



WriteOn!

WriteNow!

## Celtic holiday celebration bonds Sacramento writers



December's holiday celebration united writers, starting with music. Linda and Ken Champion were part of a trio.



Dana Michaels played the guitar



Lonon Smith read *Child's Christmas in Wales*



Nearly fifty writers and guests attended the themed event that benefited the Children's Receiving Home.

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## Facing sensitivity when writing about family members

Whether to capture fading history before it is lost, as inspiration for fiction, or in the guise of memoir, writing about family enjoys renewed popularity.

Learn from a successful author who has written about family when CWC's Sacramento Branch hosts its first-Friday networking and tip meeting January 6, at the IHOP restaurant in Rancho Cordova at 2216 Sunrise Blvd.

Author Dorothy Rice will share her experience writing about her parents, sisters, and children. She will discuss issues of confidentiality, trust, and differing interpretations of past events. Writing about family also brings up the exposure of sensitive topics and vulnerable histories. Can a writer truly put these stories on paper without damaging relationships?

Find out by joining your writing peers at 9 a.m. Friday for breakfast, networking, problem-solving, publishing tips, and Dorothy's insightful perspective on writing about the people closest to us.

In her book *The Reluctant Artist*, published by Shanti Arts, Dorothy recounts tales of her father and his life-long commitment to art, his disquieting tendency toward solitude, and his unease with useless conversation. She describes Joe Rice's self-effacing manner and his adherence to humility as the highest virtue.

Dorothy will talk about her inspirations and choices, the lines between fiction and nonfiction, the question of creative license, and subjectivity in memoir particularly



Dorothy Rice, author of *The Reluctant Artist*, speaks at the First-Friday breakfast at IHOP on January 6

when recreating distant events.

She will also provide information on identifying and pursuing markets for creative nonfiction, from flash to longer forms.

She is a Sacramento author whose fiction and essays have appeared in numerous journals. They include *The Rumpus*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Brain*, *Child* magazine, *Literary Mama*, and the Brevity blog.

At age 60, following a career in environmental protection working for the state Legislature and CalEPA, Dorothy earned a master's of fine arts degree in creative writing from the University of California, Riverside, through

its low-residency program at Palm Desert.

Learn more on Dorothy's website at <http://dorothyriceauthor.com>.

She also hosts a website dedicated to her father's art at <http://josephflaviusrice.com>.

Attendees will also hear a short seven-minute presentation from Ted Witt, branch vice president, on criteria authors can use to judge book covers – information that will help them critique the work of graphic designers, publishers, or other design sources. He will stress the importance of signing off on a cover that will sell a writer's work. If it isn't right, a cover will doom an author's story.

## Steel yourself for 2017; know the ingredients for resiliency

Contributed by

**By Kimberly A. Edwards**

*CWC Branch President*

Last year *Time Magazine* ran an insightful article on resiliency research. Nowhere does resiliency cry out more than on the writer's desk. Because we operate in a world of changes, rejections, and relative facelessness (publishers, editors, agents), our confidence and self-esteem are regularly put on the line. By knowing key ingredients of resiliency, we can approach 2017 with resolve. Below please find some pointers that I plan to keep in mind:

- Have faith in my ability as a writer.
- Know that rejection is not personal.



**Kim Edwards**

- Keep an eye on the big picture—a vision with realistic long-term goals. Commitment to success as a writer will outlive set-backs.
- Maintain a community of support. Receive validation. Be open to gentle suggestions. Listen to how others surmount similar challenges. Help those who are

struggling.

- Keep improving my skills through classes, workshops, and reading.
- View set-backs as temporary and as lessons and opportunities for growth.
- Focus on what we I control, not what I cannot.
- Practice self-care. Participate in activities and hobbies I enjoy as part of a daily routine: yoga, meditation, sports, guided imagery, physical exercise, reading, gathering with friends.

With the above strategies in mind, I plan to have a productive and fulfilling new year. I am grateful that you are part of my community!

Best wishes for 2017!

## January heralds CWC's half-year membership drive

Contributed by

**Gini Grossenbacher**

*2nd Vice President, Membership*

Know some word artists considering joining our noble band of California Writers Club writers? As many of you are aware, January heralds our half-year membership drive.

