

## AUTHOR'S VOICE

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### Also this month, Installation for the 2023-2024 Board of Directors

*Presented by Jonathan Rose*

**Presiding official: District 9 Miami-Dade  
School Board Member Dr. Luisa Santos**



A proud product of Miami-Dade County Public Schools, education advocate, successful entrepreneur and now the youngest ever School Board Member, Luisa Santos represents everything great about Miami Dade County Public Schools.

She moved to Miami from Bogota, Colombia when she was eight. During her junior year of high school, Luisa discovered she was undocumented. College seemed an impossibility, but she persisted — starting her higher education at Miami Dade College and eventually becoming a proud U.S. citizen. Luisa went on to intern with the Undersecretary in President Obama's U.S. Department of Education in Washington, DC while completing her studies in Political Economy and Education at Georgetown University. She knows teachers and school staff can change lives — she saw it first-hand as a 4th grade assistant teacher and leading a mentoring and advocacy literacy program for historically underserved students. Luisa eventually came home to Miami to launch her own business, Lulu's Ice Cream, through which she has reimagined what students can learn in the workplace.

### Incoming Officers:

**President – Mort Laitner**  
**Vice President – Elio Martinez, Jr.**  
**Secretary – Swati Bagga**  
**Treasurer – Evelyn Benson**  
**Director of Membership – Holly White**  
**Director of Conferences – Michelle Maida**  
**Director of Contests – Piper Mahoney**  
**Director of Publications – Don Daniels**  
**Director of Programs – Jonathan Rose**  
**Director of Community Relations**  
**Connie Goodman-Milone**  
**Director of Website – Don Daniels**  
**Director of Public Relations – VACANT**  
**Directors At Large – Ricki Dorn**  
**Gail Tucker-Griffith**  
**Ramesh Nyberg**

## AUTHOR'S VOICE Newsletter of the South Florida Writers Association

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### DEBUNKING THE ORANGE BLOSSOM MYTH, Part II (continued from May AV)

--by Seth H. Bramson

Upon making the trip south, and being met in Lemon City, they were amazed when they found the area lush and green, untouched by the wintry devastation. Being taken by buckboard down the dirt trail to the "center" of what, just a little more than a year later would become a city, they were nearly overwhelmed by the fact that, indeed, everything below the freeze line (after years of research the author has determined that it appears that said freeze line was somewhere in the vicinity of approximately one or two miles north or south of Broward Boulevard in today's Ft. Lauderdale) was verdant and green, and lush with growth, flowers blooming and tropical fruits growing in profusion everywhere they looked.

After surveying the surroundings they then had their porters put together several boxes of truck (produce) and citrus for them to transport back to Mr. Flagler. Along with those boxes (the exact number is unknown today) two citrus tree limbs were wrapped in wet cotton to be shown to the great man upon their return. (It is not known today if the citrus limbs were orange, grapefruit, tangerine, lemon or lime).

Upon their return, Mr. Flagler was astounded by what they had brought back to him. Looking at the lush assortment of flora, HMF asked them if they were certain that this was really what was there. Their answer was succinct: "Sir, you sent us down there to report back to you in a forthright manner. This is what we have seen and the entire area south of the freeze line is rich with growth, untouched by the wintry blasts."

Following a bit more conversation he then wired the Brickells and Mrs. Tuttle: "Madam," he asked, "What is it that you propose?"

Mary and William Brickell had previously offered Mr. Flagler half of their land south of the river but Mrs. Tuttle's offer, via a letter to him, was the icing on the cake: "If you will extend your railroad to the shores of Biscayne Bay and build one of your great hotels," she wrote him, "then in addition to what has already been promised you by Mr. and Mrs. Brickell, I will give you half of my holdings north of the river plus fifty acres for shops and yards."

With that, the deal was finalized, contracts were drawn up and signed by the appropriate parties and their witnesses. The first train, a construction engineers train, arrived on April 15, 1896; the first passenger train arriving one week later, on April 22, 1896, with the first excursion from north Florida arriving on May 11th. On May 15th the first edition of "The Miami Metropolis," Miami's first newspaper, was published on July 28, 1896. Miami, without ever having been a village or a town or an incorporated entity of any kind, sprang into existence as a city. The great and fabled Royal Palm Hotel opened on the north bank of the Miami River on December 31, 1896, NOT in 1897 as some faux historians have stated.

Without embellishment, without making up nonsense, without misinformation and utilizing only documented facts, that is how it happened, not because "she sent him some orange blossoms!"

In finality, the reader is urged to consider this statement: Does it not make a great deal more, if not total sense, that the greatest name in Florida history would extend his railroad because he received thousands of acres of land (the Brickell and Tuttle donations and the lands given by the state along the right-of-way as well as by several private property owners) rather than because some woman sent him some orange blossoms?

It does and it did and it was, especially because the Brickells and Julia Tuttle sent Mr. Flagler several telegrams and letters, but never sent "some orange blossoms." Sadly, even in the face of absolute truth and incontrovertible facts, there are those, particularly several individuals in Miami, who can't seem to help themselves and would rather proffer "alternative facts" and "fake news" rather than face and accept the truth relating to how and why the F E C Railway was extended to what, within a few years, would become known as "the magic city."

**AUTHOR'S VOICE** Newsletter of the South Florida Writers Association

**TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!... HOLLY WHITE, DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP**

Your benefits will expire on June 30, 2023!

Renew Today and again enjoy the many benefits of South Florida Writers Association until June 30, 2024.

