

**October, 2014
Volume 2, Issue 10**

**The Writers of Kern
PO BOX 22335
Bakersfield, CA**

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October Speaker Mystery Writer, Wendy Hornsby



Edgar Award-winner and internationally published author,

Wendy Hornsby, is our featured speaker for October. She is the author of two electrifying mystery series and a collection of short stories, and is a contributor in several mystery anthologies.

Hornsby designed her program, “Make a Commitment to Your Writing,” around issues that keep writers from completing projects: unfinished manuscripts sitting in drawers; bogging down after establishing plot, setting, and character; sheer boredom; and giving up.

She will talk about strategies for staying committed to the work from the beginning all the way to the end. Her themes include time management, protecting work time from intrusions, and strategies to help writers keep from bogging down during the “boring middle parts.”

And, Wendy Hornsby has the creds. She’s finished and seen published a dozen books, many short stories and articles, and a regular newspaper

column. In addition to the Edgar, her work has received its French equivalent, *le Grand Prix de litterature policiere*, and the Mystery Scene Reviewers Choice Award. All of this while raising children and teaching full time at the college level.

Her ninth Maggie MacGowen mystery, *The Color of Light*, was published in April of this year. Today, Wendy Hornsby lives in Long Beach, California, where she is a professor of history at a local college. To learn more about her and her works, visit www.wendyhornsby.com

SoCal Writers Showcase Publishing Opportunity

Attention Writers:

Here is a great online magazine to get your short stories published. It’s called the SoCal Writers Workshop. The seven Southern Cal branches of the California Writers Club host this site. We at WOK are part of the group and we want to see lots of WOK entries. Please use our own website www.writersofkern.com to check out the submission requirements and the website address to submit. We are looking for Fiction, Memoir, Poetry, News, Interviews, Writing Craft and Non-Fiction. Here is the website to look over the contents:

<http://www.socalwritersshowcase.com/about/>

~Dan McGuire, SoCal District Rep



President's Message October 2014



I'm excited. October has finally arrived and I've survived another Bakersfield summer. My

favorite weather events, including cooler temperatures, cloudy skies, and rain, are right around the corner. October also kicks off decorating for fall, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and then Christmas. Spicy scents wafting throughout the house, miniature pumpkins festooning the mantle, and tiny lights twinkling along the eaves.

Once this time of the year arrives I notice two changes in myself. With October's cooler weather, I want to take walks again. This is great because walking fuels my creativeness which, in turn, inspires my writing. Exercising does wonders for figuring out missing plot points or overlooked character flaws.

The second change, though, gets in the way of my writing. I want to decorate and clean and bake and catch up on all my to-do list items from when it was too hot to do anything other than stay inside and sit under the breeze of a ceiling fan. I could easily find 100 things I'd rather be doing than sitting in front of my computer arranging words on a page.

Just to let you know, I never was one to set a daily writing goal. It never worked for me. If I didn't reach my goal, I became frustrated. Then my inner voice messed with my mind when I was already feeling

guilty about not keeping up with a daily word count. But, even though I don't write every day, I write consistently.

Why do I revise and edit when I'd rather bake applesauce-carrot muffins? Why do I choose to develop dialogue when I'd rather decorate the front porch? What keeps me on track? The answer is simple – my critique group. Yes, I admit it – I'm motivated because our group of writers *expects* another chapter or short story from me every two weeks. And because they expect it, I make it happen, no matter what I'd rather be doing. Those of you in a critique group know what I'm talking about. Peer pressure in its purest form. Accountability among writers.

For those of you not currently in a critique group – do you let days pass without writing? Or maybe a week, or months? It's easy to do. Life gets in the way. "I'll write tomorrow," you say to yourself. But does tomorrow ever make its way to the top of your to-do list?

Do you want to write more but find it difficult without a deadline? Then I challenge you join one of our many critique groups. Step out of your comfort zone. Be accountable to a group of like-minded writers. We have a variety of critique groups to fit most everyone's needs. Our newest ones include the Online Group (for those who need the flexibility of no specific meeting time), the genre-specific Children's/Young Adult Group, and the Accelerated Group (for those who want to have their finished novels critiqued in a few short months). Yes, it's a commitment; but, it's a commitment to your craft and to yourself.

