



THIRD SATURDAY MEETING

How to successfully publish your own books



Publishing your own book can be every bit as impactful and lucrative as working with a traditional publisher, but to be successful you have to do it in a professional way. Whatever the type of book, the framework of how you publish is the same, though some of

the financials and processes are different.

Join us on **Saturday, June 21, from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Old Spaghetti Factory**, 1625 Watt Avenue, Sacramento, for our luncheon meeting with a hands-on workshop by Andrea Fleck-Nisbet, CEO of the Independent Book Publishers Association (IBPA). She'll give you the tools—and the roadmap—to become a successful Author Publisher.

What you'll learn from Andrea:

- How to prepare financially for publishing your own book
- Who you'll need to help you with the process
- Options for distributing your books to readers
- How to develop a marketing plan
- Why reviews are important and how to secure them

This event will also include Micro-Workshop Query Work with Michael Larsen. The luncheon menu features salad, three entree choices, dessert, and coffee. Get your tickets here:

BOOK ONLINE

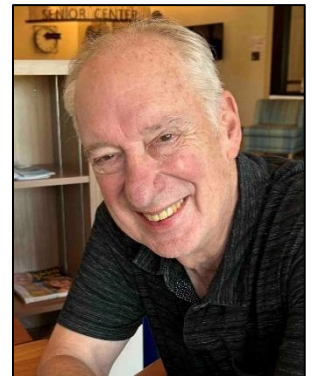
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FIRST FRIDAY MEETING

Writing science fiction

At our networking meeting on **Friday, June 6, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Denny's Restaurant**, (8841 Greenback Lane, Orangevale) self-published author George T. Hahn will explore the distinctive aspects of writing science fiction, including:



- What is science fiction?
- The many categories of science fiction
- Can you write science fiction?
- How hard do you want it to be?
- Resources

Zoomers can [Join the Zoom Meeting](#) at 10 a.m.
Meeting ID: 817 3734 0307 Passcode: 227171

100 YEARS OF WRITING EXCELLENCE

Write on, 100 years!

Planning for our Centennial Gala is in full swing—you won't want to miss this once-in-a-century event.

Save the date: October 18, 2025, 12:00–3:00 p.m., North Ridge Country Club, Fair Oaks. Tickets are \$65 and will be available closer to the event. Join us for an unforgettable afternoon honoring 100 years of literary legacy, community, and creativity. [Explore more event details, speakers, and agenda on our website.](#)

Our special thanks go out to Sandra Navarro and Ron Javor for their donations to the event.

Let's show who we are with "100 Faces in 100 Days"



By Christina de Wit

We've created a special way to showcase our membership and highlight the centennial at the same time. We're calling it "100 Faces in 100 Days."

We'd love for members—poets, memoirists, fiction and non-fiction writers, journalists, new and long-standing—to participate!

Each day starting in late August, a short 10- to 15-second video highlighting one of our members will be released on our club's Instagram and Facebook pages. Capturing 100 faces is ambitious, considering we have more than 170 members; therefore, the video collection will begin in mid-to-late June.

Of course, we'll need your help to accomplish this. Join us in raising awareness about our club, our valued writing comrades within the larger Sacramento area, and the larger CWC organization that has produced respected California poets laureate and California Writers Week on behalf of all writers statewide. Look for more information to come.

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, you're invited to attend and listen to fellow members' work. (This isn't a critique group; we share comments and questions.)

To sign up, email [John Patterson](#). Check in for readers is between 6:35 and 6:50 p.m., and the audience before 7:00 p.m. Topic: John Patterson's Open Reading Zoom, Meeting Link: [Join the Zoom Meeting](#).

CWC SACRAMENTO LEADERSHIP UPDATE

Board elections 2025-2026

By Bonnie Blue, Nominating Committee Chair

It's June and time for elections to be held for our Executive Board positions. During the nominating process, two members put themselves forward for uncontested positions. And happily, the other positions will be filled by previous Board members.

