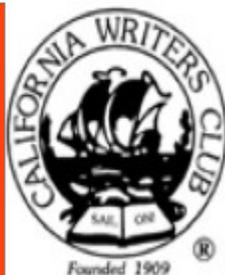


February  
2018



## President's Message

### *Path to Active*

New members joining our club start out as Associate members. Once they earn 15 publishing credits they become “Active” members. While it takes some work and planning, becoming Active is doable. That’s why we honor our members with an exclusive WOK Active pin. We want you to realize your goals of being published writers. But the path to publication is not easy, and for many quite intimidating. It reminds me of a movie about a girl who must find her way home by following a yellow brick road. You might have heard of it. Joining the girl are several memorable characters – one who doesn’t think he has the smarts to keep going. One who doesn’t have the heart. And one who is fearful.

When it comes to the path to publication, maybe you might see yourself as one of those characters. Are you lost? Don’t think you can go it alone? Afraid to put your work into the world? Or, because of rejections, just don’t have the heart to continue.

Writers of Kern aspires to demystify the Path to Active – which just happens to also be the path to becoming published. We have an Action Plan – small steps you can take to help you become Active, which in turn will be steps to publication. It’s like we’re all off to see the Wizard together so no one makes the journey alone.

For example, part of this Action Plan includes the *Dan McGuire Blog Challenge*. Did you know maintaining a blog for three months is worth 3 points for Active Status? If you don’t have a blog, or have one but it’s been neglected it’s not too late to participate. Email Clarissa at [kaeclarissa@gmail.com](mailto:kaeclarissa@gmail.com) for all the details.

Another part of this Action Plan includes our upcoming WOK Anthology. Note, this is

# Calendar

## Meeting Schedule 2018

**Mark your personal calendars for these dates**

**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”

not the YWOK Anthology with the student entries, but our own WOK publication featuring members' writing. We will be accepting submissions in multiple genres beginning March 1. (Watch for details and submission guidelines.) If your piece is selected, being published in our anthology is worth 3 points. Out of the 15 required points, by blogging for three months and having a piece published, you are more than 1/3 of the way to Active status!

There are many ways to earn points. For example, self-published authors who present a marketing plan for their book – 10 points. To calculate points for traditional and digital/self-published work, please visit: <http://writersofkern.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/wok-active-member-requirements.pdf.pdf>

If you have any questions about points, don't hesitate to ask. Remember, we're all here to help each other on the Path to Active!

Joan

# Members

## Welcome Aboard!

Four new members in January.

Bill Galbreath  
Jennifer Barker [re-joining]  
Carolyn Tilton  
Ann Cook

Writers of Kern looks forward to your active participation.

## ***Big, Big Thank You***

To those who have come forward to help with Membership and Webmaster volunteer members.  
Also to all who helped earn \$2000 for Writers of Kern by judging 'Scholastic' entries!

**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' "

**July 21, 2018 TBA**

**August 18, 2018 TBA**

**September 15, 2018**

**Joan Raymond**

"Developing three-Dimensional Characters"

**October 20, 2018**

**Joey Garcia**

"Writing About Love and Relationships:  
A Guide for All Ages"

**November 17, 2018 TBA**

**December 8, 2018 Winter Dinner**

## **It's WoK's Future and Your Future**

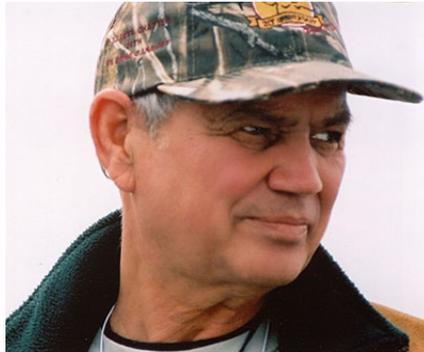
***[so it's worth mentioning again]***

**April 7, 2018, 2:00-4:00pm:** WOK Strategy/Planning Get Together. This FREE casual event is open to members and guests to help us plan for the 2018-2019 WOK year. We'll talk about how WOK can serve our members better and what you are seeking from our organization. We'll also talk about leadership and volunteering, and who might be waiting in the wings to take positions when our current board decides to retire or hit the best seller list and go on a national tour. There will be goodies to munch on as we chat about making Writers of Kern the place for writers of every genre, interest, and skill level.

