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# The Pen & Press

July – August 2012

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Northern California  
publishers & authors

NCPA has some treats coming up this summer for members and visitors. Memoirist and public speaker Kiyo Sato will be featured at the July monthly meeting, and prolific author of young adult books Linda

Joy Singleton will speak at the August meeting. See inside this issue for more information on those meetings and for a look ahead at other coming attractions.

Speaking of coming attractions, save this date: Saturday, April 27, 2013. That date is reserved for annual book awards dinner or an NCPA publishing conference, or both. NCPA president Ted Witt is pursuing a possible conference, which would be our first since the successful 2010 conference at the Red Lion Hotel in Sacramento. Planning is a work in progress at this point, so keep an eye on [www.norcalpa.org](http://www.norcalpa.org), the NCPA email list, and future issues of *The Pen & Press* for more information.

Meanwhile, NCPA needs a **treasurer**! That key executive committee position drew no nominees for our April election, and therefore must be filled by appointment. It is not a particularly difficult role, and former treasurer (and much more) Barry Schoenborn is available to train a new treasurer in the use of Quickbooks (to keep the records) and in other aspects of the role. The key requirements include reliability and careful attention to details. Our immediate past treasurer, Laurie Hoirup, moved on to the position of vice president as of May 1<sup>st</sup>.

We also need a **newsletter editor**, as I am filling that role on an interim basis. A few other board positions (**awards**, **annual conference**, and **speakers bureau**) are also open. The awards chair role (sometimes called awards director) requires a time and ability to plan and organize, but documents and forms from past awards processes, plus advice from members with past experience, will help. The conference director role requires a great deal of time, effort, and expertise. It is essentially a full-time job for many months and requires a capacity to herd cats and juggle crockery. For more information on the roles and how they are filled, see NCPA's bylaws, available at <http://norcalpa.org/pages/bylaws.html>. Meanwhile, Ted Witt has been recruiting committee members for a conference effort. Expect regular updates at our monthly meetings.

Speaking of the monthly meetings, Ted is opening meetings with a short video, a new innovation for us. That is proving to be a popular addition to the proceedings. NCPA now owns a projector and screen to facilitate those presentations as well as to support A/V needs of monthly speakers.

In closing, be sure to visit the California Authors Booth at the California State Fair, July 12 – 29, 2012. That booth is coordinated by long-time NCPA member Naida West, but is not affiliated with NCPA. The booth is in the same building as the counties exhibits, and is near the easy-to-find cinnamon roll stand (just follow the enticing scent). See the announcements section of this issue for more information.

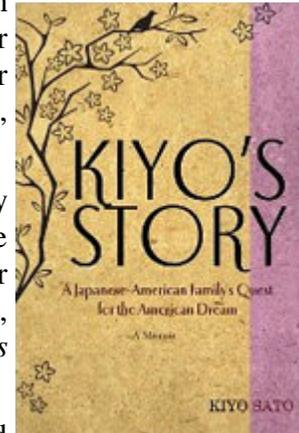
—Ken Umbach, interim editor

## July 14, 2012 Meeting to Feature Author Kiyo Sato

Kiyo's NCPA Presentation at the June 14, 2012, meeting will explore memory lane for 89-year-old NCPA member Kiyo Sato.

We'll hear her "ramble on" (her words) about her Sacramento upbringing in the 1920s and 1930s, experience as a Japanese-American citizen interned with her family during World War II, service in the United States Air Force as nurse with rank of captain, and how she became an often-requested speaker about the internment and civil rights and an award-winning author (William Saroyan International Prize for Writing, 2008 and others, including NCPA Gold Award).

Kiyo will share pictures and tell of her experiences across the country sharing her stories with young people and adults. She'll also describe how she wrote her memoir and what her life has been like after publication of *Dandelion Through the Crack* (Willow Valley Press, Nevada City, California), re-titled in its second edition to *Kiyo's Story* (Soho Press, New York).



Kiyo Sato is an extraordinary individual and an accomplished speaker and writer. This is a presentation you will not want to miss. For more information and background, see [www.DandelionThroughTheCrack.com](http://www.DandelionThroughTheCrack.com).

## August 11, 2012 Speaker is Author Linda Joy Singleton

Award-winning author Linda Joy Singleton will do two things during our August 11<sup>th</sup> NCPA meeting:

- Provide a handout of her Four-Steps to your very own one-page synopsis, and
- Teach us how to create our own one-page synopsis ... and more!