For more information on any of our current groups or to suggest a new group, email Terry Redman, our critique group coordinator, at critiques@writersofkern.com. It will make a difference. Both in yourself and in your writing. I promise.

~Joan

Getting Ink

Robert Hargreaves keeps pumping out the ink. His story, "Stem Cells," appeared in the latest issue of *The Tower Journal*. And, his letters to *The Californian* are published as often as their policy allows. Congratulations, Robert.

WOK members whose work is published, please inform us at newsletter@writersofkern.com so we can acknowledge your accomplishments! ~TWW

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



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

Official WOK Email Addresses

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

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events@writersofkern.com

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information@writersofkern.com

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Critique Coordinator:

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Upcoming Community Literary Events



Theatre

The 30th Annual Kern Shakespeare Festival presents *The Taming of*

the Shrew, October 15, 17, 19, and *Macbeth*, October 16, 18, 22, 24, 26. All performances begin promptly at 8:00pm in the newly remodeled Bakersfield College Outdoor Theatre.

The Taming of the Shrew is one of Shakespeare's most popular comedies. ... This year's production is set on the docks of 1700's England where pirates, merchants, and sailors are liable to break out in song and dance at any moment! This season's production of *Macbeth* will feature an all-female cast in this, the darkest of all Shakespearean plays.

Author Reading/Lecture



2014 One Book, One Bakersfield presents Sonia Nazario, author of

Enrique's Journey in conjunction with the CSUB First Year Experience Program. October 30, 2014, from 6:00-9:00 PM, at CSUB's Icardo Center. **Writers of Kern** will have an informational booth at the event.

Poetry



Poetry Open Mic ~ every First Friday at Dagny's Coffee from 6:00 pm to 6:50 pm.

Poets wanting to read their work can sign in at 5:50 pm.

On November 7, 2014 the open mic will feature Shawn McQuilliams reading from his book "Stacked Doors" and other poems.

Dagny's Coffee is located at 1600 – 20th Bakersfield 93301 (Corner of 20th and Eye St). Contact Portia (661) 717-1346 or ssportia@aol.com for additional information. This free event is sponsored by Dagny's Coffee and the Kern Poetry Foundation.

Author Reading/Lecture



CSUB's California Writers Series presents **Lucy Corin, Wednesday,**

November 12th, 7 p.m., Dezember Room, Walter Stiern Library.

Lucy Corin is an American novelist and short story writer. Described by *The Rumpus* as an "exhilarating collection," Corin's most recent book, *100 Apocalypses and Other Apocalypses* was published by McSweeney's in 2013. She is the winner of the 2012 American Academy of Arts and Letters John Guare Writer's Fund Rome Prize.

The California Writers Series, featuring diverse and celebrated California authors, is sponsored by Sigma Tau Delta, the English Honors Society.

The Critique Corner



The critique business is booming. The multi-genre Online Group is now active and open to new members.

This is a great option for people who can't get to a meeting at a specific time. Jim Magwood, our September speaker, is in this group.

Kid Lit, more properly called Writing for Children and Young Adults, is now meeting on Mondays. No openings.

The Advanced Group is meeting and is open to new members. This is for people who have the book done, or nearly done, and want to have it critiqued. Can you print out 50+ pages of your masterpiece every two weeks? Contact me and I will put you in touch with Clarissa.

I have placed two members in groups this week so if you want to join a critique group, contact me. That's how I learned these two people were available. If you have a group in mind we do not offer, let me know. One member has expressed interest in a screen-writing group. Any others?

Openings happen, so if I have your name you have a good chance of finding a spot.

~Terry Redman,
Critiques@writersofkern.com

September Meeting featured speaker, Jim Magwood

Mystery novelist Jim Magwood spoke at our September 20th meeting to remind Writers of Kern members "We're all here to help each other; it's what we're about."



