

WRITERS OF KERN

NEWSLETTER

WRITERS OF KERN MEETING, JULY 15, 2023

For the July meeting, Joan Raymond presented a workshop on Creating Memorable Characters. During her seminar, Joan handed out three character images to choose from, then asked participants to “interview” their character, asking very specific questions. This was when the fun began as participants in the lecture – our valued and highly creative audience members – came up with zaniest, spine-tingling, and – quite frankly – quality-crafted responses that made the workshop not only educational but a roaring good time. Next, Joan tasked us with writing a journal entry from their character’s point of view. The results were many ah-ha moments as characters came to life in front of everyone.

All in all, Joan Raymond was informative as well as entertaining and her workshop on how to create a memorable character will forever stand out enlightening and fun!

Joan Raymond
gave a
powerful
presentation!



WRITERS OF KERN MEETING, AUGUST 19, 2023

Matthew Woodman, Kern County Poet Laureate, spoke on The Poetries of Inner Geographies: Exploring the Self through Weather and Land. Through a guided lecture, super cool handouts, and audience reading, Matthew led audience members through an exploration of how poets have combined the internal, reflective process of self-analysis and understanding with the external, seemingly objective world of weather and landscape.

After the workshop, Julie Anne Nesselroad Bonderov said, “This was a great meeting! People who’d never written a poem wrote their first one AND read it aloud to the group. Matthew Woodman made poetry understandable and accessible to all.”

Thanks, Julie, and thanks Matt for a fun and informative time had by all.

Matthew Woodman
delighted
and
entertained!



WRITERS OF KERN

WRITERS OF KERN MEETING, SEPTEMBER 16, 2023 FEATURED GUEST AND SPEAKER TRACY KELLY

WRITING YOUR LEGACY

At this workshop, attendees will focus on the importance of writing your story, and your legacy. Perhaps, even the things that you learned from your grandparents or even parents that your children and grandchildren are not aware of. Write it like an autobiography. If you have been carrying something that you may regret or was a valuable lesson that you will never forget, write it down. I will discuss the value of your life to the next generation. All of us have a story, and there is value in it being shared.

Tracy Kelly has fourteen years teaching Special Education in California. He has taught all grades K-12, as well as being a Lecturer, both Adjunct and full-time, at the University level. He taught those that inspired to be General Education and Special Education Teachers. He has earned a BA in Economics, an MA in Special Education, two teaching credentials, and an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership, with a focus on teacher self-efficacy. He has edited six books.

Tracy and his wife have three sons, three grandsons, and two granddaughters. Four dogs, four cats, and two rats also live with him.

Tracy Kelly
is a dynamic
and fantastic
speaker, rated
best by his
students.



From Your Membership Chair

And you thought you were through with me... 😊

This is your reminder that it is time to renew your dues. 37 of you took up the challenge to do an “early bird” renewal. Congratulations to Phyllis Wachob for winning the \$100 Amazon gift card. Congratulations also to Nada Byrum for winning a reimbursement of her annual dues.

The drop date is September 30th. What that means is that if we haven’t received your \$45 renewal by midnight of that date, the registration system for California Writers Club will drop you from membership. No big deal? Oh yes, it is, because to rejoin, you will have to pay an additional \$20 to be reinstated. Ouch! Please don’t let that happen. You are special to us. You can renew via the website: <https://www.writersofkern.com>, pay at the August meeting, or mail a check to the WOK P.O. Box: 22335 Bakersfield, CA 93390.

If you have any questions as to whether or not your funds have been received, just give me a call, and I’ll check for you.

Blessings,
Sandy Moffett

WRITERS OF KERN



Fall Writing Contest



Announcing the Fall Writing Contest. (Flash fiction writers, this is your chance!)

This contest will award cash prizes to the three winning writers who submit their work between September 1 and September 30, 2023. We invite submissions of 2000 words or less using the topic of 'Gratitude'. The winner will have their work read at the Winter Dinner.

This writing contest is a long-standing tradition at Writers of Kern and gives an opportunity for all writers of short stories to hone their skills, win an award, and bask in the kudos of their fellow writers.

Submit in the month of September to: phylliswachob@gmail.com. Please use a Word document with no names or other identifying remarks. Use Times New Roman, 12pt font, double-spaced, and use the attachment function to send your submission. Submissions will be blind judged on the setting, originality, style (including grammar and spelling), voice, character development, and storyline.