After over twenty years of writing synopses, award-winning author Linda Joy Singleton actually enjoys writing them, and came up with the idea to create a Four-Step Synopsis Template to create a one-page synopsis. This Template offers writers an easy-to-follow method for creating synopses that will grab an editor's or agent's attention

Linda Joy's Synopsis Workshop leads writers through each step of the process so they can create a synopsis quickly, often before the workshop is over. Her most recent book, *Buried*, was sold on a one-page synopsis.



Award-winning author Linda Joy Singleton grew up in Sacramento, submitted short stories to magazines when she was 14, and finished her first book during a two-week holiday. She is now the author of over 35 books for kids, including *The Seer*, and *Dead Girl Walking*, which were both honored by The Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA.)

Currently Linda Joy lives in the foothills, and has sold 35 of her 37 published books from proposals; in a few cases, only a synopsis. She offers writing tips, a free short story, and more on her website, [www.LindaJoySingleton.com](http://www.LindaJoySingleton.com).

## Other Future Meetings

Speaker chair Norma Jean Thornton has been hard at work lining up some exceptional speakers. Look forward to our October speaker, bestselling author James Rollins. Details will be in the September-October 2012 issue of *The Pen & Press*.

Our September meeting will feature NCPA president Ted Witt, discussing the present and future of the organization.

The November meeting will feature yours truly, NCPA newsletter editor and communications director Ken Umbach, talking about “The Pursuit of Publishing: An Unvarnished Guide for the Perplexed,” an across-the-board overview of publishing options, from standard commercial publishing to self-publishing, subsidy publishing, and other variations, plus my rant on the uses and misuses of publishing and self-publishing terminology.

Our December meeting will be the popular Book Display meeting, plus member networking. This is an opportunity for members to show off their published books and to talk informally about publishing, promoting, and marketing.

We have a major surprise visit coming from another bestselling author in 2013. Stay tuned for news of that event.

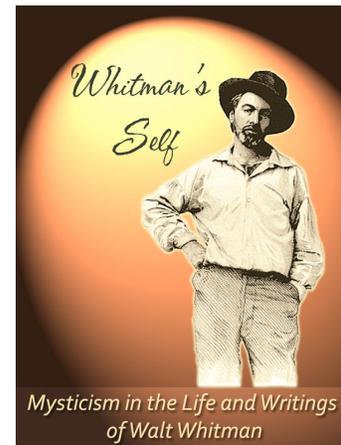
## New Ebook on the Greatest Democrat the World Had Ever Seen

According to Henry David Thoreau, Walt Whitman was the greatest democrat the world had ever seen. Thoreau said this after meeting Whitman in New York City. However, we generally know Whitman as the “Good Gray Poet” who paved the way for modern American poetry. The epithets “good” and “gray” make Whitman sound dull to the modern reader, yet, Whitman created controversy in his day and was anything but dull.

In *Whitman’s Self: Mysticism in the Life and Writings of Walt Whitman*, Paul Hourihan explores Whitman’s background and spiritual revelations and struggles that informed his most significant work, the ground-breaking poem “Song of Myself,” and made him the greatest democrat in the truest sense.

*Whitman’s Self* contains insightful and provocative interpretations of Whitman’s writing that will intrigue those who know Walt Whitman well, as well as those who are just getting introduced to him.

This book is based on the Whitman half of *Mysticism in American Literature: Thoreau’s Quest and Whitman’s Self*. To make it accessible to more readers, the editor, Anna Hourihan, decided to publish it separately as an ebook and make it the first volume of a three-part series on “Mysticism in Literature.” New material has been added to this electronic version. *Whitman’s Self* is now available from the Kindle Store and Barnes & Noble Nook Store. It’s being distributed by eBookIt.com to other venues. For more



information, contact Anna Hourihan, [anna@vedanticshorespress.com](mailto:anna@vedanticshorespress.com) or go to [www.VedanticShoresPress.com](http://www.VedanticShoresPress.com).

## **Book Launch Triumph for *Passage of the Kissing People***

*Special to The Pen & Press*

April marked two special dates: the release of NCPA member Peter Kahle's novel *Passage of the Kissing People* and the 16<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 74th Street Productions, an independent book publishing company in Seattle.

The story's backdrop is the Sonoma Valley during the 1950s. Realistic characters include an endearing (mostly) Italian family central to the plot. Peter's presentation, a reading combined with well-researched historical audio/visual elements, demanded to be staged amid the scent of pizza and glasses of good wine from the Valley of the Moon. Razzis Pizzeria was the perfect venue for the Seattle launch.

