
The Pen & Press

March — April 2013



Spring is very much in the air in the Sacramento Region. That is always a fine time of the year to relax on the patio or porch sipping an iced tea and reading a good book, whether printed or in the form of pixels on an electronic book-

reading device (e-reader). Needless to emphasize, NCPA members are doing their part to provide good reading in both formats, encompassing fiction, nonfiction, poetry.

Our annual book awards dinner will honor the best of the books entered into this year's competition, for books published in 2012. This year, the event will be on Saturday April 27th at the Blue Prynt Restaurant in downtown Sacramento. See inside this issue for more information provided by NCPA president Ted Witt, who is managing the awards competition and the dinner.

Ted has been very busy this month, as always, but still found time to provide an article on the pressing need for a new slate of officers for the upcoming NCPA administrative year, with the election just around the corner and nominations underway *NOW*.

Ted also provided an article on "Selling in the Book Market's Long Tail," useful insight for all authors and publishers.

This month we also have an article on Cheryl Stapp's latest book, a delightful and entertaining brief history of Sacramento, published by History Press, notices of upcoming meetings, and and some announcements.

Also included within is a preview of our March meeting, featuring book printing specialist Penny Callmeyer.

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Before closing, I'll just note that we continue to live in "interesting times" where books are concerned. The venerable Barnes & Noble is looking wobbly not so long after the demise of its national competitor Borders. Stay tuned, as it is going to be a rocky ride.

Meanwhile, and in closing, it has been brought to my attention that B&N's Nook platform likes to arbitrarily download book samples to the devices. Unfortunately, it is not entirely selective about that process, and on at least one occasion dumped a preview of erotica (the notorious *Fifty Shades of Gray*) to a Nook owned and used by an elementary school child. Nice. Real nice.

— Ken Umbach, interim editor

Saturday, March 9, 2013 Meeting: Penny Callmeyer on Book Printing

Multi-talented print and publishing consultant, Penny Callmeyer, will dazzle you with all you want to know and then some, with her list of **“Five Things You Need to Understand about Book Printing.”**

Penny started with Griffin Printing, Sacramento/Burbank, CA in 1989 where she helped customers with their book printing needs for nine years, was Director of Business Development for Bertelsmann Services, Valencia, CA, for six years, and was under a consulting contract with Media Lithographics, City of Commerce, CA for one year.

She currently works as an independent contractor (NOT A BROKER) with five U.S. printers and one offshore printer helping publishers print books in both short-run and long run, via digital or traditional offset printing. With more than 23 years in the business, and considered a technical book manufacturing expert, Penny uses her expertise to help clients make savvy print-buying decisions.

Penny is also a print and publishing consultant, and hit the road in 1991 for her first publishing conference as an exhibitor, at the time representing Griffin Printing. Over the next 15+ years she exhibited at 15 to 18 conferences per year representing various printers and speaking on panels.

She’s been a keynote speaker as well as a voice of experience, and became very well acquainted with all of the book manufacturers across the country and overseas. In turn, this expanded her knowledge of the various types of printing /equipment available.

When Penny chose to leave the corporate world and went out on her own in 2003, she aligned with the book printers she felt could provide the best products at the best price as well as provide the high level of customer service she require for her customers. Since the printers have a variety of presses, binderies and capabilities, she has the ability to place jobs at the right plant, whether you have a book, manual, catalog, directory or coffee table book.

Services include: print and publisher consulting; digital (POD); offset printing; web/sheet feed & offshore color printing; eBook and online bookstore management; project management; public speaking; branding; marketing consultation; proofreading; book shepherd. Contact Penny at <http://pennycallmeyer.com> or at her business, 916-692-5054, Tiger Lilly Enterprises, P. O. Box 41325, Sacramento, CA 95841

Saturday, April 13, 2013 Meeting: Networking and NCPA Updates

The April meeting is planned as a member-networking meeting and update on NCPA activities, including the April 27th Awards Dinner, which is to feature best-selling author John Lescroart.

Other Future Meetings

Norma Jean Thornton has been busy lining up speakers and planning other meeting themes for the coming year. Planned speakers include accomplished freelance writer Judith Horstman (May), and past NCPA president and award-winning author T. E. (Tom) Watson (June). Others are to be announced.

Fifteen-Time *New York Times* Bestselling Author John Lescroart to Headline Awards Dinner April 27, 2013

By Ted Witt, NCPA President

Please reserve Saturday evening, April 27, so you and your guest can attend the annual NCPA Awards Dinner, an event that will encapsulate a year of successful professional development in writing and publishing.

Although we recognize winners of NCPA's book contest, we will also honor you as a participant in our association. We'll be delivering a strong dose of insider wisdom, not only as we celebrate book contest winners, but also as we hear from our distinguished keynote speaker.

