

April
2018



President's Message

WOK's Bright Future

Thanks to everyone who braved the wind and rain to attend our first ever Strategy Meeting. We brainstormed and came up with so many fantastic ideas.

I was going to wait until the April 21 meeting to share, but I am so excited I'm going to reveal a few things now! While many of you have expressed concern about WOK's future, let me reassure you – WOK is stronger than ever. Our team of volunteers are dedicated to encourage, inspire, and assist members through all stages of our writing journeys. As I and other retiring Board members step down, we are stepping up into new leadership positions.

One project I'm really thrilled to head up is our WOK Members Anthology. Yes, I've been talking about this for a while – but now, it's coming to fruition. And in a much bigger way than we first envisioned. WOK is going to publish our own anthology – through our own imprint – WOK Press. And because submissions will be read by an acquisitions team, members whose pieces are accepted for publication will earn publication points, which will help them achieve Active status. We'll be open for submissions on May 1st. Details will be available at the April 21 meeting and online, after the meeting.

I'm also excited to share that we will have a lot more benefits for both members and non-members, including workshops with a variety of writing topics including queries, poetry, press releases, creating author platforms, and short stories.

With so many new offerings, we need folks to pitch in and help. During the April meeting, I'll have a list of volunteer positions, responsibilities and estimated monthly

Calendar

Meeting Schedule 2018

Mark your personal calendars for these dates

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

Members' Workshop details TBA

August 18, 2018

Donnee and Marcus Harris

“Self-Publishing Systems”

time commitment for each. This includes all elected positions (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer), all appointed positions (Membership Chair, Publicity, Newsletter, Member-at-Large), all meeting positions (photographer, sound set up), and teams (hospitality, anthology, and mentors).

Whether you have time to give in-person or online only, we have a place for you! For example:

- Maybe you see yourself as a co-leader. If so, we are seeking two-to-three individuals who will come alongside our new president and help with monthly tasks.
- Maybe you only have a few hours each month to help online. If so, we need individuals to read submissions for our anthology.
- Maybe you come to the monthly meetings but cannot commit to help each month. If so, we need individuals to sit at the back table and assist with sign-in or welcoming guests.

In any case, think about all you've gained from being associated with Writers of Kern and how you can share in helping others make the most of their membership in WOK.

Join us on April 21 and be the first to hear about WOK's new vision and mission. As a part of Writers of Kern, you are an essential part of our writing community, which is energized by all of us working together.

Joan

37%

That's where WOK is right now in our quest to raise \$5000 in service of YWOK, Young Writers of Kern.

WOK, your professional writing organization, has:

- § Sponsored the Young Writers of Kern Writing Competition for 5 years
- § Honored winning essayists at the WOK Honors Dinner
- § Published two anthologies of the students' winning essays

[Learn more here.](#)

This year we're proud to be part of [#GiveBigKern](#) and hope you'll support us as we support the kids of Kern County. The Donating has begun! You can play a role [here](#). Please share this message with your friends via social media and email and ask them to donate, too. Help spread the word about [#GiveBigKern](#).

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

Mar Preston

“Suspense: Not Just for Crime Fiction”

December 8, 2018

Winter Dinner

Activate!



Calling WOK Poets!

Writers of Kern celebrates National Poetry Month (aka April) with a month-long poetry slam. Each day, a WOK member's poem will be featured on the website blog. [Thirty days' worth of poetry](#). It doesn't get much better.

Published or not-yet-published works by aspiring, practicing, or experienced poets are welcome.

To participate, send your poems to submissions@writersofkern.com. Include your poem(s), your head shot, and a 50-word bio when you submit.

Meetings

General Meeting 21st April 2018

“A Morning with Barney Saltzberg”

Speaker, Barney Saltzberg



Writers of all genres, for all ages, will enjoy and learn as Barney Saltzberg, author and illustrator, shares some of his stories, his process, how to find one's voice, and how to listen to input given on a story.

Hello, Poets!

We're looking for poems for this month's WOK Poetry WebSlam. Look in your files. Or sit right down and dash off a poem. Send it to submissions@writersofkern.com. I'll also need a head shot of you and a 50-word bio. Whatcha got? Send it in and see it up on the writersofkern.com Blog this month. Cheers and hugs,

Annis

Creative Writing Workshop

Right here in Bakersfield

Writer in Residence - Workshop:

Matthew Woodman, Poet.

Thursday, June 7, 2018 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
CSU, Bakersfield, Walter Stiern Library, Ablin
Conference Room



Join Matt Woodman for this one-day creative writing workshop. This is a professional writing course for writers at all levels, offering techniques for stimulating creativethought and discussion, guides to interpreting and understanding poetry, and the chance to create new work in all genres. Please submit your application by June 1st.

More information and applications are available at csub.libguides.com/events/WriterinResidence.