See attachment for PayPal instructions: *PAY PAL LOG-IN*

Questions? email: [hollybw1@gmail.com](mailto:hollybw1@gmail.com)

See our website for more information about us! [www.southfloridawriters.org](http://www.southfloridawriters.org)



SOUTH FLORIDA WRITERS ASSOCIATION - BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Educational Programs and Networking at meetings and events.</li> <li>· Display your books at meetings/events</li> <li>· Monthly Writing Contests – enter for only \$5 and we will pay your entry into a national contest of your choosing.</li> <li>· Publication of your work in the monthly newsletter <i>Author's Voice</i></li> <li>· <u>Place Ads</u> for related business in the <i>Author's Voice</i> (discounted member rate)</li> <li>· <u>You</u> can promote your books each month at our regular meetings</li> <li>· <u>Your</u> published books can be listed in "On the Bookshelf" in monthly Authors Voice with sales links</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· You can join a Critique Groups</li> <li>· Sell your books in the SFWA Booth at the Miami Book Fair – No cost to authors</li> <li>· Member discounts for the annual Mango Conference/workshops</li> <li>· Our Authors Showcase Series for <u>Members</u> puts your video on SFWA YouTube channel</li> <li>· Member Readings (Usually February and July)</li> <li>· Financial Grant for <u>Member's</u> Book Publishing (1 to be selected at June meeting)</li> <li>· Enter our lottery for a Financial Grant for Author Marketing (1 to be selected at June meeting)</li> <li>· Leadership opportunities for <u>Members</u> to serve on the Board or join a Committee</li> </ul>

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

1. FREE - MEETING the first Saturday of each month at Pinecrest Library, 5835 S. W. 111 Street, Pinecrest, FL 10:30 am – 12:30 pm. Meet other authors. Member readings. We welcome a speaker each month. Contact Mort Laitner, President – [mortlaitner@bellsouth.net](mailto:mortlaitner@bellsouth.net) or Jonathan Rose – Program Director – [proseguy@aol.com](mailto:proseguy@aol.com)
2. SOUTH FLORIDA WRITERS ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Be part of the decision-making -process. Contact: President Mort Laitner -- [mortlaitner@bellsouth.net](mailto:mortlaitner@bellsouth.net)
3. AUTHORS SHOWCASE SERIES: A Virtual Experience we have slots for a videotaped presentation on You Tube about you as an author, about your book, writing process, etc.  
> Watch videos of our Authors Showcase Series at our SFWA Website. Just click on the link, [South Florida Writers Association - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcl-Zf1T5TsDZTJtvPyb1Pg) or, directly on our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcl-Zf1T5TsDZTJtvPyb1Pg>
4. AUTHORS VOICE: Submit your poems, articles, stories in our monthly newsletter. Submit by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. Contact: Don Daniels, editor: [sfwa.av.editor.2023@gmail.com](mailto:sfwa.av.editor.2023@gmail.com)
5. Enter your book/s and website for "On the Bookshelf" in Authors Voice. Contact: Don Daniels, editor: [sfwa.av.editor.2023@gmail.com](mailto:sfwa.av.editor.2023@gmail.com)
6. MONTHLY WRITING CONTESTS: Each month submissions are awarded for content, etc.. Contact: Piper Mahoney, Contest Chair: Open our website: [www.southfloridawriters.org](http://www.southfloridawriters.org) . At the top of the screen choose "Membership" then

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“Writing Contests”. In the body of the instructions is the link to the Google Form in yellow: <https://forms.gle/hSCwDxuCkwojXEqK7>

7. SOUTH FLORIDA WRITERS ASSOCIATION BOOTH AT THE MIAMI BOOK FAIR: No cost to members! Each November. Opportunity to sell books in our booth at this well-known book fair! (November 2023) Contact: Don Daniels - [d\\_donald@comcast.net](mailto:d_donald@comcast.net)

8. CRITIQUE GROUPS: Meet each month for support from other authors. Please contact group leader: Novels and Short Stores: Group Leader - Don Daniels - phone: 786-877-0136 – [d\\_donald@comcast.net](mailto:d_donald@comcast.net)

Poetry : Group Leader - Steve Liebowitz – phone: 305-595-2338 – [sliebowitz@aol.com](mailto:sliebowitz@aol.com)

Non-Fiction: Group Leader - Peter Luykx – [peterluykx283@gmail.com](mailto:peterluykx283@gmail.com)

9. FINANCIAL GRANTS FOR PUBLISHING AND MARKETING: Enter a drawing and win a grant to publish and/or market your book. (Drawing at June meeting - \$500.00 each of 2 grants) Contact: Evelyn Benson – [evelynbenson2@aol.com](mailto:evelynbenson2@aol.com)

10. ATTEND THE MANGO CONFERENCE AT A REDUCED RATE: Our once yearly all-day conference features exciting speakers and workshops. 2024 : Contact: Michelle Maida – [michelleamaida@gmail.com](mailto:michelleamaida@gmail.com)

## On the Bookshelf

One of our member benefits is for authors to include their books in our Bookshelf. You can check [The Bookshelf](#) in our monthly Authors Voice. If you are a paid-up member but have not yet included your book(s), you are invited to do so. Your listing can hyperlink your name to your webpage, and your book titles to a sales page. To be included please send an email to the Publications Director at [sfwaeditor@gmail.com](mailto:sfwaeditor@gmail.com) with the list of your books and URLs.

