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The Pen & Press

Because the 2nd Sunday this month is so close to the holidays, we're taking a break so:

NO JANUARY MEETING

SEE YOU 12 FEBRUARY 2023

Everyone is welcome to attend all meetings – GUEST / NON-members always welcome

Black Angus Restaurant (until further notice)
7925 Greenback Ln, Citrus Heights, CA 95610

Hope y'all had a great time during all December & January Holidays – and for those who had a disrupted time due to health/ illness issues (the Board certainly had enough of those in 2022), weather disturbances, travel complications or other frustrating, annoying, distracting, exasperating, maddening, irritating, bothersome, vexing, infuriating, irksome, troublesome, inconvenient, worrisome, incommodious, puzzling, trying, tiresome, upsetting, difficult, wearisome, tiresome, problematic, inopportune, perplexing, bewildering, disappointing, distressing, disturbing, hurtful, hard, tough, thankless, difficult, tricky, challenging, sticky, unfortunate, inconvenient, stressful, painful, traumatic, uncomfortable, and/or, ... otherwise, crappy year, let's all hope for a better 2023!

Dang! I thought those synonyms would never end, but once I started clicking on them for each word, they just kept going and going and going, and once I start something I always want to see it to the end I did learn one new word doing that at least ... incommodious ... and FYI, it does fit with all the rest!

Guest Journalist for Jan 2023: NCPA member, author & poet, Barbara Barrett –

“A Rootin’ Tootin’ Wonder Woman, with Lots of Tales to Tell!”

No further info on 2023 stuff now --- BUT we are accepting stories for both anthologies:

SUBMISSION DEADLINE for BOTH: 1 Sep 2023 * anticipated launch for both 10 Dec 2023

Beautiful World – & -- All Holidays Vol 3

SEE MORE ON PAGE 3

Meeting location remains, until we find someplace more suitable, at * Black Angus Restaurant
7925 Greenback Ln, Citrus Heights, CA 95610

Join our **NCPA FB PAGE** <https://www.facebook.com/NORCALPA>

President's Message

Looking back through my notes, I realize this is my fifth New Year's President's message to NCPA. Five years. My goodness, times have changed. Five years ago, no one knew about Covid. This year all my holiday plans have been derailed by it.

The world is a different place than it was five years ago, for good or ill, who can tell at this point? Different is different, and one thing I've learned is to stop putting so much meaning into trivial things. For one, I had a vision of how the first Christmas with my new granddaughter would go. When everything went to hell in a handbasket *(never did understand that idiom), I had to adjust my expectations.

It's hard to adjust our expectations. We put a lot of pressure on ourselves to have the perfect birthday, Christmas, graduation – all those milestones that mark years and lives, but sometimes, life takes a detour.

I'm not the only one having to temper my hopes and dreams this year. We may even have to temper our dreams for our lifetimes. I probably will never skydive now. Honestly, I had precious little desire to skydive before now, but I realize that skydiving is not for a woman with a wretched case of vertigo.

This in no way suggests we should stop dreaming. Dreaming is what gives life meaning, what makes us strive to move outside our comfort zone. Dream big, dream often—just don't let it devastate you when the universe tells you, *let's winnow down a little*. There's nothing wrong with winnowing, either.

If your goal is to get published by a major publishing house, winnowing down might be looking for a smaller publisher. That is after you've tried for the huge goal. Always go for the biggest goal and then have a fallback position. Should the Big Five, if there are still five, reject you, that doesn't mean your publishing dream is dead. Have a pout, regroup, and go after it again, perhaps in a different direction.

And always remember, a blown expectation is not defeat. It's just a sign that you need to shift direction a little and allow yourself some grace. Who knows? You might find the new vision is actually better than the original ever could be. It's all in how you see the glass. In 2023, after years of disappointment and frustration, I'm gonna make a concerted effort to see that glass half full, **even if it kills me**.

Yeah, I know, growth is a process, and I'm working on it. 😊 Happy New Year, fellow writers!

ML Hamilton

authormlhamilton.net

Editor's Note: *Apparently nobody understands it. By doing a Google, I found the following two statements that pretty much encompass the rest: ... *while the exact origins of the expression are not known, popular explanations invoke the basket, which contained heads of the victims of a guillotine execution, while others refer to the biblical story of Moses who was set on the Nile in a basket. Wikipedia states that: "Going to Hell in a Handbasket" is a saying of unclear origins.* Really? And that's all there is???

Editor's Note #2: Due to health and other issues beyond the Board's control, we've changed our Critique Groups, the 2023 anthology project, AND the 29th Book Awards & Banquet for 2023. Book Awards Banquet and **BOOK SUBMISSION** Deadlines for the 29th **BOOK AWARDS** have been pushed forward one month each, so the Banquet is now Sun 25 Jun and **SUBMISSION PRICES** have been moved from 31 Dec to 31 Jan, and from Jan 31 to 28 Feb 2023. MORE DETAILED INFO COMING LATER --- Anthology submission dates for BOTH anthologies, *Beautiful World & All Holidays Vol 3* is now 1 Sep and projected launch for both will be 10 Dec 2023. In addition, due to mass confusion, *Beautiful World* can now include all of the Americas, but we would still prefer other places besides the Americas, even if you have to do a fiction piece instead of a true experience. Critique Group info coming later also.

UPDATED Information on upcoming 2023 ANTHOLOGIES

***Beautiful World & All Holidays Vol 3* --- Start writing your stories now**

Questions? Send ONLY to Dedicated Email 2023NCPAAnthologies@gmail.com

MUST BE CURRENT NCPA MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING to submit a story

- The first, ***Beautiful WORLD*** DEADLINE TO SUBMIT YOUR STORY for ***BEAUTIFUL WORLD*** is **1 September 2023**. 500–3000-word max for **World**: **NEW CHANGE**: ANYWHERE in the world, **INCLUDING the Americas** * & * **NO POETRY**
- The second, ***ALL Holidays Vol-3*** DEADLINE TO SUBMIT YOUR STORY is **ALSO 1 September 2023**. 500–3500-word max for **Holidays** – POETRY accepted, AFTER you've ALSO submitted a story
- Anticipated launch **NEW CHANGE**: for **BOTH anthologies** will be with our Holiday Luncheon **Sunday 10 December 2023**
- In addition to each story, you also need to submit two signed and dated documents that I'm including as attachments with this Email. THERE ARE TWO LINKS included below - one for each anthology. Those links each have guidelines, an application, and an agreement, and there are two places on each that need to be signed and dated. (May not reflect current changes)
- ... **UPDATED GUIDELINES MAY COME LATER.**
- Please be sure to send all correspondence to the dedicated Email address ONLY: **2023NCPAAnthologies@gmail.com**
- The attachments are in Word doc and can be E-signed and returned. If you're having problems signing them, send me an Email and your phone number and I'll walk you through how to do it. An E-signature, for those who don't know, is when you type your name to a document and send it by Email. That's just as good as a signed, written signature, in this case.

