Membership Renewal Time! If you have not already responded to the membership renewal notice (sent via the good old U.S. Postal Service in November), please do so.

Many members have not yet replied to the notice. Memberships not already paid through 2007 or 2008 expired as of December 31st. If you did not receive or have misplaced your notice, please email ken@umbachconsulting for assistance. Even if your membership is not yet due for renewal, a response is requested so we are sure our roster is correct.

Looking for Volunteers! As NCPA treasurer Barbara DesChamps points out in her article in this issue, the organization depends on volunteers. We need not only officers and committee chairs, but also committee members to assist in planning and in carrying out various tasks. Contact any current board member (see list on last page of this newsletter) to discuss opportunities to contribute time and ideas to NCPA.

Our Work is Valuable! My continuing exposure to books written, published, or both, by our members is a constant reminder of the value created by independent publishers and by writers in our organization. To cite just one example, Bill Pieper’s novel *Gomez*, which I recently had the pleasure of reading, is a distinctive and engaging tale set in 1970s San Francisco. The title character is a study in the art of personal reinvention. The story reflects the physical and cultural setting of the time, the challenges of personal relationships, and the mysteries that can be involved in figuring out who our friends really are. As a bonus — and a motivator for the novel — Bill draws on the personal and literary adventures of Henry Miller and Anais Nin, making for a unique treat, whether or not the reader is familiar with the works of those writers. Frankly, I doubt that any major publisher’s catalog carries a better novel.

Also on tap in my enormous reading pile are the two volumes of memoirs by our January speaker, Pamela Masters. Her presentation, focusing on the challenges of publishing, should be an eye-opener for members and visitors. Speaking of visitors: we welcome them. Feel free to bring a friend or to invite those you know who have any interest in writing and publishing to attend our monthly meetings.

Meanwhile, this issue has a wonderful array of great articles, including must-read pieces by Naida West and Stephanie Chandler. Read on!

— Ken Umbach, editor
January Meeting to feature Pamela Masters

The next regular monthly NCPA meeting will be held at Merrill Gardens Retirement Community, 7418 Stock Ranch Rd., Citrus Heights, CA 95621, 10:00 am to noon, Saturday, January 13, 2007. Take Greenback to San Juan Ave. Turn north on San Juan, which then becomes Sylvan Rd. Go a block to Stock Ranch Rd. (there is a light at the intersection); turn left (west) on Stock Ranch — the only way the street goes from that intersection. Merrill Gardens is immediately on the left. Park on the street. (However, there are a few visitor spaces in the lot in front of the facility, including some for vehicles with a handicapped parking placard.)

Our speaker in January will be NCPA’s own Pamela Masters. Pamela submitted the following background for her presentation:

For those of you who don’t know me, I was born, raised, and educated in China. I spent my teens in a Japanese prison camp during World War II and it left me with a fighting spirit that’s carried me through many priceless escapades.

My latest venture — publishing, with its fellow-traveler, promotion — turned into the most expensive experience I’ve ever had. The reason is simple: I’ve always trusted everyone! Needless to say, I’m much wiser and poorer now.

If you’re interested in learning what NOT to do in the publishing/promo game, come to our next NCPA meeting and I’ll be happy to enlighten you.

Pamela Masters’ company is Henderson House Publishing. Her published titles are *The Mushroom Years* and *Sass & Serendipity*. For more information, see [www.hendersonhouse.com](http://www.hendersonhouse.com).

Treasurer’s Report

By Barbara DesChamps

When I began this job in May, 2005, then-President Sandra Williams asked me to keep paper records of everything and I did. These records turned out to be very helpful as a back-up to the Membership records. However, paper records don’t have many of the advantages of electronic records, so the Board of Directors voted to start using QuickBooks to keep track of our finances. We are in the process of converting the paper records to QB records, which can also be printed at the “flick of a switch.”

I can’t take credit for this, as our current President, Barry Schoenborn, entered all the checkbook data from 2000 to late 2005 (thank you!) and I will take it from there.

My two consecutive terms will end next April and we will need a new Treasurer. If you can keep a neat and balanced checkbook, then you can do this job (now that we have the
software working). We provide the software to you and promise to have the records up-to-date when you take over, so volunteer!

Last year, I also arranged for our awards dinner. We need someone else to volunteer to do that next spring. It’s important to show support for our award winners at a ceremony, especially as we don’t have a conference planned for 2007. Several Board members volunteered to do many of the tasks involved in putting on a conference but we still needed some volunteers from the general membership . . . and we didn’t get them. We currently have too few people trying to do too many jobs. If you want this organization to serve you, you need to volunteer a bit of your time. The Treasury is in fine shape but all the money in the world can’t substitute for people who are willing to work for their organization. If you want to thank me and all the others for all the time we’ve put into this organization, then volunteer. Many hands make light the work!

_Editor’s note: on December 2, 2006, the treasurer reported to the board an NCPA bank balance of $7,454.64, which would increase as renewal and new-member checks were deposited._

**Book Awards Competition Update**

Dierdre Wolownick, chief judge for the competition, offers this:

> I am pleased to serve as Chief Judge for NCPA’s 2007 Book Awards Program. This long-standing awards program will take place beginning in January, and books published by NCPA members during 2006 will be eligible.

> Watch your mail for more information about the competition rules and an application form!

**Article Marketing and Book Promotion: Promote Your Book To The Top of The NY Times Best Sellers List**

*Special feature article by Eric Gruber, Director of Operations, PR LEADS Article Marketing Service*

Although, Mark Hyman, M.D, the _New York Times_ Best Selling author, and practicing physician, had a strong, multi-faceted marketing and sales plan in place, the addition of an article marketing strategy helped him in his successful quest to push his book, _UltraMetabolism – The Simple Plan For Automatic Weight Loss_ to the #2 spot of the _NY Times_ Best Seller List. Dr. Hyman’s article marketing campaign was only one piece of the puzzle, but an important piece that helped him establish key relationships with website publishers that will result in increased, targeted traffic and stronger sales for many months and years to come.

By including a targeted article marketing program into your marketing and sales plan, you too could achieve book-marketing success. Doing this effectively requires planning and perfect execution from beginning to end:
Step 1: Create An Article That Grabs Readers Interest

One of the most important parts of the article is the title. Remember, the first 3-4 words of your article title have the most weight with Google and other search engines. The point of the title is to intrigue your audience to actually sit down and read the article. You may even want to offer an outrageous proposition that you can fulfill within your article body as we have with the title of this article.

The articles that get the best results are the ones that provide unique, high-quality content that solve at least one piece of a problem puzzle. However, to convert readers to buyers, you must not give the reader all of the answers to the “HOW” to solve a particular problem. Instead you want to tease them with some of the how and top it off with why it’s important.

Step 2: Turn Readers Into Prospects With A Strong Call For Action And An Offer They Can’t Refuse

You want to encapsulate the essence of what makes you and your offering unique. This is your Unique Selling Proposition. Do this by chiseling away the information that no one cares about from your golden nuggets. Refine them into gleaming insights. Hammer them into logical sequence. Fasten them to reader benefits. Then polish and polish it until your fingers ache, to create a glittering necklace of persuasion that seduces the eye, charms the imagination, and dazzles the reader with so much human interest that it is indeed much easier to click and go to your website than skip.

If you add a free bonus offer, you will make it even easier for readers to click to your website. You can offer a sneak preview of your book, a free ezine subscription, or a free special bonus report that further enhances your credibility as the expert.

Step 3: Maintain Reader Interest and Create a Squeeze Page

Think of your article as a sales funnel. Your article title, content, bio box, and the link you send your readers to should all flow right into each other. Including a link to the main page only distract and frustrate readers. You will lose that sale forever.

When you promote your book in your bio box, then take them to a squeeze page within your site that convinces people why they should either buy the book or why they should subscribe.

Step 4: Target Your Audience With Ezines and Websites That Make a Difference

You need to find websites that are highly visited and ezines that are the most read, but more importantly, you want to focus on websites and ezine publishers within your specific niche that have strong emotional connections to their audiences. Through our research for Mark Hyman, M.D., we found information for a popular About.com editor. About.com is among the top 50 sites on the net today. This submission resulted in over 1,500 opt-in and new sales in one day, not counting the successes from other credible websites.
Step 5: Submit Your Article and Build Your Links and Traffic

Now is the time to perform the tiring, boring and tedious task of submitting your articles. But, as you completing this process, know that there is light at the end of the tunnel. By using these article marketing strategies, you can build a steady stream of warm ready-to-buy visitors and substantially increase your book sales.

By including article marketing into your multi-faceted marketing and sales plan, you too can achieve success in marketing your book. You will then only be limited by your imagination and your time. The question is, “What is your destination?”

*Article marketing expert and award-winning public relations practitioner Eric Gruber helped promote Mark Hyman, M.D.’s book to the top of the NY Times Best Seller List. For a free consultation on how to substantially increase your book sales using today’s hottest Internet marketing strategies, email Eric@prleads.com or go to www.prleads.com/article.htm to have Eric manage your article marketing campaign.*

Five Steps to Creating Extra Income for Writers

By Stephanie Chandler

Freelance writers and authors have a unique opportunity to earn extra income by selling information products such as ebooks, special reports and electronic workbooks. Since you already have a talent for writing, you can use your skills to capitalize on one of the hottest online business trends.

Here are five steps to success as an “Infopreneur.”

1. Develop a Niche

Most writers have favorite subjects they like to write about. Decide on a topic that you are passionate about and become an expert in the field. You can establish your expertise by writing articles or books about the topic. Take it a step further by conducting speaking engagements or teaching related classes. Developing notoriety in your field will help you build a loyal following.

2. Host a Killer Website

Once you’ve narrowed your focus, launch a website that focuses on your topic of interest. For example, if you like to write about parenting, you could create a website that offers parenting advice, activities for kids or resources for new moms. Fill the site with plenty of free content; useful website links, articles and interviews. By providing valuable content for free, your site visitors will not only have a reason to come back again, but they will be more inclined to purchase your information products.
3. Publish an E-zine

Sending a monthly or weekly e-zine is one of the best ways to market to your audience. Since the average consumer must be exposed to a product six to eight times before making a buying decision, the more you can get your name in front of them, the better. This also allows you to build a rapport with your audience, thus giving them more incentive to buy from you.

4. Develop and Sell Your Information Products

One of the most important keys to success with information products is meeting the needs of your audience. Consider what your audience wants to know, or better yet, ask them! Next, make a list of product ideas. For example, a photographer could write a special report on how to take flattering pictures, a pet fanatic could write an ebook about first aid for pets or a gardener could write an ebook on plant care in the winter.

Once your first product is ready, you can set up your website to automate the sales and delivery process. One company that offers an affordable solution is www.payloadz.com. This service allows you to create shopping cart buttons for your website, process payments seamlessly via PayPal, and sends the buyer an automatic email with instructions for downloading the product. This allows you to earn money while you sleep!

5. Market Your Website and Products

There are many ways to get the word out about your online product business. You can include a link to your website in your author bio when you publish articles. You can offer reprints of your articles for others to publish on their websites and e-zines, each with your author bio and a link back to your site. You can swap links with websites in your industry and offer to exchange ads in each other’s e-zines.

With a bit of effort and some perseverance, your information products could generate revenues beyond your wildest dreams, as well as add some variety to your working life. An added bonus: magazine editors will appreciate the niche expertise that you have to offer.


Nonfiction Writing Courses at UC Davis Extension

Special to The Pen & Press

UC Davis Extension has announced new courses in nonfiction writing. Courses are open to the general public and held in Sacramento or Davis unless otherwise specified.
Discover the expanding field of nonfiction writing. Learn about program coursework, requirements and get answers to frequently asked questions — January 9 and April 4, 2007, 6-7 pm There is no fee.

Research and Interviewing Techniques for Nonfiction Writers: Nonfiction writing takes many forms and includes a wide variety of specializations. You will have an opportunity to explore the various forms and specializations, and gain an understanding of how to tailor your work for a chosen market. You will learn how to conduct research and interviews by practicing techniques in class and in the field. Finally you will apply these techniques as you write a professional and publishable piece. February 7 – March 8. The fee is $280.

Enhancing Writing Skills for Publication: Grammar, punctuation, sentence and paragraph construction, and English usage will be highlighted as you focus on skills needed for nonfiction writing. Discussions will cover the elements of structure, style and tone, narrative vs. expository writing, and the different kinds of writing, such as reviews, features, how-to’s, memoirs, etc. You will learn to distinguish between good and bad writing, and how to produce marketable pieces suitable for publication. Winter quarter: January 23 – March 13. Spring quarter: April 16-June 11. The fee is $285.