# Meetings

## Members Meeting February 17<sup>th</sup>

*February Speaker: L. J. Martin on “Craft: No-one is Born With It!”*



*Larry Martin*

When fiction writers and thriller enthusiasts want to know about writing and publishing, just ask L.J. Martin, the featured speaker at the February 17 Writers of Kern meeting. After thirty years in publishing and having written 48 books, Martin has answers and recommendations and is open to sharing it all.

“Yes, I’ll talk on both or anything else I’m questioned about which I know something about. I want to talk about what folks want to hear, about writing and publishing,” he said.

So, WOKians, don’t be shy. Come to the February meeting armed with all the questions you’ve ever wanted to ask!

Martin writes western, historical, mystery, and thriller novels. He’s also authored five nonfiction works and has had three screenplays optioned. A founder of Wolfpack

# Writing

## Critique Corner

*How did our first webinar in the series pan out?*

Fifteen fearless writers signed up for our first webinar of the year but due to a glitch, our recorded video is unavailable. Have no fear, I’ve jotted down the basics.

### **Query Breakdown:**

This is a letter we, as authors, send to an editor or an agent for publication. It absolutely **must** include the following components.

1. Agent
2. Pitch
3. Bio

### **Agent:**

Address your query to *one* agent, not an agency. Do your homework (and show your homework, I’m querying you because...). *Don’t forget to follow that particular agent’s submission guidelines.*

### **Pitch:**

It’s a clever summary without the ending—only the tension. I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again: A pitch is like a skirt, long enough to cover the basics but short enough to get attention.

Publishing, Martin has published more than 400 titles from other authors and designed book covers for many of them.

When not writing, L. J.'s working with his horses, hunting, fishing, cooking, and wandering the back country with his cameras, both video and still. His photography has appeared on national magazine covers and in periodicals. Over one hundred of his videos can be seen on YouTube. See his website for more information, [www.ljmartin.com](http://www.ljmartin.com).

A Bakersfield native, Martin attended BHS and BC for a short time before going on to Cal Poly SLO. He lives in Montana with his wife, NYT bestselling romantic suspense author Kat Martin, who will also attend the February WOK meeting and be available for Q & A.

*Annis Cassells*

### **January 20th Members' Meeting report**

Frank Romano is a non-violent peace activist who spends a lot of time in the Middle East and writes compellingly about that part of the world which, for most of our lives, has been filled with tension and violence. But Frank is also an anti-trust lawyer who has practiced in both the US and France.

For our WOK meeting, Frank broke his talk into two sections—writing and his work as an activist. Of course, his writing is inspired by his activism which started when he was held as a prisoner in a Jihadist Mosque in Morocco many years ago. Through his use of prologues, he aims to hit the reader in the gut immediately with the meat of the piece.

He advises us writers to *show* our fear in order to create empathy in the reader. Write about it until the reader *gets* it. Write your memoir like a novel. It doesn't have to be chronological. Let it flow, then reorganize it. Sometimes you may have to just think for a day; the next day, your thoughts will turn into writing.

In the Middle East, he works with Combatants for Peace, a group of former Israeli soldiers. It's a grass roots effort to bring Muslims, Jews and Christians together. For him, it's not about courage; it's his calling.

His latest book is *Love and Terror in the Middle East*.

*Martha Warriner Jarrett*

### **Bio:**

This is not a memoir, this is a bio to show you're the real deal. Don't over or undersell your work (or yourself). Remember, this is a job interview. You wouldn't show up in pajamas nor would you show up in a tux. Be calm, be confident and keep it simple.