Hopefully the links below can be used by clicking on them in this Email --- if not, you can Email me direct at the dedicated Email address 2023NCPAAnthologies@gmail.com for a copy.



[NCPA All Holidays Vol 3 Word doc](#)



[NCPA Beautiful World](#)

Thank you for your interest in joining our Anthology projects - it's a very simple, and FREE, process, to get published, and a great start for those of you who have never published anything before. We're happy with our regular authors, some of whom are in each volume, but we also like to have fresh blood, so to speak. We would especially like to hear from a few of our members who have never published anything, anywhere, anytime, before.

Norma Jean

Remember, 2023NCPAAnthologies@gmail.com for ALL correspondence re THESE TWO anthologies, including questions and help.:

CAL EXPO EVENTS 2022 & 2023 * & * CA STATE FAIR 2023

Home- State Fair - Cal Expo & State Fair (calexpostatefair.com)

CA State FAIR 14 – 30 JULY 2023 * AUTHORS BOOTH – ARTS & KITCHEN COMPETITION *

***Chrissi & I are both involved in the State Fair (also in the Sacramento County Fair) competitions: Chrissi in the ARTS, I'm in the KITCHEN (since 2014) – both of us have won multiple ribbons and awards each year for our submissions (my winning candies, cakes, cookies, biscuits, breads and jelly recipes are in my cookbooks) ... including some cash prizes.**

If you want to know more about entering either, send me an Email. normathornton@yahoo.com

I'll forward the arts inquiries on to Chrissi.

MORE CHUCKLE TIME:

Q: "If April showers bring May flowers, then what do May flowers bring?"

A: "Pilgrims."

I woke up this morning to find that overnight I'd changed into a cat.

Don't ask meow

In the News

RIPPED FROM THE HEADLINES: *How to MURDER YOUR HUSBAND: The Nancy Brophy Story* –Lifetime Original Movie premiers on TV Saturday 14 January 2023, starring Cybill Shepherd (as real-life Portland OR author & wife Nancy Brophy) & Steve Guttenberg (as really-dead chef husband Daniel Brophy)

*

500 New Scrabble Words

https://www.google.com/search?q=500+new+scrabble+words&client=safari&channel=ipad_bm&sxsrf=ALiCzsaGwxvVcgHHrLPQXZYaOSaDoIKKLg%3A1668680526373&source=hp&ei=Tq2Y8q8FN3NkPIPqf2SgA4&oq=500+new+sc&gs_lcp=ChFtb2JpbGUtZ3dzLXdpei1ocBABGAAyBAqAEAMyBQqAEIAEMqYIABAWEB4yBqgAEByQHjIGCAAQFhAeMqgIABAWEB4QDzIGCAAQFhAeMqUIABCGAzoHCCMQ6gIqJzoELEDQgclABCxAXBDQgUIABCRajolCAAQgAQQsQM6BAGAEEM6BwguELEDEEM6BwqAEIAEEA06BwguEIAEEA06BQguEIAEUNoQWJ9wYL2OAWgGcAB4AIAB1wGIAa0OkqEGMC4xMi4xmAEa0AEBSAEP&scient=mobile-gws-wiz-hp

*

NEW WORD: **confabulate:** **Psychiatry:** fabricate imaginary experiences as compensation for loss of memory.

7 RULES for 2023

- ✓ LET IT GO: Never ruin a good day by thinking about a bad yesterday
- ✓ IGNORE THEM: Don't listen to other people. Live a life that's empowering to you
 - ✓ GIVE IT TIME: Time heals everything
- ✓ DON'T COMPARE: The only person you should try to beat is the person you were yesterday
- ✓ STAY CALM: It's okay not to have everything figured out. Know that in time, you will get there
 - ✓ IT'S ON YOU: Only you are in charge of your happiness
 - ✓ SMILE: Life is short. Enjoy it while you have it

Miscellaneous sites that might be of interest for some authors:

Dolly Partin's Imagination Library in California:

https://www.google.com/search?q=dolly+parton%27s+imagination+library+california&client=safari&channel=ipad_bm&sxsrf=ALiCzsa7N4u6J53WtM8iXocC1ZgrKnutAQ%3A1672363537539&source=hp&ei=ET6uY_qJHrTWkPIp7oqmsAU&oq=dolly+partins+imagination+library+c&gs_lcp=ChFtb2JpbGUtZ3dzLXdpei1ocBABGAAyBwqAEIAEEA0yBwqAEIAEEA0yBqgAEByQHjIGCAAQFhAeMqYIABAWEB4yBqgAEByQHjIGCAAQFhAeMqYIABAWEB46BwqIEOoCECc6BAqIECc6BQqAEJECQgslLhDHARCvARCAjoiCC4QsQMqgwE6EQguEIAEELEDEIMBEMcBENEDQg4ILhCABBCxAXDHARDRAzoOCC4QxwEQsQMq0QMqgAQ6CAquEIAEELEDOqolABCABBCHAhAUOgslABCABBcXAxCDAToICAAQgAQQsQM6BQqAEIAEOggIABCxAXCDAToKCC4QgAQQsQMqCjoiNCAAQgAQQsQMqgEQCjoiKCAAQgAQQsQMqCjoiHCAAQgAQQcjoHCCMQsQIQJzoPCAAQgAQQsQMqChBGEPsBOq0ILhCABBCxAXDUAhAKOhMILhCABBcXAxCDARDHARCvARAKOgIABCABBdJAXAKOgclLhCABBAKOGYIABAEa06CggAEIAEEMkDEA06BwqgEKAEBa06BwqgEAoQqwl6BQqAEIYDUO4HWJLFAWCH2wFoDXAAeAGAAoFiAGoT5IBDTEuMjkuMTcuMy42LTGYAQcGAGwAQ8&scient=mobile-gws-wiz-hp

