
The Pen & Press

November – December 2010



First, some NCPA business.

Annual membership renewal time is approaching. Members whose memberships expire on December 31, 2010 (that is most of us), will receive a renewal form in the mail (U.S. Postal Service mail, not email), in the coming weeks. The notice will include an addressed return envelope for your convenience. **Please reply promptly!** Members who joined recently are already paid through 2011, as are members who previously pre-paid beyond 2010. If you have questions about your membership, contact membership chair Rosa Umbach (see contact information for board members at the end of the newsletter).

In other business, it is not too soon to start thinking about running for an **elected office** in NCPA (president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary, or communications director), or about accepting appointment to a **committee chair** position. If you would like to learn more about the management of NCPA, please feel free to contact president Elva Anson, and consider coming to a board meeting for a first-hand look. There are many opportunities to become involved, as officer, chair, or committee member. This is your organization, and it cannot function without active, responsible volunteers. **If not you, who? If not now, when?** Please let Elva know of your interest and availability. NCPA is a unique organization in our region, with growing membership and a large body of knowledge and experience. Your participation is essential to keeping NCPA in operation.

This issue of *The Pen & Press* includes a **note from president Elva Anson**, an update on the **book awards** process and a hold-the-date announcement for the annual **book awards dinner**, information on upcoming **monthly meeting** speakers, and **news and notices** from and about members and their books and about events of interest to members – including a notable **book-sales opportunity!** The **feature article, by Pamela Johnson**, is “A Guide to Plundering, Pillaging, and Festival Marketing for that Next Big Novel.”

In closing, I’ll mention that I took my new Amazon Kindle on a recent long trip, as I planned on reading some big books (one new release running to more than 700 pages in its hardback edition, far too heavy to carry along). I have seen the future, and it is e-readers. Those are not a substitute for all books, but they are going to change the literary landscape if I can judge from experience – books and newspapers instantly available, completely portable. I’ll report in detail in an upcoming issue of this newsletter.

— Ken Umbach, editor

November 13, 2010 Meeting

Our November speaker, J. S. (Jessi) Graustein, will tell us about chapbook construction: “Chapbooks: What Are They and How Do I Make One?” She will discuss chapbook history, function, marketing strategies, and the benefits they provide to a writer’s career. She will also demonstrate three simple methods of chapbook construction. Those in attendance will have the opportunity to make a simple chapbook from a single sheet of paper.

J. S. Graustein earned an M.S. in Ecology from Northern Illinois University, taught college-level Biology for two years at College of Notre Dame in Belmont, California, then switched her focus to writing after starting a family. She has written poetry, non-fiction, and flash fiction for children and adults since 1999, with work appearing in both print and online publications.

Jessi is the author of the forthcoming *How to Write an Exceptional Thesis or Dissertation: a Step-By-Step Guide from Proposal to Successful Defense* (Atlantic Publishing, 2011). In April 2009, she inherited the small indie press Folded Word. Since then Jessi has edited and produced Folded Word’s first print chapbooks and books, including *Paper House* by Jessie Carty, which made the Poetry Foundation’s best-seller list in August 2010.

Jessi is currently honing her editorial and design skills by pursuing a Literary Publishing Certificate through Emerson College in Boston, Massachusetts, and serving as Submissions Chair for Surprise Valley Writers Conference in Cedarville, California.

December 11, 2010 Meeting

Our December speakers will be Maki and Roger Morris, from Two Rock Media, with a presentation on Internet marketing, featuring such topics as book video trailers, print design (marketing), Internet development, and PanoramicVR Photography. “The presentation,” advises NCPA’s publicity and programs chair Norma Jean Thornton, “will empower you to understand book marketing methods such as: websites, book trailers, Google AdWords, and banner ads, and how to track and read the summary reports to effectively utilize your marketing dollars and get optimum results.” See www.tworockmedia.com/ for more information about the Morrises.