Spend a delightful morning with Barney Saltzberg, whose numerous beloved children's books, include "BeautifulOops!" and the best-selling "Touch and Feel Kisses" series. When an art school teacher once told him he had the ability to draw like a child, Saltzberg realized he could combine his love for writing and illustrating and create children's books. His 50-plus titles have received multiple awards. Learn more about his work at www.barneysaltzberg.com

Also a singer-songwriter, Saltzberg has recorded four albums for children, including "Crazy Hair Day" and "The Soccer Mom From Outer Space!". He has also written and produced songs for the PBS show "Arthur."

Spring Conference Report

This year's Spring Conference attracted about fifty members for a full day of entertainment and instruction.

The opening speaker was poet Brendan Constantine who explained the ways in which a poet can transform even a single line into a memorable, even haunting, image. Working interactively with his audience he demonstrated how to use the inherent imagery of language to produce pictures: "Tumbleweeds on the fence give shelter from the wind" illustrating the plight of homeless people, or " a multitude of people talking, speaking, chatting; but not to me" for the emotion of loneliness. His handout of poems in varying structures showed how a whole carefully-crafted meaning could be changed by a masterful last line.

Ernie Zarra followed with something very different, the extremely practical problem of how to snare a publisher. "Give them what they want," he counselled, "and do your homework on what that really is." A compelling proposal should speak to the publisher's values, hobbies and overall psychographics, suggest primary, secondary and even tertiary markets, stress the author's qualifications and even offer to help with the marketing task.

Over lunch a best-worst pitch contest was held – results provided below.

David Congalton then gave us an inspiring and illuminating description of how he

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 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
April 2018**

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Clarissa Kae
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achieved success in writing for Hallmark and Lifetime movies. His handout, a priceless gem of advice, takes us through the four stages of a logline, a synopsis, a ten-page 'treatment' and finally a full script. Bottom line: follow the formula exactly with no deviation, accept whatever changes are requested, take the money and run.

Finally, Rebecca Langston-George stressed the unwelcome but necessary message that “good writing is always about revision” and provided a model of the process that has helped her become a published author.

And the pitch contest for attendees?

Best Pitch:

Runner up: Lori Renee: “Young love dares to overcome the social stigma and complications of mental illness while searching for a missing teen.”

Runner up: Rossely Harman: “Years after witnessing the brutal slaughter of her family by a blood-thirsty dictator, a young Haitian girl attempts to escape the racially divided society by befriending a highly ranked soldier.”

Winner: Rossely Harman: “A young troublemaker accidentally turns her town into stone and must embark on the dangerous journey of defeating the Beast on the Mount in order to reverse the spell and get back to her family.”

Worst Pitch:

Runner Up: Joan Raymond: “All my friends told me this is a good book. It’s like the love story where everyone dies. From Poison. Then one person gets a dog. And then they find out its magic—and everyone comes back to life.”

Runner Up: Ava Rose: “The characters aren’t nice. The main character dies because of them. She can’t runaway. They all die. The End.”

Winner: Ian Cant: “This may not be the best of books, but on the other hand, it may not be the worst of books either...I think. Set in a recent revolutionary episode in an exotic foreign locale, the English milord foils his foes and liberates his fair lady. He does a noble thing, which is good but dies at the end, which is not so good. But in between the story is action-packed and no more gory than necessary.”

The Writers of Kern Executive Board

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Members



Allison Crotzker-Kimmel

Recently, I hit the jackpot. Not the Powerball or Mega Millions (I didn't even get one number the last time I played each of those). I mean I hit the writing jackpot!

After nine years of writing for kids (and eleven years after I earned my Masters in writing from USC, which was considerably more expensive than the Powerball and Mega Millions tickets btw) I signed a contract with editors who believe in my book under the guidance of an agent I love. And yes, WOK friends, it can happen. And even better, WOK friends, it all happened in part due to your generosity.

Two years ago, I entered the Peggy Connelly Scholarship contest hoping to win and offset the cost of traveling to Gettysburg to meet up with a tour guide who promised me access to the archives not many visitors get to see. Because of your generosity in the spirit of Peggy, I was able to travel there. I was able to discover primary source documents I had only dreamed existed. And I was able to craft the book I so dearly wanted to create. In my scholarship application, I wrote, "My ultimate writing dream is to have my vision, a book I have researched and created without it having been assigned, find its place in the children's marketplace and on a child's bookshelf." I am happy to say next summer that dream will become a reality. When a child holds Sallie's story in his or her hands, it will be in the spirit of Peggy, who you all recounted with such love at the awards banquet. It will also be in your spirit of fostering growth in our fabulous community of Kern County writers. Thank you, my dear friends in WOK.

Allison Crotzker-Kimmel



CSUB held a Poetry Event on April 10th. Here are five of the seven WOK members who participated.

