

Sacramento

February 2025



Branch

Newsletter

# SACRAMENTO WRITERS

## THE SEVEN DISCIPLINES OF THE CREDIBLE WRITER



Saturday

15

February

Ted Witt

Publisher, Pretty Road Companies, LLC

Ted Witt is the publisher behind Pretty Road Press, an independent publishing company in Folsom, California, where he specializes in content syndication and trade books. He is the current vice president of CWC's Sacramento Writers, where he emphasizes that marketing skills are as important for today's authors as writing skills. He is a former newspaper reporter from San Diego County and California's Central Coast. He later transitioned to public relations and lobbying in the education arena in Sacramento before taking jobs as the executive director of the California Association of School Business Officials and then as the vice president of a private Bay Area firm specializing in software and consulting for schools. He is the author of the business book, [No One Ever Told Me That](#). His bylines top scores of newspaper, magazine, and website articles. Read some of his writing and publishing tips at one of his [Pretty Road Press websites](#).

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And our member Julie Snider will give a short presentation on dialogue.

Arden Dimick Library, 891 Watt Ave, Sacramento  
Saturday, February 15, 2025, 1–3 p.m.

The meeting is open to the community at no cost. Since library rules prevent collection of a meeting fee, members are encouraged to support the club's Speaker Fund. This allows the board to continue to bring in experts of regional or national reputation. Suggested amount per meeting: \$10. Thank you, members!

# First Friday Networking Meeting

## ROMANCE—IT'S NOT JUST FOR VALENTINE'S DAY



Friday  
7  
February

### [Anna J Stewart](#)

While Valentine's Day is considered the romantic season of the year, romance novels are popular year-round. Bestselling author Anna J Stewart will share her words of advice on how to write (and consume) the always popular fiction genre!

What attendees will learn from Anna's presentation:

- The romance novel "formula"
- Debunking misconceptions
- Traditional vs. indie publishing
- 5 things I wish I knew then
- Writing to trend

Bestselling, award-winning romance author Anna J Stewart has published more than 60 romances since her first Harlequin release in 2014. Writing in multiple sub-genres, Anna also works as an independent editor, book coach, and has had one of her books optioned for a TV movie.

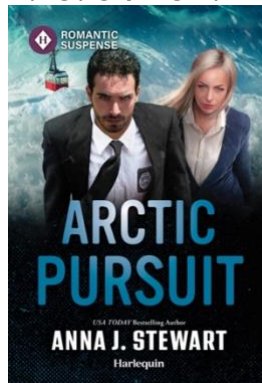
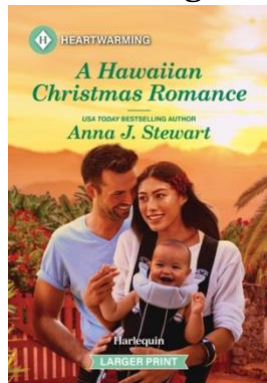
Friday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Denny's Restaurant, 8841 Greenback Lane, Orangevale, 9–11 a.m.

**Join Zoom Meeting**

Meeting ID: 817 3734 0307

Passcode: 227171



## MADAM PANTALOONS: A LOCAL HISTORICAL FIGURE



Friday  
7  
March

### Jenifer E. Rowe

How far have women's rights come since the days of the California Gold Rush?

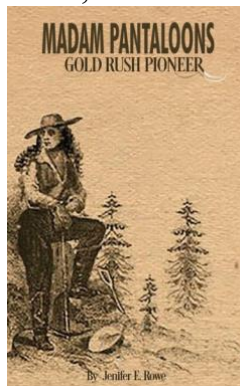
what attendees will learn from this presentation:

- Women's rights in 1849
- What travel to the mines involved
- Life in a typical mining camp
- Jeanne Marie Suize: businesswoman extraordinaire
- Brief review of women's rights today

Jenifer Rowe has published numerous short stories. [Unexpected Findings](#), her first novel, earned Finalist in the 2021 Next Generation Indie Book Awards.

[Madam Pantaloons: Gold Rush Pioneer](#) (2023) will be followed by more juvenile non-fiction. Her second novel, [Blood and Boundary](#), will be the first book in a trilogy.

Denny's Restaurant, 8841 Greenback Lane, Orangevale, 9–11 a.m.



## “THE SHORT STORY AS A TORRID LOVE AFFAIR”



Saturday

15

March

Peter Mountford

Imprudent, impulsive, poorly planned, wildly exciting—writing a short story is, as Lorrie Moore once pointed out, like having a brief intense love affair. Whereas a novel is a marriage. Marriages are fine and well, but if you’re writing and reading for fun, you might want to play the field a bit—fall in and out of love a few times, maybe get your heart broken without destroying your life. In this talk, we’ll focus on the craft (and process) considerations specific to this most exhilarating of literary forms.

