

November, 2013  
Volume 1, Issue 4

The Writers of Kern  
PO BOX 22335  
Bakersfield, CA

Regular meetings:  
The 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month,  
10 to noon. Registration, 9:45.  
Fee: \$10, members and guests.

Clarion Hotel  
3540 Rosedale Hwy.  
Hwy. 99 at Rosedale  
Bakersfield, CA  
[www.writersofkern.com](http://www.writersofkern.com)

**The Writers of Kern  
Executive Board**

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**November Speaker is  
Delia Latham**



For the November 16 monthly meeting, author Delia Latham is our esteemed speaker.

Her topic is "Rx for Writeritis," or, "Remedies for Literary Ailments." She'll be offering ideas on how to fix the "health" problems that often arise in a writer's world. For instance, what to do when you seriously *don't want* to write (literary depression); how to break through writer's block (literary helplessness); why writers shouldn't over-pressure themselves (high word pressure); and how we give ourselves literary laryngitis. Sounds like just the thing to deliver us from possible, or lurking, winter-writing doldrums.

Delia Latham is a born-and-bred Californian, currently living in Tehachapi with her husband Johnny and a spoiled Pomeranian. Delia writes inspirational romance that almost always includes a touch of the divine in the form of angels or angelic activity, thus her *tagline of "Heaven's touch in earthly tales."*

A former newspaper Staff Writer and frequent contributor to *Bakersfield Magazine*, Delia has also freelanced projects to public relations firms and magazines; compiled, edited, and designed cover art for various Kindness Incorporated projects; and sold greeting card verse. Many of her short stories, articles, and devotions can be found online. When she's not writing, she designs cover art and marketing materials for other authors. Find out more about Delia Latham at her website: [www.delialatham.net](http://www.delialatham.net) Delia will have all the *print* books available and info on the others, for folks who would like to download to their e-Readers.

**New Way to Pay  
Joan Raymond, Treasurer**



Has this ever happened to you? You arrive at the Saturday morning Writers of

Kern meeting without your checkbook and with only \$1.42 in cash. In a moment of panic you rummage through the car seats only to find a long lost ink pen, two pennies, and an old ketchup packet from a fast food restaurant.

If this sounds all too familiar, WOK has the perfect solution. Now you can visit our website and pay your meeting fee in advance! For the



November 2013 meeting, you may access the information at: <http://writersofkern.com/meeting-fee>

You can also access it from the "About" tab: About > Meetings > Meeting Fee

Paying in advance allows for a quick check-in at the door and more time to spend with your fellow writers. Give it a try this month!

## The October Meeting Nancy Clover

As usual, the October 26 meeting was fun, interesting, and informative. We started out with attendees standing and briefly stating how long they'd been members, where they were from, and how long they'd been writing. Our guests also introduced themselves.



Then we proceeded to our new feature, Writers Showcase. A member volunteers (so far we're booked through February!) to read from his or her own work, five minutes approximately.



What a challenge for those of us who are shy and reticent! Oh that's

right, it's all voluntary. The rest of us will just have to fill in, so gather up your courage and sign up for the coming months.

**Patrick Kelly** was our first member reader. Patrick writes non-fiction, and has written a book called *Quality Is* via his blog at <http://conpridigm.com/>. For more information on book blogging, Patrick recommended *How to Blog A Book* by Nina Amir.

Then on to the guest speaker, our very own Dennis Vander Werff. His topic was "The Creative and Restorative Power of Journaling." He explained how journaling, which he has been doing for thirty years, has impacted his life. Dennis writes three pages (27 min. or 730 words) daily, and he also has a notebook handy for quick thoughts. He was asked if he will ever share any of his journals with his two daughters and stated that he hasn't decided yet.



Dennis recommended a book by Natalie Goldberg called *Writing Down The Bones* and another, *The Artist's Way* by Julia Cameron.