Phyllis Wachob, Chair of the Fall Writing Contest



From Your New President:

According to our website, Writers of Kern has been around since 1996. That is when great minds first got together with writers in Bakersfield and surrounding communities to provide a forum for published and pre-published writers to share ideas, hone their craft, and encourage each other. Sounds to me like a lot of smart and savvy people got together and did something amazing. I couldn't even imagine myself being a writer back then; however, I have belonged to WOK long enough to have experienced the outstanding leadership of Joan Raymond and Sandy Moffett. Therefore, before I delve into how I hope to navigate the job and do my best

to serve as your president, I wish to extend a massive, grateful, and most humble acknowledgment to these outstanding and generous women. As past presidents, Joan and Sandy have been exceptional leaders and mentors to our community. They have been selfless, generous, informative, entertaining, and always receptive to the needs of our community. In a billion years, I do not think I can fill the shoes of these great women. No One Can. Thank you, Joan and Sandy, for who you are and all you have done. Writers of Kern would not be where we are without you.

Tami Beaulieu – Your New-And-Learning-President Writers of Kern

WRITERS OF KERN

Thank You



TO OUR OUTGOING OFFICERS,

Incoming officers of the Writers of Kern as well as our members and guests wish to express our sincerest gratitude to outgoing President Sandy Moffett (who remains part of the board in several vital capacities) and Vice President Donnee Harris as well as the Writers of Kern outgoing newsletter editor Shelley Evans for their dedication, diligence, and hard work. These wonderful women have been selfless with their time and attentive towards our Writers of Kern community with humility and grace.

Congratulations!

"Presidential Congratulations!"

Presidential Congratulations! is a publicity opportunity for newly published books. Anyone who has published a book since the last meeting can bring their newly published book to this month's Writers of Kern meeting. A picture will be taken with the author and the book. That picture along with a congratulatory message from the President of Writers of Kern will be posted on Facebook and in the next newsletter.

Presidential Congratulations! is limited solely to participating members of Writers of Kern.



September 4, 2023, Labor Day!!!!

Labor Day is a federal holiday in the United States celebrated on the first Monday in September to honor and recognize the American labor movement and the work and contributions of laborers to the development and achievements of the United States. The three-day weekend it falls on is called Labor Day Weekend. Labor Day is a great opportunity to kick off your shoes, crack open a book, and bask in the world of literature... or not!

WRITERS OF KERN



You are invited!

Level up your writing. Our monthly meetings include a delicious breakfast at one of Kern County's most treasured restaurants, known for its fantastic buffet. As we dine, experts in the writing and publishing field present informative and dynamic workshops on a diverse arena of subjects.

Community

Come and enjoy our community of writers as we gather to learn and celebrate unique voices.

Writers of Kern is a nonprofit professional organization. Monthly meetings are at 9:15 a.m. on the third Saturday of each month at Hodel's Country Dining. The cost is \$20 for members and \$25 for guests. Please check our website for information on calendar exemptions and featured guests.

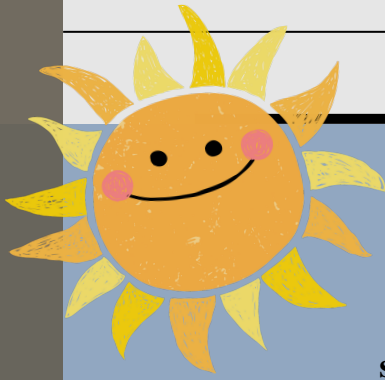
Hodel's Country Dining is a locally owned and operated restaurant celebrating 50 years of tradition as Kern County's best buffet.

Welcome

First-time visitors are
always welcome.



WRITERS OF KERN



From Your Sunshine Chair

The Sunshine Chair sends holiday, get-well, birthday (if we have your birth month), sympathy, and other supportive cards to the Writers of Kern members. Every card is filled with nurturing, caring thoughts from all the other members of our club, sending rays of peace and comfort to uplift our fellow members' spirits. How do we know when those special occasions, illnesses, or hardships arise? We rely on you, our WOK members, to alert the Sunshine Chair by emailing her the information: sunshine@writersofkern.com



WOK Critique Group News Interested in a Critique Group?