- Short stories require play and improvisation. They resist planning.
- The ingredients and basic approach that ensures the play goes well.
- Short means move fast – the crucial role of information management.
- The key craft difference between shorter short stories, and longer short stories.
- How to get end a short story? The role of theme and a surprisingly early narrative climax.

Popular writing coach and instructor Peter Mountford is the author of the award-winning novels [A Young Man’s Guide to Late Capitalism](#), and [The Dismal Science](#). His work has appeared in the *Paris Review*, *Ploughshares*, *The Atlantic*, *New York Times* (*Modern Love*), *The Sun*, *Granta*, *Guernica*, and elsewhere. He teaches at UNR’s low-residency MFA at Lake Tahoe. His collection of stories *Detonator*, will be out in fall, 2025. Learn more: [mountfordwriting.com](http://mountfordwriting.com).

The Old Spaghetti Factory 625 Watt Ave, Sacramento  
(Watt Avenue at Arden Way)

# Branch President's Message

by [Bernard Wozny](#)

There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so. William Shakespeare's Hamlet.

Huh? What is that supposed to mean?

Does it mean we think too much? Well, sort of. The context of that play is more profound, especially if you know Hamlet. But if you know Shakespeare, you will understand that his quotes are universal.

As writers, we all suffer good and bad, or at least we think we do. For instance, when we send query letters to agents, most are ignored or returned with rejection. Of course, we think this is terrible, even soul destroying. In reality, it isn't bad, we just think it is. If it takes 1000 steps to get from A to B, then that's just the way it is. If it takes 1000 query letters to get acceptance, then that is also just a fact of life.

We must learn how to accept these facts. If you are anxious on your journey, you will miss all the wonder along the way. The journey is the most important part, in fact, it is your life.

So, you've done your 1000 steps, and you have your acceptance. You now think the journey is over; not so. All you have done is enter the marketplace, and you are now in business. Your journey continues, and there are another 1000 steps to travel.

You engage with a publisher; they pay you money but also tell you what to do. Their instructions may offend you. How dare they change my cover, how dare they edit my words. They do this to please their market, because they understand how to sell books. You are now in partnership with an entrepreneur, you could have chosen a different partner, but for any market or genre, the business model remains the same.

The journey continues, there is no light at the end of the tunnel. But wait! Look around you! You are not in a tunnel; you are in fact bathed in light.

There is an old saying which I hold dear; If you're not doing it for love, you are doing it wrong.

The alternative is to do things for ego, which always leads to heartache.

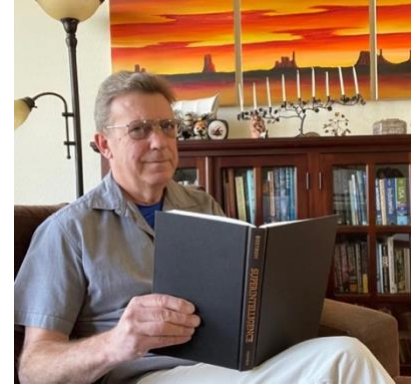
Love can be quite demanding, its very nature demands one to be selfless. Although it may be hard, love means working and understanding the partners you are with. Only fools pretend that this is easy.

Show me a love story that does not encounter challenges, and I'll show you a bank of evaporating fog.

Doing it for love radically changes your mindset. Try it sometime, and your journey will become one of pleasure, pride, and maybe even profit.

I am very demanding because I am deeply in love with CWC Sacramento.

Remember, your words must be read.





## Pin Your Calendar for Great Events Coming

by Kimberly Edwards

### CWC's Second Annual Sacramento Book Festival

May 31 - As you know, CWC Sacramento returns this year with its 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Sacramento Book Festival. Some of you may recall that years ago, this illustrious event was sponsored by the Sacramento Public Library. Last year, our branch approved an experimental "rebirth" of the Festival, and now is bringing it back better than ever. (For further information, please check our website.)

### 100 Years of Writing Excellence

October 18 - This is the date for our branch's esteemed 100<sup>th</sup> year birthday luncheon to be held at Northridge Country Club! A program line-up featuring prominent literary profiles is being planned. The award-winning Jack Ohman will be the featured speaker.