## President's Message Dana Martin

Welcome to November and this amazing fall weather. I don't know about you, but the cooler weather creates an environment conducive to writing. Whenever the temperature drops and clouds darken the sky, I like to make a pot (yes, and entire pot) of coffee, fill my mug with



vanilla creamer, and sit at my desk where only the glow of a lamp (and the computer screen) lights the room. Something magical seems to happen to the creative process when all exterior conditions are ideal.

What are your ideal writing conditions?

I hope you're all writing. I took a hiatus for a few months to run my seasonal business—during the hot July-August-September when my ideal conditions strategically go unmet—and now that my time is free, Mother Nature has seemingly conveyed through her cold temps, "Time for Dana to write again." I've been asked to write a guest column in *Bakersfield Life Magazine* this coming year, and will be a speaker at this month's Festival of Books, which will also require some down time at my computer as I figure out what aspect of writing to share with attendees. I also vow to submit to a random magazine once per month.

During this upcoming month, I encourage each of you to find your ideal writing conditions and, if possible, create them for yourself. Stephen King closes the door to write. One of my girlfriends transformed her closet into an "office" away from her family. Whatever suits your writing style, I hope you find your conditions this month and spend just an hour or two in your perfect spot remembering how blessed you are to have been given the ability to write.

Today, I saw a commercial on television where folks were asked

what they would do for a living if they could get paid to do it. In essence, their dream job.

The first occupation mentioned was a writer.

You already are one. Take some time this month to be thankful for that.

**Member Profile**  
**Meet Jean Chapman**  
*Jean Chapman*



I've been writing and reading most of my life. As a child I read *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott. Captivated by her vivid characters, I

pounded out a play on my dad's manual Corona typewriter. I was Jo, my sisters were Meg, Beth, and Amy, and my brother was Teddy. Great drama ensued as we re-enacted the March children dashing through the house and out to the frozen lake in back to skate and imagine the ice cracking, threatening injury—or better yet, death.

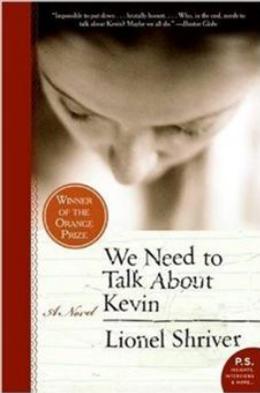
Those years have passed, and I am still enthralled by words, books and writing. Constantly searching my thesaurus for “just the right word,” I write fiction, non-fiction, and inspirational essays. Currently I am re-working a fictional novel that details my great-grandparents emigrating from Norway to the Eau Claire region of Wisconsin in 1863.

Raised as a pastor's kid, I married a man who went into the ministry. We have reared a family and served people for over 48 years. For a

Golden Season, I taught literature at Biola and Vanguard Universities. Now retired, I continue to chase my dual passions of writing and teaching Bible classes at a local church.

**Book Review**  
**We Need to Talk About Kevin** by Lionel Shriver  
*Anna Stewart*

Kevin Khatchadourian is a murderer. His mother, Eva, takes the bus to visit him in prison on Saturdays. It is never pleasant. After all, she has never much liked him. Still, her life is consumed by Kevin, by the horror of what he has done. The child she didn't really want, the child that never loved her, the child that never did anything a normal child should do has grown up to be a monster. Did she birth a monster? Or did she make one? And can she love it?



In a series of letters to her husband, Eva explores these questions, telling her story in plain and

unflattering terms. Her story is a mix of her own indifference toward Kevin, her resentments toward motherhood and her increasing awareness of Kevin's oddities, his cruelties and his indifference toward other people, toward life. If you're

looking for a light read, look elsewhere. It took me a while to get into the epistolary style of the book, a little longer to warm to a sometimes unsympathetic and perhaps unreliable narrator, but I found the book well worth the effort, troubling for the questions it asks with an ending that nonetheless offers hope of redemption for both Eva and her son. I enjoyed it.

There is a movie. I did not like it. Read the book instead.