<a href="#">ADELE ROYCE</a>	Camera Ready; For Position Only; Princess Smile
ANA CRISTINA HENRIQUEZ	Solentiname, Encountering a Myth; Solentiname, Encuentro con un Mito
BEVERLY MELASI-HAAG	The Monumental Mystery on the National Mall; The Mystery of the Square Well; Bring Your Characters To Life; Diary of a Creative Writer Series, Book #1, Set Great Writing Goals; Diary of a Creative Writer Series Book #2 Build Powerful Plots; Diary of a Creative Writer Series TEACHER EDITION Book #2 Build Powerful Tools
CHRISTIANE LEDAKIS	Wild Sea—Salt of Life
DAVID PEARSON	JFK and Bobby, Arnie and Jack... and David; Upon a Peak in Darien
DAVID ROLLAND	The End Of The Century; Yo-yo; Deadbeat
DEBORAH C. POLLACK	Orville Bulman: An Enchanted Life and Fantastic Legacy; Laura Woodward: The Artist Behind the Innovator Who Developed Palm Beach; Felix de Crano: Forgotten Artist of the Flagler Colony; Visual Art and the Urban Evolution of the New South; Palm Beach Visual Arts; Bad Scarlett: The Extraordinary Life of the Notorious Southern Beauty Marie Boozer; Vintage Miami Beach Glamour: Celebrities and Socialites in the Heyday of Chic
DL HAVLIN	Out of Italy; Turtle Point; Escaping Skeletons; The Bait Man; Blue Water Red Blood; The Cross on Cotton Creek; Bully Route Home; A Place No One Should Go; September of Echo Creek; The Hangin' Oak; Christmas Cookies Mysteries; A Christmas Story Collection
DON DANIELS	<a href="#">Rhyme and Punishment</a>
GAIL TUCKER-GRIFFITH	The Duck Chronicles, Book 1: Ziggy, The Friendliest Duck, October 2015; The Duck Chronicles, Book 2: Ziggy and Zack, Brave and True
GINA IAFRATE	The English Professor; The Girl from the Corn Field; Bestowed by Love and Splendour; Releases from My Soul; The Professor's Daughter;
GLENN PATRON	The Accidental Captain
HOLLY W. SCHWARTZTOL	In A Darkness; Sherry and the Unseen World; What We Tell; Coming Around Again; Along My Garden Path: Poems on the Rhythms of Life
HOWARD CAMNER	The Greatest Novel Ever Written; Hiss;

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JOANNE MITCHELL	Moments; Moments And Then Some; Moments Gentle Hints To Life; Moments When Night <u>Becomes</u> Day; Moments Not Things; Moments No Replacement Found
LAURA SANCHEZ-RAMIREZ	Pasión de Vida: Recetas de Valores y Virtudes en la Familia
LOUIS K. LOWY	Die Laughing; Pedal; Anatomy of a Humachine Book 1; The Second Life of Eddie Coyne
MARTIN C. TAYLOR	Gabriela Mistral's Religious Sensibility; Language into Language: Cultural, Legal and Linguistic Issues for Interpreters and Translators; Gabriela Mistral's Struggle with God and Man; Sensibilidad Religiosa de Gabriela Mistral.
MARY GREENWOOD	How to Negotiate Like a Pro; How to Resolve Anything, Anywhere, Anytime" (Third Edition); How to Meditate Like a Pro; How to Interview Like a Pro
MAXINE SCHNALL	What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Stronger- Turning Bad Breaks Into Blessings; Paris to Die For; Spy in a Little Black Dress
<a href="#">MORT LAITNER</a>	A Hebraic Obsession; Healthy Stories; A Compilation of Short Stories & Poems on Health; The Greatest Gift; Award Winning Stories Filled with Life Lessons; The Hanukkah Bunny
PETER LUYKX	The Patchwork Human: Two Billion Years of Evolution
<a href="#">RAMESH NYBERG</a>	<a href="#">The Ten Must-Haves to be a Great Detective:</a>
RICKI DORN	Strands of Rhyme: Poems from the Real World; Joy of Jewish Holidays in Rhyme; Poetry: My First Language; Monica's Hannukah
RITA BARON MORRISSEY	As Close as My Pillow; Footsteps into The Past; Wind and Whispers
ROBERT JACOBBER	How to Live to be 100 and Love it!; Holistic Living
SARA SHAW	Two Sisters and The Four Leaf Clover
SETH BRAMSON	Miami, The Magic City
STEVE LIEBOWITZ	The New Professionalism; Devorah: The Covenant and The Scrolls, Book I; Saul: First King (Book Two of The Covenant and The Scrolls); David: The Usurper, (Book Three of The Covenant and The Scrolls)
STEVE LIEBOWITZ, JONATHAN ROSE AND HOLLY WHITE	Three Friends: A Modern Tale of Sex and Spirituality
STEVE WETSTEIN	Just Being Alive: A Memoir
ULRICH MERTEN	Forgotten Voices: The Expulsion of the Germans from Eastern Europe after World War II; Voices from the Gulag: The Oppression of the German Minority in the Soviet Union; The Gulag in East Germany: Soviet Special Camps, 1945-1950
VIOLET DE LUNA	WALKING EACH OTHER HOME

## AUTHOR'S VOICE Newsletter of the South Florida Writers Association

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### MESSAGE FROM YOUR AUTHOR'S VOICE EDITOR AND WEBMASTER – DON DANIELS



First, I want to thank you for your vote of confidence in me. I've held several other positions on the Board before, but never had the huge responsibility of being the editor of our newsletter.

As I said last month, I, and all of us on the Board, are continually looking for ways to serve you better. At the last Board meeting, Mort suggested that the "On the Bookshelf" section would be better if instead of simply listing our members' names with their books in print, the members' names could be hyperlinked to their websites, for those who have

websites.

I thought this was a great idea, and I found that because that feature is essentially just an Excel spreadsheet with the member's name in one cell and the book title(s) in the adjacent cell, I can indeed make either cell a hyperlink to a webpage. I have started to do that. You'll see some that are hyperlinked in this issue. But I find I can only hyperlink the cell, not the individual book titles, to a URL. If you have more than one title, I can link to a single site. If it's Amazon or Goodreads, or some other site, that site could mention any other titles you've published. All I need to do this, is for those of you who are listed to send me the links you want me to use.