Who better to tell the story of local literary development than us? Our branch "began" in 1925 with the encouragement of Henry Noyes Pratt, CWC President who would later become curator of the Crocker Arts Museum. Pratt knew many famous writers, including Clark Ashton Smith, Ina Coolbrith, Julia Cooley Altrocchi, Ella Sterling, Henry Meade Bland, Kathleen Norris, Charles Keeler, etc. On the walls of the California State Library are murals by Bohemian Maynard Dixon, whose work appeared in the 1914 CWC *Westwinds*. Also known to Pratt was Charmian London, second wife of Jack London. She donated to Pratt's wife Nita a writing chair of Jack's; Nita in turn donated the chair to our branch. More than two decades later, our dedicated members donated the chair to the Jack London Museum! Stay tuned for an update on this topic at the Centennial!

On October 31, 1925, the day that Pratt signed the charter for the new Sacramento Branch, attendees celebrated at the downtown Senator Hotel. And Sacramento ignored the leadership model of males started with the mother club by naming a female president, Edna Becsey. This began a succession of three female leaders in a row in Sacramento. She and her officers brought in featured speakers such as Hildegard Hawthorne, granddaughter of Nathaniel! Local speakers included Caroline Wenzel, whose fame in our community continues.

By the 1960's, names such as Edna Mae Burnam Nauman, Leo Rosenhouse, Lee Roddy, and Helen Bottel of the syndicated "Helen Help Us" column show up on our Roster, as did Walter Bromberg, who wrote a report on the Robert Kennedy assassination.

Our branch obtained the Legislative Resolution for an enduring California Writers Week. Members saw a Poetry Day declared by the major. Other firsts included a club officer who wrote for the Spanish language newspaper *El Hispano*

and esteemed member Eva Rutland (*When We Were Colored*). Other members listed in our roster include life-long members Jean Giovanonni and Ethel Bangert, who started the Sacramento Suburban Writers Club at the request of those wanting to improve their fiction. Jean Giovanonni served as SSW president and Ethyl Bangert taught writing classes.

Back to putting on this once-in-a-lifetime event: We would welcome volunteers to help post flyers when they are available. We also welcome sponsors to help with costs for promotional flyers, awards, etc. If you know a business or a person interested in giving a donation, please have them contact [Bernard](#) or [Kim Edwards](#).

### Network Meeting

February 7 – We continue with our networking meeting, designed to foment close and candid conversations among members on writing, publishing, and marketing. Following the allocated networking time, attendees will hear tips on writing Romance from returning popular speaker Anna J. Stewart. The meeting runs from 9-11 a.m., but feel free to come early to look over the menu. Since the restaurant gives us the meeting room for free, your orders are much appreciated by the club and surely the restaurant manager also! Even if you don't order much, we thank you for your generosity shown towards the hardworking waitress. We always appreciate being welcomed back with a smile!

### One Last Saturday Meeting at the Library

The February 15 Saturday meeting will again take place at the Arden Dimick Library, but after that, we are leaving the library system due to logistics and challenges of reservations. But an exciting two hours will be scheduled with the renowned publisher and master of many topics Ted Witt! Check the website for full details on Ted's presentation. And our member Julie Snider will give a short presentation on dialogue. You won't want to miss this meeting! And see Program Committee Report below for upcoming changes!

### New for Saturday Luncheon Meetings: the Spaghetti Factory!

March 15 – This meeting will occur at the Spaghetti Factory on Watt Avenue at Arden Way. We are trying the Spaghetti Factory in response to members' calls to seek an alternative to Cattlemens where we have been meeting three times per year. The exact time will be communicated later.

Members and guests will be asked to sign up no later than three days in advance and to indicate their choice of Spaghetti:

- Marinara Sauce (Meatless Red Sauce)
- Spaghetti with Meat Sauce (Red Sauce with Meat)

## Great Events Coming (continued)

- Spaghetti with Mizithra Cheese and Browned Butter  
The buffet will include salad, ice cream, and coffee. Drinks, including soda, can be purchased at the bar.  
The price per sign-up will be \$30. Walk-ins will be accepted for \$35.  
Purchase tickets no later than three days in advance

Presentation will be: “The Short Story as a Torrid Love Affair”  
by Peter Mountford, writing coach & MFA faculty member, Sierra Nevada College

Those who have published a book are invited to display on provided table.  
Let’s make a good show so the Spaghetti Factory will want us back again!  
Reminder: Buy tickets ahead of time; make your food selection. If you have special dietary needs, please let us know by March 1<sup>st</sup>.

