
The Pen & Press

January – February 2012



Happy New Year!

By Barry Schoenborn, NCPA President

We ended 2011 on a high note. Our December meeting had many attendees and a lot of books for sale. You can be sure our generous members donated copies to Merrill Gardens, too.

Let's look ahead to 2012, a year that shows great promise for the independent author/publisher.

- There are more ways to publish than ever. Granted, the handheld reader “wars” will take some time to sort out, but we are responding simply by formatting ebooks for any and all readers.
- Authors (and that includes some big-time authors) are rethinking their relationships with the big publishing houses. Don't be surprised to see more authors absorbing some of the publishing tasks. And why? For many writers, there's more money in new methods than old.
- Any number of NCPA members have figured out that the old agent/publisher/distributor/wholesaler/retailer “thing” isn't working. And many of us are taking steps in new directions. The reason? The author gives up too much money. We're figuring out that it's better to sell 100 copies with a high margin than 1,000 copies with a low margin. (Of course, if Prentice Hall or Harlequin calls, it's still a good idea to answer the phone.)

Of course, there's room for caution in 2012.

- An ebook may be cheap to publish, but it's never going to carry the same satisfaction (for author and much of the public) as a print book. In my opinion, print books make great gifts while ebooks don't.

- Amazon will continue to try becoming the only game in town. Amazon's efforts to unseat big box stores are obvious. Amazon's lust for a bigger and bigger share of the author's reward is growing legendary.

One of the best parts of the president's job is answering queries from the website. I've encouraged many a new author or first-time publisher. The answers are pretty simple: essentially, you need to learn a lot and work hard at it. What's amazing to me is that I get emails from interesting and odd places, such as Nigeria, France, and Rancho Cordova.

You'll "read more about it" in this newsletter, plus on our website and Yahoo discussion group. About what? NCPA Awards 2012 for books published in 2011. The entry period closes on January 15th, 2012, but you can still get in. We have a great new category this year, too!

And so, I hope you look ahead to 2012 with the same excitement I do.

Barry Schoenborn
www.willowvalleypress.com

NCPA AWARDS 2012: Entry Details

By Pamela Johnson

I am hoping that you have already placed **Sunday, April 29, 2012** on your calendar for the **2012 NCPA Awards Banquet**. On this night we will honor those who have worked to produce books published in 2011. We all know the effort and accomplishment these books represent, and it is our wish that you join us in this evening of celebration. The venue is at Lions Gate Hotel and Conference Center on the old McClellan Air Force Base, 3410 Westover Street, Sacramento, from 6:00 in the evening until 9:00. Your invitations and dinner selections will be sent to you in the mail in the new year.

Mark Twain Award

We are pleased to announce several additions to the Banquet evening this year; the first is a new award we have entitled the **Northern California Publishers and Authors Mark Twain Award** for extraordinary contributions to the literary community. This year's initial presentation is awarded to **Ms. Kiyo Sato** for her tireless efforts in promoting the story of Japanese internment during World War II, especially through *Dandelion Through the Crack* (2007). *Dandelion Through the Crack/ Sato's Story* is an honored recipient of the 2008 William Saroyan Prize for International Writing (non-fiction). Ms. Sato will celebrate her 89th birthday in 2012, and it is our hope that Awards Night will become another fond memory in her list of achievements.

Keynote Speaker

We are also pleased to announce **Mr. McAvoy Layne** as our keynote speaker for the evening. A Mark Twain impersonator, Mr. Layne will perform as Samuel Clemens on the wit and humor of writing. Mr. Layne has performed on stage in a number of diverse venues from Leningrad University in Russia to Piper's Opera House in Virginia City, is the ghost of Samuel Clemens in A&E's biography of Mark Twain, and in the Discovery Channel's Cronkite Award winning documentary, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. He also works as an environmental advocate, is a winner of the

Nevada award for excellence in school and library service, and is the author of the published memoir, *Becoming Mark Twain*, and further works, *Mark Twain: Wild Humorist of the West*, and *Hooked on Twain*.

New Submission Category

Please note that the Awards Categories have been extended this year to include two new categories: both an E-book and Open Category.