This is very important for those members who actually care about selling their books (don't laugh. Some of us don't really care about the sales side. We write and publish because *we are writers, not businesspeople*). because, since book titles cannot be copyrighted, a search on Amazon for your title will likely bring up many books with the same (or similar) titles. And if they search by your name... Well, your name isn't copyrightable either. If it's a common kind of name, like mine, can be a very frustrating dig. I tried looking for my own name on Amazon Books, and there are several other authors with my name who came first, and most weren't even exact matches. I tried putting my name in quotes, but my book still wasn't found, and most of the 20 results their algorithm found weren't even books. The rest weren't books at all; they were gut health or skin care products. Go figure.

My book title is "Rhyme and *Punishment*" and when I searched Amazon for that, it was the third book with that title, and that was probably only because I've searched for it before. The algorithm also found Dostoevsky's book and others even though their books were all called "Crime and Punishment," and a few others called "Grime and Punishment."

This is why, if you want me to hyperlink your "On the Bookshelf" entry to a URL where someone can actually buy *your* book, you need to send *your* URL to me at [sfwa.editor.av.2023@gmail.com](mailto:sfwa.editor.av.2023@gmail.com). Put "OTB Link" in the subject line. Remember, our newsletter doesn't just go out to our members, but also many contacts. We give out hundreds of them at the Book Fair. And while the hyperlink is not in a print copy, our web address is, and there are copies of the newsletter on the website. And like I said last month, I want to synergize the newsletter with the website.



# AUTHOR'S VOICE Newsletter of the South Florida Writers Association

The South Florida Writers Association publishes the AUTHOR'S VOICE monthly. The official publication of SFWA carries authorized notices and articles regarding activities and interests of the organization but does not assume responsibility for the opinions of authors' articles, stories, or other materials.

AV is sent via email to all South Florida Writers Association contacts. Printed editions are available at the monthly meetings upon request.

EDITOR  
Don Daniels

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE  
Connie Goodman-Milone  
Holly Schwartzol  
Holly White

SUBMISSIONS/COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS CONTACT  
sfwa.av.editor.2023@gmail.com

The Author's Voice accepts submissions by members via email. Deadline is the 15th of each month for publication the following month on a space available basis, subject to editing, content, and other editorial considerations.

AV's mission is to inform and enlighten writers with news, articles, and current affairs related to writing, as well as members' accolades. Letters to the editor are also appreciated.

SOUTH FLORIDA WRITERS ASSOCIATION  
P.O. BOX 56-2652 Miami, FL 33256

### Login information for meeting:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83899718493>

Meeting ID: 838 9971 8493

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,83899718493# US  
(Germantown)

+13126266799,,83899718493# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 838 9971 8493

Find your local



## AUTHOR'S VOICE Newsletter of the South Florida Writers Association

### The Contest Corner

#### CONTEST CORNER

SFWA members with an updated membership are encouraged to enter the monthly writing contest in the following genres:

- Fiction - short stories
- Fiction - single novel chapters
- Poetry
- Nonfiction - single book chapters
- Essays
- Articles
- Memoirs

Please submit contest entries using the form linked here or on the website.

<https://forms.gle/hSCwDxuCkwojXEgK7>

Contest Director, via email  
at [piperamahoney@gmail.com](mailto:piperamahoney@gmail.com).

Entry fees can be paid online by credit card or PayPal through the SFWA website: [www.southfloridawriters.org](http://www.southfloridawriters.org). They can also be mailed to the SFWA by check or money order:

P. O. Box 56-2652, Miami, FL, 33256.

The fees are:

- One work = \$3.00
- Two works = \$5.00
- Three works = \$7.00
- Submissions over 10 pages long = \$5.00 each (maximum 20 pages)

Winners will be announced and awarded a certificate at each SFWA monthly meeting. First place winner can claim \$20 for submission of the winning work to any contest.

**For the next contests the due date for entries is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, to be announced the following month. For example, January entries will be accepted through January 15<sup>th</sup>. Winners will be announced at the February meeting and published in the March Author's Voice.**

### Monthly Writing Contests

Calling all SFWA Members!  
We accept works from all genres: Poems, haiku, fiction, memoirs, personal essays, or excerpts of a book. Please submit in MSWord or PDF, in New Times Roman 12-pt.

Submissions must be received no later than one week prior to our monthly meeting. Winners will be announced at the meeting and will be presented with a beautiful certificate.

First place winner may also claim a prize of up to \$20 toward the entry fee for submission of the winning work to a national contest of the author's choosing. Winner must show the contest director the contest submission form and guidelines and claim the \$20 from the treasurer within 60 days of award date.

Submission fees:  
One article \$3, two articles \$5, and three articles \$7.

Fee is \$5 for any piece of more than 10 pages. All entry fees are non-refundable.

#### Contest Topics:

June: "You Can't Mean That!"

July: Blind Date

August: A Century Ago

Because the May Contest deadline is after the publication deadline for the newsletter, the May Winners had not yet been announced by the publication deadline.

They will be posted on the website as soon as we have them.