The guest presenter will be John Lescroart (pronounced Less-Kwah), author of a string of legal and crime thriller novels that have seen top spots on the New York Times bestseller list 15 times.

Anyone who has sold ten million books holds a wealth of valuable writing and publishing insight. This is the chance to tap into the knowledge of an accomplished writer up close and personal. Lescroart has written 23 novels, starting a full-time writing career in 1994.

Like us, he had many jobs before devoting his career to creating sentences. He was a word and document processor for a law firm, a bartender, a moving man, a house painter, an editor, an advertising director, a computer programmer, and a fundraising executive.

Our venue for the evening will be the Blue Prynt Restaurant and Bar, 815 11th Street, at the corner of 11th and H streets in Downtown Sacramento, about one block from City Hall.

"The food is as approachable as it is refined," the owners say. "We put together quality ingredients with the idea that a night out shouldn't only be reserved for special occasions. The restaurant was established as a way to fill a void in the Downtown Sacramento dining scene. It's a restaurant that doesn't wish it was San Francisco or New York, but embraces Sacramento and its communities."

Invitations are being mailed to current members. Look for yours in your box. You can reserve spots for you and your guest either online at www.NorCalPA.org or by returning a registration card to the NCPA President, Ted Witt, at 104 Cobb Court, Folsom, California 95630.

Cost is \$36 per person, the exact cost necessary per meal to host the event. NCPA makes no profits. If you entered the NCPA book contest, your entry fee covers the cost of your meal to attend, but your guest's meal is not complimentary.

We're hoping for attendance of about 68 people. Membership is not required to participate, so invite fellow writers, publishers, and readers, especially those who want a glimpse into Lescroart characters such as Dismas Hardy, Abe Glitsky, and Wyatt Hunt.

In addition to honoring book contest entrants, we'll also be honoring authors whose work will appear in the NCPA anthology. The night will be a launch party for the new book. Contributors will get their copies of the book that night as well as author's certificate of publication.

The event opens with no-host cocktails at 6 p.m. The dinner and the program get underway at 6:30 p.m. The evening concludes with door prizes, giveaways, and autographs.

NCPA Officers Needed!

By Ted Witt, NCPA President

Seriously, we need members to step up to be officers and board members. It is nomination time, and we are looking for a few good leaders.

If you love writing and publishing, if you love people, and if you are committed to the idea that "community" is essential to successful publishing, then it is your responsibility to take a role.

We have five elected positions open: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Communications Director.

The position calling most loudly for help is the position of Treasurer. It has gone empty this year, and we've seen no candidates walking toward us from the dawning horizon.

We thank past president Barry Schoenborn for graciously writing checks, going to the bank, and making entries into QuickBooks in the absence of a treasurer.

What does the Treasurer do?

Here's the official take: "The Treasurer shall receive, deposit, and disburse all funds of NCPA, and render a full and accurate account of all NCPA monies received and paid out and ensure that sound internal fiscal controls are in operation. The Treasurer shall render a report at each meeting of the Board, including a profit and loss statement and balance sheet. The Board of Directors must approve all contracts prior to execution."

The job sounds more difficult than it is in real life, believe me. You do the necessary tasks, enter the data, and the computer spews forth reports.

We know you are all right-brained writers, but you all are publishers, too! You run a business. That means you could qualify to be our left-brained NCPA Treasurer. You will have the comfort of one year's worth of we've-got-your-back support if you raise your hand to take this job.

Then there is the job of Communications Director. The official job description reads, "The Communications Director shall attend and assist with all regular member meetings and shall perform other duties at the President's direction, such as communications with members and the public through telephone, email, and mail, as well as participation in one or more standing committees."

The venerable Ken Umbach currently serves as Communications Director, but he is looking for some relief. Thank you, Ken, for serving for so long. Somewhat apprehensively, he will agree to run and serve one more year, but we heard him swear, “Absolutely, positively my last!” The exclamation point was bold-face emphatic.

That means, if not taking on the job in full, someone should learn his role this year, and take over in 2014. We can make that happen. For example, you – yes, you sitting there at your computer – you could compile the newsletter for us and be the official Newsletter Editor. Ken will teach you. Did I hear you say you could use some additional real-life copyediting experience? Thanks for volunteering.

Current Secretary Tom Kando has agreed to let us place his name in nomination for the role of Secretary. What a relief he has agreed to continue! He makes sure that advice from our Saturday meetings makes it out to the eyes of the entire membership, an especially valuable service for people who missed the in-person experience and those who live far away.