### Program Committee Report

A new Program Committee consisting of Sandra Navarro, Susan Dlugach, Julie Snider, Christina Brabham, and Mari-Lynne Infantino has been formed to add value to the Saturday Membership meetings. These gatherings, held on the third Saturday of the month, have been the heart of our club for 100 years. Before COVID, the meetings took place at restaurants, most recently at Cattlemen’s. Following COVID, the club moved to the library as a temporary location for most meetings, while staying at Cattlemen’s three times a year. With meal charges increasing and library bookings become more challenging, the need to find a stable home in a closed, self-contained room, has become apparent.

Therefore, beginning with the April meeting, members will meet in Room “7-8” at the Unitarian Church on 2425 Sierra Blvd. Parking is plentiful, the ambiance pleasant. You won’t be disappointed. The room will be available for longer than we had at the library. The Program Committee will add value to the meeting by providing a bonus, or a “mini” lesson, whether verbal or through handouts, on topics that you, the membership, have identified. Please note that member Julie Snider will be giving us a teaser on dialogue. Thank you, Julie!

In addition to the bonus, or a “mini” lesson, and the featured speaker, Literary Agent Mike Larson will join us over several meetings to help with query. Cookies and soda will be provided. The meeting fee will be restored, set at \$15, payable online. For those who drop in, be sure to have \$15 cash in hand to help off-set room, snacks, and speaker fee. Live Zoom will not be provided, but speakers will be recorded for later access by members.



Below please find topics that members have asked to learn more about. The Program Committee is busy figuring out how to deliver these topics to you. Let us know if you wish to present 15 or so minutes on any of the topics – a nice addition to your writing resume to use when querying an editor for a job assignment or when applying for a writing program. You don't have to be an expert to deliver some tips based on your own experience.

### **Topics Identified by Members – What you Know May be Helpful to Others!**

Non-fiction writing	Legal issues to not be sued – when writing a memoir with some subjects still alive
Transitions between scenes	Writing a nonfiction book proposal
Interiority	The craft of writing – using creativity to tell a story
Plot development	Presentations by members on a work in development
When is it worth the cost of entering writing contests	Specific steps to moving a story forward to publication (after a critique group)
Character development	Working with Query Tracer and query letters
Is being on social media necessary to get published	How to set up author's website and manage to promote/sell books
Short stories and fantasy, Young Adult	Guidance on setting up/maintaining a writing business and address income tax filing
How to get on podcasts	
Creating promo videos for TikTok and YouTube	
Navigating the various self-publishing companies that advertise on Facebook	

### **Tell Your Friends and Writing Buds to Try the Historic California Writers Club**

As a reminder, CWC Sacramento delivers a robust and well-rounded slate of programs and special activities to members and the wider community. These include:

- A membership roster of accomplished writers only too willing to help and mentor newer writers. Members include award-winning journalists, article writers, publishers, historians, documentary subjects, international award winners, bloggers, anthologists, podcast hosts, memoirists, poets, and teachers.
- A monthly membership meeting with an esteemed featured speaker who members don't usually have access to. In addition to the speaker, topics identified by members for presentation, and, beginning in spring, a special series on query writing by agent Michael Larsen will be added to meetings.
- A unique network meeting where members can get real and share challenges and solutions.
- Open readings held on Zoom
- Critique groups
- Superior area events such as a rebirth of the Sacramento Book Festival and the Centennial—100 Years of Literary Success.

## The Power of Writing Anthologies

February is the month for writers re-evaluate their writing process and do some real writing. There are times that maybe the book isn't going just right, or your characters seem rigid or flat . . . it looks like you need a break.

Ever dreamed of seeing your name in print but feel like climbing Mount Publishing is too daunting? Well, grab your literary hiking boots, because I've got a secret shortcut for you: **anthologies**. Think of them as the literary equivalent of a potluck dinner – except instead of bringing your famous potato salad, you're serving up your best stories, poems, or essays alongside other talented writers. I have a short story in the last two years of [Hearts Through History](#) Anthologies. It served as a catalyst for writing my other books.

Picture this: You're sitting at your desk, staring at your computer screen, wondering how to break into the publishing world. Meanwhile, anthologies are practically waving their arms in the air shouting, "Hey you! Yes, you with the manuscript hidden in your drawer! We're over here!" They're the perfect steppingstone for writers at any stage of their journey, from nervous newcomers to battle-scarred veterans of the keyboard.