The **E-book Category** is for those of you who have your book *solely* published as an e-book. If you have no paper copy of your book, you may submit five copies on CD's for the judges.

The **Open Category** will include books that do not traditionally fit into fiction, non-fiction, poetry, or children's categories. This will include, but is not limited to, such works as gift books, coffee table books, chapbooks, graphic novels, and photographic books.

Submission Deadline

Please remember that all submissions for the 2012 Awards must be postmarked by **midnight, January 15, 2012**.

Wishing each of you warm regards and many accomplishments in 2012,
Pamela Johnson, Awards Chair

The January NCPA guest speaker will actually be Two For the Price of One!

by Norma Jean Thornton

BOTH talented author, speaker, and co-owner/manager of Winston Smith Books in Auburn, James VAN EATON, and his illustrious Illustrator, Chris MARRINEN, who has done work with Coca Cola, Mattel, Nike and Marvel Comics, to name just a few, will dazzle us on Saturday 14 January 2012.

James will discuss what led him down the path to the book that eventually became *Cartoon Eyes*, and how Japanese animation influenced, inspired, and shaped his work. He'll then talk about how he found Chris and commissioned him for the cover art, a topic that Chris will segue into how he got started in comic art, plus some background about his career as an illustrator.

As an added bonus, James became a member of NCPA the end of November 2011, and attended our December meeting.

James Van Eaton, the author of the recent young adult fantasy novel *Cartoon Eyes*, has published two previous books, *Down the Darkening Road*: an epic fantasy, and *Chasing Moonshine*, a family drama based on a true story set during Washington State's bootlegging days.

A frequent guest at author events, James has spoken or signed at Elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and colleges, as well as the California State Fair, the Roseville Literature Festival, multiple bookstores, and others. For the last seven years, he has co-owned and managed Winston Smith Books in downtown Auburn, CA, which he helped to establish. The store has become a favorite among local readers, winning the Auburn Journal's best of the best poll for the last six years.

In whatever spare time he can manage, James reads a lot, collects vintage video games, and tries to pretend that he knows a thing or two about basketball. For more information regarding James and his writing, please visit: www.JamesVanEaton.com.
raduvad@yahoo.com

An artist since age 9, illustrator **Chris Marrinan**, graduated from the Academy of Art in San Francisco, with a BFA in Illustration. He's been working steadily since, in both advertising and comics, and has extensive experience in layouts, comps, and storyboards, with clients such as Coca Cola, Mattel, and Nike. Chris has also produced comics for Marvel, DC, Image, Dark Horse Comics, and many others throughout his illustration career.

For just one sample of work done by Chris, click on the URL below, but there's plenty more where that came from ... check out his website at:
<http://www.cmarrinan.daportfolio.com/> Chris can be reached at: chrism@wizwire.com
530-887-9043

(Pamela, this one is especially for you ... and anyone else interested in pirates!)
<http://fc02.deviantart.net/fs70/o/2009/341/1/d/1d0232bb5469230c3d41cf2437f5d961.jpg>

Treasurer's Report

by Laurie Hoirup

December 8, 2011

NCPA Treasurer Laurie Hoirup reports that NCPA's bank balance is currently at \$7144.41. More information is available in the File section of the NCPA Yahoo group, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NCPA>. You need your Yahoo ID and password to access the group's message archive and other files.

CWC Writing Academy

by Kim Edwards

California Writers Club, Sacramento Branch plans to start the New Year by sharpening skills through a Writing Academy comprised of a slate of Saturday sessions. Workshops are designed to offer opportunities to improve craft and brush up on revision principles. All workshops are fee-based. Please check the web site (www.CWCSacramentoWriters.org) in January for session description, location and cost, which will include an “early-bird” price break. Once again, CWC is pleased to extend the membership discount to NCPA members.