Owners cleared their basement bistro for the evening, set up tables for book sales which also included other titles published by 74th Street, and even removed their own artwork to be replaced with original illustrations from Peter Kahle's previous books, *Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Shakespeare's The Tempest*, and *Naked at the Podium: The Writer's Guide to Successful Readings*. The crowd of well-wishers from California and Washington swelled to over 120 people. More than half of them bought books on the spot.

Others have been contacting Peter Kahle on his author website, [www.peterkahle.com](http://www.peterkahle.com).

*Passage of the Kissing People* was officially released May 1, 2012. Pizza, prizes and good wine did wonders to introduce this fine novel.



**A View of the Crowd at Peter Kahle's Book Launch  
April 25, 2012, Seattle, Washington**

## **New from Newcal Publishing: *The Marcella Fragment***

*Special to The Pen & Press*

Sunnyvale, CA – Newcal Publishing is pleased to announce the release of the debut novel of Anna LaForge, *The Marcella Fragment* (trade paperback, ISBN 978-0-9850168-1-4, 374 pages, \$14.99 U.S. retail price.)

This engrossing first novel tells the story of Tyre of Lapith and Kara of Pelion, descendants of survivors of the destruction of Earth who were transported by mysterious aliens to an Earthlike world in a far distant future. On this world, the transplanted population begins the long struggle back to civilization. Leaders of the matriarchal society of Pelion follow the words of a myth, hoping their actions will ultimately lead to the enlightenment of the planet's population. It is in Pelion that Tyre and Kara come together, experiencing the pain and joy of their transformation and giving us in the process a great story of self-discovery and love.

The Midwest Book Review calls it “a strong pick for fantasy and science fiction collections.” Reviews by readers on Amazon.com have said:

- “I found it to be an absorbing story written in a descriptive and accessible style and with tremendous character development as the story unfolded.”
- “Here is storytelling at its best: intriguing, suspenseful, action filled and intensely imagined.”
- “Anna LaForge is a new voice in the tradition of Ursula Le Guin, Anne McCaffrey and Margaret Atwood.”

The publisher hopes that booksellers specializing in feminist or science fiction works will find *The Marcella Fragment* a compelling story to share with their customers. It is Book One of *Maze*, a trilogy that will include *The Agave Translation* (2013) and *Pelion Preserv'd* (2014).

Anna LaForge read Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* at fourteen, Asimov's *Foundation* trilogy at sixteen, and LeGuin's *The Left Hand of Darkness* at eighteen. Then she decided that she, too, wanted to create new worlds. Born in Philadelphia, she has lived throughout the country, from urban centers in the Midwest and Northeast to tiny Andrews, Texas. A former executive director of several not-for-profit arts organizations, she divides her time between teaching and writing.

Newcal Publishing is a boutique publishing firm specializing in publication and promotion of the works of independent authors. Newcal's focus is on providing books in formats for all major e-readers, including Kindle, Nook, and iPad, in addition to traditional print publication.

*[Editor's Note: the publisher's background story on the book follows.]*

# First Book: Lessons Learned

*By Bob Crum, Newcal Publishing*

I'm very new at this, and established my publishing company, Newcal Publishing, in order to publish the first book of someone I have known for years. The short version of the story is that she wrote a science fiction book over 20 years ago and tried to get it published. Nothing came of it, so she put the book in a drawer and then promptly wrote books two and three of what is now the Maze trilogy. Fast forward to two years ago, when I told her that if she was willing, I'd help her publish the book in ebook format. She agreed, and *The Marcella Fragment* came into being in trade paperback and ebook formats over the past few months.

Along the way, I learned a few things that are probably obvious to many of you. But, for those of you that are embarking on this journey as innocent as I was when I began, I can share a few things I learned! All of these items should be prefaced with "For the next book, I'm going to . . ."

## **Writing and editing**

I found I needed to establish formatting standards upfront when writing in MS Word. Ultimately, I found out that we should limit the number of paragraph styles in the manuscript, and avoid file format conversions during saving. For Microsoft Word, pick .doc or .docx and stick with it. We had some problems along the way trying to maintain formatting in the manuscript that led to problems, so I think "standards" up front will minimize those problems.

