



## Mendocino Coast Writers Conference News & Updates

April 2009

Connecting Writers to Community for 20 Years

### UPCOMING EVENT

#### Join Us at the Theater

One of the ways we fund scholarships for talented, local writers who might not otherwise be able to attend our conference is our second annual theater night. Since we are all feeling a tad strapped, note the bargain price.

Delectable appetizers, fine local wines, and fabulous desserts! All this plus the humorous and moving play "Tuesdays with Morrie" can be yours at the Mendocino Theater, Thursday, April 30, 7:00 pm, at a fund-raiser hosted by the Mendocino Coast Writers Conference ("Are you people caterers?" people asked last year at this event).

Tickets are \$30 each (\$21.50 tax-deductible) and all monies go to the Conference's financial aid fund, which helps talented but struggling local writers.

"We see this event as an opportunity for artists and writers to support fellow artists, while enjoying an evening of amazing theater and food. Do not eat before you come," says conference director, Charlotte Gullick.

To reserve tickets, which will be held at the door, call Charlotte at 962-2606 ext. 2167 or email [director@mcwc.org](mailto:director@mcwc.org).

### 2009 CONFERENCE PLANS

Brochures have been mailed and registrations are rolling in. Don't miss out; send yours in soon. A few points to note about this year's conference:

**Food:** In these times of economic downturn, it's worth remembering that your MCWC conference fee includes:

- \* Continental breakfast all four mornings, Thursday through Sunday.
- \* Three delicious lunches, Thursday through Saturday
- \* A Thursday reception featuring outstanding Mendocino County wines and hors d'oeuvres prepared by the conference staff. Many participants don't bother with dinner after this feast.
- \* A Saturday gala dinner with more great local wine.

**Keynote Events:** Every night of the conference will include special events:

\* Thursday (at the reception): After the introduction of Marlis Broadhead, founder of the conference 20 years ago, poet Ellen Bass will speak on "The Essential Role of Discovery in Poetry, Fiction and Nonfiction."

\* Friday (at Cotton Auditorium in Fort Bragg): In this public event, memoirist and noted gang intervention specialist Luis J. Rodriguez will speak on "Creating Community."

\* Saturday (at the dinner): The keynote speaker will be fiction writer Benjamin Percy.

**Workshops:** As requested, we've added another half hour to the workshop schedule each morning to give you more time with your workshop leader. To help you choose, here are two more workshop descriptions:

**Benjamin Percy:** "The Refiner's Fire: Short Fiction"

This workshop will provide a forum for the writer to explore the conventions of short fiction. Student manuscripts will be constructively discussed with the hopes of refining characterization, structure, scene, voice, imagery, pacing, lyricism, point of view, metaphor, and so on. This is not a lecture course, but a round-table seminar, and everyone will be expected to participate in class discussion and provide critical feedback. There will be in-class exercises and craft lessons. Some time will also be allotted to the "business" of creative writing. By the end of the conference, hopefully everyone will have left the workshop as if through a refiner's fire, a better, stronger, cleaner writer.

**Micheline Aharonian Marcom:** "Writing Fiction: The Ecstasy of Influence"

In our workshop students will be asked to read a short piece of fiction before each class, either a short story or a novel excerpt, so that we can bring outside work into our discussion of writing fiction. Please read student work before the workshop and write three comments of what you noticed is working, where your attention was drawn in, where it feels like there is "energy" in the piece.

For more workshop details and links to the presenters' websites, please check <<http://www.mcwc.org>>. Dates for our conference are Thursday, July 30 through Sunday, August 2, 2009.

## MCWC COMMUNITY LITERARY NEWS

For those who missed his seminar at the 2008 MCWC, **Andrew Todhunter** will present his workshop "Creative Writing: The Craft and the Business" this April 25 and 26th at the Sebastopol Center for the Arts. Please email <[workshops@andrewtodhunter.com](mailto:workshops@andrewtodhunter.com)> for more information. Andrew is currently working on a series of projects for the National Geographic family of publications, including "Will Paddle for Whisky," in the March 2009 issue of National Geographic Adventure, and an upcoming scientific expedition for the "yellow magazine."

**Molly Dwyer**, author of *Requiem for the Author of Frankenstein*, is a finalist for the 2008 Northern California Book Award in Fiction, adding to her many honors for this book. Molly has some great reading and teaching gigs coming up; see her website at < <http://www.mollydwyer.com/>> for details.

Another nominee for a Northern California Book Reviewers Award is **Terry Ehret**, a presenter in 2001 and 2002, for her latest poetry collection, *Lucky Break*.