Two Rock Media, Inc. has been offering a broad range of marketing services to companies for over 20 years. One of the company’s services is production of book trailer videos for authors. “With the convenience of Internet websites, blogs, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, etc.,” the Morrises advise, “authors and publishers have discovered that a book trailer video is an innovative and fresh marketing tool to expand their customer base. An effective trailer can set the right mood, as well as heighten a sense of curiosity to motivate and tempt the viewer to purchase the book. If done right, a quality book trailer can establish distinction as a book meriting the book buyer’s time and money.”

Note: the previously announced NCPA holiday luncheon has been cancelled as a result of an unexpected conflict for the room.

Other Future Meetings

Please note: NCPA may have to relocate meetings to a new venue. That might also entail an adjustment in meeting time. Please keep an eye on your NCPA Yahoo group email and on www.norcalpa.org for updates.

Here is a quick look ahead to early 2011 meetings.

The featured speaker at our January 8, 2011 meeting will be author Jeannie Ruesch (www.jeannieruesch.com), telling us about the infamous “LBD: (Little Black Dress), and how it relates to Branding/Marketing).

Unscheduled so far are most of the meetings for February and beyond. However, be sure to mark your calendar for our May 14, 2011, meeting, where you will find out more about self-publishing from long-time NCPA member and author Naida West (www.bridgehousebooks.com) as she shares: “My Journey as a Self-published Novelist.” Naida has advised that she will also address “reformatting for Kindle, etc., and the galloping melt-down of the traditional publishing establishment.”

NCPA President’s Message

By Elva Anson

NCPA continues to grow with a dozen new members who have joined during the last few months. Norma Jean Thornton, Program Chair, has continued to provide excellent speakers for our meetings. The Awards committee has been busy preparing for those of you who have books published in 2010 to submit for judging. Expect more information soon. Everett Anson has volunteered to serve as Awards chair.

The member-of-the month program has been fun and well-received. So far we have featured Everett Anson (*Bullets for Ballots*), Bob Quinlan (*Earn It: Empower Yourself for Love*), Susan Osborn (*The System Made Me Do It*), Margo King Lenson (*Pacific Voices Talk Story: Conversations of American Experience*), and Kiyoko Sato (*Dandelion Through the Crack* republished as *Kiyoko’s Story*). Next month we will feature Carol Schroeder as she launches her new book, *Wings of Hope*.

Don’t miss out on NCPA’s monthly meetings the 2nd Saturday of the month at Merrill Gardens on Stock Ranch Road in Citrus Heights.

Elva Anson, President

www.familyfirstbooks.com

Becoming Soulmates

How to Get Kids to Help at Home

www.soulmatetips.blogspot.com

Save the Date for Book Awards Dinner: April 30, 2011

NCPA’s annual Book Awards Dinner is scheduled for the evening of Saturday, April 30, 2011, at Cattlemen’s Restaurant, 2000 Taylor Road, Roseville, California, 6 to 9 p.m. Details and reservation information will be announced in the coming months, but please save the date for that event. You won’t want to miss this one!

NCPA Book Awards Competition

By Everett Anson, NCPA Awards Chair

There will be a 2011 book awards contest for books written or published by members of NCPA in 2010 and available for sale by at least December 31, 2010. The awards will be presented at the annual awards dinner scheduled for April 30, 2011. The deadline for submitting books is 5 p.m., Saturday, January 15, 2011. The categories are General Fiction, General Non-Fiction, Children's Books, and Poetry. There will be a single award for Best Overall Design/Layout/Cover and Best Overall Marketing/Media Package.

Entry forms and competition rules will be available at the November 13, 2010, NCPA meeting. New entry forms and rules will be posted on our web page at www.norcalpa.org and at the NCPA Yahoo group site. For forms go to the web page, click on awards and scroll down and click on entry form or rules form. *Do not use old forms or rules from the 2010 awards and do not send entries or books to the address on the old forms.*

A Guide to Plundering, Pillaging, and Festival Marketing for that Next Big Novel

By Pamela Johnson / Stone Harbour Press (copyright © 2010, Pamela Johnson)

Those of you who are small publishers will understand the dilemma—one book published, so many other books you believe should see print, and all depending on attempts to find the money to move forward.