Here's what makes anthologies so deliciously appealing: they're themed collections that give you a creative playground to frolic in. It's like getting an invitation to a costume party—there are guidelines, sure, but within those boundaries, your imagination can run wild. I've personally dipped my toes in these waters, contributing to two holiday-themed anthologies with the [Hearts Through History](#) writers group. The assignment? Craft a Winter Solace story set in any historical period, keeping it under 10,000 words. In the 2024 anthology, we wrote about spirits through history for a Halloween Anthology. Great fun. Think of it as literary speed dating—you get to court your readers quickly, make them fall in love with your characters, and leave them wanting more.

And here's a little secret that might make you do a happy dance: you might already have a story tucked away that fits an anthology's theme perfectly! Or maybe it just needs a tiny tweak—like putting a Santa hat on your protagonist or moving your romance from spring to winter. Voilà! You're anthology ready!

But wait—there's more! (Yes, I just channeled my inner infomercial host, but bear with me.) Joining an anthology is like getting a VIP pass to the coolest writers' club in town. Suddenly, you're part of a community of word wizards, all working toward the same goal. You'll share beta reads, exchange ideas, and work with professional editors who'll help polish your prose until it sparkles like a freshly waxed floor. It's basically a master class in writing, minus the hefty tuition fees.

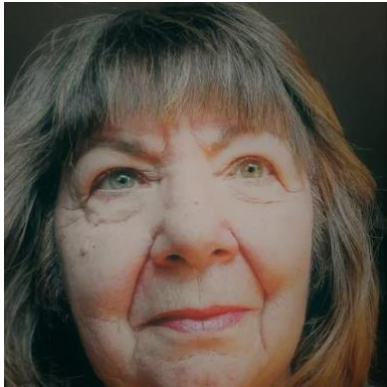
Now, before you start throwing your written confetti into every anthology basket you see, let's talk strategy. You'll want to make sure you're swimming in the right literary pool. Think of it like dating—you wouldn't look for your soulmate at a sketchy bar, right? Same principle applies here. Stick to reputable platforms like [Wattpad](#), [Scribophile](#), or even Reddit's writing communities. Local and state-wide author groups are golden too—organizations like the California Writers Club or the Southern California Writers Association.

Oh, and here's another gem for your writer's toolbox: [Submittable](#). It's like a matchmaking service for writers and anthologies. You can find countless submission opportunities that might just be perfect for that story you've been nurturing.

Remember, every bestselling author started somewhere, and many of them cut their publishing teeth on anthologies. It's like the literary equivalent of an open mic night—a chance to test your material, build your confidence, and maybe even steal the show. Plus, there's something incredibly satisfying about telling people, “Oh, that book on the shelf? Yeah, one of those stories is mine.” (Go ahead, practice saying it. I'll wait.)

So, what do you say? Ready to add “published author” to your résumé? The anthology world is waiting with open arms and empty pages, eager to showcase your literary brilliance. Who knows? Your short story might just be the one that readers can't stop talking about at their book clubs.

Check the submission criteria: Now go forth and write! May your coffee be strong, your Wi-Fi signal stronger, and your muse working overtime. The anthology stage awaits your debut performance!



Dorajane is a retired registered nurse and expert witness (on Catastrophic Injuries) who writes historical western romances, romantic suspense, and mysteries. You can find her under her pen name: Jo Donahue at [www.jodonahue.com](http://www.jodonahue.com)

## Larry Mandelberg Gives Writers Tools for Clarity, Confidence, and Communication

by Julie Snider

Perhaps you want to finish—or finally begin—that novel in 2025. Maybe you've sent out a manuscript and aren't getting responses from agents. Or it could be you're dying to write more beautiful sentences. Whatever your goals in writing may be, consultant, speaker, and author Larry Mandelberg has a wonderful tool to help make them a reality. In a fascinating, interactive presentation given during CWC-Sacramento's January Network Meeting, Mandelberg divulged steps to, in his words, "Overcome issues in the way of our dreams, clarify goals, and gain the confidence to achieve them."

Using a tool Larry calls the Issue/Opportunity Organizer, attendees looked into our writing hearts. What unfulfilled needs lie within? We discovered a path to cut through the confusion about achieving them. Larry told us that many local and regional business leaders have successfully used the organizer to clarify and reach goals over the past 26 years. That said, one doesn't need to be a titan of industry or commerce to gain value from the tool. In fact, Larry says he uses the six steps to uncover and solve problems regularly, no matter what the issue is.

