



Southern California Writers Association

Writers News

www.ocwriter.com

Volume 10, Number 1.....January 2011

January 15 guest speakers:

Antoinette Kuritz with Chris Reich, Laurel Corona and Edward Humes

Writer's Round Table

Please join us for our first event of 2011, where we will be kicking things off a little differently. We have partnered with our good friend and SCWA associate Antoinette Kuritz will be moderating a panel as a roundtable, discussing the art, craft, and business of writing from three perspectives:

Chris Reich

Christopher Reich's most recent novel *Rules of Betrayal* is a masterfully plotted novel that cements Christopher Reich's reputation as one of the most admired espionage thriller writers today. He was born in Tokyo, graduated Georgetown University and the University of Texas at Austin, and has worked in Switzerland before returning to the United States to pursue a career as a novelist. Reich is



See *Writer's Round Table Table*, page 5

Meeting Location:

Claim Jumper Restaurant

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

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



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President's Message

Looking Ahead

As your newly elected president, I would like to use the first President's Spotlight to share a few thoughts for this New Year. Thank you to all of you who put your faith in me to lead this special organization in 2011. I would also like to take this opportunity to share a little about myself; but, because of the limited space in our newsletter, I will refer those interested to my website, www.CharlaSpence.com, for the details about my background.

Last year the Board's focus, under the excellent leadership of Lynnette Baum, was used to update and refine the brand image of the SCWA with a new logo, business cards and brochures. In addition to the image makeover, a great effort was made to make the operations of the SCWA more efficient by creating redundant positions to safeguard the continuity of board vacancies, streamlining communications, developing documentation of positions, cleaning up membership information and revamping the budget.

This year's focus will be on growing the SCWA membership and sharing member's knowledge. Borrowing from Gestalt psychology, and my years in organizational development, I have learned that the wisdom of a group is greater than the sum of the individuals. To do this we will be enhancing tools like our Facebook page to enable information sharing between members. In addition, the President's Spotlight will focus on the business side of the writing since our speakers and conferences are generally more about the craft itself.

I would like to end this first spotlight with a note of sincere gratitude for the outgoing Board and volunteers. These individuals worked tirelessly to serve the SCWA. Every board member and volunteer is important to the success of the organization. Thank you for your dedication.

Charla Spence

President

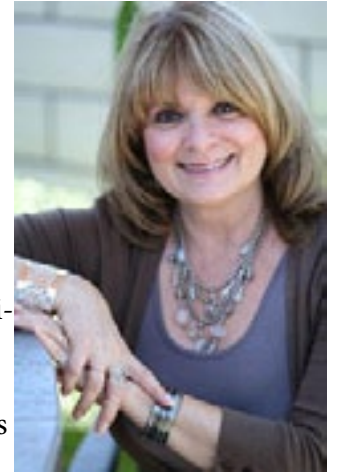


December Highlights:

KATHY PORTER

In a success story as radical as her first science fiction novel, SCWA's Kathy Porter has rocketed from a POD [Print-on-Demand] launch pad into the atmosphere of an independent publisher on her way to two stellar landings: Winner of an Indie Excellence Book Award and a National Best Books Award by USA Book News. Sold out for this region, *Earth's Ultimate Conflict* is only the first of Porter's Gray Guardians Series. Her topic was "Getting Your Published Work into a Bookstore."

Porter's goal in writing *Earth's Ultimate Conflict* was to draw female readers to the male-driven sci-fi/fantasy genre. She features strong women, including the USA President, who confront enormous challenges. When working on this novel, Porter purposely made connections with SCWA speakers and others associated with her genre. As a result, not only did she gain an endorsement by Ray Bradbury but her novel tops the pile on the desk of Dean Devlin, Hollywood director, producer, and writer.



Meanwhile, Porter established an online presence, created flyers, and entered her novel into book awards contests, becoming a winner in two of them! Her colorful, attractive flyers feature a photo of Porter above a bio featuring how she fell in love with science fiction. To the right is a synopsis of *Earth's Ultimate Conflict* under a photo of the novel, followed by eminent endorsements, such as Bradbury's. After winning awards, Porter attached stickers with the awards' names onto the flyers. Next, she designed and ordered 5,000 bookmarks from Willy Walt Printing Services in Florida for \$135 plus taxes and shipping.

Porter's next piece of ammunition was letters of introduction for her trips to the book stores. These "Meet Kathy Porter" sheets are personalized for the Community Relations Managers at Barnes & Noble and the Events Managers at Border's. They include specifics on how and from whom her novel is available and state that copies are returnable. They ask for a meet-and-greet date and pitch how her genre is increasingly popular, how the store will be promoting a local award winner, how her sales background will make her assertive and proactive with potential readers, how her website and online presence will reach out, and that the store will be listed on her book tour. "You won't regret it and your customers will love the book." Her contact info is listed. When face-to-face, Porter says, "When can we schedule a meet-and-greet?"