So, I declare this an election of acclamation: No ballots will be used.

The candidates for the 2025-2026 year, starting July 1st are:

- President, Sandra Navarro
- Interim Vice President of Programs, Kim Edwards
- Vice President of Membership, Bonnie Blue
- Treasurer, Tim Schooley
- Secretary, Teri Lown

STORYTELLING IN OUR COMMUNITY

Stories are racing through our region

By John Patterson

Yes! Many of us are aware of other writing groups in our region. These written stories hold fast to the page and allow us to experience them when we choose to

(‘Stories are racing through our region’, continued from page 2)

pick them up or listen to an Audible book. Podcasts bring the added dimension of bringing spoken journalism. We hear the report or interview “live.”

Storytelling in our region is enjoying a boom period. There are at least three active storytelling organizations in Sacramento who are sharing insights and publicity of each other’s endeavors. Be aware of these opportunities. Oh, you might ask, “What can I do with these opportunities?” You can glean lessons from life, be entertained, as well as find an opportunity to share yourself or your creations. Note, none of these allow reading or notes.

Capital Storytelling serves a growth mindset for true stories. They have various workshops to get storytellers on the road. And they have various formats to hear these stories. They train Story Ambassadors to grow storytelling in other parts of the community, which is one of their more notable programs. Some of their other programs are Immigrant Storytelling Program and the Stories of Science Program. Look through their website. You’ll see “Do Tell,” a monthly program at Log Off Brewing in Rancho Cordova on the second Tuesday of the month.

Sacramento Storytellers Guild has an annual festival in March. They have monthly storytelling opportunities, as well as slots for two poets, on the third Saturday of each month from 2:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. at the Sacramento Poetry Center. These are well-honed stories for entertainment purposes. The stories can be of any genre except not X-rated. Sac Storytellers also has a few workshops from time to time.

A relative newcomer to our scene is **In a Nutshell Productions**. Their monthly production at The Sofia theatre features longer format stories before audiences of up to 300 people. They’ve also launched a new format of live, stand-up storytelling at the Old Soul Coffee Shop in the Alley near 17th & L, the third Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. This is a ‘put your name in the hat’ format, very common to storytelling.

UPCOMING EVENTS

June/July 2025

June 6, Friday

CWC Monthly Networking Meeting, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., George Hahn: “Writing Science Fiction”, Denny’s Restaurant, 8841 Greenback Lane, Orangevale. Also via Zoom: Meeting ID: 817 3734 0307 Passcode: 227171

June 17, Tuesday

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

June 21, Saturday

CWC Saturday Meeting, 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., Andrea Flick-Nisbet: “How to successfully publish your own books”, the Old Spaghetti Factory, 1625 Watt Avenue, Sacramento. [Book online here](#).

Note: There will be no First Friday meeting in July.

Besides the ‘cross-pollination’ between these groups, these events announce and share information about events in the Bay Area, Foothills, and our region. One of the more popular and harder to attain ‘golden rings’ of storytelling, is to perform at [the Berkeley Moth program](#). The ten monthly winners are invited to participate in the annual Grand Slam competition. These events showcase at the 500-seat, historic [Freight & Salvage Theatre](#) in the Berkeley Theatre District.

Writers make good use of these opportunities. A scene, character, bit of conflict, or story center revealed before a live audience can provide quality feedback. Go, enjoy, and learn.

LEARN ABOUT GETTING PUBLISHED

New submission support group via Zoom

For many writers, the dream is to see their words in print. But how do you get published? Is it normal to pay submission fees, or to not hear back for months? Where do you find places to submit, and how do you

(‘New submission support group via Zoom’, continued from page 3)

even do that? CWC Berkeley is now offering a submission support group every fourth Sunday at 1 p.m. via Zoom. Get more info and register for the sessions on the [CWC Berkeley website](#).

BRANCH PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

How was the Book Festival?