### Steps Toward Success

Speaking in a direct yet light-hearted manner, Larry guided us through the six steps of his organizer. The steps are these:

- Issue Definition—A brief, but clear definition of the issue I wish to discuss. Be careful to define an issue rather than symptoms of a problem.
- Strategic Impact—A brief explanation of this issue's relation to the business's strategic direction. In writerly terms: How does the issue relate to my long-term writing goals?
- Background Information—What I need to know to provide meaningful feedback. What have I already tried?
- Options Being Considered—What I think I should do and why. Is it better to do "x" or "y"?
- My Ideal Outcome Would Be: What result am I seeking?
- The assistance, input, and suggestions I want is ... What will help? Who should I ask?

As the last step shows, the organizer's design enables people to get help from colleagues with experience in similar problems or situations. To quote Larry, "experience is the magic." Once we've defined our issue, analyzed it, and determined the concrete outcome we want, the question becomes, "Who can help

me get there?" The speaker suggested that it's possible to look to past role models, even those who are no longer living, and learn how they overcame similar issues.

### How Writers Can Use the Steps

We need to focus on gaining the writing and communication skills to learn how to do whatever we want to do. It's a matter of finding both the energy and desire to overcome obstacles, followed up with action. By really honing the answers to the six questions in the planner, it's possible to remove obstacles and achieve the goals that we have for ourselves.

The steps don't have to be followed in linear fashion. In fact, it may be easier to start with the strategic outcome or background information, then circle back to defining the issue. For example, a writer may first think the issue is not getting published. Upon reflection, it may turn out that they need guidance to find outlets that are likely to be receptive to their genre or writing style. This clarifies the issue and uncovers likely sources of support.

### The Bottom Line

The process, if applied honestly, can change lives. Let's make 2025 the year of positive change. Why stay stuck with writing problems, when you can cut through the confusion and make a realistic plan for moving forward? Isn't that what we all want in the long run? Larry stressed that the "right thing to do" is based upon each writer's long-term goals, as identified in Step 2. Here's to finding your unique "right thing," communicating it with confidence, and achieving success!



Larry and his wife will move to France in several months. He says the best way to reach him is by email, as that won't be changing: [larry@mandelberg.biz](mailto:larry@mandelberg.biz). His book, [Businesses Don't Fail, They Commit Suicide](#), is available through Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and other outlets.



## KEEP SEVERAL IRONS IN THE FIRE AND ALWAYS KEEP MOVING FORWARD



[Kimberly A. Edwards](#)

### **When Did You First Get Interested in Writing?**

Gosh, I think I was born with words more easily coming out of the end of my fingertips than my mouth. And as a third-grader, with my mother terminally ill, I processed the mystery by reading and writing, not speaking about it. Each morning I would jump out of bed, slide my forearm across paper, and watched the transfer of stories that cooked up overnight onto a lined paper. I would read them to my mother, my aunt, and an adored housekeeper. They all encouraged my writing. When I was 12, I started a newspaper for relatives living in five states. I interviewed them by phone, handwrote their news into columns, copied issues at my uncle's business, and sent the newsletter by mail. This experience taught me "audience." At age 13 the *Bee* published an excerpt from a poem I wrote for Father's Day.

During college I wrote for the newspaper, but I longed to just write my own column. When issues would come out, classmates would laugh because they could always tell my style before reading the byline. Unfortunately, I didn't understand the value of seriously studying journalism, nor paying close attention to literature taught in classes. Much later I would learn that writing is a *learned* craft and that studying the mentors is so valuable!

When in my 20s I made my first sale to a high-profile East Coast magazine. I would later sell two more pieces to them. I sold several short pieces to another big magazine. The editor would allow me to send lists of ideas and she would comment on each: *looks good, too narrow*, etc. I also wrote for many specialty magazines, pets, sales, etc. I took a class with Bud Gardner of the California Writers Club who taught me to analyze magazines I wanted to write for. He encouraged me to join the club. Using Bud's marketing form, I always had several articles out at a time to lessen the pain when rejections arrived in the mail.

I became a columnist for *Single News*, a Sacramento shoestring newsprint; the editor paid me \$5 a column. I did not renew membership in CWC because I found members all older than me, and very accomplished. But I stayed in touch with several members. (Decades later I rejoined the club to connect with “my people.”)

When in my early 30s, I founded a monthly 12-page newsletter for writers. I would get up early and before work, read and summarize writing and publishing trends and markets, then compile the newsletter. This effort gave me access to prominent people. My newsletter was mentioned in *Publishers Weekly*, etc. The *Bee* did an article on me for the “Sunday Woman” supplement. When I found out I was expecting my 3<sup>rd</sup> child, I had to give up the newsletter. Now working on a novel, I was accepted into the Squaw Valley Community of Writers Fiction Section. Here I learned the value of *workshopping* other people’s work.

