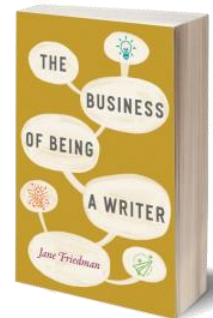


Glenda Brown Rynn, Reporter

## RESOURCES FOR WRITERS

How do you find your way through the ocean of resources available online for writers like us? Check out this sampling of what we have found to be of interest. Links are included so you will be able to investigate further.

**MOST RELIABLE:** [www.janefriedman.com](http://www.janefriedman.com) Jane has a long history in all areas of book publishing and has a solid reputation for being the best go-to for writers of all levels.



Are you without an agent for your book? Look through an extensive list of publishers accepting unagented work, review the guidelines, and consider submitting!

<https://publishedtodeath.blogspot.com/p/publishers-looking-for-authors.html>

- **WRITERS HELPING WRITERS:** [www.writershelpingwriters.net](http://www.writershelpingwriters.net) has many one-of-a-kind tools and resources for writers. Newsletter available.
- ***Authors Publish, A Magazine for Writers.***  
<https://www.authorspublish.com/>

Here's a full list of 32 Themed submission calls for June 2021;

<https://authorspublish.com/32-themed-submissions-calls-for-june-2021/>

- ***Publishing ... and Other Forms of Insanity***, the newsletter for the website **Published to Death**, sends a monthly list of writers' conferences, fee free contests, and agents for all genres who are looking for submissions.

See these lists at: <https://publishedtodeath.blogspot.com/>

Details of what agents are looking for and how to reach them will give you a head start for your submission process. Check the website every month for up-to-date information and resources.

**Note: Always check the agency website and agent bio before submitting. Agents can switch agencies or close their lists, and submission requirements can change.**

## Benefits of SCWA Membership

### WELCOME, WELCOME, WELCOME!

- ❖ Active members receive up to 60% off admission to SCWA meetings.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ Access to professional network of publishing, business consultants and editors.
- ❖ Participation in SCWA marketing platforms on **southerncalwriters.org** and SCWA social media platforms.

## SCWA Board of Directors

President ..... Larry Porricelli  
Vice President..... Steve Jackson  
Vice President of Finances ..... Don Westenhaver  
Vice President of Programming ..... Madeline Margarita  
Vice President - Social Media..... Diana Pardee  
Newsletter Editor..... Pam Sheppard  
Membership Chairman..... Karen Walker  
Scribe and Speaker Reporter..... Glenda Rynn  
At-Large..... Sharon Goldinger

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

**Membership: Karen Walker**

**Email: [Karen.walker@mac.com](mailto:Karen.walker@mac.com)**

**Southern California Writer's Association**

**[www.southerncalwriters.org](http://www.southerncalwriters.org)**

### 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.southerncalwriters.org](http://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.