By [Bernard Wozny](#)



By the time you read this, our Book Festival will be in the past. All I can say right now is, I hope you all had a good time. More than that, I trust you all felt a sense of pride while attending your own festival.

June means that summer is starting, school is over. Kids are at home in celebratory mode, while parents pay for vacations.

Now that the festival is over, it doesn’t mean we should sit back and congratulate ourselves on what fine fellows we are. There is a lot of work to do, we must identify all the good and bad things we did. In other words, we need to improve the festival for next year.

This is where you come in.

I want each and every one of you to provide feedback. You can provide lists and bullet points, but importantly, I need the pros AND cons.

Don’t just say it was wonderful, say why it was wonderful.

Let me know what we could have done better.

Tell me what you think was missing.

If you think you want to be involved next year, don’t be shy, let me know. This is your festival, so you are entitled to help run it.

Send comments directly to my email below.

In the meantime, thanks to the committee members who helped put this together. And thanks to all the

volunteers who worked hard through the day to keep things running. I’ll be passing all your praise onto them.

While we think what fine fellows we are, cast your thoughts forward in time to October. Give some thought to what we as a club have done. We will be celebrating our 100th anniversary!

This is not a trivial event, we will be celebrating a lineage of literary personalities. Hurray! We created a humble book party and called it a festival, does such an event compare with a centenary?

Take a look who brought us here and enabled us to have a festival. Maybe read the books of those who led us here. Jack London was a writer I grew up on from an early age. I can read his books repeatedly.

We are Writers Helping Writers!

This month I only have a short message because I’m going out into the June sunshine to prepare for the future.

Remember, your words must be read.

bpwozny@gmail.com

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY

So many amazing things

Our membership year runs from July 1 – June 30, which means it’s time to renew your membership and remain active in this vibrant community of writers.

Your \$45 renewal gets you access to so many amazing things—monthly speaker events, workshops, critique groups, resources, and opportunities to share your work. It also supports the club’s mission to empower writers across all genres and experience levels.

Renew today by sending your check to:

CWC-Sacramento

P.O. Box 1231

Orangevale, CA 95662-1231

Please be sure that your name appears on your check and note any changes in address, telephone, email, or genre in the past year.

Or, [renew online here](#).

MAY 2 PRESENTATION RECAP

Chris Hennessy: Captivating literary agents and publishers

by Teri Lown

If there is one word that describes Chris Hennessy's approach to writing and publishing, it's fearless. Presenting from the podium just one day after lung surgery, Chris motivated us with his trademark energetic style recounting the story of his preemie daughter's struggle for life amid his own cancer diagnosis.

His manuscript, "Touched by Hannah" is ready for publishing, and he is seeking an agent. Chris offered us a glimpse of how he has successfully marketed and promoted his work. His message: Networking works, so does public speaking, making speaking reels and book trailers, newsletters and social media. Most importantly, be consistent in keeping up with your chosen platform.

Networking has proven to be key for Chris's career in media, first as a filmmaker and now as a motivational speaker and author. Writer's groups and conferences are an excellent way to get to know the people who can help you, like agents and other authors. His connection to Cecil Murphy, a prolific Christian writer, developed with networking.

Chris demonstrated that public speaking and speaking reels are an excellent way to broaden your reach and build an email list, while adding value to your resume. Giving speeches sells books and products. When people see your authentic self, if you're likeable, you build a fan base.

Suggestions for securing a speaking gig are to join Toastmasters Clubs, writing clubs like CWC, Rotary or Kiwanis. A speaking agent and/or publicist will get you engagements in front of larger audiences. "The Message of You" by Judy Carter is a must-read book for honing your public speaking skills. Chris raffled off a copy of her book during his presentation and lucky Barbara Young was the winner.

A speaking reel is a short one-to-three-minute clip of you giving a talk, or relating a powerful moment in your career, that is primarily designed to market yourself to secure a speaking gig. Consider adding clips from previous talks.