## AUTHOR'S VOICE Newsletter of the South Florida Writers Association

### The 2022-23 Board members are:

<u>CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTOR POSITIONS</u>	<u>MEMBERS</u>
President	Mort Laitner <a href="mailto:mortlaitner@bellsouth.net">mortlaitner@bellsouth.net</a>
Vice President	<a href="mailto:emartinez@etlaw.com">Elio Martinez</a> <a href="mailto:emartinez@etlaw.com">emartinez@etlaw.com</a>
Secretary	<a href="mailto:bagga.dypb@gmail.com">Swati Bagga</a> <a href="mailto:bagga.dypb@gmail.com">bagga.dypb@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	<a href="mailto:Evelynbenson2@aol.com">Evelyn Benson</a> <a href="mailto:Evelynbenson2@aol.com">Evelynbenson2@aol.com</a>
Director – Programs	Jonathan Rose <a href="mailto:proseguy@aol.com">proseguy@aol.com</a>
Director - Membership	<a href="mailto:hollybw1@gmail.com">Holly White</a> <a href="mailto:hollybw1@gmail.com">hollybw1@gmail.com</a>
Director – Public Relations	<a href="#">Vacant</a>
Director – Community Relations	Connie Goodman-Milone <a href="mailto:cgmilone@gmail.com">cgmilone@gmail.com</a>
Director – Publications	<a href="mailto:Sfwa.av.editor.2023@gmail.com">Don Daniels</a> <a href="mailto:Sfwa.av.editor.2023@gmail.com">Sfwa.av.editor.2023@gmail.com</a>
Director – Conference/Special Events	<a href="mailto:abbasone@att.net">Ricki Dorn</a> <a href="mailto:abbasone@att.net">abbasone@att.net</a>
Director - Website	<a href="mailto:D_donald@comcast.net">Don Daniels</a> <a href="mailto:D_donald@comcast.net">D_donald@comcast.net</a>
Director – Contests	Piper Mahoney <a href="mailto:piperamahoney@gmail.com">piperamahoney@gmail.com</a>
Director at Large	Peter Luykx <a href="mailto:pluykx283@gmail.com">pluykx283@gmail.com</a>
Director at Large	Vacant
Director at Large	Vacant

#### **KUDOS TO OUR MEMBER HOWARD CAMNER- LITERALLY OUT OF THIS WORLD POETRY**

When Emerson requested my papers and opened the Howard Camner Collection in their permanent archives I thought that that was a great topper for a half-century writing career that has garnished me lots of accolades and an absolute fortune...well...maybe not a fortune. I figured my literary legacy was intact. I could now take it easy and watch "Gunsmoke" and eat chocolate ice-cream with peanut butter. I had, in essence, conquered Earth. But something else was brewing which I didn't know about until I knew about it. In 2024, to coincide with the demise of this country, six of my poems will be rocketing to the moon as part of the Polaris Collection aboard Griffin Mission 1. Those six poems are "Saint Christina the Astonishing", "Stuck", "Broad on the Beach", "In Pursuit of Mr. Monet's Muse", "Wearing Shoes on Barefoot Beach", and "Self-Portrait as Saint Dennis". They may be in the shadows of the internet somewhere for reading, I don't know. What I do know is that I want to tip my hat to the artistic brilliance of Richard Frost for his rendering of Mr. Monet that accompanies that poem, to stained-glass maven Bryan Willette for his terrific rendering of Saint Dennis, and to amazing publisher Didi Menendez. My sincere hope is that those six poems spark an alien invasion the likes of which no sci-fi movie has ever captured, because enough is enough. The best scenario would be the arrival of GORT who activates to squash any hint of violence. He'd be working nonstop in this country. Alright. Go back to what you were doing.  
Not that.

# AUTHOR'S VOICE

Newsletter of the South Florida Writers Association

## Who Said That?

Last Month's Answers:

A-4-d ;B-5-a;C-1-e; D-2-c; E-3-b



Author A

(1)  
"I'm writing a first draft and reminding myself that I'm simply shoveling sand into a box so that later I can build castles."

[a]  
Jorge Luis Borges



Author B

(2)  
I can shake off everything as I write; my sorrows disappear, my courage is reborn."

[b]  
Douglas Adams



Author C

(3)  
"A writer - and, I believe, generally all persons - must think that whatever happens to him or her is a resource. All things have been given to us for a purpose, and an artist must feel this more intensely. All that happens to us, including our humiliations, our misfortunes, our embarrassments, all is given to us as raw material, as clay, so that we may shape our art."

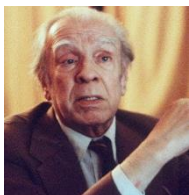
[c]  
Shannon Hale



Author D

(4)  
"I love deadlines. I love the whooshing noise they make as they go by."

[d]  
Oscar Wilde



Author E

(5)  
"In old days books were written by men of letters and read by the public. Nowadays books are written by the public and read by nobody."

[e]  
Anne Frank

## AUTHOR'S VOICE Newsletter of the South Florida Writers Association

A Personal Appreciation of Jorge Luis Borges  
 By Dr. Martin C. Taylor



From the nineteen-twenties to the mid-eighties Borges—his surname suffices—was the most recognized Argentine writer. His *Obras completas* consist of some 1,100 pages of poetry, short stories, and essays. Oddly, my Spanish and Spanish-American literature instructors at NYU and at UCLA scarcely mentioned him. Only in my position as assistant professor at the University of Michigan did Borges come to the fore. My illustrious senior colleague, Professor Enrique Anderson Imbert, also from Argentina and a short story writer with similar influences--Poe, Wells, Wilde, Kafka, and G.K. Chesterton--called him to my attention. I caught on quickly.

In a visit to Buenos Aires, Borges invited me to the Biblioteca Nacional where he served as director. Hoping to learn more, I had prepared a series of questions to show off my recently acquired knowledge and also wanted to mention an article that I was preparing about one of his stories. I hardly got in a word. Borges veered immediately off on comments about North American and English literature and philosophy. Henry James, Oscar Wilde, Shakespeare, and dozens of other writers took shape as he displayed his erudition.

He sat erect, immobile, staring straight ahead and talked. Blinded in 1938 from an infection in a head wound, only his mouth and opaque eyes moved. His eyes danced in their orbits while authors, titles, and dates danced from his lips. After an hour, he motioned that it was over and bade me farewell. I departed dizzied by his monologue of erudition and eloquence.