Carla Joy Martin, Critique Group Chair
critiquegroups@writersofkern.com

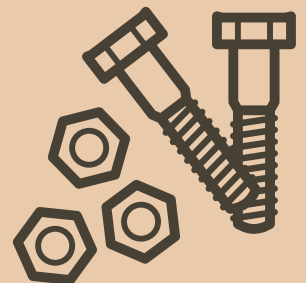
Nuts and Bolts

New members are always welcome. whether you are a published writer or not! Writers of Kern energetically assists all members who aspire to become published.



The Write Way
The Writers of Kern
PO Box 22335
Bakersfield CA 93390-2335

Tami Beaulieu Temp. Editor





WRITERS OF KERN FEATURED AUTHOR

REBECCA LANGSTON-GEORGE

Rebecca
Langston-
George
is a teacher,
writer
and longtime
volunteer.

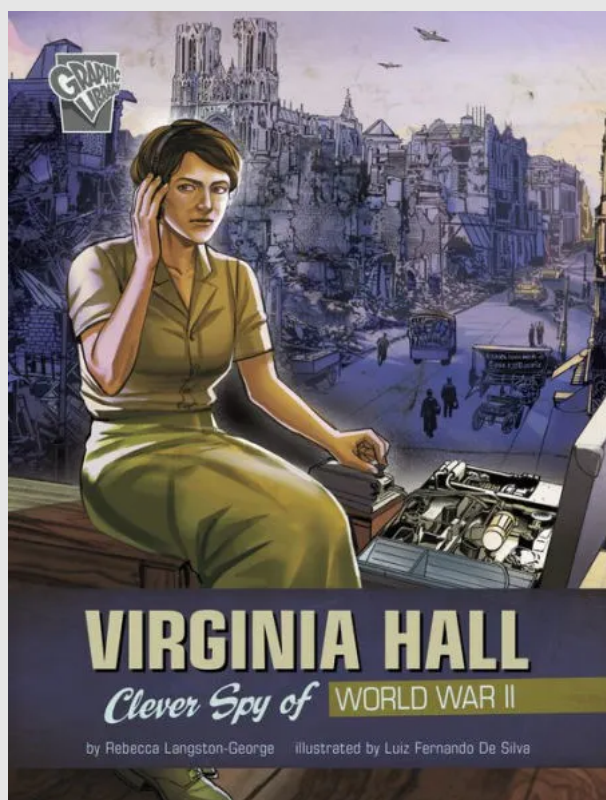


An action-packed graphic novel about Virginia Hall, known as one of the most courageous spies of World War II. In the early 1940s, during World War II, Germany's Nazi regime expanded into neighboring European countries, committing horrific crimes against Jewish people and other groups. Enter: Virginia Hall. Born on a small Maryland farm, this brilliant woman's worldly ambitions led her to a clerical position at the U.S. embassy in Warsaw, Poland. While there, a hunting accident caused Hall to lose her leg. After being fitted with a wooden prosthetic leg, she persevered in her work. Hall soon became a spy for Allied forces, serving behind enemy lines in France. With cleverness and courage, Hall, who the Nazis nicknamed the "Limping Lady," eventually became one of the Allies' greatest assets and one the German Gestapo's most feared spies.

Rebecca Langston-George will be signing her new children's graphic reader *Virginia Hall: Clever Spy of World War II* (Capstone Publishing, 2023) on Tuesday, September 5 from 4 pm to 6 pm at Russo's Books, 1601 New Stine Road, #183. Russo's will be donating 20% of proceeds that night to Kern Literacy Council. Any books purchased that evening (not just Rebecca's) benefit KLC.

Congratulations

Rebecca Langston-George





WRITERS OF KERN FEATURED POET

ANNIS CASSELLS

Annis Cassells
is a poet,
writer,
life coach,
career teacher,
and a true
friend.



Annis Cassells is a poet, writer, life coach, and career teacher who published her second volume of poetry, *What the Country Wrought*, this year. A former middle school teacher, she now conducts memoir writing classes for senior adults. Annis has been a member of Writers of Kern for many years and has served on the Board as newsletter editor, Sunshine chair, and Publicity chair.

Now up on Amazon! New Poetry Collection:
[What the Country Wrought](#)

Also author of:
[You Can't Have It All: Poems](#)

Five and Dime Memories

August, we take the streetcar downtown,
just Mama and me, to hunt for a pair of girlish
school shoes that fit my woman-sized feet,

low-heeled sturdies that could kick a soccer ball
or the 7th grade pest who tried to touch my breast,
and stay fastened on my boat-long tootsies.