We also found we need to choose an editor familiar with the genre, in our case science fiction. Our editor was a friend of a friend (that's how you do it when you start out and have NO budget) who was an experienced grants editor. The input we received was useful, but we realized that we would have received better input from someone more familiar with the genre.

## **Book Production**

The first product was a Kindle version, and I then imported the text into InDesign for creating a trade paperback. My intention was to layout the print book during the time the Kindle ebook was "exclusive" on Amazon through the KDP Select program.

The next time around, I'm going to focus on producing a trade paperback as the first product. So much time was spent on book formatting in InDesign, including ongoing edits to the manuscript, that I was simply not interested in trying to transfer those changes back to MS Word so as to create an ePub and updated Kindle version. Once I found out that InDesign can directly create both of those versions, I was sold on the idea of first producing a trade paperback and then the ebook versions directly out of InDesign.

I used the "free trial" of InDesign for the paperback and that was sufficient to get the book out. My plan for future books is to pay the \$49 monthly fee to lease InDesign for the time necessary. I just can't justify the cost to purchase, but the advantages of the software were great.

## Book Marketing

I made the first ebook available for Kindle, and enrolled it in the KDP Select program, which meant exclusivity for 90 days. I wouldn't do that again! One of the major selling points of KDP Select is the 5-free giveaway days to promote the book and (hopefully) stimulate sales and obtain reviews. We gave it away for 5 days, and had a total of 956 copies were given away. In spite of that, we had no bump in sales, and not a single one of those people has reviewed the book on Amazon.com.

We also had a Goodreads giveaway promotion that ran from mid-April to mid-May. There were a total of 971 entries, and we gave away five books, which were mailed on May 14th. From that we have had one (really weird) review on Goodreads. The author and I were very disappointed in the 'winner' list that Goodreads provided for the giveaway. Out of the 5 winners we found:

- Three of the five had never written a review of any kind
- Two of the five are teenagers, and this book is aimed at an adult audience
- Out of readers from 50 states, two winners were from Utah

As far as we're concerned, we threw away \$90 in lost revenues and shipping charges for five books due to a very bad algorithm for winner selection at Goodreads. We are unlikely to do another giveaway on Goodreads until that algorithm is improved.

## Establishing Goals

The author and I established three goals early on so that we could measure our success:

- First goal: the effort would be considered "worth it" if we sold 66 books in any format (a very arbitrary number that we jokingly created)
- Second goal: break even on costs (now about \$3,000 total).
- Third goal: sell one thousand copies, thus making it worthwhile to publish the second book.

We achieved the first goal within about two months. However, the second goal is far from being achieved! In spite of that, and in spite of not having sold close to 1000 copies, we've both decided that we want to go ahead and do the second book, and the author has already started her initial editing. We are considering using Kickstarter to help fund it (<http://kickstarter.com>), especially so that we can get an editor familiar with the genre.

## Going Forward

Next time, the trade paperback will come first and be promoted with early review copies to many of the same places I sent the first book. We'll then release the ebook in all formats and the paperback at the same time.

Our goal for Book 2, *The Agave Translation*, is to introduce it at WisCon 37, the annual feminist science fiction convention held every year over Memorial Day in Madison, Wisconsin. For a feminist SF book, there could be no better way to introduce it! The author is having a discussion in July with a "friend of a friend" who is the Managing Editor for Reference & Electronic Publishing at Columbia University Press, who was formerly an acquisitions editor for science fiction (among other genres) at Ballantine

Books, a division of Random House. He read the current book, liked it, and has offered to discuss it with her. We're hoping that his insights and comments will help us determine a path forward that will lead to more success with Book 2.

## **California Writers Club, Sacramento Branch Activities**

*CWC-Sacramento Branch, 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 immediate past president of the Sacramento Branch of CWC, and author/photographer of Cat Mulan's Mindful Musings: Insight and Inspiration for a Wonderful Life, 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, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., on the 3rd Saturday of every month except July, August, and December. Location: Luncheon meetings are held at Tokyo Buffet, 7217 Greenback Lane (between San Juan Avenue and Fountain Square Drive), Citrus Heights, CA 95610. Meeting fee is \$12 for members and \$14 for non-members, and includes a buffet lunch. For more information, see [www.cwcsacramentowriters.org/](http://www.cwcsacramentowriters.org/).

### **Upcoming California Writers Club, Sacramento Branch, Luncheon Meetings**

July and August 2012

No meetings. Happy summer!