Jim, who has written four international suspense thrillers, *Sanction*, *The Lesser Evil*, *Cop*, and *Nightmare*, over the last several years, began with a short review of his self-publishing experiences. He's used Amazon's CreateSpace.com to great effect and pointed out how convenient and prompt on-demand publishing can be. In 2012 alone, some 391,000 such books were self-published and Jim detailed ways in which to make your work stand out from the crowd.



Even if you write fiction, he suggested, a good way to connect with readers would be to treat subjects that everybody's familiar with, things ripped from the headlines of the newspapers. But there has to be that personal connection.



"People are looking for reality," he said, "You have to ask yourself 'Where have I been?'" Try to connect that intense personal experience with your fiction.

Jim was born in Vancouver, Canada "too many years ago" and brought to California as a child. He lives in Twin Oaks, CA with his wife of 30+ years, Gayle, on a quiet country refuge where he's only bothered by visiting animals looking for handouts. The background he brings to his novels comes from his military service in Vietnam and 45 years of traveling the world in various business management positions. "Most of us have stories to tell," he smiled, "open up your mind; there's a story."

While he allowed that his "evil mind" was just the result of letting his imagination run, he emphasized the creative fun all writers can have by taking a topic people are interested in and then, "Twist it a little bit."

He said description is important in writing, but warned against providing too much technical detail. "Let the imagination of the readers work to fill in the blanks," he suggested.

As a final note to all his fellow writers he declared, "Do not let anything stop you!" Visit www.jimmagwood.com

~Phil Berling



Member Profile

Meet Lou Medina



Louis (Lou) Medina was born in El Salvador and grew up in Los Angeles. He has lived

in Japan, China, Spain and England and traveled to numerous countries in Europe, Asia and Latin America. Louis earned a double B.A. in East Asian Languages and Cultures and International Relations from the University of Southern California and an M.A. in Applied Linguistics from the Universidad Complutense in Madrid, Spain.

Following a journalism fellowship with the Freedom Forum Diversity Institute at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., in 2006, Louis moved to Bakersfield to work as a full-time general assignment reporter for *The Bakersfield Californian*. He still contributes articles dealing mostly with underrepresented communities and social issues to the *Californian's* publications.

Louis's fictional writing includes short plays that have earned him top honors in Pine Mountain Club's Center of the World Festival. These plays focus on environmental issues ("The Teacher, the Buddha and the Ghosts at the Bottom of the Sea," 2011), animal rights and pet overpopulation concerns ("Good Night, Friend." 'Goodbye, Friend.'" 2010), and

prejudice/race relations ("Common Denominators," 2009). "Denominators" was featured in a daylong Oildale Centennial Conference at Cal State University Bakersfield in autumn of 2009.

One of his several screenplays, "Hotline," a psychological thriller about mistaken identity, depression and suicide, was featured in a staged reading in Hollywood by new talent promotion company Drama Garage in February 2005.

Also that year, on August 6, the 60th Anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Louis, with sponsorship from Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace, produced a staged reading of his full-length, anti-nuclear play, "What the Cicadas Sing." This play was inspired by Louis's research of the atomic holocausts of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, A-bomb survivors' stories, and the summer song of the cicadas in Hiroshima's Peace Park. "Cicadas" is currently entered in a Bay Area playwriting competition.

Louis lives in Bakersfield with his Chihuahuas, Futuro and Karma, who inspired a children's book he is polishing up. He works for a nonprofit and enjoys movies, driving, and travel. Louis is a fan of the website www.popthatzit.com.

"From Inspiration to Publication"

September 10 - December 6
Annual WOK A-Z Blog Challenge

October 25 (4th Saturday)
Wendy Hornsby, Mystery Writer
"Make a Commitment to your Writing"

November 15
Rebecca Langston-George,
Children's Writer
"Writing for the Children's Market"

December 13 (2nd Saturday)
Winter Dinner Meeting at Hodel's,
6:00 PM

Fall Writing Contest winners
&
WOK Blog Challenge recognition

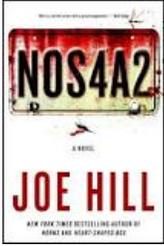
January 17
Writers of Kern Panel
"Editing"

February 21
LeeAnne Krusemark
"How to Write an
Irresistible Query Letter"

March 21
Nancy Curteman, Mystery Writer
"How to Increase Tension in Your
Novel"

April 18
Our annual Spring Conference
featuring several guest speakers.