When I first released *Heart of a Pirate: A Novel of Anne Bonny* I never dreamed that I would be writing for an audience that loved pirate stories. I believed I was writing about a fascinating woman who was a source of strength to other women, one who took her life in her own hands, stepped into the unknown, and when finally cornered at the end of her sea life, stood to defend ship, crewmates, and ideals. I placed the book in the realm of historical fiction, along with those of other strong female characters.

Yet as I began to tell Anne's story on tour and on NPR programs, I felt the growing concern with the idea of piracy itself and began to market towards those interested in piracy, rather than in historical fiction. We had our first taste of sales in this area last year at the Northern California Renaissance Festival where I was invited as guest author for Pirates' Weekend. With a table and a case of books, we began to tell Anne's story and found the book sold.

Following that success, we were invited to the enormous Texas Renaissance Fair as guest author, and again sold well. Along the way, my husband and I began picking up things to wear, and changing our appearance for these historical fairs—for me, a long skirt, a white fluffy blouse, bodice, a hat with a feather, and for him, the addition of sword and pistol. Suddenly, we were part of the crew.

Over the last year we participated in the New Orleans Pirate Festival at Easter and the Vallejo Pirate Festival in June, all the while continuing to do library appearances, book readings, and radio interview. Finally, in September, we hit what I affectionately refer to as "Faire Season." For six weekends in a row, my husband and I moved a small bookstore containing my own novel and a sign that announced "Author Signing Today", as

well as other pirate, Celtic, and Renaissance books for children, young readers, and adults.

There are many kinds of niche marketing, but I thought I would share with you the highs and lows of fairs as one type of niche marketing. As anyone knows who has participated in a book event of any kind, the best part is in meeting new people, listening to their stories, and in sharing ideas. And as anyone knows who has tried to produce an outdoor event, all depends on the weather.

Portland Pirate Festival, September 18-19

With unseasonable and early rain, it poured on the first day of the fair. We watched in amazement as Portlanders stood in their historic dress, dripping wet, mug in hand, and not a worry in the world. What we learned from this trip is how to move books in the rain and how to use a ground cloth to advantage! Before hitting the festival trail, think of the costs of traveling long distance, the hassle of carrying bookcases, boxes of books, table and decorations, rugs, and chairs, in fact, creating a portable library, lodging and food fees, as well as entrance fees.

Seafarer's Marketplace, Sacramento, September 25-26

This next weekend, the weather was near a hundred degrees and who would have thought that Cal Trans would close parts of the road to the Sacramento levee where the fair was located. But again, amazing people who banded together to help each other.

Celtic Fair, Grass Valley, October 2-3

An amazing group of people who put on a tremendous effort, inviting musicians from as far away as Ireland, as a benefit for KVMR Public Radio. A 10 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. fair, a long day by any standards. At some point you turn to your vending neighbors and tell them to ask you to be quiet if they are through hearing you give your pitch! Exhausting. Memorable was the blackberry honey-meade passed out on the last night to fair vendors!

Northern California Renaissance faire, Casa de Fruta, October 16-17 and 23-24

Rained hard on the last day, and with the rain goes a day's profits.

Harvest Festival, Oregon House, October 23

Amazingly enough, this tiny festival is attracting visitors from all over because of the quality of local wines, foods, olive oils, fruits and vegetables, and local artists. Of all the festivals we attended this was the most profitable because of low entrance fees and no travel or lodging expenses.

The Treasure

So after all is said and done and the "Faire Season" is over, after all the rain and wilted pages, the hundred degree heat and the dust of a hundred marching Elizabethan troops with pikes, after the parades of bagpipers and air filled with the smell of gunpowder and the roar of cannons, miles behind the wheel and lower back pain from moving a book store, what have we gained?

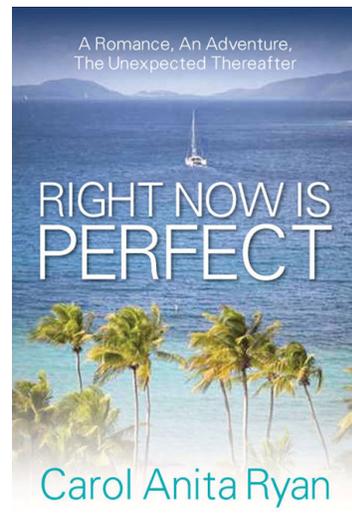
- The knowledge that so many individuals are willing to support a local author because they care about the arts.