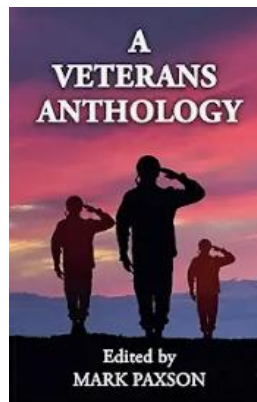
Professional editing tool "Pinnacle" is helpful in making these reels. It's important that your audience can see and hear you, good audio and visual are important elements for an effective video. His advice: write it, film it, share it. Add testimonials, an author biography, and post links to it at your website.

Writing articles and submitting them to newspapers and periodicals is another way to build an audience. Publishing a newsletter can grow a following. Chris likes to write two personal essays a month for his newsletter Henneschtick, on Substack. Visit his website to get on this mailing list, hENCHRIS.COM.

Social media platforms are another way to share yourself and work with others. It's basically free promotion. He advises to pay attention to it, post a few times per week, be your authentic self, be likeable, incorporate videos, join Facebook groups. Above all be consistent.

Don't forget you are part of a community of writers with whom you can trade services. Chris helped a fellow writer develop a trailer video for his book. This author then helped him to promote his newsletter. The forward momentum builds on itself. People will buy your book because they like YOU.

Members' announcements



Mark Paxson edited and recently published *A Veteran's Anthology*. Mark, an Elk Grove Writer's Club member, thanked Marcia Ehinger for her manuscript review and Karen Phillips (phillipscovers.com) for her cover art. John Patterson's tribute piece to his father opened the anthology, with

pieces by a dozen other writers, including Mark, Marcia and PL Clark. (Available on Amazon).

Creative Growth Fellowship

By Bernard Wozny



The City of Sacramento offers a stipend of \$850 per month for artists who are in need. The official title is the Creative Growth Fellowship Program; I

include the web link below where you can apply.

This is open to creative artists of all walks, so let's see some literary applications succeed! There is a [recording of a Zoom meeting that happened on May 19](#), which will explain the program and how to apply. Also, take a look at their web page: [Creative Growth Fellowship Program | City of Sacramento](#)

So, hone your application skills and justify your need for a stipend.

In their efforts to stimulate creativity, the city may lean towards younger or newer artists. But do not let age or any other discriminatory aspect deter you from application.

If you need assistance on how to complete your application, let me know. If I can't help you, I know a person who can.

Many thanks to Lois Buchter who discovered this while investigating art grants in general. Good luck, and make me proud!

Members' corner

By Bonnie Blue

New Members

Gloria Rosario writes creative non-fiction and short stories.

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. You can have your published books listed in our Members' Books section

by sending a description and a picture of its cover to Bernard at bpwozny@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 out into the world.

Email Bonnie at 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.

Services from our Membership (in case you have a need)

Editors:

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

Other Services

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



MAY 17 PRESENTATION RECAP

Heather Lazare: Behind the scenes of a book acquisition

By Julia Markel

What happens after you sign with an agent was Heather Lazare's focus in her presentation to the CWC Sacramento's Third Saturday Meeting, May 17th.

(‘Heather Lazare: Behind the scenes of a book acquisition’, continued from page 6)

“It’s something that you don’t normally get to see,” she said, referring to what happens behind the scenes from the editor’s perspective.

Heather was a senior editor at the Big 5 publishing house Simon and Schuster, when she and her husband decided to move back to California to raise their newborn. She started in publishing at a literary agency, reading every submission. She discovered that being an editor – not an agent – was her passion.

“I wanted to be at that moment where the book was already very good, but what could I do to enhance it to make it even better,” she said.

She is now a developmental editor and publishing consultant based in Carmel Valley.

Heather covered the process from acquisition to post-publication. Overall, she shared certain steps that occur and why they take so long.

She explained that the editor sends the book to their colleagues to read, then pitches the book in the next editorial meeting (which could be one to two more weeks). The meeting includes other editors, the marketing and publicity department, and possibly the art department.

