

SACRAMENTO  
FEBRUARY 2024



BRANCH  
NEWSLETTER

# SACRAMENTOWRITERS

## How to Write & Submit Short Personal Essays to Magazines & Newspapers



Saturday  
17  
February

Melissa Hart

In this fun and lively presentation, veteran essayist and author [Melissa Hart](#) helps you to identify topics for your personal essays and then explains how to craft them for magazines and newspapers. She'll offer revision and submission tips and how to negotiate payment, fan mail, and the occasional internet troll.

We will be looking at:

- How to identify compelling personal essay topics based on their life experience.
- How to craft the rough draft of a personal essay.
- How to revise a personal essay.
- How to find suitable magazines and newspapers for submission and contact editors.
- How to navigate the publication and post-publication process.

Saturday, February 17<sup>th</sup> 1–3 pm

[Arcade Library](#)

2443 Marconi Ave, Sacramento, California 95821

**Join Zoom Meeting** ID: 831 1220 0475 Passcode: 568644

Melissa Hart is the author of seven books, including the award-winning kids' novel [Daisy Woodworm Changes the World and Better with Books](#). Her writing has appeared in The New York Times, Smithsonian, CNN, Slate, National Geographic Kids, Real Simple, and numerous other publications. She teaches for the MFA program in Creative Writing at Southern New Hampshire University.

Delta King  
on the  
Sacramento River

# First Friday Networking Meeting

Friday  
**2**  
February

## Research for Writers



Kathy Lynne Marshall

Want to polish your research skills for novels and nonfiction books, and turn dry facts into engaging tales? Tune in!

- Learn how to find your motivation.
- Focus your book topic.
- Develop a basic research plan.
- Locate details that make books rich in storytelling and fact.
- Turn dry facts into engaging tales via a hands-on exercise.

Kathy Lynne Marshall is a Black Ancestor Biographer. She's written eight creative non-fiction heritage books that diversify the American Historical Record with previously hidden factual accounts of women and minorities. She also leads workshops to guide others in researching facts, structuring a manuscript, and publishing one's family stories.

Friday, February 2nd from 9–11 am at  
CH Cafe & Grill, 6215 Sunrise Blvd. (just off Greenback)

Edwin Crocker Mansion  
(Crocker Art Museum)  
Sacramento

# Coming in March

## Brooke Warner



Saturday  
**16**  
March

[Details on presentation coming soon] [Brooke Warner](#)

## Ina Coolbrith—Whom She Was, and Tougher Than We

### Karen D H Durham



Friday  
**1**  
March

Born into a world with no room for talents beyond the home, Ina Coolbrith forged her unique path during a time of great change.

- What world was Ina Coolbrith born into?
- Who were her family?
- What were other women doing?
- How was the world she left behind?
- What poetry did she leave to us?

Karen Durham was born and raised in The San Francisco Bay Area of California. When she's not writing she loves to swim, hike, and run on the coast. She came to appreciate poetry late in life, when in the late twenty-teens she attended a writing workshop at Tomales Bay. There she first heard current US poet laureate Ada Limón read from her book, Bright Dead Things. She was hooked. Karen's had two poems published in anthologies. Like most poets, she doesn't always understand what questions she's asking when she writes, but hopes to, someday.

## Larry Mandelberg's First-Hand Experience with a Hybrid Publisher (or two)

On Friday, January 5, a lively group of over twenty writers gathered in the private dining room of CH Café & Grill in Citrus Heights to hear long-time, active CWC participant Larry Mandelberg share his experiences publishing with a hybrid publisher. Larry promised—and delivered—helpful things, interesting things, and financial details.

As is always important at the start of the publishing process, Larry explained to us his goals for this book. Larry's career is as a business consultant and speaker. His professional writing, which includes many articles published in business journals around the country, is dedicated to sharing his knowledge with the small business community to help them overcome challenges and stay in business. His top priority for his nonfiction book Businesses Don't Fail They Commit Suicide was to create a quality product worthy of libraries or collections that maximize access to the book for people who might benefit.