- Making the acquaintances of hundreds of people with wonderful stories and dreams for producing their own books, helping to soothe their anxieties about writing, and giving concrete advice on how to proceed.
- Being able to help teachers put together pirate-themed summer reading programs for kids, choose just the right book for a young reader, and guide a parent or friend to select a holiday gift.
- The small crowd of fans who return again and again to tell me how much they enjoyed the story and ask when the movie will be made.
- The grace of knowing I have a husband who has stood by me through every contingency, loading bookcases in the truck and carrying the heaviest of boxes, who even grew his hair over the last year to fit in costume (bless his soul!), and who never complained.
- Finally, though all our hard work, we do have the money for the production of our next book—*A Nation of Mystics*.

Somewhere we want to say thank you to all those who purchased from us, who believed in us, and for all the fates that brought us to this place. We look forward to sharing our next book with you!

Carol Ryan's Book Announced

Right Now Is Perfect will be available in late November. The book, subtitled *A Romance, an Adventure, the Unexpected Thereafter*, is for anyone who has dreamed of finding a soul mate, ditching a career, and sailing into the sunset. It is also for those more practical types who would rather read about it. While vicariously sailing aboard a 36-foot yacht, the reader discovers some of the most isolated and beautiful islands on earth—the Marquesas, the Cook Islands, Samoa, and Fiji are a few of the landfalls. Unexpected developments after the sailing adventure ends present new challenges for the narrator of this memoir. The book written by NCPA member, Carol Anita Ryan, is being published by NCPA member Stephanie Chandler's Authority Publishing.



California Writers Club, Sacramento Branch Activities

CWC-Sacramento, a Silver Sponsor of the 2010 NCPA conference, has overlapping membership and some shared interests with NCPA. Margie Yee Webb, an NCPA member who is president of the Sacramento Branch of CWC, provided the following information for the newsletter.

The Sacramento Branch of the California Writers Club is one of 18 branches throughout California. The Sacramento Branch has monthly luncheon meetings at 11:00 a.m. on the 3rd Saturday of every month except July, August, and December. Luncheon meetings are

held at Luau Garden Chinese Buffet, 1890 Arden Way, Sacramento 95815. Meeting fee is \$12 for members and \$14 for non-members, and includes a buffet lunch.

Upcoming California Writers Club, Sacramento Branch, Luncheon Meetings

November 20, 2010

Stephanie Chandler will speak about Internet marketing. Look for her book, *The Author's Guide to Building an Online Platform: Leveraging the Internet to Sell More Books*. For more information, visit www.stephaniechandler.com.

Sunday, December 12, 2010, Holiday Social

Join CWC-Sacramento at its annual festive gathering! The Holiday Social will be held at Romano's Macaroni Grill, 2749 E. Bidwell Street, Folsom, at 1:00 pm. For reservations (required), or for more details, contact Margie Yee Webb at mywebb@sbcglobal.net or 916-213-0798. Choose an entree, with salad and non-alcoholic beverage for \$22, including tax and gratuity. Entree choices are Penne Rustica, Pasta Milano, Sausage Salentino, Lasagna Al Forno, Fettuccine Alfredo with Roasted Chicken, Chicken Scaloppine, Chicken Parmigiana, Pollo Caprese and Shrimp Portofino. King Salmon is available for an additional \$3.00.

January 15, 2011

Denny Grayson's topic title is: "What's so hard about writing a screenplay?"

February 19, 2011

Kimberly Van Meter is a published romance writer with Silhouette & Harlequin. She has a new romantic suspense novel called *To Catch a Killer*. For more information, visit www.kimberlyvanmeter.com.

The CWC-Sacramento Writers' Network

This CWC-Sacramento offshoot, formerly called the Nonfiction Network, meets the first Friday morning of every month 9:00 to 11:00, at IHOP, 2216 Sunrise Blvd., Rancho Cordova (west side of Sunrise, north of Zinfandel). Participants include book, newspaper, magazine, and trade journal writers. Contact: Bob Quinlan, bobquinlan1@comcast.net.

