San Francisco Chapter by Kate Farrell

The San Francisco Chapter of the WNBA was founded in 1968 by Effie Lee Morris, then coordinator of Children's Services for the San Francisco Public Library. Our members are writers, booksellers, agents, editors, publishers, publicists, librarians, graphic designers, indexers, career coaches, marketing specialists, conference planners, aspiring authors, and avid readers.

Our vision is to support women (and men) in the book industry and to create a local literary community within the San Francisco Bay Area. The continual demand for professional development programs, along with networking and marketing opportunities, drive our programming choices. For many years, we met monthly at Fort Mason in San Francisco with a dinner format along with programs and events.

As our membership grew and changed, we adjusted programming to reflect a need for more flexible scheduling. Panels, readings, member mixers and hands-on workshops take place throughout the greater Bay Area. Members and nonmember participants have the opportunity to learn more about their craft, hone new skills, and meet other writers.

The annual Effie Lee Morris Children’s Lecture Series was created by WNBA-SF to salute Ms. Morris for her outstanding contributions to the San Francisco Public Library and the children of San Francisco; the series began in 1996 and remains a collaborative effort with The San Francisco Main Library. (These annual family-friendly free lectures...
have hosted many distinguished authors and artists: Patricia McKissak, Javaka Steptoe, Tomie dePaola, Pamela Munoz Ryan, Nikki Grimes, Daniel & Robert San Souci, Milly Lee, Thacher Hurd, Alma Flor Ada, Ashley Bryan, Laurence Yep, Linda Geistlinger, Karey Wehner, and Toni Bernardi.) This year we are celebrating the 40th anniversary of this informative and inspirational series.

Our most popular community offering continues to be the annual Meet-the-Agents & Acquisitions Editors Event where we make it easy for aspiring writers to have the opportunity to present their work to a professional. Another successful program has been The Author Showcase, where the WNBA-SF writers who have been published in the previous year have a chance to celebrate their accomplishment with their peers.

The chapter is active in the literary community in Northern California, partnering with branches of the California Writer’s Club to produce writing workshops and programs. We have also participated in the Sonoma County Book Festival and the California Capital Book Festival.

Chapter members have read their work as part of LitQuake, the largest independent literary festival on the West Coast, a nine-day literary spectacle for booklovers, complete with cutting-edge panel discussions, unique cross-media events, and hundreds of readings. Members have been invaluable also in providing expertise and support for the San Francisco Writers Conference since its establishment in 2004 by long-time members and past board members Elizabeth Pomada and Michael Larsen.
Best-selling author Amy Tan was our featured speaker at the WNBA-SF 2008 WNBA Award ceremony honoring recipient Kathi Kamen Goldmark. As part of our 40th anniversary celebration in 2008, we held a festive banquet and silent auction. Members and guests bid on everything from editing expertise to website development, restaurant certificates, artwork, handmade jewelry, and books…lots of books!

We continue to work hard to become integrated into the Bay Area community and also to connect with our members. Our long-range plans call for continuing to access the needs of the membership while addressing the needs of the community at large.

As advocates of literacy, especially for children, WNBA-SF literacy partnerships have included:

- **The Teddy Bear Room**- With the encouragement and supervision of our founding president and San Francisco Main Library Children’s Librarian Effie Lee Morris, WNBA-SF collected books to donate to the Teddy Bear Room at the San Francisco District Attorney’s office.
- **Project Read**- Volunteers tutor children and adult-learners to enhance reading skills and instill a love of reading. This San Francisco nonprofit organization is located within the San Francisco Main Library.
- **Reach Out and Read** trains doctors and nurses to advise parents about the importance of reading aloud and to give books to children at pediatric check-ups from ages six months to five years.
• **Bring Me A Book** provides easy access to the best children’s books and inspires reading aloud to children.

• **The Living Room** - At the day center for homeless mothers and children in Santa Rosa, early childhood books are the cornerstone of the read aloud, early literacy program.