



## The Write Way

### President's Message

As we near the end of our fiscal year, I'm motivated by looking back to what we accomplished. Our theme for 2015-16, "Just Write," was evident in every event we planned. From featuring a variety of encouraging speakers at our monthly meetings and spring conference to recognizing student and member writers at WOK Honors, we aspired to improve your writing and breathe life into your characters and plots.

Looking forward, my vision is to continue to support our members and help you realize your writing dreams. Whether it's joining a critique group for feedback on a cherished manuscript, learning how to write a pitch, or taking a bold step and submitting work, I want to see all of us progressing forward in our writing, submitting, and publishing goals.

For our upcoming 2016-17 year, your Writers of Kern board has invited distinguished speakers and planned specific activities to support your writing goals. After a recent survey, I've listened to your suggestions and requests for writing more at meetings and learning more about the craft of writing from industry professionals. You'll see changes beginning with our meeting on June 18. Plus, I'm really excited because soon I'll be announcing several upcoming projects, which will involve member volunteers. Do you enjoy talking to people? I invite you to join our membership or sign-in team to assist at our monthly meetings. Do you love social media? I'd love to see you be a part of our publicity team. Do you enjoy editing? We have a spot for you too! Please consider sharing your creative talents and making Writers of Kern the valley's finest source for writers. I look forward to seeing everyone in June!

Joan Raymond

### June 2016 Meeting Speaker, Michael Prince



Artistic Director, Gaslight Melodrama and Music Hall

"How do they do it?" many play-goers ask upon leaving the theater. On June 18 that question will be answered by Michael Prince in his presentation, "*How I Write: A Playwright's Process.*"

Writers and theatre fans will engage in this interactive, informative program while learning Prince's method. He will outline his step-by-step process of creating a season's individual shows. We will learn how that process has evolved over the past ten years and how the writing develops during the rehearsal phase. Other topics to be covered are the specifics for writing for actors and how that writing will be seen by an audience. Michael Prince has been performing since he was two years old and has been writing and directing films and plays for the past 20 years. In December of 2005, he became the Artistic Director of the Gaslight Melodrama Theatre and Music Hall, where he has written, directed, and performed in over fifty productions. His website is <http://happydramatics.com>

For a different perspective that could translate to your work in progress, meet at the **Clarion Hotel on Rosedale Highway June 18 from 9:30-12 noon.** See you there!

Annis Cassells

# Calendar

## Writers of Kern Meeting Schedule 2016-17

**June 18, 2016**

Michael Prince

“How I Write: A Playwright’s Process”

**July 16, 2016**

Aaron Gansky

“Three Pillars of Character Development”

**August 13, 2016**

Molly Jo Realy

“Building Your Social Media Swarm”

**September 17, 2016**

Robert Kimsey

“Intellectual Property Law for Writers”

**October 15, 2016**

Mar Preston

“The Mysterious Mystery Marketplace”

**November 19, 2016**

Don E. Thompson, Poet Laureate

Poetry Reading and

“Preparing/Publishing a Chapbook”

**December 10, 2016**

Winter Dinner

Hodel’s

**January 21, 2017**

Joan Kerr

“Turning Travel Journals into Travel Tales”



## **May 2016 meeting** **[Annual Awards Dinner]**

The annual Honors Dinner was held on Saturday May 14<sup>th</sup> at Hodel's. An impressive number of members and guests enjoyed both good food and the program conducted by Dennis VanderWerff acting as Master of Ceremonies.

The winning youths from Young Writers of Kern were awarded well-deserved recognition for their efforts; hopefully their successes will encourage even more entrants next year.

The Peggy Connelly Scholarships were awarded to Julianne Black, Allison Crotzer Kimmel and Terry Pierce after an entertaining speech by Peggy Connelly's grandson, Vince Connelly. His speech can be found on the last page of this newsletter.

After dessert, the 'Leading Ladies' (Joan Raymond, Sue Jennings, Donnee Harris, and Jennifer Ward-Wood) were recognized for their Critique Group achievements, the survivors of the A-Z blog endurance test were announced and a bevy of new active members were inducted.

We all look forward to next year's event.



New active members of Writers of Kern

# Members

## **ELECTION TIME IS HERE! June 18, 2016 is Election Day for Writers of Kern.**

Janet Skibinski is the Writers of Kern Nominating Chair for 2016-2017 elected offices of president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. These current officers have agreed to serve again: Joan Raymond, president; Dan McGuire, vice president; Janet Skibinski, secretary; and Dennis Vander Werff, treasurer.

Although current officers are serving again, volunteers may throw their hats in the ring for any of the voting positions. All positions are for a one-year term from July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2017. Officers are expected to attend monthly Board and General Meetings. Volunteers for these offices may hold concurrent CWC, SoCal or Central Board positions and serve on branch committees except with limitations for the president. All candidates for these offices must be members in good standing.