The book was in process for many years. Initially Larry tried hiring a ghostwriter. After two, he realized he needed to write this book himself. He considered the literary agent/trad pub route but decided it was too complicated and slow. His first foray into working with a hybrid publisher led him to Stephanie Chandler's Authority Publishing, a person and company well known and respected here in the Sacramento writing community. Larry had high praise for Stephanie's Nonfiction Authors Association and considered Authority's \$7,000-\$20,000 publishing packages. Ultimately, Stephanie was unable to take on the work so Larry had to look elsewhere.

Larry next found Trafford, a hybrid publisher that promised powerful marketing tools and a top-of-the-line package for \$11,000. Trafford was unwilling to give him their seven-page contract/publishing agreement until he had made a downpayment. Larry had his lawyer review the contract and decided that he did not want to continue with Trafford. (He disliked the royalty structure—too many categories—and various conditions including mandatory arbitration of disputes in a faraway state.) While getting a refund of his deposit was a runaround, he ultimately did get his money back.

The journey ended with Page publishing. Larry bought a package of services to turn his Microsoft Word document into a published paperback and ebook, distribution into the usual channels (amazon, BN.com), plus add-ons for “promotional materials” (bookmarks, sell sheets, poster), a 1-minute marketing video, etc. Larry ultimately paid Page a total of \$4794, which he thinks was reasonable.

As an aside, he mentioned that hiring a developmental editor earlier in the process was transformative, and he recommends good developmental editing as essential if you are serious about your book.

When Larry received the first galley of his book, he reviewed it carefully and submitted back to Page 300 corrections. Some of these were his own errors in the original manuscript, but most were errors or imperfections by the publisher such as footnotes being split over two pages; errors in fonts, spacing, paragraph breaks, titles,

and image layout; and the index. He engaged in seven rounds of revisions with ever-fewer corrections before deciding that was good enough.

The index was the best thing about his experience. Page created a good index for only \$300—a critical feature in a business book. The biggest disappointment for Larry was the layout of the table of contents in his Kindle ebook—not very functional and nothing like the print version. This relates to his discovery that when you work with a publisher, they control many things that you might wish you could do yourself. Specifically, if your blurbs or cover image on Amazon are not right, you must go through your publisher to have them corrected. (KDP users can do it themselves.) He was also disappointed that after hiring an outside contractor for 1 year @ \$6800 to help with his book launch and marketing, his publisher was unable/unwilling to give him a book delivery date to plan around. And when the paperback was released, the ebook was not yet ready and no date was available for that either.

Over his entire journey with this book, Larry spent over \$30,000 as an investment. He has made that money back many times over in consulting business acquired directly as a result of the book (not from royalties on book sales).

[AmyRogers.com](http://AmyRogers.com)

## What is a hybrid publisher?

A hybrid publisher shares the financial costs and rewards of publication with its authors by charging fees but offering higher-than-standard royalty rates. In contrast, self-publishing service providers do many of the same tasks at the author's expense but do not have any rights to, or ongoing relationship with, the book after the author publishes it under their own copyright.

For more information, visit Independent Book Publishers Association <https://www.ibpa-online.org/page/hybridpublisher>, a trade organization that has created standards and criteria for this growing business model.

# Sacramento Branch President's Message



If you have heard the rumors, then they may be true. If you haven't heard the rumors, then I'll let you all in on a little secret.

You all know by now that I'm always on the lookout for ideas to help our membership not just to write, but also to sell books. That isn't a secret, but there is some news that I want to reveal.

First of all, Vernon Street in Roseville holds a weekly summer event every Tuesday evening during the months of June and July. These *Downtown Tuesday Nights* will include stalls, music, and activities. CWC Sacramento will be booking a stall for every evening, where we will have members to sell their books.

Tim Schooley is working to organize this. More information and how to reserve your spot will follow soon.

Next (and here's the big one) the board is working to organize an annual book festival in Sacramento. We realize there is little in this area that promotes the love of books, but we intend to change that. This is not a trivial task, but we plan to start small and grow into a festival worthy of the capital. We may have a venue and are working to select the optimum date.

Once again, this *Sacramento Book Festival* will be a place for members (and others) to sell their books. As we grow, we will include talks and presentations, literary outreach for both young and old.

So, get your sales permits ready, and brush up on your self-promotion. Discuss ideas in your critique groups. Whatever you do, keep writing, and get those creative juices flowing!