**WOK Critique Groups**

Open status may have changed  
(Sci-Fi and Fantasy) **OPEN**

**Monday 1, Dan McGuire, OPEN**

**Monday 2, Jeff Hill, OPEN**

**Tuesday, 1:30 PM, Nan Rinker, OPEN**

**Wednesday AM, Dana Martin, Closed**

**Wednesday 1, Terry Redman, Closed**

**Wednesday 2, Joan Raymond, OPEN**

**WOK's Active Writers:**

We recently discovered that two additional members, **Robert Hargreaves** and **Bob Weiss**, submitted stories to the California Writers' Club Literary Review. Our apologies for the omission, Robert and Bob. This brings the WOK total to 15 participants!

**Donnée Harris-Padgett** will be having a book signing for her first novel, *Prohibited*, at Russo's Books from 1:00-3:00pm, right after the November 16 Writers of Kern meeting.

Four WOKians are writing up a storm, doing NaNoWriMo. Congratulations and cheers to **Jeff Hill, Dan McGuire, Iola Reneau, and Anna Stewart.**

Seven bloggers among us are working on the A-Z Blog Challenge. Almost two-thirds of the way through the alphabet, they are:

- Annis Cassells**  
[www.thedaymaker.blogspot.com](http://www.thedaymaker.blogspot.com);
- Donnée Harris-Padgett**  
<http://erotic-writer-housewife.blogspot.com>;
- Clarissa Kae**  
<http://clarissakae.blogspot.com>;
- Jasmine Lowe**  
<http://jazzedaboutstuff.com/>;
- David Morris**  
<http://lateboomer2013.blogspot.com/>;
- Joan Raymond**  
<http://joanraymondwriting.blogspot.com>;
- Anna Stewart**  
<http://ontheink.blogspot.com>



## Writers Getting Ink

**Robert Hargreaves**, frequent writer to *The Californian* Opinion page, had a recent letter published in the "Another View" section.

**Dorothy Harrison** recently published her romantic novel *Megan's Days*.

Quoting from her book, "I was swallowing a delicious shrimp when my long-time boyfriend suggested, "Maybe it's time we get married," the ultimate romantic proposal. I was hurt, sad and genuinely pissed. Those words started my wild, bumpy journey, which led me to a new awareness of myself and... I'm Megan. This is my story about 365 DAYS THAT CHANGED MY LIFE."

We wish Dorothy continued success. On her ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS page, Dorothy writes: "My immense gratitude goes out to my family, my writing buddies, and all my friends who recognize just how important writing is to me. "

**Caroline Reid** told us, "I received a note from Erma Bombeck Website that they will post my submission, "Opening Christmas Presents," on their blog."

If WOKians are "getting ink," we want to know about it and shout about it. Thanks for keeping us informed at [newsletter@writersofkern.com](mailto:newsletter@writersofkern.com).

"Like" the WOK Page on Facebook. Tell everyone you know about us.

*"The purpose of a writer is to keep civilization from destroying itself."*  
~ Albert Camus

### Official WOK Email Addresses

**Go to the website, or email to the following addresses. Thank you.**

**Events:**  
[events@writersofkern.com](mailto:events@writersofkern.com)

**Information:**  
[information@writersofkern.com](mailto:information@writersofkern.com)

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[membership@writersofkern.com](mailto:membership@writersofkern.com)

**Newsletter:**  
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**President:**  
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*The Write Way* is published monthly in Bakersfield, California.

The deadline for submission of news articles is the first day of the month of publication. Send to [newsletter@writersofkern.com](mailto:newsletter@writersofkern.com)



The Writers of Kern website seeks and welcomes submissions of members' writing for the website blog. Prose, memoir, poetry, essays, and book reviews should be sent to [submissions@writersofkern.com](mailto:submissions@writersofkern.com)



## Annual Winter Dinner

Friday, December 13, 2013

6:00 p.m.

Member \$20

Member & Guest \$40

### Hodel's Country Dining

5917 Knudsen Drive  
Bakersfield, CA 93308

(From Hwy. 99, exit Olive Dr. West. Turn right at Knudsen Dr.)