Book Lovers Heart Ornament – Two-Sided Ornament: [https://www.privilegerom.com/products/book-lovers-heart-ornament-2-2?utm_source=fb&utm_medium=Facebook Mobile Feed&utm_campaign=23852410088410579&utm_term=23852565925580579&utm_content=23852565925570579](https://www.privilegerom.com/products/book-lovers-heart-ornament-2-2?utm_source=fb&utm_medium=Facebook%20Mobile%20Feed&utm_campaign=23852410088410579&utm_term=23852565925580579&utm_content=23852565925570579)

Top 10 American College Slang Words in 2022. Two (2) examples: *NO CAP: No lie, or for real; *SUS: suspicious – for more check out: <https://shorelight.com/student-stories/a-guide-to-american-college-slang-words-in-2022/>

Meet Barbara BARRETT *** barbara_barrett@sbcglobal.net



NCPA January 2023 GUEST JOURNALIST

Editor's Note: Barbara also wrote, in an Email to me, and I share: *This is one of the most difficult articles I've ever written. Writing about myself in the first person and putting it down in black and white for the whole world to gaze on, is painful. It's a difficult article to balance so it doesn't sound like bragging or condescending and that is a thin line. But don't pay much attention to me. I pretty much go through this agony with everything I write.*

I think most of us probably feel something like this, but Barbara had the strength and moxy to do it. Who's willing to be our next Guest Journalist? All 2023 months are now open. Just let me know.

A ROOTIN' TOOTIN' WONDER WOMAN

Barbara A. Barrett

The title for this article surprised me when I read it in the NCPA Newsletter tease regarding my guest journalist month. The only Rootin' Tootin' Wonder Woman I know is a comic book heroine and we couldn't be more different. Everybody knows she's tall and has black hair. I'm five feet and blonde.

After a little research, I learned that unlike other super heroes of the day, Wonder Woman doesn't have any special powers. Her physical prowess comes from training and discipline. She can't fly without her invisible plane. She needs the invincible bracelets to counter any attacks and it would be a different world today if we had her Lasso of Truth. Basically, what makes her a Rootin' Tootin' Wonder Woman is her determination, self-discipline and inner strength—and I found they are all valuable qualities for making dreams come true.

When I was eight years old, I wrote my first story. It wasn't very good but still I dreamed of being a writer. For as long as I can remember, books were my entertainment, and often my refuge. They fed my insatiable yearning to learn and understand, and best of all, they were filled with words.

I love words. They are basically gateways and bridges and they're fun to play with, especially adjectives. Whether it's poetry, fiction or nonfiction, getting the right adjective nails the mood and tone without a lot of description. For instance, leprous moon, mocking moon and lovers moon all describe the same orb that waxes and wanes above our heads. Yet our perception of it is changed with just one word. That's the power of words! And, what better way to use them than as a writer?

Before that could happen though, I had to go from dreaming to writing and that road wasn't easy. It started with one of the most painful events in my life.

In 1969 my youngest sister drowned on her 20th birthday.

Her death changed my life, changed my view of myself and changed the path I followed. She died from "shallow water blackout" which is fairly common even among good swimmers. She dove into the water and in less than three minutes, my sister was gone.

And, I never had the chance to say goodbye.

More on page 6

Barbara's BOOKS

Moon-Maze, A Poetry and Prose Collection, (self-published November 2019) (NCPA 2020 Book Award)

Tomboy Fun, A Collection of Tomboy Tales & Songs (self-published Dec 2020) (NCPA 2022 Book Award)

NONFICTION

Exploring Inner Space, *EGWG Newsletter*, July 2021 *** Quality or Quantity, *Destination: The World Vol One*, NCPA Anthology 2020
R & R, *Destination: The World Vol 2*, NCPA Anthology 2020 *** The Cemetery at the End of the Road, *EGWG Newsletter*, June 2021

SHORT STORIES

Glass Coffin (The), *EGWG Newsletter*, February 2022 *** Harold's Search, *More Birds of a Feather*, An NCPA Anthology

Perhaps, *EGWG Newsletter*, June 2022 *** Something to Say, *EGWG Newsletter*, April 2022

Tomboy Tales: A Christmas Surprise, *All Holidays 2020*, An NCPA Anthology

More of Barbara's work can be read in the newsletters on the Elk Grove Writers Guild website <https://egweg.org/newsletters/> as well as in four of the NCPA anthologies https://www.norcalpa.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=162391&module_id=477964

Barbara Barrett * **Continued from page 5**

I couldn't shake the feeling that everything was upside down. I was the eldest. I should have gone first. I went through the motions of living. Over a year later when Kris Kristofferson's "Me and Bobby McGee" was playing on the radio, I broke down when I heard the words "And somewhere near Salinas, Lord, I let her slip away". Rhonda's last name was Magee and Uvas Meadows where she died wasn't far from Salinas. Everything I couldn't express came pouring out and the tears wouldn't stop. I was a basket case. In order to cope with the pain, I had to find a way to work through my grief. I needed help.

Some of the psychologists and counselors I went to were crazier than me. There was also the problem that talking with someone on a Thursday afternoon or whenever, wasn't helpful. The nights were the worst and there were no late appointments. Help came when a friend recommended the book *Self Therapy* by Muriel Schiffman. It was the right book for me at the right time. I contacted Muriel. In the early 1970s she was holding group therapy sessions one weekend a month and I joined. It was the closest I'd ever been to having a loving family. *Self-Therapy* and her second book *Gestalt Self Therapy* helped me cope with the pain and paralyzing nightmares. As I faced my fears, one by one they faded.

I wanted to learn and understand more about what was going on inside me. I developed a hunger for self-awareness during the years I spent in Muriel's groups. This thirst to know more about who and what I am led to meditating and reading a variety of self-help books. Some weren't of any use at all while others led to wonderful adventures. After I read *The Center of the Cyclone* by John Lilly, I went to see him lecture at U.C. Berkeley. Dr. Lilly was a psychiatrist and also the foremost specialist in communicating with dolphins. He invented the sensory deprivation (isolation/flotation) tank. Afterwards I spoke with his wife, Toni. Dr. Lilly needed someone to type what he had dictated for his upcoming book and I wanted to experience sensory deprivation. One hour in the tank was supposed to be equivalent to three hours of meditation. Serendipitous is such a wonderful word!