Getting Published and The Business of Nonfiction Writing: Essential information is provided to help you turn your dream of getting published into a reality. You will learn to prepare materials such as query letters, cover letters and proposals that lead to professional writing assignments. In addition, exercises and discussions will cover other aspects of professional writing, such as contracts, taxes and working with editors and agents. April 24 – June 12. The fee is $285.

For more information or to learn more about the courses, visit us online at www.extension.ucdavis.edu/arts, email us at artsinfo@unexmail.ucdavis.edu, or call us at (800) 752-0881.


Compiled by Sandra K. Williams


Will books that have already been published need new ISBNs?

No, an existing book’s ISBN-10 can be converted to its ISBN-13 counterpart using the conversion formula. The ISBN and barcode do not need to be changed until the book is reprinted.

From www.isbn.org/standards/home/isbn/transition.asp:

On January 1, 2007, the book industry will begin using 13 digit ISBNS to identify all books in supply chain.
Two new prefixes are being created. The 978 prefix will be added in front of the current ISBN-10 and with the addition of a new check digit at the end, the new ISBN-13 is created.


Prior to January 1, 2007, books will continue to be published using ISBN-10s.

Beginning January 1, 2007, all books will be published with ISBN-13s.

During the transition period, BISG recommends that publishers should:

✓ Print both the ISBN-10 and the ISBN-13 on the Copyright Page in this format:

✓ Use both the ISBN-10 and the ISBN-13 in all marketing and sales communications materials and business documents such as invoices, packing slips and credit memos.


✓ Print only one bar code — the EAN bar code — and cease using the UPC bar code. The EAN bar code is already a 13 digit ISBN without hyphens.


After January 1, 2007, the ISBN-10 officially becomes the “ISBN.”

For more information:


Sandra Williams’s company is Williams Writing, Editing & Design, 5714 Folsom Blvd. No. 190, Sacramento, CA 95819. Phone: 916-456-0625. Email skw@williamswriting.com. Website: www.williamswriting.com.
“Why People Hate Self-Publishers”

By Naida West

Editor’s Note: the following extraordinary essay originally appeared as a comment on SlushPile.Net, a website for writers. A link to the original posted version is at the end of this article.

RE: WHY PEOPLE HATE SELF PUBLISHERS

Actually they love to hate them. Rejected Rob is a straw man easy to knock down and kick in the ribs. He’s a social idiot who fails at editing, swoons at the sight of his name on a bookcover, and has zero publicity, distribution, or marketing. He is a stereotype, but yet the hatred for him hurts me. I am an independent publisher.

Ten years ago when I learned that major houses considered my 640-page historical novels too much financial risk for a new author with “regional” appeal, I went ahead and printed the first title myself. Later, after sales were beyond regional and distributors came knocking on my door, several of those same publishers lined up to bid on reissuing that title under their imprint, as well as my unfinished MS. I refused a contract. So I was not rejected, they were.

My main beef with your piece, however, is that it bolsters the view that a book can be judged by the size of its publisher. Ideally, books should be judged by a panel of objective critics who don’t discriminate against, sight unseen, books published by small houses. Failing that, the standard ought to be a combination of number of books sold and sales income. Other industries use those standards. The book trade should too.

FALLACIES OF THE BEST-SELLER AS CURRENTLY DEFINED. The New York Times Best Seller label is misleading. Well over half the titles published in the U.S. are ineligible to compete because they refuse to limit sales to distributor channels. Small publishers don’t want all their eggs in one basket. We sell to diverse markets, including direct to readers, and we sell through stores outside the book trade (not counted in the NYT process). I sold an entire first printing (3000) of my 2nd novel through pre-paid orders mailed straight to readers. Those sales don’t count. Often my authors purchase their books wholesale and sell them outside of bookstores. Those sales don’t count. Even if our titles sold 100 times more than NYT Best Sellers, we can’t use that fact. The big houses did a great job marketing the concept of a NYT Best Seller, and of course they limit eligibility. Of course they use the easiest method of counting sales — distributor figures. But the latter might be the rosy view. In reality it appears that some NYTBS get that designation before a single reader has bought a single book. Even granting the rosy view, however, only a few weeks of sales are counted. Marketing departments know how to generate a quick sales bubble, with NYTBS part of the strategy. In the launching frenzy actual sales numbers are likely to be irrelevant. When money is at stake, corruption exists in all unregulated systems.
The print media routinely checks Amazon sales numbers to judge whether a book is worthy, but for many titles, those numbers represent a tiny portion of sales. Not all small publishers are versed in the tricks of online marketing — I’m not. The internet is another unregulated game.

An objective best-seller process needs to be established, one that reflects real sales, over time, in all venues, with proof of print runs and other evidence. This system would be a challenge to devise, but well worth it to small houses.

LOW SALES STANDARDS OF MAJOR PUBLISHERS. I was stunned to discover how few books need sell to satisfy a major publisher. A Simon & Schuster editor on a writer’s conference panel looked at my first novel (printed) and told me an acceptable sell-through if produced by them would be about 4000. That would recoup costs and garner acceptable profit, including paperback rights. I asked whether the reps of the other 5 houses agreed. They nodded. Marketing departments of large publishers pre-plan sell-through. When the money budgeted for marketing runs out, the books vanish from the shelves, usually after a few weeks. It’s curtains for that title unless the paperback rights were sold. But independent publishers keep on going. That paperback title of mine has now sold over 20,000, and is still my best seller after 10 years – my profit on average 70%, not 6%.

THE AUTHORIAL MYSTIQUE. A lot of writers are saying, “I would never publish my own book because I’m more talented than Rejected Rob, and I don’t give a hoot about money or sales.” Or, “I would never soil my delicate literary hands with crass business.” They are standing on a pedestal engraved: The Authorial Mystique. That pedestal protects publishers from their authors, their most serious competitors. How the big houses must love the mystique! Mark Twain soiled his fingers with plenty of printer’s ink, and a better salesman has rarely been seen. Huckleberry Finn is still a household word after more than 100 years. Twain was no Rejected Rob. Nor was he a self-publisher. He published books written by others in addition to his own.

THE TERM ‘SELF PUBLISHER’ MISSES THE MARK FOR MANY. My company has 5 titles in print – books written by me as well as others. I pay all costs. My books are distributed nationally. I hire professional editors and graphic artists. I use offset printers, not POD (used it once but the inflated price/unit hurt sales). My income after expenses is far more than most mid-list novelists in big houses. I spend beaucoup on printing and reprinting, but I’ve been in the black since the first six weeks. I employ an associate to handle much of the business. Despite these costs, a substantial savings CD informs me that readers like my books. To my other writers, I am a publisher (are they supposed to say, “I’m published by a self publisher?” — that would mean themselves). After I launch the 3rd novel in my trilogy, Bridge House Books will continue to publish fine literature.

OTHER COMPENSATIONS FOR INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS, BESIDES INCOME. Most mid-list novelists for big houses work day jobs; I’m at home doing what I love, writing. My books will stay in print as long as I wish. A writer friend of mine is under pressure to produce a title each year of the same genre, with the same main character (he’s so sick of his hero he could “puke”). I take as much time as I need, and
write what I want. Mid-list authors have zero control over book covers and marketing. One error can spoil sales — a slight problem to a giant publisher, devastation to the author. That happened to another friend.

CONCLUSION. If the Authorial Mystique helps salve the psychic wounds inflicted upon writers by their impotence and peonage within the book trade, good. But stop kicking Rob. He’s just an enterprising guy learning the ropes. If you’re a published writer, odds are you’ll dirty your hands with sales too, regardless of the size of your publisher. Go in peace, but remember: every publisher started with one book.


Other News, Announcements, and Comments

Your editor invites submissions for this section of *The Pen & Press*. Short items of interest to writers, editors, and publishers (and allied folks) are welcome here.

*Moj Dehghan Gains Recognition*

Moj has advised the newsletter that his book of essays *Chatter to Flatter Your Platter* has been selected by the collection department of The Sacramento Public Library. The library has ordered eight copies through Baker & Taylor. The book is available in the Arcade, Carmichael, Central, Colonial Heights, Mckinley, North Highlands, South Gate, and Valley High branches.

A copy has also been purchased by the “Friends of the Library” of Rocklin Library and it has been added to their collection. Placer County has also ordered five additional copies, which will be available in five of their branches.

*Alton Pryor Gains Another Fan*

NCPA member and author of 16 books, so far, shared this with *The Pen & Press*:

“I just received my first fan letter from a state prison. In it, the inmate explained that he had just finished one of my books and how much he had appreciated it. The kicker is the title of the book was *Outlaws and Gunslingers*. I hope it wasn’t being used as a textbook. He asked for more books and I happily packaged up several and shipped them off to him.”

*News from Danica d’Hondt: New Free Newsletter*

According to Danica:

I am publishing it on the web. To subscribe, all one has to do is go to my website: [www.whisperedhistory.com](http://www.whisperedhistory.com) and sign up.

Also, I am looking for authors of books on Gold Country History who would like to come and sell their books (and possibly speak) at a “Salon” we offer once a month at our restaurant, Sequoia, in Placerville ([www.sequoiaplacerville.com](http://www.sequoiaplacerville.com)).
The particular salon that is appropriate to this material is entitled Mysteries of the Gold Country and will be held on Wednesday, February 21, 2007 at 6:30 pm. Anyone interested may contact me at danica@thebigdream.com or by phone (530) 677-5672.

A Note from the Editor

Send your articles and announcements to ken@umbachconsulting.com. Use NCPA NEWSLETTER as the subject heading. That helps me to find newsletter submissions in the avalanche of incoming email.

Please provide submissions in Microsoft Word (or compatible) format, or in plain text. If you would like to discuss an article idea or have any other questions or comments about the newsletter, feel free to email or phone.

What fits best into The Pen & Press is news of members’ books, activities, marketing, speaking engagements, and accomplishments. Also of value: members’ insights into the challenges and opportunities of writing publishing and information on regional resources for authors and publishers. Cover illustrations and other photos are welcome in jpeg or other standard format. Please keep file sizes reasonable for receipt on a dialup account. When in doubt, call or email me in advance.

The deadline for submissions for the next issue (March-April 2007) is February 15th.

— Ken Umbach, editor
**Board of Directors of NCPA**

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Northern California Publishers & Authors  
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www.norcalpa.org
Time to fish or cut bait.

We are up against the wall, folks, with the annual election of board members just around the corner. This is a key time for NCPA every year, when the shape of the organization is determined for the coming year.

This organization cannot run without dedicated, self-starting, judgment-exercising, responsibility-taking volunteers, people who will participate in decisions and discussions and carry out tasks, for the most part independently, under general guidance of the board.

Although it appears that our overworked NCPA president Barry Schoenborn is willing to take on that role for another year (after which, he is termed out under current bylaws), we will need a new vice president, treasurer (current occupant of the office Barbara DesChamps being termed out), a secretary (perhaps Bill Teie can be induced to serve another year), and a flock of people to handle the other board positions: website, awards, speakers bureau, newsletter, membership, annual conference, and publicity—not to mention actual committee members to help out the chairs of those various committees.

At this point, we are woefully short. One of the prices we pay for that is an inability even to make use of the organization’s funds on behalf of promoting independent publishing and informing the press and public of the valuable work being done by independent publishers—including our own members—in our region.

Unless you are ok with NCPA simply disbanding, ceasing operations and donating the contents of the treasury to charities in accordance with the bylaws, consider stepping up to the plate. The time for nominations is now. As of February 19, we have 71 members. Surely we can fill the board from that number.

— Ken Umbach, editor
The next regular monthly NCPA meeting will be held at Merrill Gardens Retirement Community, 7418 Stock Ranch Rd., Citrus Heights, CA 95621, 10:00 am to noon, Saturday, March 10, 2007. Take Greenback to San Juan Ave. Turn north on San Juan, which then becomes Sylvan Rd. Go a block to Stock Ranch Rd. (there is a light at the intersection); turn left (west) on Stock Ranch — the only way the street goes from that intersection. Merrill Gardens is immediately on the left. Park on the street. (However, there are a few visitor spaces in the lot in front of the facility, including some for vehicles with a handicapped parking placard.)

NCPA member Hector Barrera will be our speaker. His book is *The High Rider y Otros Cuentos: A two-in-one book – story with a craft* (Gold Seal Publisher, Ceres, California).