Please tell your fellow writers, readers, editors, and friends that they may join our California Writers Club, Sacramento Branch now at the half-year rate of \$22.50, plus a \$20.00 one-time enrollment fee. They may visit our CWC website link at

<http://www.cwcsacramentowriters.org/about-cwc/join/>

Bring them to our IHOP breakfast meetings, or Saturday lun-

### Membership Corner



**Gini Grossenbacher**

cheons. Shout out our benefits, including the status and prestige of membership. Let them know the CWC considers them serious writers in a community that supports and encourages not only their craft, but also the business of writing.

Membership benefits include discounts to monthly general meetings, subscriptions to the newsletter, discounted entry fees, critique groups, and writing tips.

Please let me know if any questions on membership arise. You bring in the best members of all—your friends and associates! My email is [ginis.writers1@gmail.com](mailto:ginis.writers1@gmail.com).

Wishing you the best of 2017!

## January 21: Writing coach offers insight to craft of memoir

What is it about memoir that's drawing more and more writers to the genre? And why is it so controversial? We'll take a look at what memoir actually is, how to do it

well, and why it matters so much—despite critics—when professional writing coach Brooke Warner comes to the CWC Sacramento Branch.

She will speak Saturday, Jan. 21, at the 11 a.m. general meeting at Cattlemens Restaurant, 12409 Folsom Blvd. in Rancho Cordova.

This discussion will touch upon both craft and process and will unpack why Brooke and so many others know memoir to be a truly magical—albeit it challenging—genre for writers.

Brooke Warner will take you on a deep dive into the fastest-growing genre that people love to hate.

In this presentation, attendees will learn:

- The five major craft points of memoir writing.



Brooke Warner

- Why memoir is so beloved and so reviled.
- The major challenges (part of process) that all writers of memoir will confront and how to work with and around them.
- Why memoir is, in fact, magical and why all writers of memoir know this to be true.
- How to capture the attention of agents and editors if you're thinking about shopping your memoir.



Founded 1909

### Sacramento Branch California Writers Club

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### Romantic Suspense



*Our committee is in agreement; your novel has plenty of suspenseful twists. Now can you point out the romantic parts?*

## Human rights lawyer: manuscript is finished; now what?

Contributed By

**Lisa Deines Wiggins**

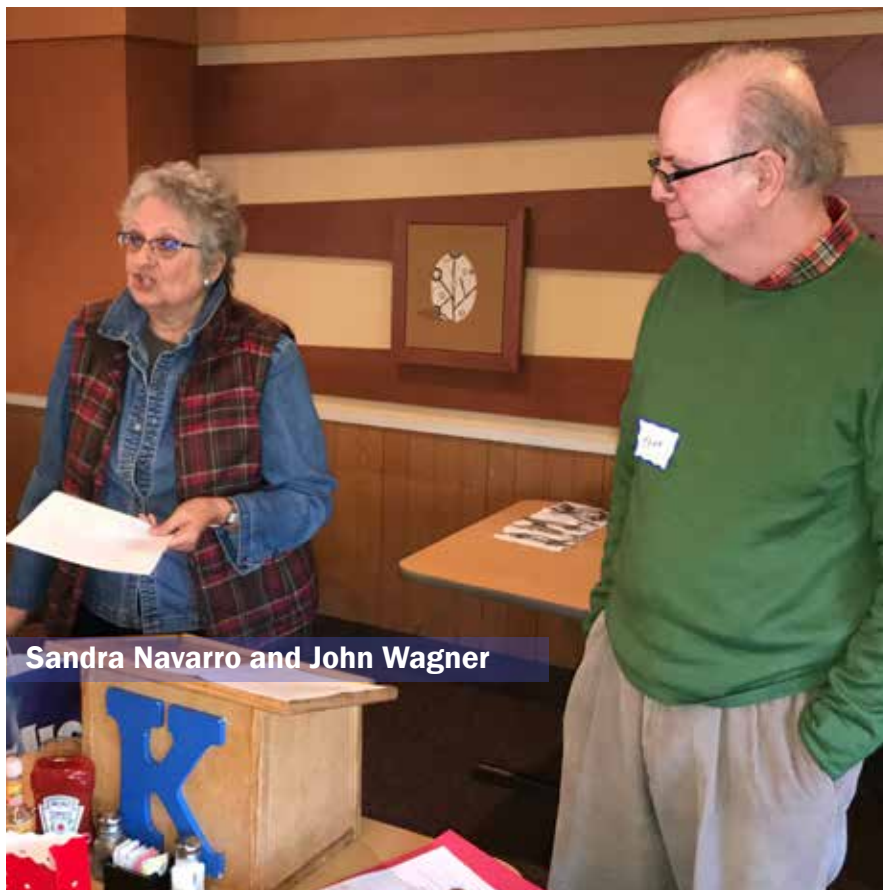
While we don't usually have a Writers' Networking Meeting in December, it was decided that we write all year long, so why not meet? And those of us who attended were grateful for that decision.