September 15, 2012

Fred Setterberg, author of *Lunch Bucket Paradise: A True-Life Novel*, on writing the true-life novel. See [www.fredsetterberg.com](http://www.fredsetterberg.com).

### **The CWC Sacramento Branch Writers Network**

The CWC Sacramento Branch "Writers Network" meets the first Friday morning of every month, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m., at IHOP, 2216 Sunrise Blvd., Rancho Cordova, CA (west side of Sunrise, north of Zinfandel). Participants include book, newspaper, magazine, and trade journal writers or fiction and nonfiction.

Upcoming Writers Network Meetings:

- July 2012: No meeting; Happy 4th of July week!
- August 3, 2012: Cheryl Anne Stapp, author of *Disaster and Triumph: Sacramento Women, Gold Rush Through the Civil War*. See [www.cherylanestapp.com](http://www.cherylanestapp.com).
- September 7, 2012: Scott Thomas Anderson, award-winning journalist and author of *Shadow People: How Meth-driven Crime is Eating at the Heart of Rural America*, will speak on Literary Journalism and the enduring power of creative nonfiction. See [www.scottthomasanderson.com](http://www.scottthomasanderson.com).

### ***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, 6111 Sunrise Blvd., Citrus Heights (Sunrise just south of Greenback). Contact: Julie Bauer, joolieb@aol.com.

Upcoming dates: July 13, 2012; August 10, 2012; September 14, 2012.

### **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.

✓ Cheryl Stapp will speak to the Native Daughters of the Golden West Elk Grove Parlor on July 13 about her book, *Disaster and Triumph: Sacramento Women, Gold Rush Through the Civil War*, with an overview of pioneer women’s character and life styles.

✓ Naida West is the Author-Manager of the California Authors Booth at the California State Fair at Cal Expo from July 12-29, 2012. Fair hours are Monday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; and Friday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.. The California Authors Booth is inside the A/B Building. For info on the State Fair, visit [www.bigfun.org](http://www.bigfun.org). NCPA members appearing will include: Naida West, Alton Pryor, Phil Silver, Margie Yee Webb, Cindy Sample, and Denise Lee Branco.

Visit [www.bridgehousebooks.com/events/statefair2012.htm](http://www.bridgehousebooks.com/events/statefair2012.htm) for a complete list of author appearances with dates and times,

✓ Margie Yee Webb announced that her award-winning gift book *Cat Mulan’s Mindful Musings: Insight and Inspiration for a Wonderful Life* has led to her next book project, *Not Your Mother’s Book . . . On Cats*. If you are a feline fanatic or just plain kitty crazy, she wants you to submit your true cat stories. Not Your Mother’s Book (NYMB), a new anthology for a new century, is created by Ken and Dahlynn McKowen, of Publishing Syndicate. *On Cats*, *On College*, and *On Travel* are a few of the nearly 40 NYMB titles accepting real-life stories. For submission guidelines and story deadlines, visit [http://publishingsyndicate.com/publishing\\_syndicate/submissions/nymb\\_submit\\_guidelines.html](http://publishingsyndicate.com/publishing_syndicate/submissions/nymb_submit_guidelines.html).

✓ Laurie Hoirup, author of *I Can Dance: My Life with a Disability*, is on a cross-country tour, with her husband JR, revisiting the places in her life and promoting her memoir. See [www.laurieslegacy.com](http://www.laurieslegacy.com) for more information on Laurie and her book.

✓ Searching for a special used book, or looking for bargains on reading? Check out 2010 NCPA Conference sponsor Time-Tested Books, 1114 21st Street, Sacramento, CA 95811. See <http://timetestedbooks.net/> for more information.

✓ Know someone who is looking for quality assisted living? Be sure to ask for a tour of our monthly meeting host, Merrill Gardens, Citrus Heights.

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

## A Note from the Editor

Send your articles and announcements for the September/October 2012 issue to Ken Umbach, [ken@umbachconsulting.com](mailto:ken@umbachconsulting.com).

Use **NCPA NEWSLETTER** (exactly and only that) as the email subject heading. That helps in finding 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 August 23, 2012.** 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. Send to [ken@umbachconsulting.com](mailto:ken@umbachconsulting.com).

— Ken Umbach, interim editor

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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.

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# Board of Directors of NCPA

*The following list is updated for 2012-13*

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Vacant

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

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**Past President**

Barry Schoenborn  
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**Awards**

Position is open!

**Speakers Bureau**

Position is open!

**Annual Conference**

Position is open!

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.