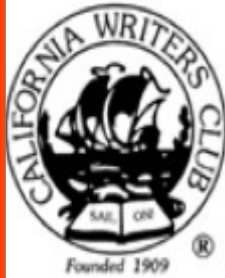


December  
2017



## President's Message

### Looking Back, Looking Forward

January 2017. It seems so long ago. I wrote down goals and had high hopes of all the things I'd accomplish by the end of this year. My goals included: Complete my M.A. Finish my novel. Get an agent. Get published. Be hired as an adjunct professor. Dandy goals to work toward.

Today is December 6, 2017. As I look back, I've completed two of those goals -earning my M.A. and finishing my first novel. But, in retrospect those were the only goals I had complete control over. While the other three depended on me reaching out, I couldn't make an agent, publishing contract, or adjunct position happen.

If you are like me, you've also written down goals you hoped to achieve this year. And if you're looking back wondering where the time went and why more didn't happen, take heart. Looking back at what didn't happen isn't the way to end the year. It's not only discouraging, but it's counter-productive. Looking back at what DID happen is more productive and encouraging.

I decided to make my own WHAT I DID list, and was surprised by how much I had accomplished. I found many of the things I did weren't on my Goals list, but happened because I had control to make them happen and those new things led to bigger accomplishments.

For example, last January I signed up for a children's picture book class and joined an online picture book writer's critique group. Because of that, I wrote four picture book manuscripts and I am within a few chapters of completing my first middle grade manuscript. Along with that, I attended two children's writing conference, and two of

# Calendar

## Meeting Schedule 2017-2018

**December 9, 2017**

Winter Dinner  
at Hodel's

**January 20, 2018**

Frank Romano  
*"Activist for Peace in the Holy Land"*

**February 17, 2018**

L.J. Martin, author  
*"Craft: No One's Born with It"*

**March 17, 2018**

**Annual Spring Conference**

Dave Congalton  
*"Writing for the Hallmark Movie Channel"*  
· Ernie Zarra, educator

*"Make Them an Offer they Can't Refuse!"*  
Rebecca Langston George, writer

*"Revising with Vision and Purpose:  
Tips to Push Your Writing to the Next Level"*  
· Brendan Constantine, poet  
*"The Haunted Line"*

my picture book manuscripts were critiqued by agents/editors.

I completed my first women's fiction novel, a manuscript I started over five years ago.

I completed my M.A. in Creative Writing/English. I taught a creative writing class as Bakersfield College through the Levan Institute, and went on to teach that class online four more times in 2017.

Looking back at what I DID accomplish amazes me. I never set goals to attend the conferences or write the manuscripts, or teach the creative writing classes, but they happened because I pushed myself out of my comfort zone. And, looking at what I DID, brings the most important into focus, while the DIDN'Ts faded away and stopped discouraging me.

If you're in a similar place, take some time to write down what you DID accomplish. Focus on what got you there and how those accomplishments turned into actions that caused new, exciting successes to happen. Bring the DIDs into focus and congratulate yourself on an amazing, triumphant year.

By focusing on what we DID, it will be easier to look forward to all the wonderful, yet unknown, successes coming in 2018. Happy Holidays!

Joan

## Members

### Welcome Aboard!

Three new members in November:

**Christine Harness**

**Julie Bonderov**

**Brent Gill**

Writers of Kern looks forward to your active participation.

**April 21, 2018**

**Barney Saltzberg**

*"A Morning with*

*Picture Book Author Illustrator Barney Saltzberg"*

**May 19, 2018**

**WOK Honors Dinner**

**June 16, 2018**

**Louis Medina**

*"Working with Local Kern Newspapers to Develop Published  
'Clips' "*

Mark your personal calendars for these dates

## Writing

### Critique Corner

My Beloved Writers,

We are getting ready to launch our annual Critique Workshops. What aspect of writing paralyzes you? Queries? An elevator pitch? Finishing that manuscript tucked in the drawer? We're here to cheer you on and hold your hand—but we need your help. Like your doctor, we can't diagnose what we don't know. Tell us where it hurts and where you'd liked to be. Drop an e-mail to [kaeclarissa@gmail.com](mailto:kaeclarissa@gmail.com) and get ready for 2018, your best writing year yet.