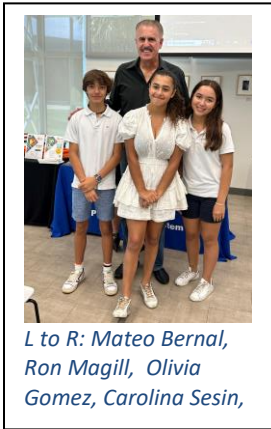
Awed and inspired, I published in *La Revista Nacional de Literatura* of Caracas an article titled "La mitificación borgeana" ("Borgesian Mythification") based on Borges's story "El Evangelio según Marcos" ("The Gospel According to Mark"), from his book *El informe de Brodie (Brodie's Report)*. Translator Andrew Hurley offers a telling phrase: "[Espinosa's] father, like all the gentlemen of his day, a free-thinker, had instructed [him] in the doctrines of Herbert Spencer...". This illustrates succinctly Borges's style and erudition. He always imbues and interlaces his fiction with esoteric non-fictional references, in this case Spencer, the English philosopher of Evolutionary Positivism.

Before and after my article, hundreds of scholars wrote about Borges's Gaucho themes, his detective/detection stories, and his knowledge of national and European cultures. As for me, I hastened to catch up via an interview and an article. Following is a list of his awards. Some of the institutions that invited Borges to lecture: UCLA, Michigan State, and Harvard. He received an honorary degree from Universidad de Los Andes of Bogota and from Columbia University. From 1961 to 1983, Borges merited awards from the International Publishers, the American Academy of Arts & Letters, and from Spain the Cervantes Prize. Had he lived longer he might have placed first, not third—on the short list--for The Nobel Prize.

## Community Relations Column

By Connie Goodman-Milone

### JUNIOR ORANGE BOWL CREATIVE WRITING FIRST PLACE ESSAY AND AWARDS EVENT

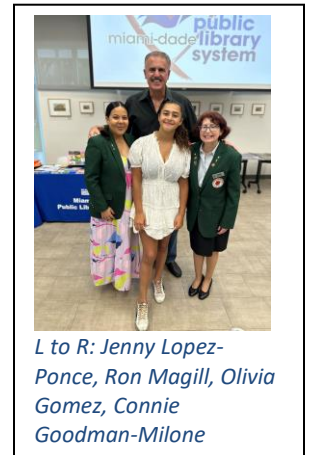


L to R: Mateo Bernal,  
Ron Magill, Olivia  
Gomez, Carolina Sesin,

The South Florida Writers Association is proud to present the First Place winning Junior Orange Bowl Creative Writing essay in the June *Author's Voice*. The theme for the 35<sup>th</sup> annual Creative Writing Contest was "Write a Story from the Perspective of an Animal." The Creative Writing Competition was led by Chair Jenny Lopez-Ponce. SFWA is a co-sponsor of this literary event. We received a good number of submissions from eighth graders in South Florida. **Olivia Gomez** from Ransom Everglades is our First Place winner. Her winning teacher is **Ms. Jody Salzinger**.

The awards ceremony was held on March 11 at the Westchester Library Health & Wellness Information Center. **Ron Magill**, Communications Director and Wildlife Ambassador at Zoo Miami, was our guest speaker. Winners were announced at the awards event. The event was highlighted by wildlife photos from the Junior Orange Bowl Photography Competition awards ceremony that followed. Olivia Gomez was there to read her powerful essay.

We thank Mitchell Kaplan and Books & Books for the gift cards. Our gratitude to Richard Blanco for his donation to the Creative Writing Contest. Thank you to Miami Lit for your support for these young writers. Special thanks to Pablo Lopez, Manager at the Westchester Regional Library Health & Wellness Information Center, for hosting the awards ceremony.



L to R: Jenny Lopez-  
Ponce, Ron Magill, Olivia  
Gomez, Connie  
Goodman-Milone

### A Change for the Worst By Olivia Gomez

The sound of strident chirping and cracking intensifies as I slip away from the darkness of sleep and into the real world. I look at the remains of my egg as I am finally released from my miniature coffin and into the fresh, salty beach air. Even though I was freed from my shell, I was compacted in the sand by copious baby hawksbill turtles like me, yet I have never felt freer. I wanted to stay in my safe, complacent position in the cushion-like sand, unlike my relatives who were already trying to make their way out of the hole. Watching them, a perturbing feeling washed over me. In my short life span, this seemed to me as its culmination. What motivated them to leave this serenity? But I had to make a choice, one that would dictate the rest of my life.

Dubiously, I crawled out of the hole and onto the flat, sand beach in an aggregation of my brothers and sisters. A faint squeal comes from the right as one baby is lifted off the ground by a seagull. I was aghast at the sight, raising my head to follow it into the air. My eyes land on the covey of birds above my head. The inclination to survive overcame me. I felt like a doll with no control over my body. My pace changed to go as rapidly as my flippers would take me. The water was within reach as I closed my eyes and let my body take me to safety.

A cooling sense fell upon me as I was surrounded by a protective layer of water, safe from my attackers. My eyes opened to take in my new home, the Indian Ocean. I was still immured by turtles, who were swimming vigorously away from the battlefield we just crossed. For 48 consecutive hours, I practiced the same swimming motion until I eventually arrived in the deep sea, protected from the majority of my predators, or so my naive self believed.

I have lived peacefully in the endless ocean. It has become my perfect home. I have never regretted my decision to leave that sand whole since the day I set my shell here. To me, it was a utopian place, until I noticed a yarn barrier cloud

(continued next page)

## AUTHOR'S VOICE Newsletter of the South Florida Writers Association

my vision, and I started to swim upward. Deja vu hit me as I remembered what it felt like to be attacked by those birds. Yet, in this instance, there was no escape, unlike how the ocean was my safe haven. I was hoisted out of the salty sea and onto a large boat. My breath was restricted by some netting around my neck. With my last breaths, I tossed and turned feeling hopeless. Black figures blocked the sunlight as they loomed over me seeing what pain they have inflicted. Now, I wish I stayed in my force field of sand forever. I made a change for the worst that cost me my life.