That summer I drove from San Jose to their home in the Malibu Mountains. In the mornings I typed a hard copy of the tapes and spent the afternoons in one of the many tanks available.

Before my first experience Dr. Lilly opened the cover to show me it contained only water. There would be nothing there that I didn't bring in with me.

The tank was a little over six feet long, about four feet wide and five feet high. Inside, the water was three feet deep and heavily salted for flotation. My nude body except for the area between my chin and eyebrows was totally submerged. None of my senses worked. The water was blood temperature so there was no sense of feeling, it was pitch black, no sound and I couldn't taste or smell anything.

I got in, closed the hatch and laid back into the water. Immediately it felt like the top of the tank was a few inches above my face. I knew the roof was at least three feet away. If my mind could trick me into thinking it was inches above, I could make it whatever distance I wanted. I pushed it back and when the stars appeared (a physical impossibility) I never experienced claustrophobia in there again.

I was in the tank that first day for an hour and a half which seemed to be my optimum time. During those two summers I worked for him, I chalked up a total of 72 hours. The longest session was three and a half hours.

Floating in the dark in salted water exaggerates everything. If I moved an inch or so sideways, it felt like I floated on a cloud for miles and there were always stars above. These inner experiences were breathtaking but tank time also affected my senses afterwards. The real world felt magical and enchanted. Like stepping from Dorothy's grey world into colorful Oz. After a shower to rinse the salt off, I walked in the backyard. The flowers, trees, sky and grass seemed more vibrant and brilliant. In my journal, I wrote about each tank experience amid a wonderland of color.

During those summers I saw the power of the mind and learned my senses were not always reliable where reality was concerned. For decades I processed the images and emotions I experienced during those hours in the Malibu Mountains. **More on page 7**

UPDATE ON NCPA CRITIQUE GROUPS

Sharon Darrow's non-fiction & memoirs critique group via Zoom MAY BE ON HOLD DUE TO HER STROKE IN DECEMBER

Contact Sharon: sharonsdarrowcritiquegroup@gmail.com

Michelle Hamilton started a **Fiction** critique group in October 2022 – by Zoom

Contact Michelle: authormlhamilton@gmail.com

ANOTHER CRITIQUE GROUP COMING SOON

Norma Jean Thornton will be doing a **basic, non-specific genre critique group sometime early 2023 – LIVE & IN PERSON**, days &/or nights, times, locations, extra days or nights TBD once we start setting up the initial time. If necessary, we can have meetings once a month, twice a month, or once a week, whatever's needed, including taking one day a month, or ???, to focus specifically on writing anthology stories, if anyone would like extra help, or if I suggest one or more of you to have a one-on-one with me.

Full details and Contact info coming late January 2023.

Barbara Barrett **Continued from page 6**

Not all my adventures were inside my head. Some were in the physical world. Perhaps Life happens when we're willing to take a risk. In the 1980s, team building was popular and my office booked a Ropes Course.

When the sign-up flyer came around, I remembered, that when we were ten years old, my sister and I went to Saturday afternoon movies. Afterwards the lilac grove beside our house became a forest that sheltered Robin and his merry men, or a fort for Gene Autry and Roy Rogers. On the single rope hanging from a crab apple tree, we flew through the jungles of our imaginations like Tarzan. A Ropes Course would have been a dream come true. I quickly added my name to the list.

I was no longer ten years old when I put my foot on the first rung of the rope ladder and climbed to the wooden platform built around the tree. It was two stories above the ground. When I reached it, I wanted to throw my arms around its knotted trunk and never let go. I was terrified but determined not to let my fear take over. I assumed a jaunty pose with one hand on the tree à la Errol Flynn in *Robin Hood*. That was apropos considering it was Robin who got me into that. Well, him and Tarzan.

The first challenge consisted of walking sideways across a thick rope holding onto another rope over my head. Since I didn't have to look down it was *no problemo*. But never say "piece of cake" on a Ropes Course.

The second challenge was the big *problemo*. This one consisted of two narrow boards a few inches apart that eventually merged. I looked down and put my foot on it. The only thing my eyes saw was the 20-foot drop to the ground. My foot wouldn't move. I even forgot we were wearing an out-of-sight harness hooked to a wire above. I tried two or three more times to move that foot but it was steadfast. I finally scolded it, "If you don't move, we are never going to get down!" That did it. My right foot slid slowly along the narrow piece of wood and I made it to the next platform.

I think there were about six challenges. I managed to get through all of them. I have little or no memory of what they were or how I did it. I do remember several people couldn't finish and were lowered to ground level by a small crane.

At the end when my boss commented I looked so relaxed up there, I realized people only saw my actions not the jelly in my knees and spine, nor the fear in the pit of my stomach. I owed Errol Flynn a great debt of gratitude.

My next path went in a different direction and it kind of surprised me. I love learning so I often attended night classes at the local college. After taking "Introduction to Formal Argument" and a couple of paralegal classes, I enrolled at Lincoln Law School in San Jose. It was small, inexpensive and I could go to school at night and work full time during the day. It was a tough curriculum and schedule but doable.

The first thing I learned is law schools don't teach the law. Because law is what the courts say it is today, you buy very expensive and very heavy case books. I didn't mind because they were filled with what were essentially short stories about people, their problems and legal recourses. Since we had 40-50 cases to read and outline in each class per week it was just as well that I enjoyed them.

After four and a half years I was exhausted and was facing the last examination of my last year. The class was *Remedies* which details what damages can be awarded in any successful civil lawsuit.

I had finished the first two essay questions and still had almost two hours left. I put a blank sheet in my Selectric and started on the third and last one. I typed almost four pages and threw them away. The conclusion wasn't right when I tried to match the facts in the case with the elements of California Libel Law. I tried again. Two pages later I knew I was the wrong track. By this time, I had less than an hour left. On a new sheet I typed: "I wouldn't even take this case" and added there was no Libel under California law. I discussed the Libel remedy if it had existed and offered advice to the client. I reread my paper and submitted it with minutes to spare. By now the exam room was empty. I gathered my belongings and walked out.

My friends were waiting. I told them what I wrote. They all agreed I failed the exam. Months later I received an award for the highest grade because the client really didn't have a case. When I walked up to receive the framed plaque, I remembered that last question. I had been very angry with my professor for writing such an obnoxious and annoying question. As I struggled then I didn't realize within its depths were hidden lessons.