Sandra Navarro, the fearless facilitator, provided a door prize and candy, rewarding us as she led us through "Name the Quote Source" and "True or False Facts About Our Speaker" games.

We also did self-introductions with our name and three words to describe our writing (this produced appreciative nods and occasional laughter). It was an interactive and lively morning, but Sandra did a great job of redirecting the fun when it was time for speakers.

Our president, Kim Edwards, made announcements about the Holiday Social, the January Luncheon Meeting, and a new Open Mic at Dimple Records in Citrus Heights, Saturday, January 28, which will also provide opportunities for author book signings. Make sure to stay tuned.

Ted Witt, branch first vice president, spoke about encouraging young writers and handed out "book on a sheet of paper" for kids. This ingenious page had writing tips for kids of all ages, complete with to-do check boxes, and folded up into a tiny, yet hefty, eight-paged book – seriously, a nifty and beautiful piece of work that everyone would love.



Sandra Navarro and John Wagner

The main speaker, John Wagner, addressed the logistics of publishing in his talk entitled, "Congratulations, You've Finished Your Manuscript. Now What?"

John was a successful lawyer who did human rights work in Peru during the violent 1990s. He is described as "a frequent adventurer and spiritual traveler" who is currently a full-time writer.

John's presentation covered a multitude of valuable topics, including transcription, editing, getting an agent, self-publishing consultants, getting cover art, head shots for publicity, ISBN

numbers, copyright, legal review, formatting for publication, selecting a book distributor, business names and licenses, tax identification numbers, book publicists, and social media.

It was a full and informative presentation, and John also solicited input from the group to increase access to resources. The energy of the meeting was high enough to hold attention and at the same time delivered an incredible amount of material about the business of getting your manuscript out to the world.

All in all, an excellent meeting!

## Read your work aloud; Open Mic returns at Dimples location

New Open Mic Facilitator Brian Lewis will be bringing back Open Mic in January, starting on Saturday the 28th at 6 p.m.

The location will be at the Citrus Heights Dimples Books store.

This is a change from previous practice when the event was held on a Friday night. Dimples Owner Dilyn Radkovitz reports that usually Saturdays have the best turn-out from customers. "By then our stores are back to normal and we have more time to focus on in-stores."

Dilyn Radkovitz is excited about the potential for expansion of our Open Mic to other Dimple Book locations.

All locations have some books and comic books, but three have sizable book departments.

The Folsom location has 2,000

feet dedicated to books. Citrus Heights has 2,000 feet of books. Arden Books & Vinyl store has 3,200 square feet of books.

Currently Dimple is moving to a new Roseville location which will open within the next month. It will be the biggest retail store with around 14,000 square feet, and it will have the largest book department of all our stores about 4,000 square feet.

It may prove valuable to revisit the October edition of the club newsletter, where the featured article was about the practices seven different CWC branches under take for their Open Mic programs.

A consensus of opinion among branches is that open mic is not only a benefit to the author, but also a welcome community service.

## Open Mic Returns January 28

at  
**Dimple Books**

**Citrus Heights  
7830 Macy Plaza Dr.  
Citrus Heights**

**Under the  
Leadership of  
Member  
Brian Lewis**

**January 28 at 6 p.m.**



## Volunteers needed; broad participation strengthens club

We as a membership association are tasked with keeping our club running! Getting involved has benefits for the volunteer – experience, access, confidence, and collaboration with others. By participating, you will meet people and add to the richness of our club. We're not talking about a lot of time, just a few hours a month:

- Post upcoming speakers on social media
  - Assist with putting upcoming speakers on the website
  - Serve as advertising chair.
- Example of duties includes email-

ing the quarterly Bulletin to our members.

- Coordinate cookies to the Cattlemens meeting
- Help with "tear down" after the Cattlemens meeting

The premise on which our branch is based is that we share in the duties to keep operations running. The model is "horizontal" (broad) as opposed to "vertical" (one or two people at the top). There's a reason why this distinction is important. By maintaining broad-based participation, the club remains ours – we share

in the decisions, the ownership, the influence, and the democratic process. Conversely, lack of volunteers can lead to a closed system, which carries a great risk to a non-profit. If we become complacent or tell ourselves that someone else will do it, we risk allowing all decisions to fall into the hands of one or two people. Our operations must be transparent – funds, contests, communication, access to speakers and book display opportunities, to name a few. Thank you for considering helping with a task.