### GAIL TUCKER-GRIFFITH PRESENTS SFWA AWARDS TO NWSA WINNERS

*By Gail Tucker-Griffith*

I had the pleasure on May 24 to present two book awards from South Florida Writers Association at New World School of the Arts H.S. Annual Awards Ceremony. It was doubly enjoyable for me as I returned "home" to where I had taught for 25 years, where I met a former student that evening who is now Principal Dr. Contessa Bryant!

In keeping with the objective of SFWA to encourage and support the efforts of writers of all ages and genres, our Board voted to provide a year's membership in SFWA to each awardee. The ambiance was one of encouragement and celebration of the students' intellectual and artistic talent, and active collaboration that continues to be the hallmark of this internationally recognized magnet school, a jewel in the crown of the Miami-Dade Public School System.



*Dr. Gail Tucker-Griffith at podium*

The book selected for the first award was *The Paintings of J.O.J.*

*Frost: An American Story*. It is a biographical and artistic study of the pre-Civil War "self-taught" painter, documenting life in his hometown, Marblehead, Massachusetts. His artworks used skilled visualization of life in early America/New England, and the records of his works that he kept demonstrate for all artists the importance of detailing and maintaining creative accounts of their completed pieces for posterity. Author Bethe Lee Moulton's gift of a copy of her book for this book award, after speaking at the Mango Conference in 2022, is greatly appreciated. She graciously autographed the book as well. This book was awarded to "a Visual Arts student who shows particular skill in recording history/historic events in/by their work." The recipient is Selah Brown, a senior at New World who will graduate in just a few days.



*Dr. Gail Tucker-Griffith presents Selah Brown with her award.*

The second book award from SFWA is an autobiographical exposition of the development of the art of writing. In it, the author describes the journey he engaged in to become a world-class writer. *Writing, A Memoir of the Craft*, by Stephen King, is a tour de force description of his life, with its many sharp-edged emotional and physical challenges, and how that was intertwined in the development of his art. A favorite quote from King's book says, "Life isn't a support system for art. It's the other way around." This book was awarded to "a student who was singled out as a skilled writer by her teachers. Her writing has been deemed exceptional both linguistically and in terms of her maturity as a wordsmith." The recipient shared, that evening, that it was her writings on the different ways that people respond to grief that was recognized by her teachers.

The winning student was Annette Perez, a rising senior at NWSA who happens to also be a visual artist at the school.

Dr. Gail Tucker, SFWA Director-At-Large shares the stage with the two recipients for a moment following the presentation.

In her closing remarks, Dr. Bryant thanked SFWA for celebrating the talents of the New World students who won the Book Awards we sponsored there this year. She went on to invite us to participate again in 2024!



*Dr. Gail Tucker-Griffith presents Annette Perez with her award.*



## AUTHOR'S VOICE Newsletter of the South Florida Writers Association

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### The Son Of A Sharecropper

By Morton Laitner



I first learned about sharecroppers in my 7th grade, US history class. I remembered studying about these poor Southerners, black and white, who after the Civil War contractually bound themselves to the plantations they worked on. The landowners allowed the sharecroppers to rent their land in exchange for a portion of the crop. "How large of a cut did the landowners take?" I wondered. I never found out the answer. What I did find out was that about two thirds of all sharecroppers were White and only one third Black. In my history text books, I saw photographs of these poor, hungry, deprived sharecroppers living in

ramshackle shotgun houses.

I thought, "Their lives must be unbearable. They're fighting droughts, hurricanes, hail storms, frost, insects and vermin that are all trying to destroy their crops. And the Black sharecroppers also had to fight off racism."

And as a 13-year-old Yankee with liberal roots, I felt sorry for these downtrodden souls. But it took another 60 years for me to meet and talk to the son of a sharecropper.

I met Jim, in 2023, at the Santiago, Chile's Sheraton Hotel. After ordering a bucket of Coors, we chit-chatted by the pool in the shade of a blue and yellow umbrella.

When I looked at Jim, I saw a big gregarious guy, over six feet tall, with a beer belly, a bald head and a good-old-boy North Carolina accent. I thought, "This guy is a friendly, big-hearted dude, who loves talking, listening and imbibing."

So after talking about the basics: jobs, family, education and football, I asked, "Jim, what was it like to grow up in the South in the 50s?"

"Mort, I'm going to start my story sometime around 1954, when I was seven years old. I lived in rural NC but only about three miles from the city of Fayetteville—it may as well have been 100 miles because I lived the same way my parents had lived, and my grandparents had lived. I was frozen in time, living like people did during the depression years.

To say my family was poor would be the ultimate understatement."

"Jim, how large was your family?"

"Well, there was my dad, Robert, my mom, Becky, my sister, Elaine, me James, and my younger brothers, Kenny and Rocky."

"With that big of a family, how did they make ends meet?"

"Dad worked at a poultry processing plant and made \$35 a week. Our rent was \$30 a month, the electric bill was \$1 or 2 a month. My mama had a strict budget of \$15 a week for groceries. She made a list each week and my dad dropped it off on his way to work at Jeff's Place, a small grocery store on the way into Fayetteville. He picked up the groceries on his way home in the evening.

"Do you remember the items on those lists?"

"Yup, the groceries consisted of 25 pounds of Robin Hood flour, Blue Plate Peanut Butter, jelly, mayonnaise, 6-8 pounds of pinto beans or other dry beans, lard, canned vegetables, fatback meat, a box of Chef Boyardee Spaghetti, Sugar, Lipton Tea, a head of cabbage, potatoes, and tobacco products for Mom and Dad. We ate cereal for breakfast, but we never had whole milk—always made it from dry powder. Pinto beans and biscuits several times a week, cabbage and corn bread, potato salad and biscuits, and the Chef Boyardee Spaghetti occasionally. I remember always seeing a green ticket with the groceries, that meant we had bought the groceries on credit. My dad never had enough money to pay cash so everything he bought was paid by making payments.