Hector Barrera provided the following background.

**How I came about writing this book.**

About eight months ago while returning some books at CSU Stanislaus, I ran into a friend and his child riding bicycles. Something about the size of his tall bike next to the smallness of his daughter’s bike caught my eye. This image took me back in time, and I shared with them the story of the high rider. I decided then and there to build another high rider, and a few weeks later I built the one on the cover of the book. After conversations with my wife regarding how we as adolescents
made all of our toys and how today’s youth buy everything, I decided to write fiction stories that would include a craft, hopefully stimulating young people to problem-solve creatively and to build things from the resources around them.

The stories are not intended to be in order. The last story is in actuality the first as the protagonist is on his way home. I plan to take Sabino through three more books. Each book will continue to return him to his youth in the barrio and to memories of a craft that will be included with instructions. Each book will move him through the experience of one of the four quadrants mentioned in the Half Dollar Ring. Embedded in this book, as will be with the other three, are symbols and pictures only familiar to the Barrera family that I include for my relatives to find.

**How I decided to publish and bind the book.**

When I attended my first meeting at NCPA the stories were completed. I was at that time looking for information on how to publish the book. My networking that day opened a few more avenues. I bought Alton Pryor’s book, *Publish It Yourself*, recommended to me by Marlys Norris. This book provided me with the basics of forming my publishing house and acquiring all the necessities for publishing the book: ISBN, etc. But I still did not have someone to print and bind the book.

I followed Alton’s advice (pg. 23) to browse books in libraries and book stores for typeface and layouts. After studying books cover to cover, the experience stimulated the idea that I could put together the book myself. This experience took me back to my youth of problem-solving and the construction of several book binders to “Big Blue” as my sons call it because of its color - the final manual binding machine that put this book together.

My next plans are to write a “How-To” book on the publishing of this book. Included in the book will be instructions and pictures on building a manual binding machine.

This should be a real treat, showcasing an author who demonstrates with unusual force and clarity the value of independent publishing.

**Book Awards Competition Update**

Dierdre Wolownick had to resign as chief judge on account of personal circumstances and demands of work. The contest is being managed by Barry Schoenborn, with a staff of volunteer judges.

**Marlys Norris Gaining Recognition**

NCPA member Marlys Norris has carved out a niche as a Christian writer and speaker.

Her book titles include:
• God Moves Mountains, Yes It Was a Miracle!
• Recipes for a Happier Marriage
• Defining Moments
• Short Stories for the Family
• Messages in the Dust

She is also the author of an article about the writing experience in *Walking with the Wise Entrepreneur*.

Marlys has been writing a regular column on the religion page of *American River Messenger*, a newspaper that serves Citrus Heights, Fair Oaks, and Gold River. Among other speaking interests, she offers writing workshops on topics that include how to began a writing career as senior citizen.

**Ron Barnes Publishes Distinctive Anthology**

NCPA member (returning to the fold after an absence) Ron Barnes is in the process of publishing his distinctive anthology of fiction, a sort of Stephen-King-meets-Rod-Serling collection called *Mind Shadows*. The book is currently available only from Lulu.com (www.lulu.com/content/626583), as Ron is still scouring the early printings for any last-minute corrections and adjustments before securing an ISBN and making *Mind Shadows* generally available.

Ron brings a unique voice to his writing, drawing from his background, including a legacy of stories heard as a child from family members, and from his observations of life.
Jonathan Pearce Serves Humanity


Jonathan provided this description:

Mr. Burberry, an English butler (or is he an agent of MI-6?) lost in the fog finds himself in Balona, CA 95232. He is so suave, handsome, and articulate that he is accepted by the populace at once and soon becomes a candidate for public office and partner in the local sausage-making company. All well and good, except that citizens begin to disappear and the flavor of the local korndog product assumes an unusual piquancy. Is Mr. Burberry safe? Is Balona?

“Pre-publication readers,” Jonathan tells The Pen & Press, “say they like the story but would pass on the korndogs.”

How Self-Published Books Create Highly Profitable Businesses

by Robert Skrob, President, Information Marketing Association

Customers expect a book to cost $9.95, $19.95, or perhaps as much as $49.95. With production costs, that doesn’t give you a lot of money to promote your books and generate sales. It depends on your income goals, but if it consists of selling your books alone, you’d have to sell hundreds or thousands of books a month to earn any substantial income. Your operation costs and marketing expenses would quickly exceed the revenues.
There is a better way. When you use your self-published books as a sales tool to identify customers and make additional sales, then your self-published books become a money-generating tool that can drive a million-dollar business.

**Here Are 3 Examples of How Your Self-Published Books Can Create a Highly Profitable Business:**


   Speaking and presentation skills coach, Susan Berkley self-published her book, *Speak to Influence: How to Unlock the Hidden Power of Your Voice* ([www.speaktoinfluence.com](http://www.speaktoinfluence.com)) in 1999. The book has sold over 14,000 copies, is now in the second printing of its second edition, and continues to sell every month. Susan still gets quoted from her book, even though it is over seven years old. In fact, the book recently scored blurbs in *Glamour* and *Self* magazines without even trying.

   More importantly, Susan invites her book buyers to sign up for her free e-zine through her website. In the e-zine, Susan offers subscriptions to her monthly paid newsletter, and promotes her products, teleseminars and consulting/coaching services. The revenue from these additional services and products is many times higher than anything she has received from publishing her book. Best of all, Susan can easily market new products whenever she likes. If she decides she needs more money, she creates another program, sends an e-mail to her list, and makes sales—all from a list created through her self-published book.


   Brian Sacks’ self-published book, *Yes, You Can Get a Mortgage: Even If You’ve Had a Bankruptcy, Foreclosure, or Other Credit Issue* ([www.marylandloantips.com](http://www.marylandloantips.com)) has helped thousands achieve the American dream of homeownership. For Brian, this $19.14 book has generated a constant flow of great customers and millions of dollars of revenue for his mortgage brokerage company.

   Brian invites book readers to visit his website for more information and a personal evaluation. Quite often, this evaluation leads to mortgage services with fees ranging from $5,000 to $15,000.

3. The source for accurate celebrity contact information creates monthly, recurring revenue from his self-published book.

   Jordan McAuley self-published his book, *Contact Any Celebrity*, and sold it for $55.00 ([www.IMACelebrityResource.com](http://www.IMACelebrityResource.com)). This book that provides contact information for celebrities is useful for authors who want positive quotes from celebrities to put on their book covers, fans seeking autographs, and charities looking for celebrity endorsements.
Even though $55.00 for a book is a great price, Jordan didn’t stop there. He created a membership website with data that wouldn’t fit into the finished book. Jordan includes publicist information, additional phone numbers, and charities the celebrity already supports. It’s a lot of useful information specifically for authors and charities. Jordan charges only $9.95 a month for membership and promotes this option throughout his book. So instead of selling a book and getting paid once, Jordan has created monthly, recurring revenue from individuals who want constant access to more extensive and constantly updated information.

**Final Self-Published Thoughts**

Too many authors see the self-publishing of a book as their end goal. When that book hits bookstores, they breathe a sigh of relief and pat themselves on the back for a big accomplishment. Yes, you should be proud, but don’t stop there. Self-publishing a book opens the door to hundreds of other business opportunities.

**About the Author:**

Robert Skrob, President of the Information Marketing Association, can help you turn your self-published books into highly promote-able, highly profitable information marketing products like audio programs, DVD’s, catalogs, online magazines, newsletters, membership websites, teleseminars, webinars, and tele-coaching programs. To receive a free two-month trial membership in the Information Marketing Association, a $3,103.84 value, visit www.JoinIMA.com. [This notice is included as a courtesy to the author of the article, but is not endorsed by NCPA]

**Other News, Announcements, and Comments**

Your editor invites submissions for this section of *The Pen & Press*. Short items about NCPA members or otherwise of interest to writers, editors, and publishers (and allied folks) are welcome here.

✔ **Pamela Masters Provides Requested Information**

NCPA member Pamela Masters, author/publisher of *The Mushroom Years* and *Sass & Serendipity*, gave a thoroughly interesting presentation to our January meeting. Some members asked for information on some of the businesses she mentioned. Here it is:

**USAsia Press**

Dave Ingland
200 S. Lexington Dr, #318
Folsom, CA 95630
Phone 916-984-0229
Fax 916-984-3121
Website: www.usasiapress.com
Email: dave@usasiapress.com

“Dave is Korean,” Pamela adds, “and very knowledgeable. My book, cover art, etc., were all sent to Seoul as an attachment, and you saw what great job they did. If I recall, the
whole process took six weeks. There was a hang-up this end at Oakland as there was a
dock strike, so it took another week to get to Camino. The price again for 3,500 broke out
at $3.06/book and included the freight from Korea.”

United Graphics Incorporated
Acct. Executive, Marty Gilliland
2916 Marshall Avenue
P.O. Box 559, Mattoon, IL 61938-0599
Phone 217-235-7161
Fax 217-234-6274
Website: www.unitedgraphicsinc.com

Pamela notes, “As [book designer] Pete Masterson did all the liaison on my book, I don't
have Marty's email address. UGI's price for 500 books broke out at $6.24/book.”

✓ Save the Dates

The following items have been submitted by Pat Canterbury, who keeps tabs on a host of
writers’ events.

August 17-19, 2007, CSUS Summer Writer's Conference

Information regarding panels, speakers, and so on will appear in the next newsletter,
along with information on the restructuring of the conference, currently underway.

March 1, 2008, Authors on the Move

Authors on the Move will be at the Hyatt in 2008. Theme and keynote speakers
are to be determined by mid-June.

March 6-9, 2008, Left Coast Crime

For those who read or write mysteries, Left Coast Crime 18 will be held in Den-
ver, Colorado on March 6-9, 2008. More information may be found on the

The same folks that brought Left Coast Crime and Bouchercon to Monterey will
be hosting Left Coast Crime 19 in Hawaii. [Pat will have more information later
in the year.]
A Note from the Editor

Send your articles and announcements to ken@umbachconsulting.com.

Use NCPA NEWSLETTER as the email subject heading. That helps me to find newsletter submissions in the avalanche of incoming email.

Please provide submissions in Microsoft Word (or compatible) format, or in plain text. If you would like to discuss an article idea or have any other questions or comments about the newsletter, feel free to email or phone.

What fits best into The Pen & Press is news of members’ books, activities, marketing, speaking engagements, and accomplishments. Also of value: members’ insights into the challenges and opportunities of writing publishing and information on regional resources for authors and publishers. Cover illustrations and other photos are welcome in jpeg or other standard format. Please keep file sizes reasonable for receipt on a dialup account. When in doubt, call or email me in advance.

The deadline for submissions for the next issue (May-June 2007) is April 15th.

— Ken Umbach, editor
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Readers are of course 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.

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Whew!

Thanks to the combined efforts (read: arm-twisting) of several folks, for the first time in a while NCPA has a full board. This issue of the newsletter has a list of new and returning board members and brief statements from most, so all I will add here is that we have a very fine team for the coming year.

Committees. Please be receptive to requests to serve on committees. Many hands make light work, as the adage goes. NCPA nominally has several committees, but has not had actual committee members in practice. This year we should establish a new tradition of broader participation.

Awards. As anyone who attended the awards dinner or who has spent time with the entries knows, our members produce some fine books spanning a broad spectrum of design and subject matter. It is a worthwhile endeavor to share that fact more widely, as well as to encourage high professional standards among our members. “NCPA” should be a mark of quality that helps to promote members’ books and that alerts readers to quality. A word to the wise: invest in professional editing and proofreading before your book goes to press. ‘Nuff said.

Ideas. Please share with the board your ideas for how your organization can better serve members and inform the region. Do you have a suggestion? Let us hear it (but be ready to help make it into a reality). Is there a topic you want addressed at a meeting, through the 2008 conference, or in the newsletter?

The board is listening.

— Ken Umbach, editor
May Meeting Speaker to be Announced

As of newsletter deadline, no speaker has been announced for the May meeting (or June meeting, for that matter).

Whether or not a specific speaker is scheduled, every meeting is well worthwhile, as members always have new projects, insights, and answers to questions asked by other members. With a new (and full!) board, and with plans under development for the coming year, there is much to discuss.

Book Awards

Following are the results of the 2007 book awards competition, for books published in 2006. The judges exercised a good deal of discretion in categorizing entries to reflect specific merits and competitive considerations.