Once the publisher okays the book, the editor looks at costs and pricing to figure out what they can pay the author. Their research includes books that are comparable (aka “comp titles”) and that the house has published in the last year or two, to see how well they’ve done.

“This is where all the smoke and mirrors come into play,” Heather said. “It’s impossible to predict what’s going to happen, so everything is based on what has happened previously.”

Other factors will include the target audience for the book, and how they can capture that audience with the new title. They also look at how they can leverage the author’s platform.

Heather explained that a social media platform is not as vital for fiction authors as it is for non-fiction authors.

“With fiction, it’s all about the read,” she said. “It’s all about ‘did people love this book?’”

Non-fiction authors need a strong social media presence.

“You have to have a reason why you are the person to write this book,” she said.

Heather explained that the editor will want to meet with the author before making an offer. She shared questions to ask the editor during that meeting.

She then went through the back-and-forth offer process between the agent and the editor. The agent may set up an auction, depending on how many houses are making offers. This adds more time to the process.

Heather said that the author should consider not only the money, but how good a fit it is with the editor and publishing house.

“Just because a publishing house offers you more money, it doesn’t mean that they are the right [fit for you],” she said.

Once the offer is accepted, it’s time to celebrate. It’s an amazing moment, she shared.

“But, don’t quit your day job,” Heather said.

She then explained how the advance payment is broken down over the next year or two. The agent goes back-and-forth with the publisher negotiating the author’s contract. Then the editor makes notes and the author rewrites for a few months. Add a few months before the book is published and out for sale.

“I would say that if I acquired a book right now in May of 2025, I would not expect that book to go on sale until, probably spring 2027,” she said.

The final payment is usually made six months or a year after the book is out for sale.

(‘Heather Lazare: Behind the scenes of a book acquisition’, continued from page 7)

Even when a payment is made, the agent deducts their payment, and the author must pay taxes on what is left.

When asked if the author could go directly to the editor with later manuscripts, Heather answered with a resounding “no.”

“The thing I will say is no agent makes money until you make money,” she said. “In working with you and getting your book ready for publication and using their contacts and getting that book out to the publishers, they are doing so much work before they see a penny.”

That includes managing the legal side of the process.

She added that most big publishers will not deal directly with an author.

Heather explained how the “earn out” (sales of the book going against the advance the publisher paid) process works. In addition to direct sales of the book, selling it as an audiobook, eBook, or paperback (if originally printed as a hard copy), and selling foreign rights, will all count toward earning out.

She said that, surprisingly, most publishers don’t really expect the book to sell more than 30,000 copies (the number it usually takes to earn back its advance).

“Most books that they publish do not earn out,” she said. “But the ones that do earn out make so much that they help make up for all the ones that don’t.”

Heather said that the reason she likes to present the numbers is that she wants authors to see the business side.

“We can talk about the beauty of words all day long,” she said. “But ultimately, it’s a business and there are businesspeople at the core of it that have to have a reason to invest in your work.”

Heather is the founder of the Northern California Writers Retreat, an annual event for fiction writers that includes writing time, workshops, inspiration, connection, and more. Information about the retreat is at <https://www.norcalwritersretreat.com>. You can

find more information about Heather and how to contact her at <https://heatherlazare.com>

Do you have an idea for an upcoming newsletter?

The deadline for submissions is the 23rd of each month and we publish on the following 1st of the month. Email your submissions to: sacramentowriters@gmail.com

CWC Sacramento leadership

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- President: Bernard Wozny
- 1st Vice-President/Programs: Kimberly Edwards
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- Secretary: Theresa Lown

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- Marketing Consultant: Alysse Adularia
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- Open Readings Host & Coordinator: John Patterson
- Publicity Chair: Chris Hennessy
- Webmaster: Bernard Wozny
- Writers Network Coordinator: Cheryl Stapp

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