We had an ice box next to the stove where my mom kept margarine and little else because the ice melted rapidly. Fridays were special because the ice man came on Friday morning. My mama would chip off some ice with an ice pick from a 25-pound block, and we'd have iced tea or iced water with our supper. The fish man came on Friday afternoon and if mama had the money, she bought some fish, and we'd have fried fish and coleslaw for supper. Sundays, we had fried chicken with vegetables for dinner. Dinner was the noon meal back then and the evening meal was supper. We got most of our protein from beans and peanut butter."



## AUTHOR'S VOICE Newsletter of the South Florida Writers Association

### A POET'S OFFERING

By Jo Christine Ledakis

A patchwork of treasures  
I offer you my love  
a quilt of delights  
crocheted from strings of words  
syllables sewn together  
woven of notes  
from the song of life

A blackbird's solo at dusk  
frogs croaking in the night  
the sleepy snore of a sow  
pink piglets lined up at her tits  
reeds rustling in the wind  
waves leisurely lapping  
the high C on a Stradivarius

The aroma of Arabica  
hovering over buttered toast  
lavender's fragrant freshness  
poured from a moss-green flask  
the scent of earth after a gentle rain  
the mystery of incense wafting  
through a chapel on a cliff by the sea

Pale pebbles glistening  
on a deserted autumn beach  
the yearning yellow of a grapefruit  
a dot of royal blue from a fresco  
in a slowly sinking palazzo  
moon light mirrored in a window  
like the golden eye of a toad  
The caress of a pelican's feather  
the velvet of a violet  
the cool crispness of rose quartz  
snowflakes melting on the tip of the tongue  
sparks flying from Burning Man's fire  
a ballerina's torn shoe laces  
a tear in the eye of a stranger

### A Poet's offering (Continued)

Air roots reaching the ground  
for a foothold of belonging  
an anchor of awareness  
a silver thread of meaning  
in the mosaic of beauty  
where twinned souls dance  
their minuet of love

From a storyteller's water pipe  
what I longed for and found  
offered on the palms of my hands—  
to gladden your heart my love  
smooth your brow cajole a smile:  
you are my blessing  
at the edge of the night.

### TELEMARKETERS by Don Daniels

Those telemarketers called back last night.  
Why can't those people just leave me alone?  
Like pop-up windows, but they're on my phone!  
A modern 21<sup>st</sup> century blight!  
Uncanny, how they always time their call  
To interrupt me at my dinner hour  
Or else they get me while I'm in the shower.  
Or when writing; I can't concentrate at all.  
The Do-Not-Call list was flawed from the start.  
It set surveys and charities apart.  
Efficient telemarketers soon found  
Ev'ry loopnole and ev'ry workaround.  
I know they have to make a living, too.  
Can't they just get a job like me or you?

## AUTHOR'S VOICE Newsletter of the South Florida Writers Association

### Editor's Note:

#### **This was supposed to be May's President's Message; Delayed owing to Election coverage**

A Tale of Action and Inaction by Morton Laitner

#### Action

At 2:00 in the morning, I lay in bed unable to sleep, thinking about my friend and fellow writer. Louis was dying and I wanted to honor him. And then it hit me, as President of the SFWA, I should write a proclamation declaring February 16, 2023 Louis K. Lowy Day. I sat down in front of my desktop, started typing and I thought, "Am I starting a tradition? I hope so." So here's what I wrote:

#### **South Florida Writers Association's Proclamation**

##### **Declaring February 16th, 2023 Louis K. Lowy Day**

**WHEREAS**, Louis K. Lowy is an American writing treasure, and

**WHEREAS**, Louis K. Lowy has published five outstanding novels: *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in America*, *To Dream: Anatomy of a Humachine*, *Die Laughing*, *The Second Life of Eddie Coyne*, and *Pedal*, and

**WHEREAS**, Louis K. Lowy is the recipient of the Florida Individual Artist Award, and

**WHEREAS**, Louis K. Lowy has received a MFA in creative writing from Florida International University, and

**WHEREAS**, Louis K. Lowy writings have appeared in numerous publications including Coral Living Magazine, New Plains Review, The Florida Book Review, Ethereal Tales, The Chaffey Review and The MacGuffin Magazine, and

**WHEREAS**, Louis K. Lowy is a loyal and long term member of the South Florida Writers Association

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it resolved that I, Mort Laitner, President of the South Florida Writers Association on behalf of the Board of Directors, do hereby proclaim February 16th, 2023 Louis K. Lowy Day.

#### Inaction

I sat in the funeral parlor listening to the loving eulogies about my friend and fellow writer Louis K. Lowy. And I thought, "Why didn't I write one?"

Too busy or too lazy or both and then I kicked myself. As I sat, cried and thought, I knew I had the kernel of a story floating in my synapse sea. Yes, the title of one of Louis' books: *Die Laughing*. And as it so often happens, six hours after the funeral, I had my eulogy.

So here it is:

As Louis, a Jew, reaches the pearly gates, he breathes a sigh of relief, thinking, "It's G-d and not Saint Peter. I got a chance at getting in."

G-d: Son, why should I let you pass through my gates and into my kingdom?

Louis: Well G-d, I've been a loving father, a good husband and a lover of dogs. I've played a pretty mean guitar; my music made the people smile. I've saved the lives of some of your flock as a firefighter and my novels made my readers think.

G-d: I've read your books and I was wondering about the title of one of them.

Louis: Which one?

G-d: "*Die Laughing*"

Louis: Why that one?

G-d: Well, after all that I have put you and your family through in the last year, would you change the title of that book?

Louis: Yup. Now I'd call it, "*Die Crying*"

G-d with a tear in his eye, stood up and embraced Louis. "Son, welcome to heaven. We always need a few more good writers up here."