Before leaving, Porter asks which employee is most likely to read sci-fi. She then endorses a copy for that person and leaves a book-selling sheet for orders plus many flyers and bookmarks, which she also scatters on the sci-fi shelves and in the coffee shop.

On the day of the meet-and-greet (not a signing), Porter has her "elevator speech" and other positive "blurbs" clearly in her mind while carrying a small bag with a change of shoes, protein snacks, and enough personal supplies to maintain herself at the store doorway for hours. She also re-sprinkles the coffee shop and register counters with bookmarks.

At her display table, Porter's literature and setups face both ways, for shoppers coming and going. She even places some displays on the floor for those who avoid her eye contact by looking down. "The managers have

to see you're actively engaging incomers or your books won't stay six weeks on the shelf." If this dynamo must leave her station for the restroom, she tells personnel she'll "be right back." Porter's last advice: "Never leave a store without getting re-scheduled."

(Kathy Porter also planned Darlene Quinn's *Webs of Power* and *Twisted Webs* book tours.)

See www.grayguardians.com and www.booktour.com/author/Kathy_Porter.

Glenda Brown Rynn, reporter

grynn@cox.net

GUESTS ALWAYS WELCOME—\$35 AT DOOR; \$30 WITH RSVP
MEMBERS WHO DO NOT RSVP PAY \$30 AT DOOR
MEMBERS WHO DO RSVP PAY \$25

SCWA Critique Committee

Open to Members of SCWA

Critique Groups, Writers Groups

Do you want to join a critique group? Is your critique group looking for more participants? You might find what you need at <http://www.crayne.com/critique-groups.htm>. If your critique group would like to be listed in the largest webpage of critique groups in southern California, send an email to victory@crayne.com.

Executive Committee

President.....Charla Spence
VP, ProgrammingNeil Young
VP, Membership..... Polly Dunn
Secretary Polly Dunn
TreasurerLarry Porricelli
Publicity DirectorLarry Porricelli
Ambassador.....Lynette Baum
WebmasterTony Stoklosa
Meeting Coordinator.....Sonia Marsh
Newsletter EditorDavid Meacham

Membership Information
membership@ocwriter.com

Meeting Reservations
Sonia Marsh, meeting@ocwriter.com
or message (949) 309-0030

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER: February 2011

Janice Higgins

Janice Higgins is a Community Activist; Motivational Coach and founder of Project R.A.G.E. Release Anger & Guilt for Empowerment, an organization concerned with coaching young people on how to deal with anger and guilt through positive and empowering experiences. Higgins is also the National Author of a series of books, *There Were No Parents Here*, that chronicle the events of her life that lead her to incarceration at the CCWF, the largest women's detention center in the California.



This Month's Speaker (cont.)

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the best-selling author of five other acclaimed novels, *Numbered Account*, *The Runner*, *The First Billion*, *The Devil's Banker*, and *Rules of Deception*.

Laurel Corona

Laurel Corona began her career as a published author in 1999 with a book on Kenya for Lucent Books, and went on to write seventeen Young Adult titles for that company before turning her attention to books for adults. In 2008 she had award-winning debuts with major publishers in both fiction and non-fiction. *The Four Seasons: A Novel of Vivaldi's Venice* (Hyperion/VOICE 2008) won the 2009 Theodor Geisel Award and has been translated into eleven foreign languages. *Until our Last Breath: A Holocaust Story of Love and Partisan Resistance* (St. Martin's Press 2008) received a Christopher Medal. Penguin/Berkley released Laurel's second novel, *Penelope's Daughter*, in October 2010. Her third, *Finding Emilie*, comes out in May 2011 from Simon & Schuster/Gallery Books.



Edward Humes

A journalist and author of ten nonfiction books, Edward Humes received a Pulitzer Prize for his newspaper coverage of the military and a PEN Center USA Award for his book, *No Matter How Loud I Shout: A Year In the Life of Juvenile Court*. His latest books are *Monkey Girl: Evolution, Education, Religion, and the Battle for America's Soul*, which is currently in development at HBO, as well as *Eco Barons: The Dreamers, Schemers & Millionaires Who are Saving Our Planet*. His next book, *Force of Nature*, will be published in spring 2011.



So please join us on Saturday, January 15 when you get three speakers for the price of one!

Neil Young
VP, Programming
programmer@ocwriter.com