I passed the California State Bar the first time. There was no way I was going through that again. I only practiced law for a short time. Age was one factor. Money was another. New attorney salaries were half what I was making as an executive secretary to presidents and CEOs in Silicon Valley. In addition, there was the cost of malpractice insurance as well as annual fees, and the California State Bar has strict educational and client financial requirements. Any infractions are grounds for discipline and even disbarment. Just too much trouble and expense. After two years I requested and received an "Inactive" status

More on page 8.**San Francisco Writers Conference**

Conference dates:
16-19 Feb 2023

NCPA 29th BOOK AWARDS Competition **FEES & DEADLINE** changes: Previous date of first deadline fee was 31 Dec --- that date has changed to 31 Jan 2023, so you haven't missed the least expensive deadline – but get those books in to Sharon ASAP. Also, you now have until 28 Feb, 2023 as the final date to enter your books. **COMPLETE INFO COMING SOON**

ONLY for BOOKS PUBLISHED 1 Jan 2022 - 31 Dec 2022

Barbara Barrett **Continued from page 7**

Was Law School worth it? If all I learned was law, the answer is no. But the classes held hidden lessons that taught me to think objectively and gave me the ability to discern what is and is not relevant. I learned self-discipline so when the going was tough, I was able to keep going. All were valuable lessons for a budding author.

As I look back, I realize all my paths led to writing and it seems whenever I was ready, I received the skills necessary. Some growth periods were painful. We've all heard "When life gives us lemons, make lemonade" but life has taught me lemons are far more versatile than that. They have many additional tasty possibilities, from lemon meringue pies to sauces and garnishes. That applies to our writing too. For those of us who are writers, everything that happens, all our experiences, are grist for the mill.

After law school I still read a lot and I began to write nonfiction articles by the dozens, some of which were published. Little by little my writing improved.

Then I discovered poetry and something deeper awakened. I had been writing poems off and on for about four decades. I didn't take it seriously or learn to love and appreciate it until I saw the Robert E. Howard 1996 biopic *The Whole Wide World*. I'm not much on movie biographies because of their inaccuracies but I was curious enough to start reading everything about and by him. One of the things I learned is he sometimes worked 18 hours a day on his Underwood No. 5 typewriter shouting aloud everything he typed. Must have been annoying to his Texas neighbors at night but I would like to have pitched a tent outside the window and just listened. He wrote hundreds of short stories and over 800 poems before he committed suicide in 1936 at age 30.

From his fiction I had learned about poetic prose but I was not prepared for the power of his poetry when I read these lines from "The Ride of Falume":

A league beyond the western wind,
A mile beyond the moon,
Where the dim seas roar on an unknown shore
And the drifting stars lie strewn.

I was there, on that seashore, amid a bejeweled sky, silhouetted against a large, looming moon—in a vague location described as a league beyond the western wind and the moon. While I *loved* words, I hadn't realized the *impact* they could have—I hadn't understood how deeply words could touch me.

I was ready to quit dreaming and start writing.

Clearly, I had found my Muse, someone who loves words as much as I do. Bob Howard inspired me to write almost 200 poems, innumerable short stories and novellas and one novel (unfinished).

I enjoy writing lyric poetry the most and lyrical poems sound best when read aloud:

***** **more of Barbara on page 9**

THIS TOO WILL GO ITS WAY

Barbara Barrett

The streets are filled with bygone days
And haunting memories.
I miss the town that I once knew,
The one my heart still sees.
Ghosts of buildings long torn down
I know where each one stood—
The places where I shopped and ate
In my old neighborhood.
It's sad to know that what I loved
Was cast aside with scorn.
The fun filled places that I knew
I now can only mourn.
I see the ghosts of all my friends
Strolling down each street
That now are strolled by younger youths,
This town is now their beat.
I leave to them this legacy:
Go fill each golden day
Knowing that in years to come
This too will go its way.

THE MOON Barbara Barrett

Each month the Muses spin a globe
To illuminate the night.
With stolen rays from a sleeping sun
They weave it full and bright.
But in a jealous rage the sun
Unwinds the silver rein
And from this battle in the sky
The moon will wax and wane.

More POETRY

by Barbara Barrett

Dusty Memories, *EGWG Newsletter*, July 2021
Fuzzy Brain, *EGWG Newsletter*, July 2022
Moon (The), *EGWG Newsletter*, September 2021
Offspring (The), *EGWG Newsletter*, September 2021
Persephone, *EGWG Newsletter*, October 2021
Priorities, *EGWG Newsletter*, November 2022
Something Unforeseen, *EGWG Newsletter*, June 2022
Victory Revisited, *EGWG Newsletter*, March 2022
Waiting for You, *EGWG Newsletter*, May 2022
Windsong, *EGWG Newsletter*, November 2022

THE SHATTERED CUP

Barbara Barrett

The cup lies cracked and broken
The love within has gone.
Contemptuous words were spoken
And cannot be withdrawn.

Sharpened shards lie on the floor
All scattered here and there.
Their flow 'ring buds will bloom no more
They're only broken ware.

The cup lies cracked, its nectar spilled.
It couldn't stand the strain.
The ghost arising now is filled
With loss and searing pain.

More POETRY

by Barbara Barrett

TIME IS FUNNY

Barbara Barrett

Though Einstein says you're relative
We really are not kin.
You go too fast when I want slow
And shorten my weekend.

And when I have you on my hands
It's much to my dismay.
Cause all I get is extra work
Without the extra pay.

You're good for aging fine liquor
But terrible for skin.
And all who race must beat you first
If they expect to win.

You're nanos short and eons long—
No uniform amount.
And some of us who count on you
Have found that you don't count.

So please slow down when I am late
And need the extra time.
Then go just like a bat from hell
When I must stand in line.

I chose to be a writer. It has taken determination, self-discipline and inner strength and there is still much to learn and understand. At eight years old I only dreamed of it. To make those dreams a reality involved getting to know myself better and as I became more self-aware, I could see The Writer within more clearly. I learned that words have impact as well as power and took creative writing classes to hone my skills.

Like isolation tanks, ropes courses and law classes, writing is an experience. It's a never-ending journey. Are there more adventures ahead for a Rootin' Tootin' wonder woman? I can only dream and we all know where dreams lead.

For me, they lead to a little internal tickle I get whenever I write.