Upcoming Writers' Network meetings: November 5, 2010, Zoe Keithley, "Write to Your Passion"; December 3, 2010, Judith Horstman, "Writing About Science"; January 7, 2011, A. K. Buckroth, "From a Peppermint Plant to a Garden of Herbs: Promoting Your Book"; February 4, 2011, Jo Anna Phillips, "What Did You Say? How to Listen and Be Heard."

Open Mic for Writers ("10 Minutes of Fame")

Join the Sacramento branch of the California Writers Club on the second Friday of each month for opportunities to read your written work. Sign-up begins at 6:45 p.m. Listeners are also welcome. Location: Barnes & Noble, Birdcage, Citrus Heights (Sunrise just south of Greenback). Remaining 2010 dates: November 12, and December 10.

Other News, Announcements, and Comments

Your editor invites submissions for this section of *The Pen & Press*. Short items about NCPA members or otherwise of interest to writers, editors, and publishers (and allied folks) are welcome here.

✓ Cindy Sample, new member of NCPA and long-time friend of several members, author of *Dying for a Date*, reports on some upcoming events in the Sacramento area.

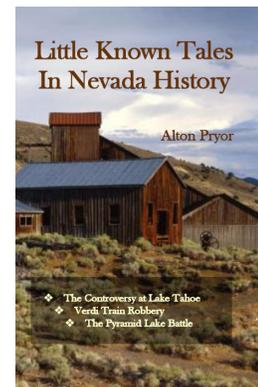
- Avid Reader at Tower, Sunday, Nov. 7 – 2:00 p.m. Author reading and signing
- Avid Reader in Davis, Friday, Nov. 12 – 7:30 p.m. Author reading and signing
- Elk Grove Library, Saturday, Nov. 13 – 11:00 a.m. Mystery Author panel

✓ Long-time, much-published (and much publishing) NCPA member Alton Pryor sent your editor some comments. Alton advises, “I have four titles on sale in both Sam’s Club and Costco. The titles include *Little Known Tales in California History*, *Fascinating Women in California History*, *Classic Tales in California History*, and *Historic California: Its Colorful Names and How It Got Them*.”

He adds, “This is the fourth time for *Little Known Tales* and the third time for each of the others to be in Costco. My boxed sets are really going well. I figure they’ve increased my book sales by one-third up at Apple Hill,” somewhat offset “because I’ve discounted the price of the books by \$2 each when they are purchased in a boxed set.”

Alton concludes, “I wish I’d done this 10 years ago.”

Alton also sent along the new and more colorful cover of his *Little Known Tales in Nevada History*, shown adjacent.



✓ The newly-formed group Sierra Authors Showcase invites area authors, editors and publishers to its next monthly meeting. It will take place on Tuesday, Nov. 9, beginning at 6 p.m. at the Cornerstone Cafe, 3392 Coach Lane, Cameron Park. The bookstore-cafe is located two doors east of the Safeway in Cameron Park, which is 1-1/2 blocks south of Route 50 at the Cameron Park exit.

SAS has just had a successful first-ever event at the El Dorado county library featuring its author-members showcasing their various books, fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Not only did the public have a chance to see the books and talk directly with their authors, there was a very popular and informative discussion about publishing in the current marketplace.

For further information, please contact Brigit Truex by phone, 530-626-4269, or by email, cedarwoman@comcast.net.

✓ California Writers Club, Sacramento Branch, is sponsoring a “short-short story” writing contest (750 words maximum). The contest features cash prizes (first, second, and third place), and requires an entry fee. Entries must be postmarked by March 31, 2011. The contest is open to all writers, not just to members of CWC.

For contest details and entry procedures, visit CWC-Sacramento's new website, <http://cwcsacramentowriters.org/>, or contact Marsha Robinson, marshar@quicknet.com.

