



Mendocino Coast Writers Conference

November 2009

Connecting Writers to Community for Over 20 Years

2010 CONFERENCE PLANS

Two more exciting presenters have joined our roster for next summer's conference. We're delighted to welcome Mexican-American novelist **Reyna Grande** <<http://www.reynagrande.com/>> whose new book, *Dancing with Butterflies*, was published last month and is already receiving critical acclaim. Her debut novel, *Across A Hundred Mountains* (Atria 2006), about immigration's human side, received an American Book Award (2007) and El Premio Aztlan Literary Award (2006).

Joining us to teach a short fiction workshop will be **Valerie Miner**, a member of MCWC's advisory board. She is the award-winning author of thirteen books, among them the short fiction collections *Abundant Light*, *The Night Singers* and *Trespassing*. Winner of a Distinguished Teaching Award, Valerie has taught for over twenty-five years and is now an artist-in-residence and professor at Stanford University.

Journal editor **Stefanie Freele**, who was on our Paths to Publishing panel this year, will join book publisher **Steve Mettee** as moderators of a roundtable to discuss issues in blogging and other online marketing tools. Stefanie has just been named the 2010-2011 Healdsburg, CA Literary Laureate.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Heartfelt thanks to everyone who sent in donations to help create the arts opportunities that gang interventionist Luis Rodriguez encouraged when he spoke during the 2009 conference. Plans are shaping up for the poetry slam workshop with Christina Perez. We're also looking long term, with service organization partners and Fort Bragg businesses, to find and furnish space for a youth drop-in center where MCWC volunteers will lead an on-going writing workshop. Donations of any amount are still welcome. Please send your check, made out to MCWC, to: MCWC, PO Box 2087, Fort Bragg, CA 95437. Write Community Outreach on the memo line of your check to make sure your contribution goes toward this project.

Related to the topic of young people and gangs, you might want to check out an online article by **Graham Moody** (participant 2008 & 2009) at <<http://thisisdiversity.com/articles/all/3599/blaze/>>. Graham teaches a writing workshop at the high security Pelican Bay State Prison. He says: "The prisoners are all ex-gang members. They're part of a special program. They were shot-callers, or soldiers, or just 'made' gangsters. Now they've disavowed the gangs and moved on. They don't make trouble any more. We hope." Graham's description of his students' lives is a grim reminder of what kids face if they don't see alternatives in their lives.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday Nov 21, 6:30 p.m. at Gallery Bookshop, Mendocino: A young poets' extravaganza. Local students will recite their work in celebration of the release of two anthologies: *Word: Mendocino County Poets in the Schools 2009*; and *What the World Hears: 2009 Statewide Anthology of California Poets in the Schools* with foreword by Gary Soto.

November 20-22 in Petaluma: The Institute of Noetic Sciences offers a weekend of poetry offerings. Presenters include David Whyte, Robert McDowell and Terri Glass. For more information and to register, go to <www.ions.org/events>.