Bernard Wozny ([bpwozny@gmail.com](mailto:bpwozny@gmail.com))

# Members' Corner

by Bonnie Blue

We welcomed seven new members in January, three of which have not been introduced in members' corner. So here they are. Please say hello if you see them.

- Jennifer Pickering writes memoir, fiction, poetry, CNF.
- Nishaant Singh writes fantasy, science fiction, and mystery.
- Nick Webster writes thriller, mystery.

New members are invited to share a brief (200 words max) bio and a jpeg headshot for our website's Members page. And you can include a link to your own website in your bio! Please send to [sacramentowriters@gmail.com](mailto:sacramentowriters@gmail.com). You can have your published books listed in our Members Book section by sending a description and a picture of its cover to [Bernard](#).

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## Critique Groups

Interested in finding a Critique Group? So many of us write alone and have gotten very little feedback on our work. Exposing our creative efforts to a group of like-minded and considerate writers is the first step towards sending our masterpieces out into the world.

Email [Bonnie](#) if interested. Your names and genre will be collected and linked with other members. Your newly formed group can get help with getting started on our [website](#).

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## Building a Critique Group

The meeting last Saturday discussed leadership, structure, how to give critiques and how to receive them. We heard from leaders of a few of our present critique groups about their role as leader. [Nalin Ratnayake](#) summarized the discussion by saying that a leader's role is to hold the structure, culture and values of the group.

Structure varies, depending on the choices of the group. Very often consensus has been used to make decisions that affect the structure.

We discussed what type of feedback to share and how to deliver the feedback. Overall, we had a successful meeting, with many members sharing personal experiences and wisdoms gleaned from belonging to previous critique groups.

This meeting resulted in the possibility of a few new groups. While we still have space in Ruff Writers, a mixed group, some new specialist groups began to take shape, including the genres of Science Fiction/Fantasy, Child and YA Fiction, Historical Fiction/Non-Fiction, and Mystery Fiction. If interested in joining one of these beginning groups, contact [Bonnie Gault-Blue](#).



Central Pacific engine #1  
The Gov. Stanford 1862  
[California State Railroad  
Museum, Sacramento]

## A Passing of Note

We are sorry to report the death of fellow member, Albert J. Mingo. He recently attended a networking meeting and I was stunned to hear he had been in this club for 42 years. What stories he could tell! I asked to interview him, but regretfully, I never got round to it. He is clearly a writer and motivational speaker whose contributions to the world are noteworthy. Here is his bio from our website. - Bonnie



Albert J. Mingo

[Albert J. Mingo](#) is an author and motivational speaker who joined the California Writers Club in 1981. His books include: [Be a Why Not Person](#); [The Power in You](#) (a local best seller at Tower Books); and a novel entitled [The Vision: Torn Between Heaven and Hell](#). All of his books are available at Amazon.com.

## Announcements

### Point of View Workshop

Mark your calendars to come on out to the [Avid Reader Bookstore](#), 617 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Davis on **Wednesday, February 28, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.**, to hone your skills and increase your knowledge related to **point of view (POV)**, that essential topic for fiction writers.

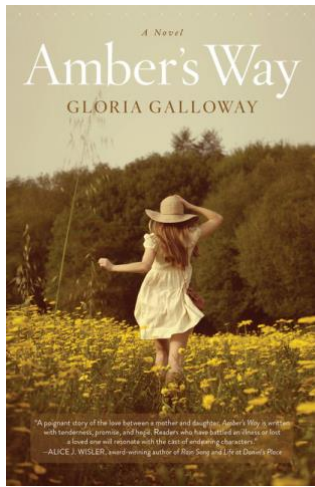
CWC Sacramento members [Judith Starkston](#) (author of *Hand of Fire*, *Priestess of Ishana*, *Sorcery in Alpara*, *Of Kings & Griffins*) and [Tim Schooley](#) (author of *The Wool Translator*) will share their tactics for bringing readers deeply into the POV of their characters, an essential skill for increasing your readers' emotional response to your words by feeling what your characters feel.

The course is designed for both novice and experienced writers, and will cover: POVs used by contemporary authors, statistics about the use of various POVs today, when and how to avoid head-hopping, how to choose the *correct* POV for you, writing multiple POVs in one novel or story, and the all-important topic: writing in *deep* or *close* POV. The course will include exercises to help you stretch your POV wings.