✓ An “FYI” came in from an NCPA member concerned about Smashwords’ difficulties regarding conversion of books to Kindle format. Mark Coker, of Smashwords (a recent speaker at an NCPA meeting) advised this member, “We have two items to resolve with Amazon: 1. they need to approve our new conversions after we make some additional modifications. 2. we need to reach agreement on a new ebook distribution contract. The first item should take us another week or two. The second item is really in the hands of Amazon.” Folks considering Smashwords and with a particular interest in the Kindle format might want to inquire about current status.

✓ **Call For Authors, Editors and Agents.** The “Authors Among Us” promotion and sales event at The Market Place will encompass nine days showcasing local authors, editors, and agents, November 27 through December 5, 2010. The Market Place is located at 11395 Folsom Blvd, Rancho Cordova (off Hwy 50 between Sunrise and Hazel exits).

Requirement: Must be a published author, an editor, or an agent. Request an application by email: info@MarketPlaceRancho.com or by phone: 916-859-9988. Mail, e-mail or fax application by Saturday, November 20, 2010. Space for the Authors Among Us promotion and sales event is limited. See www.marketplacerancho.com/whats_new.php for more information.

✓ **Your notice or announcement could go here!**



A Note from the Editor

Send your articles and announcements to ken@umbachconsulting.com.

Use **NCPA NEWSLETTER** (exactly and only that) as the email subject heading. That helps me to find newsletter submissions in the avalanche of incoming email.

Please provide submissions in Microsoft Word (or compatible) format or in plain text (preferably *not* in pdf). If you would like to discuss an article idea or have any other questions or comments about the newsletter, feel free to email or phone.

What fits best into *The Pen & Press* is news of members' books, activities, marketing, speaking engagements, and accomplishments. Also of value: members' insights into the challenges and opportunities of writing and publishing and information on regional resources for authors and publishers. Cover illustrations and other photos are welcome in jpeg or other standard format. Please keep file sizes and illustration dimensions reasonable. When in doubt, call or email me in advance.

The deadline for submissions for the next issue is 5 p.m., Saturday, December 18, 2010. If you do not want your article or announcement to be lost in hundreds of accumulated email messages, use **NCPA NEWSLETTER** (exactly and only that) as your email subject heading.

— Ken Umbach, editor

The Pen & Press is published by Northern California Publishers & Authors, a coalition of authors, small presses, and independent publishers. All newsletter content, unless otherwise attributed, is copyrighted by NCPA. Material from the newsletter may not be reproduced in any way without written consent of the copyright holder. The editor reserves the right to accept or reject submissions and to edit submissions for length, clarity, or style.

Readers are of course free to print copies for noncommercial personal use, and NCPA members are welcome to print copies of the newsletter to share with friends, colleagues, and prospective members.

Northern California Publishers & Authors
3104 O Street, #270
Sacramento, California 95816
916-733-1655 (voice mail)
www.norcalpa.org

Board of Directors of NCPA

President

Elva Anson
elvawriter@emidrapublishing.com
916-961-7182

Secretary

Matthias Mendezona
matthias.mendezona@gmail.com
916-344-5724

Communications Director

Ken Umbach
ken@umbachconsulting.com
916-722-6897

Publicity and Programs

Norma Jean Thornton
normathornton@yahoo.com
916-991-5751

Membership

Rosa Umbach
rlumbach@surewest.net
916-342-7556

Past President

Barry Schoenborn
barry@wvswrite.com
530-265-4705

Speakers Bureau

Susan Osborn
susanosborn41@comcast.net
916-722-3452

Vice-President

Susan Osborn
susanosborn41@comcast.net
916-722-3452

Treasurer

Barry Schoenborn
barry@wvswrite.com
530-265-4705

Note: NCPA's executive committee includes president, VP, secretary, treasurer, and communications director.

Website

Jim Collins
jim@jcwrite.com
209-566-0935

Newsletter

Ken Umbach
ken@umbachconsulting.com
916-722-6897

Awards

Everett Anson
78everett@comcast.net
916-961-7182

Annual Conference

Position is open!

Awards Dinner

Rosa Umbach
rlumbach@surewest.net
916-342-7556

Meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Merrill Gardens Retirement Community, 7418 Stock Ranch Road (just west of Sylvan Road about a quarter mile north of Greenback Lane), Citrus Heights

Visitors are welcome.