



THIRD SATURDAY MEETING

How is a book acquired at a publishing house—and how can you help yours stand out?



Join us for our May CWC-Sacramento meeting on **Saturday, May 17, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 2425 Sierra Blvd, Sacramento.** Former Big Five editor [Heather Lazare](#) will pull back the curtain on what really happens when

your book goes out on submission to a publisher. When your literary agent submits your proposal or manuscript, there are dozens of decisions made before an editor is allowed to make an offer—what are those, and who's involved? We'll talk about all this and more, leaving plenty of time for questions!

What you'll learn from Heather:

- What “comp titles” are and what role they play on the financial side of publishing.
- What to ask when you meet with an editor.
- What does a publisher mean by “platform,” and what role does it play in the acquisition process?
- Why you shouldn't quit your day job—even if you get a six-figure book deal.
- What is an advance, and how does an author earn out their advance?

This session will also include Micro-Workshop Query Work with Michael Larsen. Admission is \$15, since we have to pay for the room. You can pay on the day or do it the easy way by getting your ticket here:

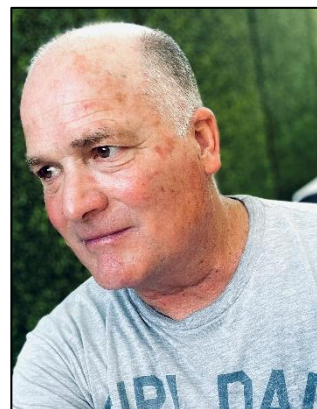
[BOOK ONLINE](#)

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FIRST FRIDAY MEETING

Captivating Literary Agents and Publishers



At our networking meeting on **Friday, May 2, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Denny's Restaurant** (8841 Greenback Lane, Orangevale), author and video pro [Chris Hennessy](#) will share “Captivating Literary Agents and Publishers.”

Join Chris to pick up useful tips like these:

- Learn how to connect with agents at writers' conferences and on QueryTracker.
 - “Know You and Your Stuff”—manuscript, elevator pitch, one page, you're extended pitch, etc.
- (continued)

- See clips from Chris' award-winning films, social media posts that tens of thousands have viewed, a query, and a book proposal. (continued)
- Watch Chris shoot a short/simple promotional video, ad-libbed, with his iPhone 12 and an audience volunteer.
- Understand the basics of creating your video speaking reel, getting speaking gigs, building your email list, and getting your name out there.

Chris Hennessy is a filmmaker, author, speaker, and CWC Sacramento board member. From 1990 to 2018, Chris produced 1500 films for Google, eBay, the SF 49ers, Deloitte, Office Max, etc. His videos have 8 million views.

Yoyo's *Miracles on College Street*, produced to promote Chris's memoir, *Touched by Hannah*, won most inspirational at the 2022 Manhattan Film Festival and runner-up 'Best Episode' 2022 Western Region Cable TV. Chris recently pitched *Touched by Hannah* to five agents who wanted his book proposal and sample chapters.

[Join the Zoom Meeting:](#)

Meeting ID: 817 3734 0307 Passcode: 227171



DON'T MISS IT! Sacramento Book Festival

The [Sacramento Book Festival](#) will take place on Saturday, May 31, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Shepard Garden & Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd.,

in East Sacramento, next to McKinley Park.

Many CWC members have signed up as authors or volunteers for the book festival—the book festival committee can't thank you enough! We're hoping that all CWC Sacramento members will attend. It will be the biggest, most fun book festival held in Sacramento for many years. More than 130 local authors will be there to talk about and sell their books. We'll have several well-known authors speaking during the

festival, including headliner James Rollins, award-winning mystery author Catriona McPherson, and crime fiction writers Claire Booth and James L'Etoile. Many sponsors will join us, including five bookstores, eight local writers' organizations, the Sacramento Public Library, Friends of the Library, 916 Inc, and the Sacramento Literacy Foundation. See you there!



Don't forget our fundraiser for the **Mustard Seed School** at the Sacramento Book Fair—we're asking book fair attendees to bring a new or gently used children's book (or to buy one during the festival) to donate to the school.