BEST OVERALL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Book Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Best Book – Gold</td>
<td>Hubie and the Fire Service</td>
<td>William C. Teie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Book – Silver</td>
<td>Deer in My Garden, Volume 1</td>
<td>Carolyn Singer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Best Book – Bronze</td>
<td>Carmichael: Americana on the Move</td>
<td>Susan Maxwell Skinner</td>
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BEST IN CLASS AWARDS

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Book Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
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<tr>
<td>Best Children’s Book</td>
<td>Buz Words: Discovering Words in Pairs</td>
<td>Maria Felicia Kelley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Juvenile Fiction</td>
<td>GreeHee: The Journey of Five</td>
<td>Michele Avanti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Business/Technical Book</td>
<td>Service Agreements for SMB Consultants</td>
<td>Karl Palachuk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Political Commentary</td>
<td>Bushopedia</td>
<td>Bill Potts</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Best First Book
Carolyn Singer
Deer in My Garden, Volume 1

Best Nonfiction Book
Mark McLaughlin
The Donner Party: Weathering the Storm

DESIGN AWARDS

Best Interior – Text, Images, and Graphics
William C. Teie
Hubie and the Fire Service

Best Interior – Photos/Photo Layout
Susan Maxwell Skinner
Carmichael: Americana on the Move

Best Exterior – Hardcover
William C. Teie
Hubie and the Fire Service

Best Exterior – Soft cover
(Two Awards)
Carolyn Singer
Deer in My Garden, Volume 1

Susan Maxell Skinner
Carmichael: Americana on the Move

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Honorable Mention – Essays
Moj Dehghan
Chatter to Flatter Your Platter

Honorable Mention – Humorous Essays
Tim Herrera
Dad, You Are NOT Going Out Wearing That!

Honorable Mention – General Fiction
Lew Osteen
Beloved Vagabond
MEDIA PACKAGE

Best Media Package
Jennifer Martin
*The Huna Warrior: The Magic Begins*

SPECIAL AWARD

Special Innovation Award
Hector R. Barrera
*The High Rider y Otros Cuentos*

The awards were announced, and plaques presented, at the awards dinner at Coco’s Restaurant and Bakery, Citrus Heights, Friday, April 27. The occasion was festive, even if a bit hectic, and an excellent time was had by all in attendance (38 members and guests).

Clearly, judging was not a simple task, as every entry had merit, and several were truly extraordinary. At the same time, some entries had, shall we say, issues (read: lapses in editing and proofing), that affected final decisions.

Some distinctions call for explanation. Tim Herrera’s *Dad, You Are NOT Going Out Wearing That!* received honorable mention for “humorous essays,” in view of the nature and purpose of the book: a humorous take on fatherhood. In slight contrast, Moj Dehghan’s *Chatter to Flatter Your Platter* received honorable mention for “essays” in the light of the somewhat more serious underlying tone of some of Moj’s essays in that anthology. Needless to emphasize, Moj also demonstrates much humor, so the distinction was finely drawn.

Hector Barrera’s unique entry *The High Rider y Otros Cuentos* received a special innovation award in the light of the book’s distinctive and innovative combination of fiction and crafts. Dr. Barrera’s craftsmanship extends to his writing as well as to the projects described in his book and indeed the manufacture of the book itself.

Bill Potts’s *Bushopedia* called for recognition for its primary purpose, political commentary, a more suitable classification than the default categories in the contest announcement. Likewise, Karl Palachuk’s *Service Agreements for SMB Consultants* was recognized in a fitting category, business/technical book.

The other entries are more self-explanatory. Clearly, the gold, silver, and bronze “best book” award winners exemplify the value of independent publishing in our region.

Congratulations to the authors!
NCPA Election Fills All Positions

For the first time in a few years, NCPA has a full slate of board members. One board member, Ken Umbach, is handling two tasks, newsletter and membership. One position, conference chair, is divided between co-chairs Karl Palachuk and Yolanda Cuesta. Past president Sandra Williams is also assuming website manager duties (resuming a role she has held previously). Here is the complete list (executive committee in **bold**):

- **President:** Barry Schoenborn
- **Vice President:** Bill Potts
- **Secretary:** Michele Avanti
- **Treasurer:** Carol Ryan
- **Past President:** Sandra Williams
- **Public Relations:** Marlys Norris
- **Newsletter:** Ken Umbach
- **Speakers Bureau:** Stephanie Chandler
- **Membership:** Ken Umbach
- **Web Manager:** Sandra Williams
- **Awards:** Jennifer Martin
- **Conference co-chair:** Yolanda Cuesta
- **Conference co-chair:** Karl Palachuk

Most board members provided brief post-election statements for the newsletter. In alphabetical order:

**Michele Avanti.** I am honored to be secretary for NCPA. I will do my best to keep concise notes of each meeting, so that everyone may stay informed of the board’s activities. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve a community of publishers and authors who unknowingly have been a support system for me living three hundred miles away. Thank you!

**Stephanie Chandler.** My goal is to generate more speaking engagements for all of us this year. Since our phones aren’t exactly ringing off the hook with requests, I will proactively notify local organizations and let them know that we have a talented group of speakers available. You can help by sending me any direct contact information or leads for area organizations that could benefit from talks by members of NCPA. I look forward to serving another year on the NCPA board and hope to see more participation from all members in the upcoming year!

**Jennifer Martin.** I’m looking forward to working on the board and welcome any suggestions for next year’s awards program. I thought this year’s event was fun and spirited—a great get-together with some very talented people. With everyone’s input, next year’s will be even better.
Marlys Norris. What a pleasure it has been to meet several of our NCPA members since I joined in 2002. The past year getting to know Pres. Barry and Ken has been very encouraging. I consider it an honor to be working with them and the new board for the coming year. My goal is to write publicity to acquaint the public with the work NCPA does to help authors and publishers, and to invite the public to attend one of our meetings and hopefully join our membership.

Karl Palachuk and Yolanda Cuesta (co-chairs). We know we haven’t had a conference for a couple of years. We plan to work together to put together something for Spring 2008 that will be both enjoyable and educational. But two people can’t pull off a successful conference, so decide how you wish to contribute your time and talents, and contact us at karlp@greatlittlebook.com (Karl) or yjcuesta@mindspring.com (Yolanda).

Carol Ryan. As incoming treasurer, I hope to provide the members with clear, accurate, and timely information about the finances of the organization. I will be working with Barbara DesChamps, our current treasurer, to get up to speed as soon as possible.

Barry Schoenborn. Thanks very much for giving me the chance to serve as President for one more year! NCPA is on a solid footing and we have great new crew of officers and board members. In the upcoming administrative year (May 1 to April 30) you’ll see more and better services for members, great programs, another fine book competition, and the return of our annual conference. First and foremost, however, you have my commitment to listen to you attentively so I can help take our organization in the direction you want it go.

Ken Umbach. As newsletter editor, I look forward to another year of informing members and others of the activities and accomplishments of people in NCPA. I expect to continue the bimonthly schedule for the newsletter, and invite articles and announcements from members. As membership chair, I plan to keep the records current, encourage timely renewals, and invite new members to join our ranks. This will be my last year in either position, so I invite potential candidates for the 2008 NCPA election to ask what the positions involve and explore the opportunities to serve the organization.

Sandra K. Williams. After a two-year break, I’m refreshed and ready to work again on the NCPA Web site. I have several ideas for improvements, and they’ll be implemented as I find time between other projects. Probably the first change will be creating the Self-Publishing Wiki. The name wiki comes from the Hawaiian word for “quick,” which is exactly the purpose of a wiki: a fast and easy means of creating and updating a Web page. Wikis provide a way for community members to share information: just click the “edit” button and start typing. If you have suggestions regarding the NCPA site, send them to me at skw@williamswriting.com.
From the President
In the Middle of the Internet Age

By Barry Schoenborn, President

Not very long ago, tools like e-mail and the Internet were novelties. Then they became “nice to have” conveniences. Now, they are the inescapable essentials of our work. It’s obvious that even before these online tools came along, the PC had evolved into an outstanding tool for writing, drawing, and page layout.

Now (and irrevocably), success for publishers and authors is linked to their mastery of all things electronic. Yes, you can still try to “do it the old way” (with a yellow pad, an electric typewriter, and conventional mail), but it is hard to be competitive using the old methods.

As independents, we have to be able to do many things and do them fast. True, many services can be hired out, but really, how much money can we afford to spend on things we can do ourselves?

That’s why over the upcoming year, you will see NCPA doing all it can to make your full immersion in “modern day” publishing as productive and pain-free as possible. My hope is that we’ll have new and better ways to communicate (for example, please see Sandra Williams’ statement in this newsletter). We’ll bring to you new awareness of tools that will make publishing faster and easier.

We’ll also use the computer better for NCPA matters—that is, it will be easier and faster for you to see NCPA information. Look for improvements in e-mail, forums, access to minutes, access to financials, access to resources, selling opportunities, etc.

All this is made possible courtesy of the machine we love to hate, our personal computer.

Stay tuned. I think we’ll have an excellent year.

Feature Article
Online Marketing for Authors

By Stephanie Chandler

Authors have a tremendous opportunity for to reach millions of potential readers by marketing books online. Even better, you don’t have to be a technology guru or spend a lot of money to launch your online marketing campaign.

First and foremost, every author should have a website. You can use your website to not only market to readers, but to communicate with editors, agents and publishers. Your website is essentially an online brochure that can include as much or as little information as you’re willing to share.
Website hosting is also surprisingly affordable, with rates ranging from $5.00 to $20.00 per month depending on the provider you choose and the services you need. Some providers to consider are Yahoo (http://smallbusiness.yahoo.com), Network Solutions (www.networksolutions.com) or Go Daddy (www.godaddy.com).

Once your website is up and running, there is plenty you can do to get the word out. Following are strategies you can use to market your books around the globe with your own online marketing campaign.

**Host a Newsletter**

Sending an electronic newsletter, also known as an ezine, is one of the most effective and affordable marketing tools available. This is your opportunity to communicate with your readers, announce events, tell them about new books and products and build loyalty.

Make sure to send your newsletter on or around the same time each month or week. Ideally it should be loaded with interesting information so that your subscribers are eager to read each edition. Check out www.constantcontact.com for email management solutions.

**Form Strategic Alliances**

Contact authors and business owners in your field and inquire about partnership opportunities. You can swap links to each other’s websites, promote each other in your ezines, refer each other to media opportunities and speaking engagements, and find other mutually beneficial partnership opportunities.

**Maximize Exposure on Amazon**

Amazon has a variety of programs that can boost an author’s book sales. Check out Amazon Connect, where you can post messages to readers and on your book’s main page. You can also create Listmania lists, post reviews for other people’s books, and submit search terms relevant to your book. Also, make sure your book’s description on Amazon is accurate. If not, contact Amazon and request appropriate changes.

**Participate in Forums and Message Boards**

Online forums are a place where visitors can exchange information. Whenever you post a message, you can include a brief signature line with details about your book and your website address. Locate forums related to your book’s topic and become a regular visitor. You might be surprised by how many new readers you will find here. One great resource is Yahoo! Groups: http://groups.yahoo.com. Also search the Internet for industry-appropriate forums. If you’re really ambitious, you might consider hosting your own forum.

**Host a Blog**

A blog, also known as a web log, is essentially an online diary where you can post brief bits of information for your readers. Most bloggers post messages two or three times per
week. Well-read blogs provide information on controversial topics or offer how-to advice and useful statistics. You can start a free blog by visiting www.blogger.com. Make sure you promote your blog everywhere by including a link from your website in your email signature and mentioning it in your author bio. You might also want to read some existing blogs to get some ideas on how to format yours.

**Publish Articles**

Many of the millions of websites on the Internet are in need of quality content and articles. You can write articles related to the topic of your book and submit them for consideration to industry-related websites. Make sure to include an author bio with a link to your website.

You can also post articles to content sites such as www.ezinearticles.com and www.ideamarketers.com. Visitors to these sites look for articles to publish on their websites and in their ezines. When your article is selected for publication, the publisher must include your author bio. This is one of my favorite book marketing strategies. Even if you publish just one article per month, over time you should see your website traffic grow dramatically. Don’t forget to run an Internet search periodically on your article’s title so you can see where it is featured.

The more time you spend online looking for opportunities to market your book, the more chances you will find to increase sales. Commit to spending an hour every day to marketing online and you will surely see your sales improve.