In addition to elected officers, the WOK Board of Directors includes presidential appointments such as Membership Chair, Program Chair, SoCal Representative, Critique Group Chair, Publicity Chair, Newsletter Editor, and others as needed. The following members have volunteered to serve in these appointed positions: Annis Cassells, Publicity Chair; Susie Rainbolt, Membership Chair; Clarissa Kae, Critique Group Chair; Dan McGuire, SoCal Representative, and Ian Cant, Newsletter Editor. Committee leaders choose teams with the approval of the president. Committee leaders report directly to the president but are not required to attend board meetings. We are seeking members to help our membership chair, treasurer, and contribute to our newsletter. Officers will be elected at the June 18, 2016, general meeting. All other positions will be



appointed by the president at the first board meeting in July.

Please consider giving back to your CWC branch by volunteering for an elected position or in other areas that interest you. If interested in any position, email Janet at [info@writersofkern.com](mailto:info@writersofkern.com).

Janet Skibinski

\*\*\*\*\*  
Starting next month we would like to welcome new members and recognize their works-in-progress, submissions, honorable rejections and publishing successes of existing members. So let us know either at the meetings or by e-mail so that we will be aware and can recognize your writing efforts!

\*\*\*\*\*

### **2016 WOK Blog Challenge Winners**

DanMcGuire "Bako Heat"  
[www.bakoheat.com](http://www.bakoheat.com)

Donnee Harris "Don't Annoy the Crazy Writer"  
[dontannoythecrazywriter.wordpress.com](http://dontannoythecrazywriter.wordpress.com)

Emily Brunett "For the Love of Birthmothers"  
[fortheloveofbirthmothers.com](http://fortheloveofbirthmothers.com)

Gay Chambers "A Librarian's Point of View"  
[gsuzettechambers.com](http://gsuzettechambers.com)

Ian Cant "Khoti Sarque"  
[www.KhotiSarque.wordpress.com](http://www.KhotiSarque.wordpress.com)

Jenny Estes "Jenny Blog –Reflections on Life"  
<https://jennyestes.org/>

Melanie Rudnick "Life in the West"  
<https://melanierudnick.wordpress.com>

# Writing

## Quick Reminder

Membership renewals are due now. For only \$45 your membership benefits continue through June 30, 2017. Benefits include our critique groups, exclusive member-only Winter Dinner, the opportunity to enter the Fall Writing Contest, and \$5.00 savings on the meeting door fee.

AND, just in case you need one more reason to renew now, anyone who renews by July 31, 2016\* will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 Amazon gift card!!

\*You may renew in-person at the June or July meeting or online at <http://writersofkern.com/membership/>

## Critique Corner

### The Cost of a Critique

Writing is a business—for the publisher *and* the writer, whether the product is a blog or the next Great American Novel. We write, edit then repeat until we've saturated our own talents.

If I sew a dress how will I know if it fits the average woman? I'll need models and feedback. And that's just for the first try. There will be several fittings before the final product will be presented to a purchasing board. It's no different than publishing a novel.

Instead of paying for fitting sessions of my dress, I could join a fashion group and receive help from my peers—from those in the trenches of the industry.

For a first draft (line edit) the average cost of a local editor is \$500 and upwards of \$5,000 for an industry professional.

The cost of a critique group? Nothing. Nada. It's free, a generous perk from Writers of Kern. We're here to help your literary ambitions—and maybe your bottom line too.

Clarissa Kaye



## Book Review

### *The Little Paris Bookshop* by Nina George

Jean Perdu is the bookseller/owner of a floating bookshop, The Literary Apothecary. He is a man gifted with the unique ability to identify the exact book to cure whatever malady of spirit ails you and a man who has never recovered from the loss of his first love, Manon. When, after 21 years, an encounter with another damaged soul leads to the opening of a long-ignored letter, Jean takes his boat and, together with his irritant neighbor (and famous first-time author) Max, sets out on a journey into the past, through his long denied grief and into a new life.

Along the way, he collects kindred spirits, makes new friends and comes to realize it is not too late to seize happiness.

The book is a little too idyllic, too pretty to be called perfect. There are conveniences everywhere. Every character we encounter seems to have this 20 year gap of loneliness echoing Jean's self-imposed isolation. It's a little heavy-handed with its thematic push.

But *it is* lovely, well-written and a charming adventure. Its characters are oddities of regret, each with an authentic sense of heartache brought to resolution by Jean's late-in-life search for closure. The characters are likable. Readers will root for Jean. And every bibliophile will be a little bit charmed by the very notion of a floating bookshop.

It is a book of second chances, where mistakes are made but ultimately forgiven. And, if you're looking for a little bit of bookish medicine, something to warm the soul so to speak, this may well be the book for you.

It certainly worked for me. I loved it.

Anna Stewart

# Nuts and Bolts



## Official WOK Email Addresses

Go to the website, or email these addresses.