CWC Sacramento, Writing Academy Sessions Tentative Line-Up

March 10 - Get Polished to Get Published: Being an author means getting published, making yourself known as an expert, and getting your work out through various means. Come prepared to brainstorm ideas and learn exercises to improve your writing and increase your chances of opening doors. The goal is to polish to get published! Hands-on workshop will feature Melanie Bowden sharing how to buff writing to get into the editor’s office. Author of *Why Didn’t Anyone Tell Me? True Stories of New Motherhood, Get Your Articles Published!* and other stories and articles, Bowden has coached writers for over nine years. She has presented on writing query letters, managing the writer/editor relationship, negotiating higher fees, preparing manuscripts for submission, and selling and reselling your articles.

April 7 - Transform Your Writing and Your Life through the Universal Story: Exclusive Appearance, Plot Whisperer Martha Alderson. The transformative energy in stories is available to everyone. Open a new dimension you never before imagined. Life is lived (and character revealed) in the answers to three questions: What do you want; What is stopping you from attaining it; and What are you willing to do to get it? Learn the answers to story questions in this interactive workshop. Alderson is founder of the award-winning blog *The Plot Whisperer*. She is the author of four books on plot. Her new book is *The Plot Whisperer book: Secrets of Story Structure Any Writer Can Master*.

May 12 - SuperCharge Your Writing Like a Pro: Super-charge your writing with a hands-on workshop designed to amp up your characters by making them real, activate your prose by keeping it lean but vigorous, create stories and plot elements that hook the reader from page one, and find dynamite solutions to problem areas. All writers will benefit from discussion on engaging the reader, led by Karen Sandler, author of *TANKBORN*, a novel for young adults, and of 17 adult novels. She’s published several short stories and optioned screenplays. Before becoming a full-time writer, she worked as a software engineer, including work on the Space Shuttle program and communications satellites.

June 23 – How to Identify Hot Publishing Markets: Is there a way to anticipate what publishers and book buyers will want? Yes, and former Random House editor Jennifer Basye Sander will show you in a lively session on conducting market research, developing ideas that publishers will want, and creating the proposal that sells. Writers at

all levels will gain from Jennifer Basye Sander, former Random House senior editor, co-author of the *Complete Idiot's Guide to Getting Published* and the New York Times best-seller, *Christmas Miracles*, and some 50 other titles. She owns the book-packaging firm Big City Books Group, and is the founder of the women's weekend writing retreat, Write by the Lake, in Lake Tahoe.

Other Branch Activities from the California Writers Club, Sacramento

CWC-Sacramento Branch, a Silver Sponsor of the 2010 NCPA conference, has overlapping membership and some shared interests with NCPA. Margie Yee Webb, an NCPA member who is immediate past president of the Sacramento Branch of CWC, and author/photographer of "Cat Mulan's Mindful Musings: Insight and Inspiration for a Wonderful Life," provided the following information for the newsletter.

The Sacramento Branch of the California Writers Club is one of 18 branches throughout California. The Sacramento Branch has monthly luncheon meetings, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., on the 3rd Saturday of every month except July, August, and December. Location: Luncheon meetings are held at **Tokyo Buffet**, 7217 Greenback Lane (between San Juan Avenue and Fountain Square Drive), Citrus Heights, CA 95610. Meeting fee is \$12 for members and \$14 for non-members, and includes a buffet lunch.

<http://www.cwcsacramentowriters.org/>

Upcoming California Writers Club, Sacramento Branch, Luncheon Meetings

January 21, 2012

Mark Coker of Smashwords on ebook publishing and distribution.

<http://www.smashwords.com/>

February 18, 2012

Cindy Sample, author of *Dying for a Date* and *Dying for a Dance*, on "The Pothole-filled Path to Publication and Promotion."

<http://cindysamplebooks.com/>

March 17, 2012

To be announced.

The CWC Sacramento Branch Writers Network

The CWC Sacramento Branch Writers Network, meets the first Friday morning of every month, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m., at IHOP, 2216 Sunrise Blvd., Rancho Cordova, CA (west side of Sunrise, north of Zinfandel). Participants include book, newspaper, magazine, and trade journal writers.

Upcoming Writers Network Meetings

January 6, 2012: Cheryl Stapp on “Taxes for Writers.”
<http://www.cherylannestapp.com/>

February 3, 2012: Publishing expert Tim Flynn of Relkey Books.
<http://relkeybooks.com/>

March 2, 2012: To be announced.