Afterward, shoebox in hand, we make
our way to the big Woolworth's
on Detroit's Woodward Avenue

climb the wide, pink-marbled staircase
to the mezzanine lunch counter
slide onto side-by-side red swivel stools.

Mama reads the plastic-covered menu.
I flip the jukebox selections and hope
for a nickel. I don't ask.

The waitress in a cap-sleeved yellow dress
and apron stands before us, her pencil poised
above the order pad, almost sings *What'll it be?*

My order is always the same: A grilled cheese
sandwich and a chocolate malt, extra chocolate.
Mama orders coffee and some kind of sandwich.

She winks at me. Then I notice the nickel. It's
Buffalo side up. But I still call it good luck—
a jukebox nickel and Elvis singing "Hound Dog."

In *What the Country Wrought*. Annis Cassells ©2023.



WRITERS OF KERN FEATURED POET

TAMI BEAULIEU



Tami Beaulieu
is a poet and
author who
enjoys graphic
arts and painting
murals

Tami Beaulieu joined Writers of Kern and fell in love with poetry and fiction. When she is not writing, walking her dog, or watching crime shows on television, she can be found painting or dabbling in graphic arts.

Tami is the new and learning president of Writers of Kern as well as the temporary newsletter editor. Using this space as an example, Tami encourages members to submit poems, short stories (up to 400 words), and newly published books to submissions@writersofkern.com

Tami writes under the pseudonym
January Joyce.

I THINK MY CAT HAS A DRINKING PROBLEM

**I think my cat has a drinking problem
A determination I made on my own
No matter how hard he disguises the smell
It seeps through his cheap cologne**

**Hitting the sauce got him fired from work
His wife left him, so did his mouse
The other day, I went to his place
Found bottles all over the house**

**Fluffy's pants were unsnapped
He hadn't showered in weeks
When he sputtered excuses
He had a milk kind of reek**

**For my cat's addicted to the cold stuff
Drinks white gold straight from the carton
Then he wipes his chin with the back of his paw
Declares himself an udder Spartan**

**Fluffy refuses to go to rehab
Defers my invite to MA
No matter how hard I try to help out
Fluffy says milk's my ba-bae!**

**He sawed the lock I had on the refrigerator
I'm broke and indebted to the bank
Fluffy just grins and glugs from the carton
Toasts the cow with a chug and a clank**

**My cat's addicted to milk
Don't know what else I should do
Cause I'm a big-time enabler
As part of the milk drinkers' crew**

From the book, *I Think My Cat's a Time-
Traveling Alien*



WRITERS OF KERN

CRITIQUE GROUPS

BY: CARLA JOY MARTIN

CRITIQUE GROUPS - WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

Writers of Kern offers its members the opportunity to join a Critique Group specializing in many genres such as **Poetry, Mystery, Romance, Young Adult, Children's, Screenplays, and SciFi**. Now is the time to join a group that interests you!

The word "Critique Group" may give you horrible shivers, reminding you of the day your 3rd-grade teacher handed back your short story about what you did that summer - covered in red ink noticing every misspelled word. Who needs criticism like that?

WOK Critique Groups are far removed from this punitive experience as possible! The best way I can describe what one is like is to imagine you're sitting at a back table at Dagny's with your closest friends on a Friday afternoon, sharing something momentous or humorous that happened to you. Your friends laugh and offer suggestions about what you might do now - and you know that no matter what you say, they will still love you!

Critique groups offer even more than just a place of camaraderie - they offer a surefire way to improve your writing. When I read my poem to my Poetry Critique Group, each member tells me what they liked about the poem - if there was some cool alteration or rhyme - or a meaningful message. Then one member may ask me, "I wasn't sure what you meant when you wrote 'the green monster' Perhaps 'dragon' might give the reader a better visual?"

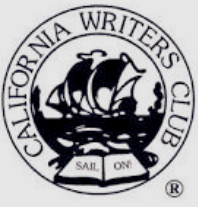
These are the really valuable moments - because if one person has a question about what you've written, you can bet other folks will too. I jot down the question and promise myself I will try to rework that line. And if a member says, "If this was my poem, I might try a vermillion witch" - I jot down that idea, too.