### **Events:**

events@writersofkern.com

### **Information:**

info@writersofkern.com

### **Membership:**

membership@writersofkern.com

### **Newsletter:**

newsletter@writersofkern.com

### **President:**

president@writersofkern.com

### **Submissions:**

submissions@writersofkern.com

### **Sunshine Committee:**

sunshine@writersofkern.com

### **Treasurer:**

treasurer@writersofkern.com

### **Webmaster:**

webmaster@writersofkern.com

### **Critique Coordinator:**

critiques@writersofkern.com

Writers of Kern seeks and welcomes submissions of members' writing for the newsletter and the website blog. Send prose, memoir, poetry and essays to the Webmaster, and send book reviews and articles of general interest to the newsletter editor

### **Website:**

www.writersofkern.com

### **Facebook:**

https://www.facebook.com/WritersOfKern/

## The Writers of Kern Executive Board

### **President & Program Chair:**

**Joan Raymond**

president@writersofkern.com

### **Vice President & Webmaster:**

**Dennis VanderWerff**

webmaster@writersofkern.com

### **Treasurer:** *[pending election]*

treasurer@writersofkern.com

### **Secretary: Janet Skibinski**

secretary@writersofkern.com

### **Membership: Susie Rainbolt**

membership@writersofkern.com

### **Critique Coordinator: Clarissa Kaye**

critiques@writersofkern.com

### **Newsletter: Ian Cant**

newsletter@writersofkern.com

### **Member-at-Large, CB Rep &**

SoCal District Rep: Dan McGuire

### **Hospitality/Sunshine: Annis Cassells**

sunshine@writersofkern.com

\*\*\*\*\*

### **The Write Way**

June 2016

Copyright The Writers of Kern

PO Box 22335

Bakersfield, CA 93390-2335

\*\*\*\*\*



# The Write Way

# It's Miller Time!

**California Writers Club Annual Picnic**

Saturday, July 23, 2016 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Joaquin Miller Park, Oakland

**Potluck + BBQ Open Mic LitCake Contest**

Join your fellow CWC members at the Fire Circle for food and fun at the historic birthplace of our club. Free for members and families.

**Details & directions:**  
[calwriters.org](http://calwriters.org)



## Last Words

After the Peggy Connelly award presentation, her grandson **Vince Connelly** passed on some of her practical wisdom.

### “Three Life Lessons my Nana would want you to know, from the other side”

You might find some of this inspiring. You will probably find some of it boring and you will definitely forget all of it after a week. Be warned – there will be hokey similes and obscure aphorisms which start well and end up making no sense at all. So listen up, or you'll get lost, like a blind man in a pharmacy clapping to try to echo-locate the contact lens fluid.

Here we go, ready for number one. You don't have to have a dream! People on talent shows always talk about their dreams. Fine, if you have something you've always wanted to do, dreamed of with all your heart, go for it. After all, chasing a dream is something to do with your time, and if it's a big enough dream it'll take most of your life to achieve. So by the time you get it done you'll be almost dead, so it won't matter.

My Nana would advocate passionate dedication to the pursuit of short term goals. Be micro-ambitious, put your head down and work with pride on whatever is in front of you. You never know where you might end up. Just be aware the next worthy pursuit will probably show up in your periphery. This is why you should be careful about long-term dreams. If you focus too far in front of yourself you won't see the shiny thing in the corner of your eye.

Number two, it's all luck! You are incalculably lucky to be born and incredibly lucky to be brought up by a good family. Or if you don't have a good family, that's unlucky and you have my sympathy, but you are still lucky. Lucky you happen to be made of the kind of DNA that went on to make the sort of brain that when placed in a bad family environment worked well enough to eventually go to college and have a nice life.



Well done you, for dragging yourself up by your bootstraps, but you are lucky. You didn't create the bit of you that dragged yourself up. They're not even your bootstraps. I suppose I've worked hard to achieve whatever dubious achievements I have, but I didn't make the part of me that works hard.

Understanding that you can't take all of the credit for your successes nor truly blame others for their failures will humble you. Empathy is intuitive but is also something that can be worked on intellectually.

Number three, exercise! I'm sorry for you pasty-pale philosophy grads arching your eyebrows into a cartesian curve as you navigate the miniature traffic cones of life.

You are wrong and they are right. Well, you're half right. You think therefore you are, but you also jog therefore you sleep. Therefore you're not overwhelmed by Life's existential angst. You can't be Kant, and you don't want to be.

Play a sport, pump iron, do yoga, run, whatever. But take care of your body – you're going to need it. Most of you will live to be nearly a hundred and even the poorest of you will experience a level of wealth that most humans throughout history could not have dreamed of. And the long luxurious life ahead of you is going to make you depressed. But don't despair. There is an inverse correlation between depression and exercise. Do it. Run, my beautiful intellectuals, RUN!