Although there is no charge for the class, Avid Reader asks that attendees buy one of either author's books at the store on the evening of the program. Come out to enjoy an evening with fellow writers while studying some of the more challenging skills in fiction writing.

11th & K Sts.  
Sacramento





Gloria Galloway is excited to announce the release of her book, Amber's Way is set to come out on Tuesday, February 20.

Jessica Langston's storybook romance turns to tragedy when her husband is killed in the Iraq War shortly before the birth of their daughter Amber. Despite Jessica's grief, she makes a promise that Amber will live a happy life.

Her pledge is tested when her high-spirited daughter is diagnosed with cancer when she is four years old. But Amber summons her warrior spirit to help fight the monster—the way she did when one lurked under her bed. After months of harrowing treatments, they hear the magical word ... Remission!

Eight years later, Amber is happily on the verge of adolescence when she is told her cancer has returned, and they are thrust back into the nightmare. In spite of this cruel twist of fate, Amber vows she will live her life to the fullest. They move to the historic town of Placerville, California, at the foot of the majestic Sierra Nevada Mountains.

Here, in her favorite place, Amber befriends an orphaned deer she names Jane Doe and meets Nathan, a cute musician. Will she experience her first kiss without the shadow which has darkened most of her life? Whatever happens, Amber is determined to live her life her way.

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## Literary Review Deadline is February 3rd 2024.

Between Feb 3rd to Feb 24th, we will ask you, our members, to read the submissions on our website and **vote for the ones you prefer.**

The CWC-Sacramento Board of Directors will count the votes and send the winning submissions to the Central Board for publication.

[Read the official guidelines here.](#) Please [submit your work with this Word form.](#)

Please use this [MS Word template](#) to format your work. When opened, it will appear blank, but it is set with all the correct font, line spacing and headers needed for submission. Simply save the file as your titled Word document and enter your text.

Submit your writing and the release form to [sacramentowriters@gmail.com](mailto:sacramentowriters@gmail.com) with the heading **Literary Review**. Submission of a story or poem to CWC Sacramento constitutes permission to place the story or poem temporarily on CWC Sacramento's website to allow CWC Sacramento members to read it and vote.

CWC Sacramento is allowed to submit 4 short stories and 4 poems from our members. When it comes time to vote, we will ask all members to assess the entries posted on our web site and to vote by email with options for 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th place winners.

We will update you at voting time.

## Elk Grove Writers Guild Presents Spring Seminar Exploring Deep Point of View: Fiction and Memoirs

Our class on Deep Point of View (DPOV) in fiction and memoirs delves deeply into the perspectives of your characters.

The course begins by laying the groundwork of Point of View (POV), differentiating between First Person (1<sup>st</sup> POV) and Third Person (3<sup>rd</sup> POV). We examine the specifics of each, covering aspects like pronoun usage and narrative perspective, and offer insights into crafting engaging stories using one of the other POVs.

The focus then shifts to DPOV, a narrative technique that immerses readers by merging the narrator's and protagonist's viewpoints. This section discusses DPOV's benefits in enriching reader engagement and its implementation in notable literature.

We study the common challenges in maintaining a consistent POV, highlighting frequent mistakes and ways to rectify them. Please bring your work-in-progress to practice refining DPOV.

By the end of the class, you will have a thorough understanding of DPOV, gaining the ability to create stories that vividly portray characters' inner worlds. This knowledge is crucial for those aiming to write engaging novels or memoirs, making DPOV an invaluable element in your writer's toolkit.

Join Us! April 13, 2024

Program: 12:00 – 1:00 PM - Check-In and Pizza Lunch

1:15 – 3:30 PM – Speaker, Gini Grossenbacher, M. Ed.

Elk Grove Community Center, 8230 Civic Center Drive, Suite 140

Elk Grove, CA, 95757. Registration Fee is \$35.00

Questions or concerns, email [Loy Holder](mailto:Loy.Holder). We'd love to hear from you.

## Announcements from Afield

Dear Sacramento Writers,

We want to inform you about the upcoming 2024 Sierra Writers Conference. We have many amazing writers speaking this year and hope your members will attend. Please see the authors, presentation descriptions, and schedule of events on our website:

<https://sierrawritersconference.wordpress.com/>.