### **What training helped you improve your writing?**

Training that helped the most occurred when I was thrust into situations that tested me. This included learning how to evaluate writing and make suggestions. At Kenyon College Writers Workshop, we had to produce new writing each day for workshopping by teachers and others. I am not a fast writer. Everyone seemed better than me in developing new writing. We also had to read aloud a story in a filled theater. This taught me the importance of rhythm and delivery. When I later taught at the Renaissance Society, I had to prepare lessons and loved the energy and talent I saw in the room.

### **What in your writing career are you most proud of?**

That I have the skill to characterize and memorialize people who make interesting characters and should not be forgotten and also to make stories out of injustices. I guess I am also very proud of the writers newsletter I produced for 2 1/2 years. I am also proud of my motorcycle history book. When you write articles on different subjects, you learn to quickly identify and contact industry leaders to get the lay of the land. For the book, I took on a subject I knew relatively little about, went to motorcycle club meetings, and for two years researched the invasion of the motorcycle industry in Sacramento starting in the early 1900s. I would stay up late at night tracking down interesting things about forgotten people. One early rider lived with his grandmother in Mexico who lived to be 108. He died early of a gastrointestinal condition. Another who participated in the local leg of a national relay was misidentified by the local newspapers as he drove through Capitol Park. I pieced together the real story and figured out he later died of alcohol poisoning. He left a daughter who decades later signed in at an event hosted by the Cyclettes (female motorcycle club). Bringing to life these lost people—and often finding descendants such as of the first motorcycle cop—gave me pleasure.

## What words of encouragement would you give to new writers?

When you submit your work for publication, remember that editors are looking for great work. If your work is rejected, all it means is that more drafting is needed or that the timing or fit isn't right. Either way, you have to have a tough skin and move on.

Everything is potential material for the future. I have two unfinished novels, one a saga of generations with a backdrop of the symbiotic relationship between California and Mexico. The other is about a person who influenced me greatly during the last 12 months of my mother's life. Good characters and good people never go out of style.

Never let an editor go. Editors I wrote for decades ago moved into high positions. One became an agent. I should have hung onto them as a writer and potentially moved up with them.

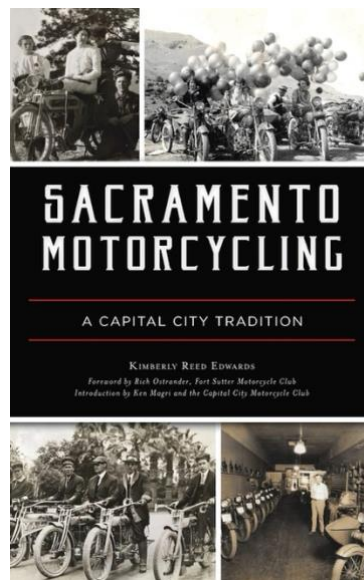
Understand that you may need to put money into your project or your writing career. It is a worthy profession.

Don't get hung up on editorial changes made to get your piece in print.

Keep a list of your writing credits. Look for markets, however small. It doesn't matter if they don't pay. Some editors of small pubs are hungry for material. Organize your credits by subject. Mine are organized by travel, culture, business, seniors, children, etc.

Always put the reader right there in what you are writing. If you like to write, you will learn to do this. Writing is your friend!!!!!! But you have to learn how to get me there with you, and take me along for a ride.

Good luck to all. Everyone takes an individual path to get there. You WILL get there!



## NEW MEMBERS

- **Carl Weber** writes non-fiction and social commentary.
- **Deborah Kelch** writes fiction and poetry.
- **Jacki Sturkie**
- **Rebecca Nelson** writes on topics of politics, religion and ethics. Has written textbooks.
- **Jennifer Bearss**
- **Stephanie Caballero** writes women's fiction
- **Jennifer Holden** writes non-fiction essay, graphic novel, fiction
- **Terol McCullar** writes science fiction and memoir
- **Maureen White**
- **Robert Pires-Sturm** writes fantasy, horror, and literary
- **Dorothea Bonneau**
- **Lou Ann Barnett** writes YA fantasy and poetry

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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' Books](#) 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 at [sacramentowriters@gmail.com](mailto:sacramentowriters@gmail.com). Your names and genre will be collected and linked with other interested members. Your newly formed group can get help with getting started on our website under Members Resources then select Critique Group.