Book Review



NOS4A2 by Joe Hill

Vic McQueen is only a little girl when she rides her bicycle across the Shorter Way Bridge for the first time, discovering not only her mother’s missing bracelet but her own ability to make that bridge take her wherever she wants to go. When, as a troubled teenager, she goes looking for trouble, the bridge obliges.

Charlie Manx, a man with a talent just as bizarre as Vic’s, collects children to populate his twisted amusement park, Christmas-land where it is Christmas every day and the children murder grown-ups for fun. Vic and Mr. Manx’s first encounter is a violent one. Vic barely escapes with her life and the story she tells of their encounter not only lands Mr. Manx in prison, but ensures he will be her lifelong enemy.

When he escapes from the morgue after his autopsy more than ten years later, Vic and her son are his number 1 target. Confronted by the reality of what she had come to believe was delusion, Vic must reclaim her mastery of the Shorter Way Bridge and find her missing son before he too becomes one of Mr. Manx’s terrible creatures.

If you’re looking for a bit of a scare during the Halloween season (and you don’t mind the perversion of classic Christmas cheer), this book may be for you. The characters are well-drawn. Vic is a feisty, if somewhat unstable, main character whose struggles with self-worth and life and love are relatable in spite of the fantastical plot. Mr. Manx as a villain is terrifying with his soft demeanor and pedantic tones. The book *is* somewhat graphic; there is violence. It is disturbing at its core. Which is why I kept turning pages. There is action and adventure and more than a few thrills. I enjoyed it. ~ **Anna Stewart**



WOK to host NaNoWriMo Write-Ins

Ready to get started on your NaNoWriMo novel? Writing is a solitary activity. The world you’re creating on the page is “your own world” but being surrounded by the collective creativity of a bunch of others who are writing, too, can encourage and stimulate.

Writers of Kern will host three NaNoWriMo Write-Ins for members: November 8, 15, and 22nd, from 1-5 PM at Russo’s Books, 1601 New Stine Road, #182 (between Olive Garden and Rosewood Retirement Community). Our friend Mike Russo has graciously offered his meeting space, equipped with tables and chairs for comfort in composing.

We have space for ten writers to exercise their flying fingers and novel writing skills. Sign up at events@writersofkern.com for any or all dates, or take your chances and drop in.



**Three Saturday *NaNoWriMo* Write-Ins
November 8, 15, and 22
Russo’s Books, 1601 New Stine, Ste. 182**

THE BACK PAGE

From the Inkwell



Well, I am back from the cool breezes and salt air of the Oregon Coast in time for a beautiful Bakersfield fall. With so many local literary events coming up, it's going to be an autumn of enjoyment, learning, and growing. Every writing-and-reading activity I attend bolsters my writing toolbox. I hope you will take some of these opportunities. Take a look at the Upcoming Community Events article on Page 3 of this issue, and check in with some of your favorite venues.

A huge "thank you" to our contributors for *The Write Way*. Terry and I appreciate your reviews, member profiles, articles, and alerts about publication and events.

Mandy Wallace and **Sue Speake** answered the call for help with Writers of Kern publicity. With Mandy helping us become more visible in the community and Sue highlighting us in 140-character Tweets, WOK is creating a presence and a platform. Thank you!

Congratulations to the writers who entered the Fall Writing Contest. First, second, and third place winners will be announced and cash prizes awarded at the Winter Dinner, December 13, at Hodel's.

A bittersweet "win." The September 30 Fall Writing Contest deadline came and left with fewer than 20 entries. That means my gleeful co-editor **Terry Redman** wins breakfast at the Bakersfield establishment of his choice. Longtime friends, we relish chances to sit over coffee and chat. But really, congratulations?

~Annis Cassells



Note
Writers of Kern meets
October 25,
The 4th Saturday of the month
(Same time, Same place)

Mark your calendars for the Writers of Kern Winter Dinner
Saturday, December 13, from 6-9 p.m. at Hodel's