The conference runs from February 5<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup> with both online and in-person activities. We are hosting writers Grant Faulkner, Charles Hood, Rosanna Xia, Obi Kaufmann, Publisher Steve Wasserman, and Deborah Miranda. The cost of full admission is \$65 and \$25 for online only.

Would you please post this information to your calendar? We would greatly appreciate any publicity you can provide.

Kindest regards,

Lynette Vrooman, Editor-in-Chief, Sierra College Press

## San Francisco Writers Conference 2024



The California Writers Club is one of the sponsors of the San Francisco Writers Conference. The conference takes place February 15-18, 2024, at the Hyatt Regency Embarcadero, San Francisco. See [www.sfwriters.org/](http://www.sfwriters.org/) for more information.

Every year, the SFWC offers 2 scholarships to each branch of the CWC.

1) The [Poetry Summit](#) is held on Saturday February 17<sup>th</sup> at 9am. This full day event has a standalone value of \$249. There is also a Poetry and Jazz evening event.

2) The Writing for Hollywood summit is on Friday February 16<sup>th</sup> at 9am. This is also a full day event; the details can be [found here](#). You may also get access to the Wine and Book tasting event at 7:30pm.

Both summits have a standalone value of \$249. Cost is waived for Recipients of the scholarships. Attendees must provide their own transport. We may reimburse reasonable travel expenses subject to approval by the board.

### Details:

- Seminars are day-long—expected to be 9-5. The scholarship does not include lunch. Recipients should either bring a bag lunch or avail themselves of many nearby lunch locations.
- Hotel parking is likely available; the SFWC website carries a map showing additional places to park. The hotel is also available by BART or ferry.
- Recipients wishing to secure a hotel room should check with the Hyatt directly. Lodging is not provided by this program.

Contact Bernard Wozny or Kim Edwards to request a scholarship. Include the reasons you wish to attend, and if you would be prepared to present your experience at one of our meetings.

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## Scholarship for High School Students

The Sacramento Suburban Writers Club is holding an annual scholarship fund for senior high school students. The next award will be made in Spring 2024 for the best short story or essay. A cash prize of \$1000 will be awarded to the winner, which will be paid directly towards college fees for the winning student's first year.

Submission of entry to the competition is free, subject to support by one of the applicant's Teachers.

A panel of judges will be appointed by Sacramento Suburban Writers Club, to choose the winner. Their decision is final. Their subjective decisions will be based on their individual experience and expertise. Objective decisions will be based on a clearly defined set of writing criteria.

Full rules of entry are listed [here](#).

## Next Generation Short Story Awards

Entry deadline: February 28, 2024



Brought to you by the Next Generation Indie Book Awards (the largest book awards program in the world for self-published authors and independent publishers) and Independent Book Publishing Professionals Group

There will be 1 Winner and 3 Finalists in each of the 25+ categories and 3 Grand Prize Winners will be selected from all entries. Grand Prize Winners of the Short Story Awards will be invited to attend the Next Generation Indie Book Awards (NGIBA) annual awards gala to be honored for their winning stories.

### **Grand Prize Winners:**

All Grand Prize Winners receive a gold medal + an invitation to attend NGIBA awards gala + their story published in our Anthology + receive a complimentary copy of the Anthology, as well as a cash prize:

**1st Place:** \$500 Cash prize

**2nd Place:** \$300 Cash prize

**3rd Place:** \$200 Cash prize

[Details on [website](http://www.ShortStoryAwards.com)]

Heilbron House  
7<sup>th</sup> & O Sts.  
Sacramento

## Board of Directors

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Webmaster: Bernard Wozny

Writers Network Coordinator: Cheryl Stapp

## Epilog

Is a blinking cursor on your blank screen the extent of most writing sessions?

One way to prevent writer's block is to maintain a daily writing routine. Setting goals, such as word or page count, is often counter-productive, but committing to fifteen minutes or more of creative writing works wonders in keeping characters and storylines active. Even if the day's tasks are centered on editing or research, take a break for a few minutes on what makes writing enjoyable.

When writing daily, developing plots or dialog comes easier, keeping your story refreshed often. Thinking of the current writing project while performing mundane tasks, like exercising or laundry, leads to a clearer vision of what to write next.

American River  
Rancho Cordova