Barbara A. Barrett, Author and Poet

*

AND Guest Journalist for the January 2023 NCPA Newsletter

Many thanks to Barbara and each guest journalist from 2022. It turned out to be a fascinating, interesting experiment, one I'd very much like to continue. Anything family friendly you want - **YOU CAN BE NEXT** – just send an Email to normathornton@yahoo.com

NCPA 29th ANNUAL BOOK AWARD COMPETITION

Now that the Book Award Banquet has faded into the background, it's time to get ready for the next competition. It is my honor to be the Competition Coordinator for the 9th year, in concert with Norma Jean Thornton, Michelle Hamilton, Chrissi Villa, and Amy Rogers. That means that **anyone who has published, or will publish a book by December 31, 2022**, should think about entering it in the competition.

Details such as prices and cut-off dates, in addition to application forms for the new competition was published on the NCPA website the end of August. We started accepting submissions on October 1st 2022. **The last date for receiving submissions has changed to February 28, 2023**. Submissions can be in paper, Mobi (format used for Amazon) or pdf formats, but must be the exact same as what the reader will download online. The date for the **Awards Banquet has changed to Sunday June 25, 2023**. Each submission includes one ticket for the banquet. This year we are excited to add a totally new category for entries: Collections.

- ✓ **Anthologies, which include the work of multiple different writers, are still NOT accepted.**
- ✓ **Collections can include multiple stories, poems, and/or essays, by ONE PERSON AUTHOR ONLY.**

• Sharon Darrow

\$\$\$

WRITE FOR HARLEQUIN CARINA PRESS SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

\$\$\$

<http://carinapress.com/blog/submission-guidelines> Carina Press accepts **both agented and unagented submissions**

**\$40/ year to join
www.norcalpa.org**

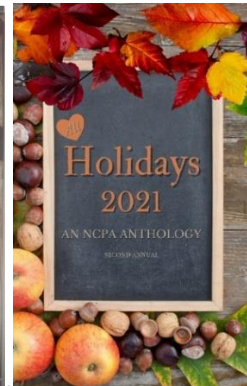
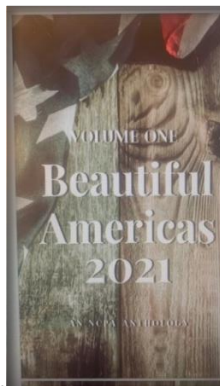
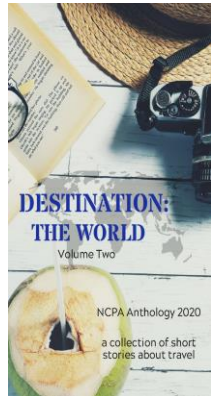


BIRDS OF A FEATHER
An NCPA Anthology
A Collection of Short Stories about Animals



MORE BIRDS OF A FEATHER
An NCPA ANTHOLOGY
A Collection of Short Stories about Animals and Other Things

2020 NCPA Anthologies



ALL (seven) 2019, 2020, 2021 & 2022 ANTHOLOGY BOOKS (above) AVAILABLE PAPER COPIES @ Cost for Authors from Sharon Darrow: Sharon@SharonSDarrow.com or [NCPA Anthologies \(7 book series\) Ebook & Paperback Edition \(amazon.com\)](https://www.amazon.com/NCPA-Anthologies-7-book-series/dp/1544700000)

2023 NCPA Anthologies --- COMING DECEMBER 2023

BEAUTIFUL
WORLD COVER
COMING SOON
(as soon as I give
it to Michelle &
she fixes it out of
a pdf format so I
can copy it here)



(Holidays' title will also change: from 2022 to Vol 3)

Get those thinking caps on and start writing now for NCPA's next two anthologies in 2023:

*** Beautiful World * & * ALL Holidays Vol 3 ***

NEW dedicated Email address for both anthologies: 2023NCPAAnthologies@gmail.com

CHANGE OF BANQUET DATE: SUNDAY 25 June 2023 at the Cherry Island Golf Course in Elverta

SILENT AUCTION DONORS 2022 * THANK YOU SO MUCH to our donors *

Cherry Island G.C. * Sharon Darrow * Ant-fm * Grand Oaks Inn B&B * Chrissi Villa * Frances Kakugawa * Placer Pops Chorale *
Roaring Camp Mining Company * Amy Rogers: Science Thrillers Media * Sharif Jewelers * Linda Joy Singleton

Looking for a great venue for your Banquet &/or more? How about a decorated Cake?

Both great for Writing Organizations, and Highly recommended by NCPA Book Awards Banquet Committee

Cherry Island Golf Course * 2360 Elverta Rd * Elverta, CA * www.golfcherryisland.com * 916-991-6875

Looking for a great decorated cake for ANY event, including that Banquet?

Walmart Supercenter Bakery * 5821 Antelope Rd. * Antelope 95843, CA * Bakery: **916-729-6217**

Placer Pops Chorale & Orchestra 2022

Great present for ALL * www.placerpops.com * Locations, DATES & TIMES COMING CLOSER to dates

ADVERTISING FOR MORE OF OUR DONORS, all NCPA members

Looking for a detailed critique and line edit? Contact donor **Amy Rogers: Science Thrillers Media**

Amy Rogers, independent publisher, beta reader for James Rollins, and former judge for International Thriller Writers' Thriller Awards. amy@AmyRogers.com Web: AmyRogers.com (916)-712-3334

Need a Manuscript Evaluation? Contact donor **Jennifer Grainger**

Jennifer says a manuscript evaluation is not editing. It is evaluating the quality of the writing so she will carefully and thoughtfully read your manuscript from beginning to end and provide very explicit feedback for you on what works, what could be better and how to fix the weaknesses.

jennifer@JenniferTheEditor.org www.JenniferTheEditor.org 209-369-6188

Want your own Website? **Sharon Darrow** will build you one through **Wix.Com**

Hourly rate, with a four-hour minimum appointment. ~ in your home. (Will accept phone calls for help for 3 months after completion if you still need it. Anything further, price will be negotiable.) **916-803-1665**

sharon@sharonsdarrow.com

Writing Picture Books for Kids? **Chrissi Villa** gives detailed Picture Book Evaluations

Chrissi also hosts PB Workshops. contact her chrissivilla@gmail.com * www.Christinevilla.com

www.purplecottoncandyarts.com/about.html * <https://www.velvetduskpublishing.com/about.html>

916-993-8798 h

916-500-3492 c

Need a special gift ~ Or a donation to your non-profit event?