But what if you don't agree with someone's comment? What if you like your work just the way it is?

That's fine! The bottom line is you have the final authority over what you write. Each critique group member understands that they are just offering suggestions - writing is such a subjective exercise that what may seem correct to one person may seem wrong to the next. You are always free to take advice or leave it.

Sometimes a suggestion will make me mad - "But that's my favorite part!" I may say to myself, "I can't get rid of that!" But after a day or two, usually, I see the wisdom of the suggestion. Or I change one part and keep the other. Compromise for clarity.

Before I sent poems out to literary magazines and before I published my first chapbook and now as I am preparing my second chapbook, I present every single poem to my Critique Groups (yes - I belong to 2 Poetry Critique Groups! The more the merrier!) Without fail, these friendly juries of my



WRITERS OF KERN

CRITIQUE GROUPS CONT.

peers help me hone and improve my work.

Have you noticed? Often in the acknowledgment pages of your favorite contemporary romance, mystery, or history, the author may thank the members of their critique group. Yes - critique groups exist all over the globe and savvy authors rely on them as sounding boards and support for their ideas. They are hip and happening.

WOK has 2 **Poetry** Critique Groups and groups are starting in the following genres; **Mystery, Romance, Young Adult, Children's, Screenplays, SciFi**. Groups meet once or twice a month, in the mornings, afternoons, or evenings, in person or on Zoom.

Send me an email at critiques@writersofkern.com and tell me what genre you write and good days and times for you to attend a meeting. That will start the process! And if two others are interested in your genre, I will set up your Critique Group meeting and guide you through your first sessions.

One more thing - before you invest in having a paid editor examine your work, you should definitely take advantage of Critique Groups! A professional editor is a valuable investment, don't get me wrong. But a Critique Group will help you do most, if not all, of the work a paid editor can offer - for free! What kind of great deal is that?

Carla Joy Martin
WOK Critique Group Chair
Author of [A Kaleidoscope of Love](#)

Coffee Cafe Customers: An Americana Collection - coming soon!

Carla is a poet, piano instructor, and artist. She co-hosts First Friday Open Mics with Portia Choi and interviews the participants for KernPoetry.com. She is the Critique Group Chair for Writers of Kern. Carla received her MA in English Literature from Stanford. She has published poems in Rabid Oak, Reaching for the Sky, Writing Fields, Writing Sound, Writing Flora, and Writing Fauna. Carla published her first poetry chapbook, *Kaleidoscope of Love*, in 2020.



Carla Martin
is a Poet,
Author,
and
Critique Group
Chair

WRITERS OF KERN



CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB A 501(c)3 NONPROFIT

**OUR MISSION: TO EDUCATE WRITERS OF ALL
ABILITIES IN THE CRAFT OF WRITING AND THE
MARKETING OF THEIR WORK.**

**The California Writers Club (CWC) is one of
the oldest and largest writers' clubs in
America. With a proud heritage going back
to 1909, CWC has over 1,900 members in 22
branches spread across our state.**



CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB KERN COUNTY BRANCH BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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WRITERS OF KERN

Community, Workshops, & Writer Support

FREE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

OPEN MIC

Featuring Catherine Abbey
Hodges presenting Poetry and
the Practice of Time Travel.

FIRST FRIDAY

**SEPTEMBER 1ST 2023
STARTS 6PM**

DAGNY'S COFFEE
1600 20th Street (Corner of 20th and Eye St)
Bakersfield, CA 93301

Poetry, Spoken Word and Music. **Only Original Creations for 5 Minutes.**
To perform your poems, words or music, sign in at 5:50pm.

For Information, call, text or email Portia:
661.717.1346 or Portia@Kernpoetry.com
Sponsored by Dagny's Coffee and Kern Poetry - Kernpoetry.com



“

Local Authors

Kern County is home to many talented writers and the Kern County Library is happy to provide a digital home for their work through our OverDrive platform.