*About the Author:* Stephanie Chandler is the author of several business books and the founder of www.BusinessInfoGuide.com, a directory of resources for entrepreneurs. She also recently released a workbook and eBook called “Online Marketing for Authors.” For details visit http://businessinfoguide.com/products.htm.

**Coming Attractions**

By Pat Canterbury

The Third Annual **CSUS Summer Writers’ Conference** will be held on Friday, August 10 through Sunday, August 12, 2007, at Napa and Modoc Halls on the CSUS campus. Keynote speakers: Raymond Obstfeld on Friday and Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston on Sunday. “Save the Date” postcards will be arriving soon.

The Sixth Annual **Authors on the Move** fundraiser for the Sacramento Library Foundation will be held on Saturday, March 1, 2008, at the Hyatt Hotel. Those with novels published in 2006 or 2007 please contact Pat Canterbury at patmyst@aol.com, as she is a member of the larger Authors’ Committee. Many NCPA members have already been featured during the past five years.
For fans of the mystery genre (authors and readers) members of the Sacramento mystery community have submitted Sacramento’s name to host the 2010 or 2012 Left Coast Crime Convention. More information coming soon.

**Other News, Announcements, and Comments**

Your editor invites submissions for this section of *The Pen & Press*. Short items about NCPA members or otherwise of interest to writers, editors, and publishers (and allied folks) are welcome here.

✓ From Ben Gay III: “Thanks to displaying our books/CDs, etc. in the PMA booth at the Frankfurt Book Show, we sold the worldwide rights to ‘The Closers’ series in the Korean language and the same rights in India (‘in all languages named in the Indian Constitution’), and several surrounding countries (Singapore, etc., etc., etc.).” —Ben Gay III, *The Closers*, 800-248-3555, Bfg3@directcon.net, www.bfg3.com.

✓ From Alton Pryor: “I have just made arrangements with the ‘recovering’ Sacramento Union, which will publish weekly beginning April 6, 2007, to run a series of historical columns on California and the west. They will run a different story each week. I have just transmitted the first eight, but have probably another year-and-a-half worth in the can.” —Alton Pryor, www.stagecoachpublishing.com.

✓ Ken Umbach will be speaking on the topic of Internet research for business people, at the May 8 luncheon meeting of the Citrus Heights Chamber of Commerce. Ken’s latest column for *Knowledge Quest*, the journal of the American Association of School Librarians, is scheduled for the Web edition of the May-June issue.

✓ From Chuck Giarratana: “Greetings all. Time to brag a tiny bit. My poem, ‘East Gallatin River’, won second place in the poetry division of the recent Stockton Arts Commission writing contest. It will be published in a locally produced chap book and read at a reception on April 7 in Stockton. And for frosting on the cake, they’re paying me $50.00. Yahoo!”

✓ Moj Dehghan’s book signing event for his book *Chatter to Flatter Your Platter* took place on Monday, March 12, at 7:00 pm at Fair Oaks Library. More than a dozen people showed up and enjoyed Moj’s humorous talk. Four people from the audience bought a copy. Moj told the audience about his background and about the horrific accident in which he was seriously injured many years ago. Writing, a supportive family, and a fine sense of humor helped him to recover. The presentation was much appreciated by the audience. Among the attendees were your NCPA newsletter editor Ken Umbach and his wife, Rosa Umbach.
A Note from the Editor

Send your articles and announcements to ken@umbachconsulting.com.

Use **NCPA NEWSLETTER** as the email subject heading. That helps me to find newsletter submissions in the avalanche of incoming email.

Please provide submissions in Microsoft Word (or compatible) format, or in plain text. If you would like to discuss an article idea or have any other questions or comments about the newsletter, feel free to email or phone.

What fits best into *The Pen & Press* is news of members’ books, activities, marketing, speaking engagements, and accomplishments. Also of value: members’ insights into the challenges and opportunities of writing publishing and information on regional resources for authors and publishers. Cover illustrations and other photos are welcome in jpeg or other standard format. Please keep file sizes reasonable for receipt on a dialup account. When in doubt, call or email me in advance.

The deadline for submissions for the next issue (July-August 2007) is June 15th.

— Ken Umbach, editor

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Readers are of course 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.

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As this issue shows, our members have been busy and successful as writers and as publishers. Some are attaining significant recognition.

Independent publishing is no picnic. The independent self-publisher has to be both writer and entrepreneur, willing and able not only to produce a quality book but to manage all aspects of running a business. Either part—writing or publishing—is quite enough challenge, of course. Our ranks include members who tackle only one or the other side, as well as those who both write and publish.

Bookselling, too, looks to be quite challenging, even if entirely separate from writing and from publishing. Recent polling has suggested that most people have read no books in the last year, and few have read more than a handful. That leaves the heavy lifting to those of us who buy and read dozens or scores of books in a year, but I digress. (But please be nice to your local independent bookseller as well as local authors and publishers.)

I occasionally hang out at an online site for writers that too often parades not only ignorance, but often outright hostility toward self-publishing (“self-pubbing” as the snarky attack dogs phrase it). That hostility and ignorance spill over into attitudes toward not just straightforward self-publishing, but the whole arena of small, independent publishing. There is just no breaking through to those who believe that if it is not published by a Random House or its ilk after passing through the gauntlet of agents and acquisitions editors and commercialization of manuscripts, it is just not worth reading, if even worth the paper it is printed on. Well, balderdash. It is not so.

True, too many self-published and other very-small-press books are unworthy. That is all the more reason for NCPA to encourage high standards of writing, editing, production, and marketing, to aid in sharing of information and encouragement, and to honor those who have written and published well. Hence our highlighting of quality work by our members, annual awards to recognize books of special merit, and occasional conference.

To continue this work, we need a continuing stream of volunteers, not to mention a critical mass of members with varied experience and expertise. So keep in mind that our annual membership renewal process will start in a matter of weeks—please respond promptly—and that the next round of nominating and electing officers is sure to follow in the early months of 2008. New members are of course always welcome.

— Ken Umbach, editor
Treasurer’s Report

By Carol Ryan

As of September 1, 2007 the NCPA bank account has $7,999.82. Last month as an organization we contributed $250.00 (along with another $20.00 individually contributed by members) to the Jan Nathan Memorial fund. Ken, our membership Tsar, has kept a steady income coming to our organization from new member dues. I am keeping the board members up to date about our financial status by uploading QuickBooks financial reports to our Wiki site on a regular monthly basis. I can easily prepare updates or special reports on request. Thanks to Sandra Williams for creating the Wiki site, which adds so much value to NCPA.

Although upgrading our QuickBooks software was a major—but unfortunately necessary—expense when I assumed duties as treasurer, I’ve been very happy with its ease of use.

Now that we have the Wiki site, it will be easier for board members to stay informed about our finances.

Special Feature Article: The Apostrophe Impostor

By N. W. Miller

An organ recital I attended recently included several French pieces, one of which was “Poème Héroïque” by Marcel Dupré. Just looking at that title made me breathe a sigh of relief that English uses scarcely any intraverbal punctuation. (Nor is it just the spelling itself that would vex: getting all those funny marks to appear in Word is a whole separate hassle.) In English, we can—in the few cases where it might otherwise appear—omit an accent or diéresis with impunity. True, a few punctilious publications, notably The New Yorker, use the diéresis in words such as coördinate and reëlect, and some will put the proper accents in résumé; once in a while a borrowing from Spanish will sport the tilde. But omitting these marks is much more the rule than the exception. Nor is the writer faulted for it. Omission of an accent in French, of course, constitutes a misspelling.

Yes, we editors and proofreaders of English ought to be grateful that we have only the humble apostrophe to worry us—although that one mark stirs up more than its share of trouble: It’s regularly omitted where needed and thrust in wantonly where it is not. Sometimes, though needed, it’s misplaced ("T’was the night . . ."); I've even seen the formulation it’s’, though I failed to preserve the specimen. But now, thanks to word processing and the automation of certain typographic subtleties, we have a new apostrophic anomaly with which to contend.

In the early 1980s, I was free-lancing—and using a typewriter, on which apostrophe and (single) quotation mark are one and the same. "Word-processing," as it was then newly designated, promised an end to retyping a page for the sake of one sentence, the ability to
cut and paste without actual paper and scissors. Obviously the computer would prove a great boon to writers. I should have suspected that it would bring baleful results as well.

Today, thanks to the ease of "processing" words electronically, we’re engulfed in a flood of them, and more electronic now than print: e-mail, e-newsletter, and endless "blogs." But one can always simply ignore or delete unwanted verbiage. More insidious is the process(ing)—the software itself. Word, for instance, monitors your spelling and grammar. No program, however, can supplant a skilled practitioner; indeed, the unskilled are easily misled into error by inept software. (I have a growing list of Word’s stupid suggestions to "fix" my grammar.) Nor can Word (as we all know) discriminate between homophones. If it’s in the dictionary, Word accepts it—whether it’s the rite word or not. (Word doesn’t flag "rite.") But another, more subtle quirk of Word has gone unremarked; at least I’ve seen nothing on the subject.

The apostrophe can, besides indicating possession, mark an omission: can’t, should’ve, c’mere. But notice what can happen when the omission comes at the beginning of the word: Try to type ’em ("them"), for example. With "smart quotes" enabled, Word gives you not an apostrophe but an open- quotation mark. Apparently, the programmers gave no thought to the occasional need for an initial apostrophe, assuming that if you type one before a word begins then you must be beginning a quotation. An open- quotation mark, you should note, is 180° different from the apostrophe: It resembles the numeral six rather than number nine. It’s not an apostrophe; it’s an impostor.

I have seen this inverted apostrophe, as I call it, in magazines, newspapers, and even in books (in one poorly edited volume, I found they’re; I can’t guess how that happened), as well as on TV and the Internet. Last year, promos for the new show "’Til Death" got it wrong, and in November I photographed a sign in a J. C. Penney store in West Virginia that heralded ’Tis the Season! The identical error (’Tis) appears in rotating ad that accompanies my daily e-mailed New Yorker dog cartoon. The ubiquitous apostrophe-n that ignorant writers use in place of ‘n’ for the contracted form of and routinely turns up with the inverted apostrophe; even when you try to do it right—using both apostrophes—you’ll end up, if you’re not careful, with ‘n’. The disease also spreads via calendric contractions, as in ’07 or ’08.

To get a proper apostrophe at the beginning of a word, short of using the 'Insert/symbol' nonsense, one must type a gratuitous character other than a space, then the apostrophe key, then the contracted word; finally, delete the gratuitous character in front of the apostrophe. And Microsoft has the temerity to call its faulty process "smart quotes"!

So keep your eyes open for abused apostrophes. Continue to take ’em out where they don’t belong and put ’em in where they do. But also be on the lookout for the apostrophe impostor.
Editor’s note: N. W. (Nick) Miller is one of my friends of longest standing, neighbor and schoolmate in Redlands, California. He was kind enough to respond to my request for an article on the technical, but valuable, topic of the abuse of the apostrophe after he pointed out that problem in an email recently. Nick is a writer, editor, and careful observer of the English language, its use, and its abuse.

New Edition of Stems of Life Available

By Ginny Hansen

The new edition of my book is now out and I need to get the word out to as many people as possible. The subject is one that touches almost every family in America. Cancer! I am a fortunate survivor of not one bout, but two bouts with Hodgkin’s lymphoma, first in 2001 and again in 2002.

Despite all the up-to-the-minute treatments and wonder drugs that make up chemotherapy, I became resistant to treatment. My choices were to just keep on keeping on and hope for the best or have a stem cell transplant. I asked my doctor to explain what happens when you have a stem cell transplant and he told it to me straight. We give you enough chemotherapy to kill the cancer and almost kill you, then we give you the stem cells to save you. Oh my God, I was shocked with this information.

I left his office stunned. It was a die if you don’t, hope to live if you do decision. Almost more then I could handle. Really more then anybody can imagine, my life had been taken over by a few damn cancer cells and I had to find them and kill them before they killed me.

I obviously survived, and since I did I wanted others to know that if "I" could go through this hell hole called cancer, then so could "They!" I decided to write this book starting from the beginning with my odd symptoms and allow the reader to walk in my shoes. I have been told by quite a few that I wrote this story as if I sitting next to you telling you what happened. I keep it short, to the point and add as much wit to get us all through each step.