Check out the fine jewelry at Sharif's

Sharif Jewelers * 1338 Howe Ave, Sacramento, CA * www.sharifjewelers.com ~ 916-927-0542

There are three (3) locations, total ~ check out their website for the other ones.

How about an Outdoor event for the entire family

Roaring Camp Mining Company in Pine Grove, CA just 1-1 ½ hours south east of Sacramento ~ Roaring Camp has BBQ Cookouts, Guided Gold Mine & Gold Panning Tours & Dinners, All Day Adventure & Gold Panning Tours & more ~ Camping or Cabins available

www.roaringcampgold.com ~ 209-296-4100 ~ info@roaringcampgold.com

Grand Oaks Inn B & B ~ Joe & Ann Mehrten 21941 Buena Vista Road P.O. Box 518

Clements, CA 95227 grandoaksinn.com 209 759-3453 or 209-759-3713 grandoaks@inreach.com

Grand Oaks, Sharif & Roaring Camp Mining Co have all generously donated to NCPA for every Silent Auction **we've had since 2010**

SILENT AUCTION DONORS

Want your name and info advertised here? It's really simple:

Just donate something to the Silent Auction during one or more of NCPA's Annual Book Awards Banquets. Beneficiary of amounts received during the 2022 (published) Book Awards Banquet Sun 7 May 2023 will once more be Friends of the Library

GENEALOGY SITES I've run across, but haven't checked out. Some may be duplicates. Use at your own risk – but please let us know if you do, especially if you find anything good?

Guide to Proving Your Mayflower Ancestry - <https://hubs.americanancestors.org/guide-to-proving-your-mayflower-ancestry>
 These 5 sites let you map a family tree for free - <https://www.komando.com/family/free-family-tree-templates/836889/>
 The Brick Wall Solution Roadmap - <https://bws.theoccasionalgenealogist.com/rm-09-fba221012/>
 Genealogy Bank: Discover Your Family Story in Newspapers 1690-Today - <https://www.genealogybank.com/sign-up/family-history>
 Genealogy Chart Printing & Family Tree Printing Services - <https://www.ancestryprinting.com/>
 Find items in libraries near you - <https://worldcat.org/> * DNA & Genealogy Tools - <https://www.gedmatch.com/>
 Genealogy Tree on canvas - https://www.parutoarach.com/products/familytree?utm_campaign=23852030870170524&utm_content=23852057163900524&utm_medium=Facebook+Mobile+Feed&utm_source=fb&utm_term=23852057163870524&variant=33923
 LDS Genealogy - [LDSGenealogy.com](https://www.familysearch.org/) | [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/LDSGenealogy/) * FREE FAMILY TREE - <https://www.familytreenow.com/>
 Death Certificates - [Why You Want the Death Certificate of Your Ancestor \(ldsgenealogy.com\)](https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSK3-3?i=1&cc=2)
 Genealogy Websites - [10 Free Useful Websites for U.S. Genealogy Research \(ldsgenealogy.com\)](https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSK3-3?i=1&cc=2)
 Ancestor Obits - [How to Find Your Ancestor's Obituary - Learning Genealogy articles at LDSGenealogy.com](https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSK3-3?i=1&cc=2)
 Relevant Genealogical Sources - [Keys to Finding Relevant Genealogical Sources \(ldsgenealogy.com\)](https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSK3-3?i=1&cc=2)
 Past Home-Owners - [Researching Past Owners of an Old Home or Property \(ldsgenealogy.com\)](https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSK3-3?i=1&cc=2)
 Offline Newspapers - <https://ldsgenealogy.com/Locating-Offline-Newspapers.htm>
<https://prf.hn/.../www.ancestry.com/cs/gift-selection>
<https://prf.hn/click/camref:110014xJr/destination:https://www.tkqlhce.com/click-3126607-11570746?url=https://www.newspapers.com/choose-a-plan/>
<https://prf.hn/click/camref:110014xJr/destination:https://www.tkqlhce.com/click-3126607-10934994?url=https://go.fold3.com/buynow>
<https://prf.hn/.../destination:https://www.ancestry.com/dna/>

INTERESTED IN GENEALOGY? During the shut-down, the library has generously made their access to Ancestry.com FREE from your own home to all who have a library cardthe census records are great, even if you don't do anything else

Go to www.saclibrary.org and click on Books & Media – Special Collections – Genealogy Collection – Have Questions (at bottom of screen) – click on “Learn More” under “Do you have other genealogy services available?” (or just click on this link as a shortcut - <https://www.saclibrary.org/Education/History/Genealogy>). (Other Genealogy sites free also) Once there, you'll see the links to the websites in green. Once you click on the website, you'll be asked to enter your library card and PIN. If you don't know your PIN, click on Reset My PIN in blue and enter a new PIN. **THIS MAY NOT WORK NOW THAT LIBRARIES ARE OPEN: Try this one: thanks to Barbara Barrett:** <https://www.saclibrary.org/Education/Online-Learning/Online-Resources-Alphabetical>

2023 Genealogy Presentations at Sacramento Central Library

For information, please contact Beth Daugherty, Librarian, at bdaugherty@saclibrary.org Sacramento Central Library, 828 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814. Phone: 916-264-2920. <http://www.saclibrary.org>

UPCOMING 2023 NCPA EVENTS

**29th NCPA
BOOK AWARDS
BANQUET**

5pm-9pm

Sun 25 June 2023

Cherry Island Golf Course
Elverta, CA

**COVID RULES WILL APPLY
NOTE: DATE CHANGE**

Sun 10 Dec 2023 ~ 12Noon-?
Citrus Heights' Black Angus on Greenback
NCPA's 6th Holiday Luncheon 2023
& 2 Anthology launches

NEW UPDATED ANTHOLOGY INFO & DATES
NCPA SUBMISSION DEADLINES 1 Sep 2023
& Anthology Launch BOTH – 10 Dec 2023

Beautiful World (INCLUDES THE AMERICAS)
ALL Holidays Vol 3

Submission Email & Contact info for both anthologies:
2023NCPAAnthologies@gmail.com

MAKING CONNECTIONS CORNER with our Local Sister Writing Organizations

➤ **California Writers Club (CWC) (Sacramento Branch)**

Monthly Luncheon Meetings generally **3rd Saturday** of each month ~ 11am – 1pm
\$15 members, \$25 non-members, includes lunch **Rancho Cordova Cattlemen's**
 Writers Network 9-11am **1st Fri** monthly **Perko's** 6215 Sunrise, Citrus Heights