Open Mic for Writers (“10 Minutes of Fame”)

Join the Sacramento Branch of the California Writers Club on the second Friday of each month for opportunities to read your written work. Sign-up begins at 6:45 p.m. Listeners are also welcome. Location: Barnes & Noble, Birdcage, 6111 Sunrise Blvd., Citrus Heights (Sunrise just south of Greenback). **Contact:** Julie Bauer, joolieb@aol.com.

Upcoming dates: **January 13, 2012; February 10, 2012; March 9, 2012**

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.

- ✓ Cindy Sample wants to remind everyone of the 22nd Annual Left Coast Crime Convention which will be held at the Sacramento Sheraton March 29 through April 1, 2012. The convention will feature panels of experts speaking about mysteries and thrillers, and the craft of writing. The low registration fee of \$210 includes a reception, 2 breakfasts and an awards banquet featuring a silent and live auction to benefit the Sacramento Library Adult Literacy foundation. They are offering day passes for Friday and Saturday for only \$75 (price does not include any meals). Advertising opportunities are available. Guests of Honor include John Lescroart and Jacqueline Winspear plus special guest James Rollins. Email Cindy@cindysamplebooks.com with any questions or check out the website www.leftcoastcrime.org/2012.
- ✓ With the generous permission of several poets, Jessi Graustein and the Folded Word team have launched a line of broadsides suitable for framing. “[Don’t Harrass the Garden](#)”, a poem by Matthew Lippman, is now a graphic art print available in multiple sizes through RedBubble. “[Winter](#)”, a poem by John Sibley Williams, is now a limited-edition illuminated parchment 11x14 print available through the Folded Word shop. (Due to the length of the links, they have been embedded—just click on the blue words to see what the broadsides look like.)
- ✓ Margie Yee Webb is pleased to announce that her gift book, *Cat Mulan’s Mindful Musings: Insight and Inspiration for a Wonderful Life*, was awarded Certificates

of Excellence in the “Gift” and “Color Photographs (series)” categories in the Cat Writers’ Association 2011 Communications Contest.

<http://www.catwriters.org/11coe-winners.pdf> . *Cat Mulan’s Mindful Musings* was recognized as a Finalist in the “Animals/Pets: Novelty” category in the USA

“Best Books 2011” Awards sponsored by USA Book News.

<http://www.usabooknews.com/bestbooks2012awards/bestbooks2011results.html> .

Visit <http://www.catmulan.com/> to read more about the gift book for cat lovers and their finicky friends.

- ✓ Searching for a special used book, or looking for bargains on reading? Check out 2010 NCPA Conference sponsor Time-Tested Books, 1114 21st Street, Sacramento, CA 95811. See <http://timetestedbooks.net/> for more information.
- ✓ Know someone who is looking for quality assisted living? Be sure to ask for a tour of our monthly meeting host, Merrill Gardens, Citrus Heights.
- ✓ **Your notice or announcement could go here!**



A Note from the Editor

Send your articles and announcements to Jessi Graustein, editors@foldedword.com.

Use **NCPA NEWSLETTER** (exactly and only that) as the email subject heading. That helps in finding newsletter submissions in the avalanche of incoming email.

Please provide submissions in Microsoft Word (or compatible) format or in plain text (preferably *not* in pdf). 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 916.624.4988.

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 and 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 and illustration dimensions reasonable. When in doubt, call or email me in advance.

The deadline for submissions for the next issue is 11:59 p.m., Wednesday, February 22, 2011. If you do not want your article or announcement to be lost in hundreds of accumulated email messages, use **NCPA NEWSLETTER** (exactly and only that) as your email subject heading. Send to editors@foldedword.com.

— Jessi Graustein, 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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Board of Directors of NCPA

The following list is updated for 2011-12

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Note: NCPA's executive committee includes president, VP, secretary, treasurer, and communications director.

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Awards

Position is open!

Speakers Bureau

Position is open!

Annual Conference

Position is open!

Meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 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.