On my website I have quite a few reviews, two from doctors all who have praised my story telling and willingness to tell others. It was therapeutic for me to do so, but the process took two years. Once I finally had this book published via Llumina Press, I felt like I had given birth to an elephant. There it sat in front of me, now needing my care. I wanted it to get up on its own, wave her trunk and venture off to have a successful life. But she demands constant attention and nurturing. Something I have learned as a new author.
The name of my book is interesting and revealing: *Stems of Life Picked from the Garden of Survival*. Stems of life, are my stem cells. I was able to use my own stem cells for my transplant because the cancer cells had not invaded my bone marrow or blood stream. Thus the "Garden of Survival." Few people know this is possible, to use your own stem cells! They are generally hung up on stem cells to mean, embryonic stem cells and that is difficult for some people to condone or understand. I am not an expert or even in the medical field, just an expert patient who wants others to know what is possible and what I know. Yes, I do want to encourage continued stem cell research, without research I would have died.

For more information:
Author’s website: www.stemsoflife.com
My Space website: www.myspace.com/ginnyhansen
Email: Ginnyh@citlink.net

**Frances Kakugawa: NCPA Member and Versatile Author**


Wordsworth doesn’t understand why Grandma has changed so much since she came to live with his family. She doesn’t even remember his name. He finds comfort in writing poems, which also help his family understand what’s going on with Grandma.

A review appeared in Bookreviews.com, as follows:

Increasingly, there are books written for children to help explain things that grownups often find difficult to discuss. *Wordsworth Dances the Waltz* ($10.95, Watermark Publishing, Honolulu, Hawaii) uses the character of Wordsworth, a little Hawaiian mouse who loves poetry to describe what happens when his Grandma comes to live with the family. Written by Frances H. Kakugawa, with great artwork by Melissa DeSica, the story plays out against the drama of Grandma’s Alzheimer’s disease, as she becomes more forgetful. The author’s own mother was afflicted and the book is dedicated to her. It is a touching story told with poetry and prose, and I am sure that for any youngster, age 6 to 10 or so, it will make it easier to cope with a loved elder’s decline and loss.

Also in this lovely series, *Wordsworth the Poet*. Wordsworth writes poetry—about rainbows made of butterflies and castles in the clouds. But all the other mice make fun of Wordsworth and his “silly” poems, until the day the sun disappears, and the sky rumbles, and the rain begins to fall and fall. That’s when Wordsworth takes pen in hand and shows the others how poetry can save the day.
Frances has written other books of note as well. *Mosaic Moon: Caregiving Through Poetry* is a unique resource for anyone with a loved one suffering from Alzheimer’s disease or other long-term illness. Created from poetry workshops conducted by the Alzheimer’s Association Aloha Chapter, this writing tool for non-writers is brimming with ideas and techniques for finding solace in journaling and poetry.

Also among Frances’s books is *Teacher, You Look Like a Horse!* an exploration of the special lifelong bond between teacher and student. At once poignant and hilarious, this is a first-person, inside look at the learning process: the magic of discovery, the growing pains of childhood, and the serendipitous moments when student becomes teacher.

**Barbara DesChamps’ New Book On its Way**

*Special to The Pen & Press*

*It’s In The Bag: Your Custom Business and Travel Wardrobe* by NCPA member Barbara DesChamps goes to press about the same time as this newsletter. An advance copy received the following review from a business writer.
My father loved to quote Rita Mae Brown, who said, “Good judgment comes from experience, and often experience comes from bad judgment.” Any time you can benefit from someone else’s experience, you should. Now, business travelers can take advantage of Barbara’s extensive experience to save themselves heartache, drama and bad travel experiences. Barbara KNOWS what travel is all about – for business OR pleasure. Her unique insights into the world of business and travel will have readers thanking her when they say their prayers at night.

Barbara’s knowledge and advice on acceptable attire for business meetings all over the world is tested and true. As a business relationship expert here in the U.S., I couldn’t agree more with her advice. I’ve always told my audiences that if they intend to travel for business, they should become knowledgeable about the country they’re visiting and what that unique culture requires. Barbara’s book is my new “go-to” resource for these issues. Being prepared is what this is all about, and nowhere is being prepared more important than when traveling.

It’s In The Bag will save you time, money, heartache and possibly even your life! It will also help you to reap tremendous benefits, including outstanding comfort, increased respectability, and value. Even if you are only taking one trip this year, read It’s In The Bag before you book your ticket! Buying this book could possibly be the best $13.95 you’ll spend in your entire life.

—Robin Jay, award-winning author, The Art of the Business Lunch, professional speaker, corporate trainer

For more information on Barbara’s books, see http://www.chateaupublishing.com or email chateau@ncws.com.

Author Initiates Market Test

by Alton Pryor

For the past ten years, my first book, Little Known Tales in California History, has been my bestseller, outselling all of my other 17 books day in and day out. It has sold more than 80,000 copies in its ten-year existence. (Where did all the money go?)

Most of my marketing is at arts and craft fairs, the California State Fair, and Apple Hill where I have had a booth for the past eight years. I have come to the conclusion that the reason for my first book maintaining its sales lead is that the title is somewhat of an “impulse buy.” We will soon know. Our newest book should test the “impulse buy” theory. It is called More Little Known Tales in California History. It will be for sale at Apple Hill and we should make a definitive finding on how well a title sells.

Editor’s note: it was good to see Alton Pryor, Naida West, and other authors at the well-attended California Authors booth at this year’s California State Fair (Cal Expo). Great work!
Other News, Announcements, and Comments

Your editor invites submissions for this section of *The Pen & Press*. Short items about NCPA members or otherwise of interest to writers, editors, and publishers (and allied folks) are welcome here.

✔ Michele Avanti, author and NCPA secretary, shared the following with *The Pen & Press*:

GreeHee Publishing will release the paperback version of *GreeHee The Journey of Five— Tales of Tamoor Book One* in January 2008. This tale has won two awards: 2007 NCPA Best Juvenile Fiction and 2007 COVR Visionary Fiction Finalist. The 6” x 9” trade size paperback is 304 pages with 17 illustrations, larger typeface, and beautiful dragon and fairy graphic number blocks for each chapter. This first paperback edition is priced at $14.99. ISBN 978-0-9779590-4-4. Review Copies will be available early October 2007.

I will be doing book signings with Free drawings for posters and new paperbacks at Epilog Books in Quincy, California, on Friday, September 7 from 3:00 - 4:30 pm and Book Lovers in Sacramento on Saturday, September 8 from 12 noon to 2 pm.

I will be back in Sacramento, Friday, September 21 to read and work with three middle school classes at the Navigator School in Rancho Cordova.

I am currently using the Farmers’ Market in Roseburg to get word out on my book and have been quite successful selling it there. (Costs are minimal, 10 percent of sales.) I have now joined the Eugene Saturday Market, one of the oldest markets in the country, to get more exposure for my book.

I am planning a book tour from April through May 2008 through California and will keep you posted.

That's the news from GreeHee Publishing (Michele Avanti).

✔ Marlys Johnsen Norris, who leads workshops for those interested in writing their life story, legacy or testimony, is pleased to announce that the *American River Messenger* Newspaper for Fair Oaks, Orangevale, Citrus Heights, Gold River and Carmichael has officially recognized her bi-weekly articles and is now considered a regular columnist for the paper and included several of her articles on their web site. You may view them anytime by going to [www.AmericanRiverMessenger/writers](http://www.AmericanRiverMessenger/writers).

Published Books: *God Moves Mountains, It was a Miracle; Recipes for a Happier Marriage; Defining Moments; Short Stories for the Family; Messages in the Dust;* articles in *Walking with the Wise Entrepreneur* and in Auburn Writers Group’s *Feathers in His Quiver*. All Books available through Marlys.

✓ **Translator sought!** NCPA member **Rosa Israel** is seeking a qualified and experienced literary translator for her nonfiction book. If you can meet the need, or can refer to someone else who can, please contact Rosa at rosaisraelphi@yahoo.com

✓ **Kiyo Sato**’s memoir *Dandelion Through the Crack*, published by Nevada City’s own Willow Valley Press, under the direction of NCPA president Barry Schoenborn, got off to a fine start with its Rancho Cordova book launch party on September 8, and other events, including a signing at Book Lovers Bookstore, in Sacramento. Kiyo is pictured here at the book launch. (Photo by NCPA vice president Bill Potts.)

✓ In July and August **Loraine Holden** gave presentations based on her book *Don't Get Thin Get Healthy* at Rotary Club and Senior Center in Cottage Grove Oregon, Senior Centers in Brookings Oregon and Placerville, California. Main Topic: Heart Disease is NOT caused by cholesterol. She will give an expanded seminar on heart disease (citing overlooked good research by respected doctors) at Sierra Community College in Rocklin, 1 to 4 pm, on October 13, 2007. Call 916-781-0590 to pre-register.

Check Loraine’s new website for more information about her background and her book: www.dontgetthin-gethealthy.com.

✓ **Your news or announcement could go here!**
A Note from the Editor

Send your articles and announcements to ken@umbachconsulting.com.

Use NCPA NEWSLETTER as the email subject heading. That helps me to find newsletter submissions in the avalanche of incoming email.

Please provide submissions in Microsoft Word (or compatible) format, or in plain text. If you would like to discuss an article idea or have any other questions or comments about the newsletter, feel free to email or phone.

What fits best into The Pen & Press is news of members’ books, activities, marketing, speaking engagements, and accomplishments. Also of value: members’ insights into the challenges and opportunities of writing publishing and information on regional resources for authors and publishers. Cover illustrations and other photos are welcome in jpeg or other standard format. Please keep file sizes reasonable for receipt on a dialup account. When in doubt, call or email me in advance.

The deadline for submissions for the next issue (November - December 2007) comes soon, close of business on Friday, October 26. Earlier is better.

— Ken Umbach, editor

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Meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month, 10 am to noon, at Merrill Gardens Retirement Community, 7418 Stock Ranch Road (just west of Sylvan Road about a quarter mile north of Greenback Lane), Citrus Heights.

Visitors are welcome.
The annual membership renewal process is about to get underway. Please see article on page 2. It will be a big help and time saver if you will renew early, following the directions in the article.

The annual NCPA book awards competition is headed this way. The deadline for submission for awards consideration of books published during 2007 is January 16, 2008. See page 7 for some comments by Awards chair Jennifer Martin and see www.norcalpa.org for more information.

Our annual NCPA conference is back, after a one-year layoff, so mark your calendar for April 26, 2008. This promises to be a fine event, now being planned by co-chairs Yolanda Cuesta and Karl Palachuk. The conference is to feature an appearance by the guru of self-publishing, Dan Poynter. Remember that NCPA members received discounted admission to NCPA events such as the conference, which this year will also feature the book awards ceremony, so that is all the more reason to be sure to renew promptly.

The NCPA website has been beautifully updated and expanded by webmaster Sandra Williams. See her article beginning on page 4 for details.

As the holidays approach, keep in mind books as gifts. Our members have written and published many fine books that can make welcome and rewarding gifts for the holidays as well as for birthdays, graduations, and other occasions—not to mention good reading for yourself. Many of our members’s books can be found at Book Lovers Book Store, Madison & Manzanita, Sacramento. Please stop by, say hello to store cats Sugar and Sweetie, and check out the local author book selection.

We are on the lookout for NCPA officers for the coming year. Nominations will be in March and the election in April, with new officers taking their places in May. New leadership and active participation are always welcome.

— Ken Umbach, editor
Membership Renewal Time!

By Ken Umbach, Membership Chair

Memberships expire as of December 31. Some of our members, including those who have joined recently, are paid through 2008, 2009, or 2010. Those members can skip the rest of this notice. See below for a list of those whose memberships expire this year.

It will save postage and printing if members will send renewal checks payable to “NCPA” ($40 for one year, $99 for three years) by November 15th, to:

NCPA Renewal
c/o Ken Umbach
6966 Sunrise Blvd., #263
Citrus Heights, CA 95610

That is my business mailing address. It will save time in comparison to the NCPA’s regular mailing address. The above address is to be used only for this round of renewals.

Please include any updates to your roster information — new email address, website URL, new books, and so on, and be sure that your name appears on your check.

I will be sending email reminders as well, and I will follow up with snail-mail notices for those who do not take this opportunity to save NCPA postage and printing costs by renewing early. Timely renewal will also help NCPA in planning and budgeting for 2008.