## Set your new year's goals to make 2017 the best ever

The new year is the perfect time to set writing goals. Experts report that by setting goals, we're more apt to accomplish what we desire. One model for setting goals is SMART, an acronym that describes what goals should look like:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant/Reasonable
- Time-Framed

### Step 1: Make it Specific

Vague: Get published.

Better: I will submit stories to five online markets.

### Step 2: Make it Measurable

Not measurable: I will work on stories.

Better: I will "workshop" and polish three stories.

### Step 3: Make it Achievable

Unlikely: I will be asked to share my work with an audience at a conference.

Better: I will read two stories at an Open Mic.

### Step 4: Make it Relevant/Realistic

Irrelevant: I will participate in two weekly critique groups, regardless of the hour.

Better: I will join one weekly critique group that fits my genre needs and early-morning schedule.

### Step 5: Make it Time-Framed

Not pinned to a time: I will put together a book proposal.

Better: By July 1, 2017, I will have drafted a book proposal for two agents I have identified.



For each of your goals, make a list of all the things, people, and information you need to achieve your goal. Consider breaking goals into smaller objectives that lead to the goal. What milestones are important at each step? Mark your progress along the way. How can you motivate yourself with rewards when you achieve each step? For instance:

### Examples of milestones

Write and outline. Take myself out for a Mexican dinner.

Develop a draft. Treat myself to an afternoon movie.

Revise. Invite my friends to go out for coffee.

Share with critique group. Have a party.

Revise. Go shopping for a new pair of boots.

## As you move into the new year, here are five ideas to help you focus on you and your brand

1. Submit your articles on writing, publishing or marketing to the branch newsletter. This is your newsletter!
2. Redo your CWC online biography. Consider keeping it updated, as it will give you a link to reference in approaching editors and publishers.
3. Contact others in the branch who write the same genre as you.
4. Attend a Shut-up-and-Write session. Let us know if you feel it worthwhile or would you like to help plan one sponsored by our branch.
5. Participate in an Open Mic setting with a facilitated critique in a safe environment.

## Calendar at a Glance

**Friday, January 6, 9 a.m.**

**IHOP, Rancho Cordova**  
First-Friday Networking  
Dorothy Rice  
“Writing about Family”

**Saturday, January 21, 11 a.m.**

**Cattlemens, Rancho Cordova**  
Brooke Warner  
“The Magic of Memoir”

**Wednesday, February 1**

**Essay Content Opens**  
First day to set up an account, submit your essay, and pay entry fee online

**Friday, February 3, 9 a.m.**

**IHOP, Rancho Cordova**  
First-Friday Networking

**Saturday, February 18, 11 a.m.**

**Cattlemens, Rancho Cordova**  
Shelley Blanton-Stroud  
“Choose and Use a Writers Conference for Your Advantage”

**Friday, March 3, 9 a.m.**

**IHOP, Rancho Cordova**  
First-Friday Networking

**Saturday, March 18, 11a.m.**

**Cattlemens, Rancho Cordova**  
“Monetize Your Writing”



### Club writing contest will open February 1, and themed essay submissions deadline will be April 1

The club’s annual writing competition will be open for submissions starting Wednesday, February 1, for essays under the theme “Why I Write.”

Authors should create their own unique titles for their manuscript submissions, which will be accepted online with a maximum word count of 750 words.

The names of entrants will be blind to the judges who will be identifying first-, second-, and third-place awards worth \$100, \$50, and \$25 respectively.

Winners will be honored at the club’s third-Saturday general meeting in June.

Information on how to submit manuscripts and entry fees will

be posted on the club’s website at [CWCSacramentoWriters.org](http://CWCSacramentoWriters.org) along with a link to a page to begin entering your contact information and to upload your original, unpublished manuscript entry online.

A full set of rules and fees will be posted as well.

The final deadline for submissions will be Saturday, April 1.

As you begin crafting your essay, consider this from Vivian Gornick in *The Situation and the Story*: “To approach the work in hand as any ordinary reader might was to learn not how to write but – more important by far – why one was writing. In these classes both I and my students discovered repeatedly that this was more than half the battle.”



I was brought up in the great tradition of the late nineteenth century: that a writer never complains, never explains and never disdains.

— James A. Michener