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## EDITORS FROM OUR MEMBERSHIP

(in case you have a need)

[Gini Grossenbach](#)

[Janey Ranlett](#)

[Rebecca Partridge](#)

# Spring Open Reading

by John Patterson

## Sign Up To Read Your—Or—Listen To Your Colleagues' Work

Tuesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> 7:00 pm

Sign-up for the Zoom (link below) Open Reading at:  
[2johnpatterson@gmail.com](mailto:2johnpatterson@gmail.com)

Tuesday  
**18**  
March

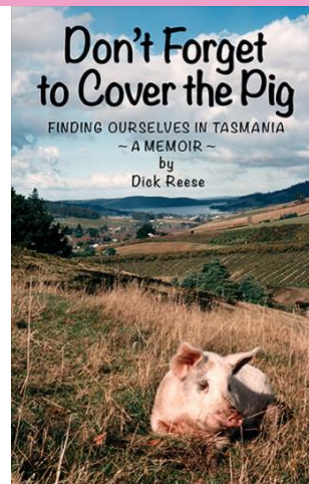
This reading commences our Branch's fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) year of our writers as sharing their work. The readings are insightful, akin to a quick workshop on how scenes and characters have been quickly devised, taking listeners to new places. In these journeys we learn about people and places, real and imagined, outside of our experiences. Please attend to share and/or listen for an enjoyable evening.

Check-in for readers opens at 6:30, and audience before 7:00 pm.

John Patterson is inviting you to use this Zoom [link](#).

Meeting ID: 860 6016 9459 Passcode: 686480

## Announcements



Dick Reese recently self-published [Don't Forget to Cover the Pig: Finding Ourselves in Tasmania - A Memoir](#).

The book describes our family's migration to Australia's remote island of Tasmania where we purchased a 125-acre farm and, too late, realized:

- We knew nothing about farming
- Keeping livestock confined is nearly impossible
- The Yank to Aussie cultural gap is vast
- All snakes in Tasmania are poisonous

Available for purchase on [Amazon](#) and at all popular online stores (plus from the stash in my trunk).



Want more assistance or a workshop series to broaden your editing skills?  
Contact CWC member, [Gini Grossenbacher](#), or [register on Eventbrite](#) for  
**Polish to Perfection: The Art of Manuscript Revision Workshops**

A Four Week Online Mini-Series, Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26  
\$25/class; \$100/mini-series.



Take a journey into the techniques and strategies for refining your work to professional standards. Learn how to tackle step-by-step revisions to bring clarity, depth, and impact to your writing. Safe space environment. Wednesday evenings, 6–8 pm, facilitated by Gini Grossenbacher, guest instructor, Rebecca Evans, M.A., and sponsored by [San Rafael Writers & Artists](#) and JGKS Press.



### Next Generation Short Story Awards

A not-for-profit international awards program for authors of short stories.

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

A brand new not-for-profit awards program open to authors writing short stories worldwide is now accepting entries written in English.

Why you should enter the [Next Generation Short Story Awards](#):

- 30+ Categories open to all short story authors worldwide
- Cash Prizes plus Gold Medals for all Winners
- Inclusion in a published Anthology for all Winners
- Exposure and valuable literary recognition
- Gala invitation for all Grand Prize Winners to attend the prestigious awards reception being held in conjunction with the Next Generation Indie Book Awards (NGIBA) awards gala

[Enter](#) by February 27, 2025 to take advantage of this exciting opportunity to have your short story considered for cash prizes, awards, exposure, and recognition as one of the top short stories written this year!

On Friday, April 11, 2025, Chuck Sambuchino will return to Sacramento to host The 2025 Sacramento Writing Workshop—a full-day in-person “How to Get Published” writing event. This event is a unique opportunity to get intense instruction over the course of one day. On the conference website, you will find the agents and editors expected to be in attendance. Seating is limited to 125 total, resulting in a event truly personalized with so many experts in the house. We, the California Writers Club Sacramento, are proud to be the local partner of this event. See you there!

## CWC SACRAMENTO LEADERSHIP

### Board of Directors

#### Officers

President: Bernard Wozny  
First Vice-President/Programs: Kimberly Edwards  
Second Vice-President/Membership: Bonnie Blue  
Treasurer: Tim Schooley  
Secretary: OPEN

#### Directors

Kimberly Edwards (Board Member Emeritus)  
Chris Hennessy  
William MacDonald  
Cheryl Stapp

### Club Positions

Contest Coordinator: OPEN  
Historian: Julie Bauer  
Marketing Consultant: Alysse Adularia  
Newsletter: William MacDonald  
Open Readings Host & Coordinator: John Patterson  
Publicity Chair (Print/TV/Radio/Social Media): Chris Hennessy  
Webmaster: Bernard Wozny  
Writers Network Coordinator: Cheryl Stapp