A CENTURY OF WRITING EXCELLENCE

Literary agent to join our Centennial Celebration

Newly added to the roster of presenters at our October 18 "A Century of Writing Excellence" centennial celebration is Sandra Proudman, a literary agent for Gallt & Zacker Literary Agency. An author as well as a seeker of manuscripts, this esteemed guest will hand out the Greater Sacramento Literary Commendations.

Headlining the program will be Pulitzer Prize-winning Editorial Cartoonist and Columnist Jack Ohman. Also speaking will be Carolyn Lynn Stevenson Grellas, Editor for Kelsay Books and 13-time Pushcart Nominee; Rich Ehisen, Editor-in-Chief of Capitol Weekly; Maryellen Burns, Cultural Historian & Author/Publisher; and Al González, Documentary Film Maker.

Join us on October 18 from 12:00 noon to 2:30 p.m. at the Northridge Country Club in Fair Oaks and take yourself back in time to 1925 to learn about trends in Sacramento writing and publishing in the 100 years since. See the book and period displays. Meet new people and add to your knowledge of efforts to promote writing in the community. We'll only be 100 once! Tickets on sale soon.

AUTHORS READ AND SHARE THEIR WORK

Summer's Open Reading

Our Summer's Open Reading is Tuesday, June 17 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Come read part of your work—finished, draft, WIP, hot off the keyboard ideas, whatever! If you don't sign up to share some copy, if only to gauge audience reaction, you're invited to attend and listen to fellow members' work. (This isn't a critique group; we share comments and questions.)

Email John Patterson to sign up for this event:
2johnpatterson@gmail.com.

Please note, if you arrive after the reading has started, you will be admitted as soon as the piece is concluded. Pieces are approx. eight (8) minutes long.

Check-in for readers is between 6:35 and 6:50 p.m., and we ask that audience members enter the Zoom call before 7:00 p.m.

VIRTUAL WRITERS' WORKSHOP

Zoom Flash Fiction World Series

Are you ready to spark your creativity and have some fun with your writing this spring? Gini Grossenbacher of San Rafael Writers & Artists is hosting a Zoom Flash Fiction World Series this month—a welcoming, inspiring space where you'll explore the power of short, punchy storytelling in a supportive group of fellow writers.

Dates: Wednesday evenings, 6-8 pm, May 7, 14, 21, and 28. \$25/per session. Take one, take all!

Each session includes:

- Guided prompts to get your creativity flowing
- Time to write and share in a low-pressure setting
- Encouraging feedback from your peers and instructor
- Tips and tools to strengthen your flash fiction voice

For more information, check out the Eventbrite page:
<https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/flash-fiction-world-virtual-writers-workshops-4156143>

BRANCH PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

There's a lot happening

By [Bernard Wozny](#)



There is a lot happening in the world today, some good, some bad. In many ways it always seems to weigh down upon you. Is that life, or is it just a matter of perspective?

Let me tell you that there is also a lot happening here in our club. That definitely is not a matter of perspective.

We have two new members of the board. And a lot of new initiatives.

Teri Lown has accepted the position as club Secretary. So, offer a warm welcome to Teri when you see her at club meetings. Not only does she fulfil the role, but she also brings new ideas and opinions to the board.

Starting this month, the newsletter has a new editor. Wendy Rose has accepted this role, and you will see her creative touch on this edition. If you have any stories or news, please send them to Wendy c/o sacramentowriters@gmail.com.

One of the big initiatives coming up is to help with creating query letters for agents. Michael Larsen, a foremost agent in California, will be guiding us on this. At the end of each Saturday meeting, Mike will work with members to hone their query letter skills. At the next meeting on Saturday, May 17th, at the Unitarian Church, he will advise on creating the author's bio. This is typically a single paragraph at the end of the letter.

In addition, at the next Friday meeting at Denny's on May 2nd, Chris Hennessy will tell us how he approached agents and publishers. This promises to be a valuable preamble to Mike's mini workshop.