**Tips:** Your writing should stand out, not the actual query. Don't use unusual font. Stick with 12 point size. Keep it to roughly 250 words total.

If you're feeling nervous, then you're doing something right.

*Clarissa Kae*

### **Dan McGuire Challenge Entrants**

Publish 26 posts on your blog by May 6th (twice a week for 13 weeks if you break it down)

Comment or like (on Facebook) at least three other blog posts (see list below)

Take a deep breath. You only need to write a few sentences, not a novel.

Brent Gill [brentgwriter.blogspot.com](http://brentgwriter.blogspot.com)

Suddah Reddy [doctorslounge4all.blogspot.com](http://doctorslounge4all.blogspot.com)

Shirley Castro <https://pelicanfamily.com/blog/>

Patrick Kelly <http://patternsofexplanation.wordpress.com>

Judy Salamacha [www.judysalamacha.com](http://www.judysalamacha.com)

Srey Khoy [www.skreykhoy.com](http://www.skreykhoy.com)

Annis [www.thedaymaker.blogspot.com](http://www.thedaymaker.blogspot.com)

Joan Raymond <http://joanraymondwriting.com/blog/>

Isabella Tagore [passioncruit.com](http://passioncruit.com)

Judy Kukuruzza [definitionstruths.blogspot.com](http://definitionstruths.blogspot.com)

Lily Hobbs [www.justonething.site](http://www.justonething.site)

Carla Martin [www.carlajoypoetry.com](http://www.carlajoypoetry.com)

Mary Morton [www.iwondergirl.com](http://www.iwondergirl.com)

## Book Review

*Camino Island*, by John Grisham

The first reviews of this book were so negative that I didn't buy it, even though I'm a huge Grisham fan. As a lawyer, of course, I'd like nothing better than to *be* John Grisham. But my fandom does have its limits. The review that turned me off most was one that said it sounded like someone else had written the middle section of the book. And then there was the nearly universal criticism of the main character as being "annoying." But then someone said it was about writers, so I checked it out again. This time I decided to buy it, and I'm glad I did. It will appeal to anyone who reads books, writes books, or is interested in the book business and/or rare book collecting. It starts with a daring heist of priceless manuscripts—original handwritten copies of *The Great Gatsby* and other famous F. Scott Fitzgerald novels—from the vault of Princeton University. After a gap of several years, we meet Mercer, a struggling writer who was been laid off from her teaching position. She's recruited for some undercover sleuthing on behalf of Princeton's insurer, with enough money attached to both solve her financial problems and give her enough time to conquer her writer's block and write another novel. The scene shifts to Mercer's family home on Camino Island off the Florida coast near Jacksonville, and the literary society that has grown up around Bruce Cable and his very successful independent bookstore (a rare treat in itself). Romance, intrigue and writerly friendships and parties ensue. One pair of writers has been compared to Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas. Eventually, of course, the bad guys are caught (or maybe not), but I won't spoil it for you with any further information about how all of that happens. It's been called a good beach read (undoubtedly because of the setting), but since we don't have a beach anywhere close, perhaps it's good by the fire on a rainy afternoon. Oh, wait, we don't have any of those either. Well, I'm sure you'll find someplace to enjoy it.

*Martha Warriner Jarrett*



## Register Today and Spread the Word "Pitch, Polish & Publish"

The WOK Planning Committee is excited about the caliber of presenters slated for our March 17, 2018 Spring Conference. Each one has a wealth of experience and knowledge to share to help us become more successful in our writing efforts. Whether you are a published author or working on your first work, there is something for you to learn.

The day's agenda includes Rebecca Langston-George, Ernie Zarra, Brendan Constantine, and David Congalton. The day will also include a pitch contest and door prizes.

Langston-George (speaking on the topic of revision) has authored 11 books for children and is the 2016 recipient of the California Reading Association's Armin Schulz award for children's writing in Social Justice. Visit her website to learn more about her

<http://www.rebeccalangston-george.com/>.