Open to public, pay for your own breakfast (**NEW LOCATION**)

For information & prices on joining, go to: **cwcsacramentowriters.org**

➤ **Capitol Crimes (Cap Crimes) (Sacramento Chapter of Sisters in Crime)**

If you write anything crime-related, or want to, then check out Cap Crimes.
FREE monthly meetings, generally the **3rd Saturday** of each month, generally with guest speakers, generally crime-related. They normally meet at **1pm** at the
Rancho Cordova Library 9845 Folsom Blvd in Rancho Cordova

No-Host lunch 11:30am prior to meetings usually at Perko's 9647 Micron Av

Must be a member of Sisters in Crime (\$50) to join Cap Crimes (\$20) **Capitolcrimes.org**

➤ **Elk Grove Writers Guild (EGWG) Elk Grove Writers Guild (egweg.org)**

Meets the **1st Fri** of each month in Elk Grove - **BY ZOOM RIGHT NOW**

No further info, but go to the following for more:

* Email **egwg2020@egweg.org**

➤ **Gold Country Writers (GCW) http://goldcountrywriters.com/**

3rd Wed Monthly Speaker Programs ~ 10am-12Noon: FREE & open to Public
 Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1279 High St, Auburn, CA 95603

"Writers Working Together to Promote and Improve their Work"

Questions contact Margie Yee Webb **mywebb@sbcglobal.net**

➤ **Sacramento Suburban Writers (SSW)**

Meets 2nd Mon of each month 7pm- 9pm

Crossroads Fellowship Christian Church, 5501 Dewey Dr, Fair Oaks, CA

Meetings, generally with guest speakers, are **FREE** ~ (\$40 membership fee)

Like with NCPA, you don't have to be a member to attend **Sactowriters.org**

➤ **Sacramento Valley Rose (SVR)**

(Sacramento Chapter of Romance Writers of America {RWA})

If you write Romance, or want to, then check out SVR ~ they generally meet at 10am at the
White Rock Community Clubhouse, 10488 White Rock Rd, Rancho Cordova

4th Saturday of each month \$20 for members \$30 for non-members

Contact: Deb at **debjulienne@gmail.com** for RSVP information & directions

Debbie Putnam, President: **DebbiePutnam.SVR@gmail.com**

Suggest you go to their site for their rules & stipulations Must be a member of Romance Writers of America (\$99+) before joining SVR (\$30) **Sacramentovalleyrose.com**

➤ **San Joaquin Valley Writers (SJVW Branch CWC) **FREE** Monthly Meetings generally 2nd Saturday of each month 12Noon-2:30pm UOP in Stockton - Questions? June Gillam**

President SJVW-CWC **https://junegillam.com** Dues Info unknown at this time

➤ **Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators (SCBWI) (CA North/Central)**

If you're interested in writing ... or illustrating ... for kids of any age, this is the premiere INTERNATIONAL organization to belong to! **Your first year of SCBWI membership is \$95, with an ongoing annual renewal fee of \$80.** No monthly meetings, but there are occasional Schmoozes, Workshops, Intensive-Events, Special Events, and Critique Groups, as well as a great Holiday Party in December, and a discounted Spring Spirit Conference ... plus more ... Go to their website for full information: **https://canorthcentral.scbwi.org/***

All info may be outdated. Suggest you contact prior to attending any.

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chrissivilla@gmail.com**FB & Promo Coordinator**

Charlene Johnson

circleoftheredscorpion@gmail.com**Book Events Coordinator**

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danita@danitamoon.com

(916) 980-0375

Anthology 2019 - 2023Norma Jean Thornton: **Coordinator**Michelle Hamilton: **Main Editor**Bob Irelan: **Editor**Norma Jean Thornton: **Proofreader**Sharon Darrow: **Publisher**2021NCPAAnthology@gmail.com**Main Webmaster**

Amy Rogers

Amy@ScienceThrillersMedia.com

Sunday afternoon meetings with or without guest speakers now 2nd Sun of each month

In Person 1pm TEMPORARY Location: through March 2023 Black Angus Restaurant @

Greenback & Sunrise, Citrus Heights (on Greenback, across from Sunrise Mall)

No purchase necessary but at least a soda/drink would be appreciated *

Meetings always FREE ~ Visitors always welcome.

www.norcalpa.org

Northern California Publishers & Authors (NCPA)

PO Box 214673 ~ Sacramento, CA 95821

Michelle Hamilton, President ~ 916-837-6812 * Norma Jean Thornton, Editor ~ 916-991-5751

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The editor reserves the right to accept or reject submissions and to edit submissions for length, clarity, or style.

Readers are free to print copies for noncommercial personal use, and NCPA members are welcome to print copies of the newsletter to share with friends, colleagues, and prospective members.

Other News, Announcements, and Comments

All submissions for this section of *The Pen & Press* including short items about NCPA members or otherwise of interest to writers, editors, publishers and allied folks, are welcome.

A Note from the Editor

Send your articles and announcements to normathornton@yahoo.com

Please type either **NCPA N/L** or **NCPA NEWSLETTER** as the email subject heading, to help me find newsletter submissions easier.

Please provide submissions in Microsoft Word (or compatible) format, or in plain text. **NO PDF**, please, since I have to retype anything sent by pdf to make it fit.

If you have any suggestions, an article idea or any other questions or comments about the newsletter, feel free to email or phone ... normathornton@yahoo.com or 916-991-5751

Any news of members' books, activities, marketing, speaking engagements, and/ or other accomplishments are greatly appreciated.

Also: any information on members' insights into the challenges and opportunities of writing and/or publishing, or information on regional resources for authors and publishers works well.

Cover illustrations and other photos are welcome in jpeg or other standard format. Please keep file sizes reasonable. When in doubt, call or email editor in advance.

Submissions for each issue will be the 5th of each month, unless otherwise noted ~ and ~ **if you have something after the 5th call me (916-991-5751), then send it anyway** ~ I'm flexible, so we'll probably be able to work it in, since the monthly Pen & Press publishing date depends on time available for the editor to complete and send out; sometime after the monthly meeting, held on the 2nd Thursday of each month, and as late as the last day of each month.

The goal of the current editor is to publish one Pen & Press each month, with two in April every year in order to cover the Book Awards Banquet ... one prior to the event, and one after.

... Norma Jean Thornton, editor *The Pen & Press* 2016-2022