We don't stop there. Christina Brabham will be leading a design initiative for our website. She will liaise with students from Sacramento City College,
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who are graphic artists, designers, coders, etc. They will make recommendations which we can then choose to implement. These recommendations will relate to the content, layout but also the branding. For instance, we do not have a branch logo.

I have a question for all our members; What do you WANT to see on our website? This also includes what you do NOT want to see on our website. Ideas are welcome, after all, this is YOUR website.

As I said, there is a lot happening here at your CWC Sacramento Branch. I like to think this is all positive. So, if you ever feel subdued by the pressures of today's life, then come to our meetings. Here you can relax and enhance your love for writing.

Remember, your words must be read.

bpwozny@gmail.com

Members' announcements



Congratulations! **Linda Smith**

Hoggan won First Place in [Story Circle Network's](#) online writing competition for her essay "What the Stars See."

The story will appear in the June SCN Journal, is available

on the [Story Circle Network website](#), and available here: <https://lyndasmithhoggan.com/2025/02/what-the-stars-see/>

Kathy Lynne Marshall will present at the Annual Midwest African American Genealogical Institute, Writing Track in July. One class will teach students how to create and use a book template to showcase their research efforts. A second course will tutor them in how to print a "proof" using Kindle Direct Publishing. For more information, see her website at <https://kathyllynmarshall.com/>

Welcome to a world where dreams and reality intersect. By day, **Kanika Marshall** delves into the precise world of welding. But when night falls, her dreams take flight, soaring through fantastical landscapes to weave 28 captivating tales called [Dreamscapes Anthology Where Fantasy, Suspense & Joy Intersect](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

May/June 2025

May 2, Friday

CWC Monthly Networking Meeting, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., Chris Hennessy: "How to Captivate Literary Agents and Publishers", Denny's Restaurant, 8841 Greenback Lane, Orangevale.

May 17, Saturday

CWC Saturday Meeting, 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., Heather Lazare: "How is a book acquired at a publishing house—and how can you help yours stand out?", Unitarian Universalist Church, 2425 Sierra Blvd, Sacramento. [Book online here](#).

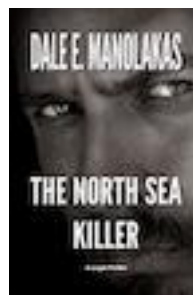
May 31, Saturday

Sacramento Book Festival, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Shepard Garden & Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd., East Sacramento. Free to the public.

June 17, Tuesday

Summer's Open Reading, 7:00 p.m., via Zoom. [Sign up here](#).

Request for reviews *The North Sea Killer*



Member **Dale E. Manolakas** would like to gift you a free ebook in exchange for a fair review of his book, *The North Sea Killer: A Legal Thriller*.

Kirkus review calls the book a "taut legal tale masterfully fused with a frightening portrayal of a killer. The

author opts for suspense over gratuitous violence... The London-set trial takes center stage in the final act, and readers will be on tenterhooks waiting to see if an innocent man will serve time for Edward's deeds."

Dale says, "I would truly appreciate the help with my latest release. Please email me at dalemanolakas@yahoo.com and put 'Request for Free Copy of *The North Sea Killer*' in the subject line."

Free access to journal databases for fiction, non-fiction, and poetry

By Lynda Smith Hoggan

Michael Barrington mentioned two journal databases in his April presentation: Brecht De Poortere has compiled a (rated) database for fiction and nonfiction of over 1000 journals, plus a smaller one for poetry. His ratings are based on factors such as whether the journal submits for prizes/anthologies, but whether you care about that or not, there is a wealth of info such as when to submit, word count limits, are simultaneous submissions ok, do they pay, number of submissions, acceptance rate, and more.

You can download the journal rankings on Brecht's website: <https://www.brechtdepoortere.com/>

Members' corner

By Bonnie Gault-Blue

Election update: Our call for candidates to run for board positions took place in the first two weeks of April. One candidate offered to run for an uncontested position. We will be announcing the slate of board members in the June Newsletter, so stay tuned.