*Clarissa Kae*

# Meetings

## Members Meeting 18<sup>th</sup> November 2017

Katya Cengal gave an entertaining and illuminating talk on “How to Fund and Publish your Work.” For most of us the question of funding does not arise as a significant problem; pen and ink and perhaps some computer disk space are not so very expensive. Cengal, however, travels internationally and performs research on the topics she intends to cover with her writing. She needs front money, and told us how to find it from less-conventional sources than the traditional publishers and newspapers. Her favorites are grants from educational presses and from interested organizations. These have taken her from her base in the Central Coast of California to places as widespread as Cambodia, Mozambique and the 'Flyover States' to prepare stories on subjects as diverse as minor league baseball, elephants, and always with human interest.

She starts with a good proposed subject [which might change as events unfold] and a well-prepared, brief but highly-focused pitch to offer to carefully-selected publishers and sponsors; always remembering that the sponsor wants credit for the final work, and to get that credit the work must eventually be published. Established credentials help! Prior research into these publishers and sponsors is equally as important as the final article or book.

The combination of topic selection, customer research, planning and preparation, flexibility – and don't forget writing talent – has enabled Cengal to make a living from travel and writing and build a considerable reputation as a human-interest journalist and author. She sets an enviable example for us all.



# Nuts & Bolts

Regular monthly meetings of Writers of Kern are held the third Saturday of each month (with the exception of special events in March, May, and December).

Meetings are held at Hodel's. Route 99, Olive Dr West turnoff, right turn onto Knudsen, big sign. Meeting: 9:15 to 11:15 am. Cost is \$10 for members, \$15 for visitors. Hodel's breakfast buffet is included and available from 8:45-9:30. See [www.writersofkern.com](http://www.writersofkern.com) to pay admission online.

New members are always welcome, both Active [previously published] and Associate [not yet published]. Writers of Kern energetically assists Associate Members who aspire to become Active.

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

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**The Write Way  
December 2017**

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Bakersfield, CA 93390-2335**

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# Activate!

## Young Writers of Kern

It's that time of year again when we'll be inviting middle and high school students to enter next year's Young Writers of Kern essay contest. YWOK is how we encourage young and aspiring writers in our community to write and to show them that they can actually get paid for what they write. We'll be honoring the winners next Spring at the WOK Honors Dinner. Please don't forget to donate toward the prizes and for dinners for the winners and their families. All of the information on donating, along with a link for making donations, is on our website. But it's also an opportunity for all of us to invite our friends to donate too, so please tell your friends and give them the link!

*Martha Jarrett*

## Southern California Writers Showcase (and YOU becoming a published author)

If you write, you're a writer—whether you've been published or not. But if you have a desire to see your work published and to garner points to achieve “Active” status as a member of Writers of Kern, we just may be able to hook you up.

Southern California Writers Showcase, website of the Southern region of California Writers Club, often seeks stories, essays, memoirs and poetry. Submission is possible only through the branches and only members of a Southern California branch are eligible. Copies of the Showcase submission guidelines are available at every regular WOK meeting. But, since the next one isn't until January 20th, why not check out the website at [www.socalwritersshowcase.com](http://www.socalwritersshowcase.com) to read pieces they've published. Then start writing your own 500-word story, memoir, or essay so you'll be ready to begin the new year with a submission under your belt.

And, stop by our Writers of Kern website to begin tallying your points to reach “Active” status. Before you know it, you'll be sporting that prestigious pin!

*Annis Cassels*

## The Writers of Kern Executive Board

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**Vice President: Dennis VanderWerff**  
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