The winner of the Writers of Kern Summer Writing Contest will be announced, and other awards will be

presented. Back by popular demand, we're including a book exchange in the evening's events. Please bring one wrapped, gently-used book, and you will get to exchange it for a different book to add to your library.

Members are encouraged to bring a short piece of their own writing to read to the group (5 minutes or less, please). It's a great time to hear what others have written and celebrate our mutual passion for the craft of writing.

This is our annual winter event for members and their guests. **Make your reservation online no later than Friday, December 6, 2013.**

Go to [www.writersofkern.com](http://www.writersofkern.com) and click on the Events tab. The dinner meeting is the second event listed. Click on Information and Reservation. OR, go directly to the information/reservation page by entering [www.writersofkern.com/reservation](http://www.writersofkern.com/reservation)

#### The Nancy Ellen Dodd Workshop



Nancy Ellen Dodd creates images from cultural metaphors



Participants at the Nancy Ellen Dodd workshop

*"Ideas are like rabbits. You get a couple and learn how to handle them, and pretty soon you have a dozen."*

~ John Steinbeck

### Calendar

#### November 16

Guest speaker, Delia Latham  
"Rx for Writeritis"

#### November 23

Nancy Ellen Dodd Workshop, Part II for registered participants

#### December 13

Winter Dinner Meeting  
Awards, Open Mic, and Book Exchange  
Friday evening, 6:00-9:00P at Hodel's.

#### January 18

Critique Workshop presented by Dana Martin and member panel

#### February 15

Speaker pending

#### March 15

Carol Sanders, author of *Spy on Clinton Street*

#### April 19

Writers of Kern Annual Spring Conference

#### May 17

Read the Book. Meet the Author  
Reggie Ridgway

#### June

Summer Members Dinner Meeting

# THE BACK PAGE

## Editors' Inkwell

Annis Cassells



A poem a day for a month? It sounded daunting, difficult, and possibly disastrous. October Poetry Writing Month (OctPoWriMo) turned out to be challenging, but satisfying. I learned that everything, each day, has poetry potential. And, I learned about and wrote new forms of poetry. The organizers, with their guidance through prompts, examples, and encouragement, tapped a dormant part of my creativity. OctPoWriMo brought poets together from all over the world who shared their words and lives and provided insightful comments, praise, and encouragement. With each poem, I felt my poetic confidence rise. Now that OctPoWriMo is over for this year, many of us are feeling withdrawals. So, next up is Poets on the Page, a less intense undertaking that will still keep us on our poetic toes.

## Writers Showcase

The latest feature to be installed at our monthly WOK meetings is the Writers Showcase. This is a time to have one member read a short piece to the group. And, it not only allows the rest of us to hear what others are writing, we will have the opportunity to be inspired, intrigued, and encouraged by each other's work.

At the October meeting, our first member reader, Patrick Kelly, read a few pages from his non-fiction blogged book, *Quality Is*.

We already have folks onboard to read their five-minute offering for November, January, and February. If you wish to regale us with your writing in March, or May, please send an email stating the month you prefer to [events@writersofkern.com](mailto:events@writersofkern.com).



## What You Can Do (and we have people who are actually doing it)

Share your successes with the Newsletter Editors at [newsletter@writersofkern.com](mailto:newsletter@writersofkern.com).

Send your bio, with a headshot or other good photo, to the Newsletter Editors at [newsletter@writersofkern.com](mailto:newsletter@writersofkern.com).

Volunteer to work on a committee or take on a responsibility for the good of the organization.

Notify the Sunshine Committee whenever you know of a member who might be ill or recovering or who needs a note of condolence. Send to [sunshine@writersofkern.com](mailto:sunshine@writersofkern.com).

Write a short story, essay, memoir, or poem for the **Writers of Kern website blog** and send it to [submissions@writersofkern.com](mailto:submissions@writersofkern.com)