”



**JULY 14 - SEPTEMBER 9
A NIGHT AT THE PADRE**



**FREAKY
FRIDAY**

September 1st - September 23rd

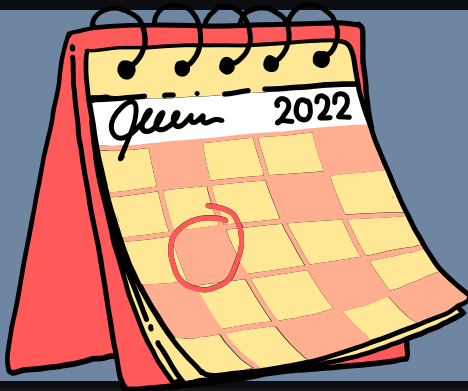


**FIRST FRIDAY FREE ADMISSION
EXTENDED HOURS: 10AM-8PM
IN PARTICIPATION WITH DOWNTOWN
BAKERSFIELD'S FIRST FRIDAY EVENTS.
BMOA IS PROUD TO OFFER
COMPLIMENTARY ADMISSION WITH
EXTENDED HOURS UNTIL 8PM.**



WRITERS OF KERN

Mark Your Calander



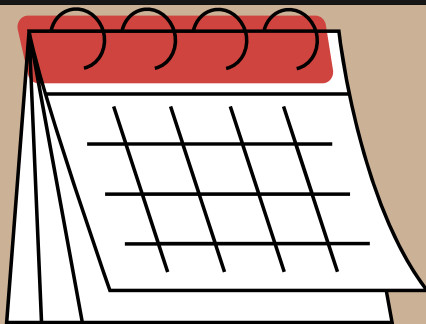
SEPTEMBER 16, 2023

TRACY KELLY
Writing Your Legacy



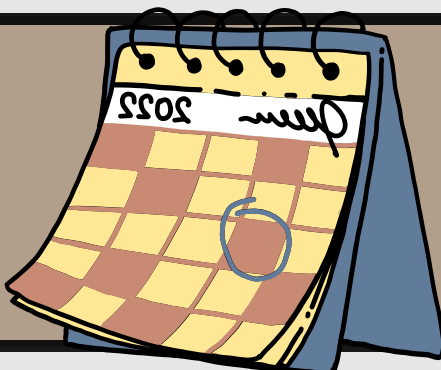
OCTOBER 21, 2023

JENNY MARGOTTA
Self-Editing



NOVEMBER 18, 2023

NANCY DODD
Spark: Learning the Process



DECEMBER 16, 2023

WINTER DINNER
Winners of the Fall Writing Contest
Will Be Announced

WRITERS OF KERN

Useful Writing & Submission Links

WRITER'S DIGEST

Chicken Soup
for the **Soul**

Winning
Writers
best resources for poets and writers

THE
NEW YORKER

NER

indie
BOOK
AWARDS

THE **CIN**
CIN
NATI REVIEW

UNIVERSITY OF
Cincinnati

R⁸⁰
rattle

The
Washington
Post

N **NARRATIVE**

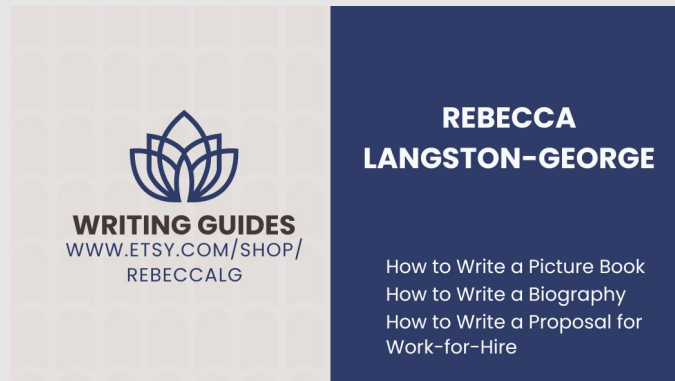
THE **GEORGIA REVIEW**

QUARTERLY
SINCE 1947.

AGNI

CLASSIFIEDS

Writing, Editing, & Publishing Services Provided by Members of Writers of Kern



A business card for Rebecca Langston-George. The card is split into two sections. The left section is light beige with a subtle pattern of stylized leaves. It features a logo of a stylized lotus flower above the text "WRITING GUIDES" and "WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/REBECCALG". The right section is dark blue with white text. It lists "REBECCA LANGSTON-GEORGE" and three services: "How to Write a Picture Book", "How to Write a Biography", and "How to Write a Proposal for Work-for-Hire".



- Free -

Writers of Kern members may submit an applicable business card-size ad with a picture (not mandatory) to submissions@writersofkern.com. The subject line *must* be titled Newsletter Ad.

THE END