Dr. Ernie Zarra is the author of six books, a national conference presenter and member of several honor societies. He will address the topic of "Make them an Offer, They Can't Refuse." Zarra will share how he has crafted a relationship with publishers that makes his proposals for work an easy sell.

Brendan Constantine is a Southern California poet and champion for the literary arts. His topic is the haunted line. He performs his work across the United States. Brendan's work has appeared in *Prairie Schooner*, *FIELD*, *Ploughshares*, and *Virginia Quarterly*. Visit his website to learn more: <http://brendanconstantine.com/brendan/>.

David Congalton will share his experience of writing for The Hallmark Movie Channel, and the basis Do's and Don'ts of writing for Hallmark and how to improve your chances of sealing the deal. Congalton is a radio talk show host and screenwriter.

## Writers of Kern Spring Conference Sponsorship Opportunities

Do you, or your place of business, want to have a visible presence in the community? Want to assist in expanding the skills and knowledge of a growing number of residents of Kern County and beyond?

Writers of Kern is actively seeking sponsors for the 2018 Spring Conference. In past years, several local businesses and individuals reached out to partially sponsor our conference.

We welcome you or your business to partner with Writers of Kern to present the premier writing conference in the valley. Cash or in-kind donations are welcome.

Level	Amount	Acknowledgement
Gold	\$250-\$500	Name & Logo listed in Conference program, in news releases; plus Gold website badge
Silver	\$100-\$249	Name & Logo listed in Conference program, in news releases; plus Silver website badge
Bronze	\$25-\$99	Named in Conference Program

To render support, contact WOK president Joan Raymond at the February meeting or by email at [president@writersofkern.com](mailto:president@writersofkern.com)

Your getting involved is sure to help make a positive impact on the writing community.

Better late .....



.....than never.

## 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.

\*\*\*\*\*

**The Write Way  
February 2018**

**Copyright The Writers of Kern  
PO Box 22335  
Bakersfield, CA 93390-2335**

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*"February brings the rain,  
Thaws the frozen lake again"*



**Annual Spring Conference**  
*"Pitch, Polish, & Publish"*

March 17, 2018

8:00 am to 3:00 pm at Hodel's Kern Room

**Revision**

*Revising with Vision and Purpose: Tips to Push Your Writing to the Next Level*  
With **Rebecca Langston-George** learn to approach revision with mindfulness and purpose.



**Publishing**



*Pitching Your Proposals: Make Them an Offer they Can't Refuse!*

**Ernie Zarra** will share from experience tips and techniques for pitching your proposals and working with a publisher.

**Poetry**

*The Haunted Line*

**Brendan Constantine** will present a generative workshop exploring the strange and elusive qualities of the poem that 'stays with you.'



**Screenwriting**



*Writing for the Hallmark Movie Channel*

**Dave Congalton** explains the basic Do's and Don'ts of writing for Hallmark and how to improve your chances of sealing the deal.

**Register Today!**

**Early Bird Registration through February 28, 2018**

\$50 WOK & CWC, \$75 Non-Members, \$25 Full-time Students with ID

**March 1<sup>st</sup> – Conference Day:** Registration: \$95; Full-time Students with ID \$45

Includes: Continental Breakfast, Snacks, and Lunch

Visit: <http://writersofkern.com/events> to register

**The Writers of Kern Executive Board**

**President & Program Chair: Joan Raymond**

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

**Vice President: Dennis VanderWerff**

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

**Treasurer: Karen Sallee**

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

**Webmaster: Dennis VanderWerff**

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

**Secretary: Janet Skibinski**

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

**Member-At-Large: Martha Jarrett**

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

**Membership: Jenny Estes**

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

**Critique Coordinator: Clarissa Kae**

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

**Newsletter: Ian Cant**

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

**CB Rep & SoCal District Rep: Sandy Moffet**

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

**Hospitality/Sunshine: Annis Cassells**

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

**Events:**

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

**Information:**

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

**Submissions:**

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

**Website:**

[www.writersofkern.com](http://www.writersofkern.com)

**Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/writersofkern/>