The following are due for renewal by December 31, 2007, according to my records:

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<tr>
<th>John Andrew</th>
<th>Tim Herrera</th>
<th>Dan O’Connor</th>
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<td>Everett &amp; Elva Anson</td>
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November and December Meeting Announcements

By Stephanie Chandler, NCPA Speakers Bureau Chair

November 10th

Publicist Heather Atherton, founder of Atherton PR (www.athertonpr.com/), will share with us her tips for getting publicity and media exposure. Heather previously held positions at some of the top PR firms in California.

This is a fantastic opportunity to learn from an expert!

December 8th

Special NCPA Author Showcase. Bring your books and be prepared to share a brief overview with the group. This will allow members to become more familiar with each other's books and get exposure just in time for holiday gift-giving!

[Editor’s note: under Merrill Gardens’ rules for use of the room, we are NOT allowed to sell books or anything else within the facility. However, books may be displayed for the meeting and ordering/availability information provided to those in attendance.]

Reminder

Guests are always welcome to visit our meetings. If you know someone who would benefit from participating, please invite them along.

[Editor’s note: Watch the website, www.norcalpa.org, as well as the members’ email discussion list, for news of upcoming meetings.]


October Meeting Summary

The October meeting featured a presentation by Stephen Baetge, editor of Spectrum, also known as Senior Spectrum to long-time readers. (His last name is pronounced Bay-Chee.) Steve recounted his involvement with newspaper writing and editing, mentioned that he is a published poet with poems in a half dozen books, and outlined ways of approaching Spectrum with ideas for articles and columns. Although such contributions are unpaid, they provide an opportunity to gain bylines and to communicate on areas of your own interest and expertise that are pertinent to the large and growing senior audience.
Treasurer’s Report

By Carol Ryan, Treasurer

The NCPA’s financial status (right around $8,000) remains healthy. As you probably know it will soon be time to renew membership. A large portion of our income is member dues, so maintaining membership will allow NCPA to flourish. The upcoming NCPA Conference planned for April 2008 will require a large expenditure and hopefully will generate income to help cover those costs. Whether attending the Conference, attending monthly meetings, accessing our website, or getting to know our interesting members, membership has its advantages, so don’t forget to see Ken Umbach about renewing.

[Editor’s note: at only $40 per year for regular membership, or the still-available special rate of $99 for three years, NCPA is a bargain. Because NCPA is a freestanding organization, your dues stay right here with NCPA. Because we benefit from volunteered services by our board members and others, expenses are modest and are focused on priorities and a few business necessities. Our operations are transparent to members, who are always welcome to attend board meetings, to ask questions, and to propose and work on behalf of NCPA initiatives, as well as to seek office.]

Whole Lotta Changin’ Goin’ On

By Sandra K. Williams, NCPA Webmaster

You’ve probably noticed a few changes in the NCPA online presence—maybe a lot of changes.

Members-Only Wiki

The first change was implementing the Members-Only Wiki. A wiki is a community-edited Web site. (A well-known example is Wikipedia, “the free encyclopedia that anyone can edit.”)

At our Members-Only Wiki, any community member can create a new page. Any member can add information to an existing page. Any member can correct bad information. Members can upload files. The NCPA community owns the Wiki.

The Wiki replaces the Members-Only section of the NCPA Web site, which essentially had been online storage for a few files, specifically the membership directory.

The purpose of the Members-Only Wiki is to create a repository of members’ wisdom. The same questions keep popping up: Who’s a good short-run printer? Where can I find an editor? How do I sign up with a wholesaler? Is this library conference worth attending? Let’s save those answers.

Because the Wiki is an additional benefit of membership, you need a password to log in. You don’t have to contribute if you don’t want to. The Wiki is a private place where
members can share information they don’t necessarily want to make public for all the world’s search engines to find. Keeping the Wiki private also stops strangers from defacing our community with ads or worse.

**Changing Your Members-Only Wiki Password**

I signed up every NCPA member for the Wiki. If you don’t know your password, go to the Members-Only Wiki. At the bottom of the sign-in page there’s another link: “Send new password,” which will take you to a page where you can request a new password.

You’ll need to enter your username (which is the same as your regular name with hyphens instead of spaces). Click the “Send new password” button.

For security reasons, you’ll receive an e-mail asking you to confirm that you need a new password. If you’re certain the e-mail came from us, click the link. You can also copy the link and paste it in your browser. The link address should look like this:

http://members.norcalpa.org/?do=resendpwd&pwauth=[string of numbers]

After that link is activated in a browser, your password will be sent to you. If you don’t want a new password, ignore the e-mail.

**Note:** COOKIES MUST BE ENABLED. If you are sent back to the log-in page after typing in your username and password and clicking the “Log in” button, you probably need to change your cookie settings. For instructions for your browser, search for “browser name” “enable cookies” at Google.

**Main NCPA Site**

This site is NCPA’s public face. Members and nonmembers come here to download the latest newsletter, get details about the annual awards, and learn about NCPA.

Major goals in the redesign:

- Put the most-wanted info on the front page
- Promote members
- Promote members’ books
- Highlight members who provide publishing-related services
- Make the site easier to update
- Give more control to all board members
- Allow members to update their own Vendor or Speakers Bureau pages

I looked at a handful of open-source content management systems, or interfaces that allow you to edit a Web site without using special software or knowing how to code. I
chose WordPress blog software for the content management system (CMS) because—to me, at least—it has the most understandable interface. Anyone who needs to make an announcement or correct a page can log in, click the menu tabs to either write or edit a page, and start typing. No arcane skills are required.

Members have to register themselves to edit the Web site. (Click the Login link at the upper right of any page at the NCPA site, then click the Register link at the bottom.) This is a one-time process. Most members won’t need to register. But if you’re a speaker or vendor, registering allows you to update your topics or services without going through an intermediary.

The passwords for the Wiki and the CMS are separate; you can change your password for either system to be whatever you want, but logging into the Wiki doesn’t log you into the CMS, and vice versa. That wall between private and public was intentional; it may be revisited later.

The new site offers nonmembers an additional option for getting NCPA updates: they can subscribe to the NCPA-Bulletin announcements-only e-mail list or to the brand-spanking-new Announcements & Events RSS feed.

**LibraryThing**

The most exciting change has got to be the addition of members’ books to the site. I love seeing those covers. Credit goes to LibraryThing, one of those social networking sites that the media fawn over from time to time. Be aware: there’s an active community of readers and authors online, and a lot of them are cataloging their books on LibraryThing. Some of those readers have your book listed in their LibraryThing catalog.

Book covers and their links to Amazon.com are automatically generated by LibraryThing code. If your book cover isn’t on Amazon and there isn’t an image on your Web site that I can steal, your book won’t get displayed on NCPA pages.

See the whole NCPA catalog at LibraryThing.

**LibraryThing Author Pages**

If you click on the name of any author—you yourself, perhaps—you’ll go to a page for that author. You might see books listed that you don’t expect. This Sandra Williams didn’t write *Health Care for Single Homeless People*, despite what LibraryThing says.

The author page is created by LibraryThing. They’re planning an upgrade to separate authors with the same names, but it hasn’t happened yet. In the meantime, LibraryThing members can add a disambiguation notice to an author page.

If you navigate to the LibraryThing author page for William C. Teie, at the bottom of the page you’ll see listed “Users with books by William C. Teie: NCPA (6), BrauerFamily (1), Dixon (1).” LibraryThing member TheRouses must be fans of Alton Pryor; they have four of his books.
NCPA-Network E-mail Discussion List

No changes are planned at this time. Members are automatically subscribed when they join. The e-mail list is the primary source of information for members. If you get too many messages, you can change your list options to receive all messages for the day in a single e-mail message called a daily digest.

And Last

Everything is subject to change. Send your questions to me at skw@williamswriting.com.

Sandra K. Williams is NCPA’s current webmaster and past president. Her business website is www.williamswriting.com.

Book Awards 2008

By Jennifer Martin, Awards Chair

For the past 13 years, NCPA has honored the work of Northern California independent publishers and authors by presenting awards for overall excellence and quality book production, from cover illustration to interior design. At its annual Awards banquet, NCPA rolls out the red carpet to award its members for their outstanding achievement in writing and publishing books and marketing material.

Our upcoming NCPA Awards program, celebrating those entries produced in 2007, will be the culminating activity of our NCPA conference scheduled for April 26, 2008. If past programs are any indication, this special event promises to be an unforgettable night of camaraderie, fun, and much deserved member recognition. So please mark your calendars and save the date.

More importantly, if you have an entry for awards consideration, please see the Awards section of our website (www.norcalpa.org) for submission rules, categories, and timelines. All entries must be submitted by January 16, 2008.

We look forward to your participation in this spectacular event. Remember, as Woody Allen says, “Eighty percent of success is just showing up.” Here’s to you showing up for our Book Awards 2008.

Awards chair Jennifer Martin is author/publisher of The Huna Warrior: The Magic Begins (www.hunawarrior.com).

2008 NCPA Conference — Mark Calendar for April 26

Hold the date! April 26, 2008 — NCPA’s conference returns after a year’s absence. Rumor has it that the headline speaker will be self-publishing guru Dan Poynter.
Laura Ramirez Recognized

NCPA member Laura Ramirez was invited to speak at the recent Inter Tribal Council of Nevada (ITCN) Conference at the Nugget in Reno. The ITCN represents 27 small Nevada tribes. Laura's topic: "The Practice of Child Stewardship."

In her speech, Laura pointed out that many tribes are no longer practicing long-cherished values. Ramirez said, "As a white woman, I find myself in the odd position of encouraging native people to reclaim traditional values."

Laura's husband who is a Pascua-Yaqui Native American, was concerned about how her speech would be received and wanted to accompany her, but she told him that she had to do this on her own. At the close of her two-hour seminar, she received a standing ovation and many native elders approached to tell her how powerful it was.

Laura Ramirez is author of Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting (www.walk-in-peace.com).

New from Balona Books

Jonathan Pearce's BalonaBooks (Balona.com) offers another new story for teens and grownups, An Almost Private Eye: Mystery of the Starfighter, by Joaquin Peralta. Balona's private-eye-in-self-training Joseph Oliver Kuhl shares his freshman criminal justice term paper, footnotes and all, in which Joe more or less solves the mystery.


By Carol Ryan

Ken Umbach’s presentation on Lulu.com a few months ago at one of our NCPA meetings was intriguing. Recently in an email discussion Ken, reminded readers that he had a booklet available through Lulu on the subject of publishing. I decided to order his book online to see how well Lulu worked, what kind of product it would produce, and in the process to learn what Ken had to say on the topic. I was greatly impressed with the content of “The Pursuit of Publishing An Unvarnished Guide for The Perplexed” and with the ease in ordering through Lulu.

As Ken’s book says, using Lulu is not a cost effective solution for every publishing project. You’ll have to ask him about his profits on his book. But, from a reader’s point of view, I found the book very concise, convincing, and easy to understand. As a novice in the publishing world, I now think I have a pretty good idea of what my options really are. Ken explodes a few common delusions that beginning writers tend to operate under. But, his style is so logical and informed that you can’t stay depressed too long. He offers suggestions for ways to get published based on an author’s real purposes and audience. I know some of our members have spent thousands of dollars learning these lessons. I am thankful to Ken for writing such a straightforward overview! Although you may already know the ins and outs of publishing, I highly recommend this book for any friends or relatives that want to ‘be published’. It will take the sting out of educating them on market realities and it will provide ideas for reasonable alternatives where appropriate.

[Editor’s note: Thanks, Carol, for your kind words. The entire content of the booklet can be previewed free at www.lulu.com/browse/preview.php?fCID=740262 .]

Other News, Announcements, and Comments

Your editor invites submissions for this section of The Pen & Press. Short items about NCPA members or otherwise of interest to writers, editors, and publishers (and allied folks) are welcome here.

✓ NCPA member and author Marlys Johnsen Norris has developed a tri-fold flier to promote her books. The flyer, titled “My Image as a Christian Author,” explains Marlys’s convictions, reasons for writing, and outcomes of her publishing endeavors, as well as listing her books. Marlys won the 2003-04 Northern California Publishers & Authors award for Best Christian Book, Recipes for a Happier Marriage. For more information, see her website, www.heavenlyboundpublishers.com.

✓ NCPA member, author R. D. (Ron) Barnes presented a very well received talk to the October meeting of the Sacramento Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication. Ron demonstrated and discussed the use of PowerPoint in promoting his short-fiction collection Mind Shadows, and talked about the background and motivation of his Rod-Serling-Meets-Stephen-King style stories.
NCPA member Ken Umbach presented a talk about the writing of query letters for magazine articles and for books to the October meeting of the Nonfiction Network of the Sacramento Branch, California Writers Club. He will follow with a discussion of how to find appropriate publishers and literary agents—tools of the trade for researching targets—at the November 2nd meeting of the same group. The Nonfiction Network meets at IHOP on Sunrise Blvd., Rancho Cordova, 9 – 11 am, the first Friday of each month. Visitors are welcome.