Volunteers update: We have been fortunate to have received two volunteers to help the Board:

Teri Lown has volunteered to take on the secretary position on the board. As secretary, she will take notes during the board meetings and make executive decisions with the other board executives: the president, the vice presidents, and the treasurer. Teri takes the reins from Cheryl Stapp, who volunteered to take on the extra position until a permanent secretary was found. Imagine organizing the Friday Networking Meetings and being secretary. So many thanks go out to Cheryl. And let us welcome Teri to the Board.

Wendy Rose has offered to create our newsletter, following our previous newsletter person, William MacDonald. Wendy has not been able to attend many meetings, so decided instead to volunteer her skills.

The board members are so grateful, and me especially as the interim newsletter person. Wendy has many skills and ideas and we can expect our newsletter to maintain its consistent high standards. Please send any announcements you wish to share in the newsletter to Wendy c/o sacramentowriters@gmail.com.

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 into the world. Email Bonnie at sacramentowriters@gmail.com. Your name and genre will be collected and linked with other interested members. Your newly formed group can get help getting started on our website under Members Resources, then select Critique Group.

Editing services

- Gini Grossenbacher: <https://www.ginigrossenbacher.com>
- Janey Ranlett: Search for Janey Ranlett on Linked-in
- Rebecca Partridge: <https://www.ripartridge.com/>

Other Services

Audiobook narration: Dina Kouremetis, <https://www.denakouremetis.com>, 415-235-2891.

IN THE NEWS

Legislator Advocates for Writers with the AI Copyright Transparency Act

By Dana Michaels

Legislator Advocates for Writers with the AI Copyright Transparency Act

You've undoubtedly heard or read something about "GenAI"—generative artificial intelligence—being trained on copyrighted material without the owners' knowledge or permission.

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Fortunately, creative people have friends in the California Legislature who are ready to solve this problem. Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan (D-Orinda) has introduced AB 412, the AI Copyright Transparency Act.

Tech firms such as Amazon, Google, and ChatGPT have “scraped” the internet for decades of newspaper and magazine articles, E-books, manuscripts, and screenplays to teach their large language models (LLM) the algorithms that make them seem to “understand” questions or prompts and respond with reasonable written answers.

But AI is not intelligent; it can’t think or understand anything. Its responses are based on algorithms that copy the letter and word patterns found in the literature used to create it.

The New York Times and others have sued AI developers who’ve used their copyrighted materials to train new GenAI models without compensating or crediting the owners of those materials. Most copyright owners have no way of knowing whether their work has been used to train any LLM. Courts haven’t yet decided whether this practice is legal.

AI firms are profiting handsomely from authors’, artists’, and voice actors’ creations. Yet, these firms seem to think they owe writers and artists nothing for the use of our products.

The AI Copyright Transparency Act should increase transparency around the use of copyrighted materials to train GenAI systems and models. The proposed legislation requires GenAI developers to inform copyright owners when their materials are included in GenAI training datasets.

"As the AI industry continues to develop and expand, it is critical for content creators to know if and how their work is being used to train advanced models," said Assemblymember Bauer-Kahan. "The AI Copyright Transparency Act increases accountability for AI developers and empowers copyright owners to exercise their rights."

AB 412 needs all the support it can get, to be passed this legislative session. If you would like this legal

protection for California’s writers, now is the time to tell your State Senator and Assembly Member why it’s important to you, and ask them to support it.

[Read the news release here.](#)

CWC Sacramento leadership

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- President: Bernard Wozny
- 1st Vice-President/Programs: Kimberly Edwards
- 2nd Vice-President/Membership: Bonnie Blue
- Treasurer: Tim Schooley
- Secretary: Theresa Lown

CLUB POSITIONS

- Club Journalist: Julia Markel
- Contest Coordinator: OPEN
- Historian: Julie Bauer
- Marketing Consultant: Alysse Adularia
- Newsletter: Wendy Rose
- Open Readings Host & Coordinator: John Patterson
- Publicity Chair: Chris Hennessy
- Webmaster: Bernard Wozny
- Writers Network Coordinator: Cheryl Stapp

Looking back 100 years



Caption: The affiliation dinner of the newly-formed CWC Sacramento Branch, October 31, 1925, Senator Hotel.

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