This just in from NCPA member (and current NCPA secretary) Michele Avanti!

The NEW Paperback version of *GreeHee The Journey of Five - Tales of Tamoor Book One*, winner of NCPA's Best Juvenile Fiction award and a COVR Visionary Fiction Finalist, is scheduled for release January 2008.

This paperback first edition retails for $14.99, is perfect bound, 6"x9", 304 pages with 13 illustrations. Michele offers them one at a time at retail price, and wholesale at $8 each in bundles of three or more, or a baker's dozen (13) for $96. All with FREE media mail shipping.

Amazon is offering a Special Pre-order price of just $10.19!

Michele will have the books and will start shipping them for pre-orders October 29, so you will receive the books in time for Christmas giving or sales.

You can contact Michele at astrologyandmore@gmail.com.


Moj Dehghan, author of *Chatter to Flatter Your Platter*, believes that marketing of your book is a lifetime process. He has been successful in arranging book-signing events at Mercy McMahon Terrace on Oct. 21st and at Sierra College Bookstore on October 30th.

Your notice or announcement could go here!
A Note from the Editor

Send your articles and announcements to ken@umbachconsulting.com.

Use **NCPA NEWSLETTER** as the email subject heading. That helps me to find newsletter submissions in the avalanche of incoming email.

Please provide submissions in Microsoft Word (or compatible) format, or in plain text. If you would like to discuss an article idea or have any other questions or comments about the newsletter, feel free to email or phone.

What fits best into *The Pen & Press* is news of members’ books, activities, marketing, speaking engagements, and accomplishments. Also of value: members’ insights into the challenges and opportunities of writing publishing and information on regional resources for authors and publishers. Cover illustrations and other photos are welcome in jpeg or other standard format. Please keep file sizes reasonable for receipt on a dialup account. When in doubt, call or email me in advance.

The deadline for submissions for the next issue (January - February 2008) is close of business December 15, 2007.

— Ken Umbach, editor

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Readers are of course 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.

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Meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month, 10 am to noon, at Merrill Gardens Retirement Community, 7418 Stock Ranch Road (just west of Sylvan Road about a quarter mile north of Greenback Lane), Citrus Heights.

Visitors are welcome.
July is here (or will be by the time this issue appears on the website), and naturally, one’s mind turns to books and authors and writing and reading.

Well, fine, those things are always on my mind. So sue me.

But to get back to the point, our July 14 meeting will feature a valuable presentation for writers. Rich Ehisen, editor of the State Net Capitol Journal, will discuss the mechanics of freelance writing and how to break in. Although books form the focus of NCPA, our members encompass a variety of writers, experienced and aspiring. An introduction to freelance writing from someone in the trenches should be well worth attending, as writing and publishing books is not all we do. (No speaker is yet scheduled for August.)

The California State Fair is approaching. One of its popular features is the California Authors table. Some of our members will be participating, and others will want to be sure to drop by and say hello, buy some autographed books, and schmooze with the authors. Last year I saw a good crowd around the tables, getting acquainted with books and their authors.

For those who might have missed the article, NCPA member Kiyo Sato, our June speaker, was the subject of Anita Creamer’s feature article in the Sacramento Bee, Sunday, June 24. Kiyo’s memoir, Dandelion Through the Crack, is to be published by Nevada City’s own Willow Valley Press, under the guidance of Barry Schoenborn. (You know him. He is the fellow who runs NCPA’s meetings, being president of the group and all.) Dandelion Through the Crack has the makings of an American classic, a book that yields new insights with every reading and rereading. We are fortunate to be in the company of such an author.

Others in the NCPA fold who are drawing attention include Brian Gorman, with his new guide to Northern California media, Ed Mitchell, with a new thriller, Gold Fire, and Ben Gay III, whose series “The Closers” is gaining traction internationally. Some of our recent NCPA book award winners—notably Carolyn Singer’s Deer in My Garden and Michele Avanti’s Greehee: The Journey of Five—are gaining additional recognition as well, and (hint . . .) we look forward to hearing from them for future issues of The Pen & Press.

— Ken Umbach, editor
July Meeting: Rich Ehisen on Freelance Writing

Announcement courtesy of Stephanie Chandler, NCPA Speakers Bureau Chair

Our July speaker, Rich Ehisen, will discuss the mechanics of freelance writing and how to break in.

Rich Ehisen has more than 17 years of experience as an editor, columnist, journalist and writer. During that time he has published hundreds of stories in local, regional and national publications, covering a broad spectrum of topics and issues. Those publications include Sacramento Magazine, Comstock’s, Prosper, Sunset, California Journal and Government Technology. In recent years, his focus has been on business, education, the arts and politics.

Ehisen is also currently the editor of the State Net Capitol Journal, an online public policy newsletter that covers legislative trends in all 50 states. The SNCJ is directly distributed to numerous Fortune 500 companies, state and national advocacy groups and more than 7,000 state lawmakers. During his almost four years as SNCJ editor, Ehisen has written extensively on such issues as immigration, stem cell research, education and homeland security.

Ehisen is a board member of the Sacramento Press Club, where he chairs the freelance committee. He holds a Master of Arts degree in Public and Political Communication from California State University, Sacramento.

Treasurer’s Report

By Carol Ryan, NCPA Treasurer

The NCPA treasury was handed over by Barbara DesChamps in great order. It was necessary to upgrade QuickBooks Pro to the 2007 version, in order to work with Internet Explorer 7 on my computer, however.

Thanks to Ken there have been a few new memberships generating income. There were several expense items (awards ceremony bills, QuickBooks, Web site hosting, etc.) to pay since the turnover. At this time, we have $8,045.17 in our account.

A Danger with Digital Printing

By Ed Mitchell

Knowing the strength and weaknesses of digital printing can protect you from receiving a book that arrives with an unexpected flaw. Currently, the strength of digital printing is with plain text. The weakness is reproducing photographs. The following experience that I had this last year may help you avoid a flaw I am living with.
My previous award winning novels were all produced by offset printing of perfect bound hard and soft cover books. Both I and my customers have been very pleased with the “gift” quality of interior text, outer cover, inner flaps/covers, and author photograph. You can see the cover quality at www.BooksByMitchell.com.

To keep production costs down while developing my latest thriller, *Gold Fire*, I considered digital printing versus the more traditional offset means. Being wary of changing to an unknown print capability I questioned the representative for the printer, to include asking for an example book produced by digital printing. I trusted the representative because I had worked with him before when producing earlier thrillers. He assured me that the text would appear equivalent in clarity by offset. The example book text, proved him right since its text was equivalent to offset printing.

Later the printer provided a single proof of the book. When I checked it the four-color cover, interior text, and author photo were good. However, after receiving the full production run my inspection of ten sample boxes revealed that the author photograph was grainer that the proof. This was when I learned the weakness of digital printing. Digital printing of photographs tends toward newspaper quality as the run size grows and falls short of offset quality. Newspaper photographs have a blur or graininess that I am not satisfied with for my customers or when I submit my work to regional and national award competitions.

The solution I plan to follow for the next book I produce is to require in the print contract that the interior author photo be printed via offset while the text portion of the book is printed by digital means.

*NCPA member Ed Mitchell is Author/Publisher of the award winning Gold Lust series of contemporary thrillers. See next article for news of Ed’s latest book.*

**Ed Mitchell’s New Book Announced**

*Special to The Pen & Press*

*GOLD FIRE — As real as today’s headlines.*

NCPA member Ed Mitchell is proud to announce that his newest thriller, *Gold Fire*, was released in June and will be available in New York City at Thrillerfest, along with his other award winning contemporary thrillers. Ed will be a panelist during Thrillerfest held at the NYC Grand Hyatt July 13 – 15, 2007.

Mitchell wove a tale of terrorism and nuclear blackmail by applying his real-world experience as an Airborne Infantry Ranger who has guarded nuclear weapons and spent over eighteen years working National Missile Defense and Homeland Security contracts.
The premise of the story is as real as today’s headlines. The son of Osama bin Laden has stolen nuclear warheads from Russia’s Strategic Rocket Forces. Is his peace offer to end global terrorism sincere or will he vaporize millions in Washington, D.C., Moscow, and Tel Aviv? Confronted with an offer for peace, would the United States government negotiate or resist al-Qaida demands?

Mitchell’s debut thriller, *Gold Lust*, won the National Publishers Freedom Award for Best New Fiction in the USA and Canada from a small press. His second thriller, *Gold Raid*, won the 10th annual fiction award for Best Action Book, issued by Northern California Publishers and Authors (NCPA), as well as winning the Best Thriller award from the San Francisco Bay Area Independent Publishers Association.

Mitchell is also a charter founding member of the International Thriller Writers Organization. His books can be ordered at www.BooksByMitchell.com, amazon.com, and from bookstores supplied by Baker and Taylor.

**New Guide to Northern California Media**

*Special to The Pen & Press*

NCPA member Vdahl Enterprises (Vivian Terry) is proud to announce the publication of its first reference book, *Gorman's 2007 Northern California Publicity Guide*. Gorman's lists up-to-date information with contact persons, press release and advertising deadlines, advertising rates and publishing dates for over 375 Northern California print publications. Contact information includes physical and mail addresses, email addresses, websites, phone and fax numbers. Bookstore list price is $59.95. A CD with a pdf of the book is available with purchase.

The book is available to NCPA members for $39.95 + $3.09 tax ($42.04 total) after NCPA monthly meetings. [Editor’s note: we are prohibited by policy of our host, Merrill Gardens Retirement Community, from sales within the facility.] Otherwise, the book is $49.95 + $3.86 tax and $2.50 shipping ($56.31) and can be purchased by sending check or money to Vdahl Enterprises, P.O. Box 215127, Sacramento, CA 95821-5126. For details call 916-977-0276.

*Vdahl Enterprises would also like to recommend production designer, Hal Hammond of Hal Hammond Graphics, an exceptional and experienced professional (over 35 years in the business). His office number is 916-451-6840 and his address is 1285 Seville Way in East Sacramento. Call him for a free consultation and mention Gorman's Guides when speaking to him.*

**Coming Attractions**

Mark your calendar for the festive Book Launch Party for Kiyo Sato’s *Dandelion Through the Crack* (Willow Valley Press, Nevada City, California), September 8, 2007. Time and location are to be announced, although the venue is expected to be in Sacramento or a nearby suburb.
Other News, Announcements, and Comments

Your editor invites submissions for this section of *The Pen & Press*. Short items about NCPA members or otherwise of interest to writers, editors, and publishers (and allied folks) are welcome here.

✔ NCPA member Ben Gay III advises *The Pen & Press*: “We recently sold the foreign rights to "The Closers" sales training series of books, audios, videos, newsletters, seminars, etc. to separate investors/publishers in South Korea, India (and several surrounding countries/city-states), and China. And, while the “advances” were certainly interesting, due to the timelessness of our material and the fact that we picked up over three billion new potential customers, the future is what we’re really excited about! [Editor’s note: Way to GO Ben!]

✔ Your news or announcement could go here!

✔ Or here . . .

“When you come to a fork in the road, take it.” —Yogi Berra
A Note from the Editor

Send your articles and announcements to ken@umbachconsulting.com.

Use **NCPA NEWSLETTER** as the email subject heading. That helps me to find newsletter submissions in the avalanche of incoming email.

Please provide submissions in Microsoft Word (or compatible) format, or in plain text. If you would like to discuss an article idea or have any other questions or comments about the newsletter, feel free to email or phone.

What fits best into *The Pen & Press* is news of members’ books, activities, marketing, speaking engagements, and accomplishments. Also of value: members’ insights into the challenges and opportunities of writing publishing and information on regional resources for authors and publishers. Cover illustrations and other photos are welcome in jpeg or other standard format. Please keep file sizes reasonable for receipt on a dialup account. When in doubt, call or email me in advance.

The deadline for submissions for the next issue (September - October 2007) is September 15.

— Ken Umbach, editor

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Meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month, 10 am to noon, at Merrill Gardens Retirement Community, 7418 Stock Ranch Road (just west of Sylvan Road about a quarter mile north of Greenback Lane), Citrus Heights.

Visitors are welcome.