Laurie Hoirup, of *I Can Dance* fame, has agreed to run again for Vice President, but expressed the utmost flexibility, willing to take on other elected positions and roles and expressing the hope that others will come forward to volunteer.

That brings us to me – the President, the fifth of the elected positions called out in the NCPA bylaws.

I began my term thinking there was specific interest from another member taking on the leadership role for 2013-14, but that interest has disappeared. I still have a lingering hope that there is another name willing to come forward and lead. However, if my e-mail box remains empty of nominations, I have agreed by default to run for a second term, due to some badgering and my passion for the community of publishers.

Believe me, if you are interested in being President, I can help make you successful, and you will have fun doing it. So think about the opening, so I can float gracefully into the role as Past President.

Even if you are not interested in an officer position yourself, you may have knowledge of another member who would serve us well. Exercise your gift of persuasion and convince your friend to run. The nomination process is painless. The bylaws say, “Any member may submit names of NCPA members in good standing, including self-nominations.”

Send me an e-mail with your nomination, for yourself or a fellow member. The address is TedWitt@PrettyRoadPress.com (of course, it is a common courtesy to get your friend’s consent before placing the name in nomination).

The story does not end there because we have committee chairs and volunteer roles that need filling, for example, jobs to coordinate the awards contest, the newsletter, membership, our speakers’ bureau, and conferences. If you want to make NCPA a better place, volunteer. Chose a job or tell us your interest area, and we’ll make sure you are in the leadership loop to make a difference for authoring and publishing.

You can only imagine the tornado of activity that will swirl around NCPA if my e-mail inbox remains empty of volunteers. I will be going to the phone. I will be calling you. I know you are all creative, so you’d better have a fanciful excuse for turning me down

when I ask you to serve. Rev up your imagination. I will persuade you, nevertheless. Then you will not be a volunteer; you'll be a recruit, and boot camp is around the corner.

Cheryl Stapp's New Book on Sacramento History Now Available

Special to The Pen & Press

NCPA member Cheryl Anne Stapp's latest book, *Sacramento Chronicles: A Golden Past* (History Press) was released in February:

Sacramento boomed when forty-niners flocked to California, but the road from riverfront trading post to cosmopolitan capital was bumpy and winding. In this collection, historian and local author Cheryl Anne Stapp reveals the setbacks and successes that shaped the city, including a devastating cholera outbreak, the 1850s' Squatter Riots, two major fires, the glamorous Pony Express and the first transcontinental railroad built by Sacramento merchants. Even bursting levees and swollen riverbanks couldn't keep the fledgling city down, as Sacramento hoisted its downtown buildings and streets above flood level. Come discover the diversity of Sacramento's heritage from agriculture and state fairs to war efforts, Prohibition and historic preservation, and explore the historic sites that mark the city's development.

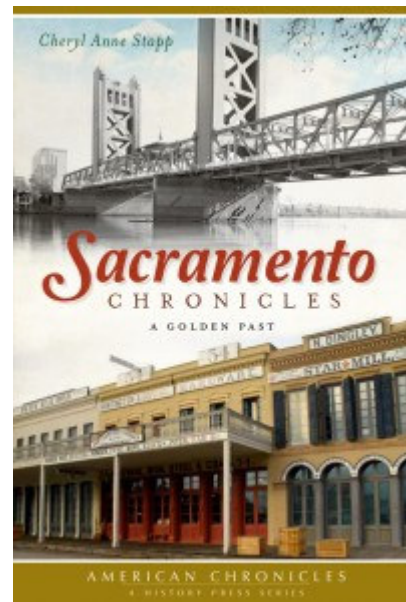
Cheryl has an active schedule of speaking engagements and book signings in March and April, following her February 28th book launch at Time Tested Books.

Saturday 3/2/13: Book signing at Barnes & Noble Birdcage, Citrus Heights, 1:00 p.m., featuring *Sacramento Chronicles: A Golden Past*.

Monday 3/11/13: Presentation & book signing for the Monday Alpha group (affiliated with GFWC women's clubs) to honor National Women's History Month; *Disaster & Triumph: Sacramento Women, Gold Rush Through the Civil War*. Will also sell and sign *Sacramento Chronicles*. Denny's Restaurant on Auburn Blvd., 11:00 am. (This is **not** open to the public.)

Saturday 3/16/2013: Presentation and book signing (both books) at Sutter's Fort, 2701 L St. Sacramento, for Hands on History Day featuring women on the frontier. Three 15-minute talks are planned for 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., and 4:00 p.m. Sutter's Fort hours are 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday 4/9/2013: Sacramento Room, Sacramento Public Library, 828 I St., 6:00 p.m., arranged by the History Press for *Sacramento Chronicles*.



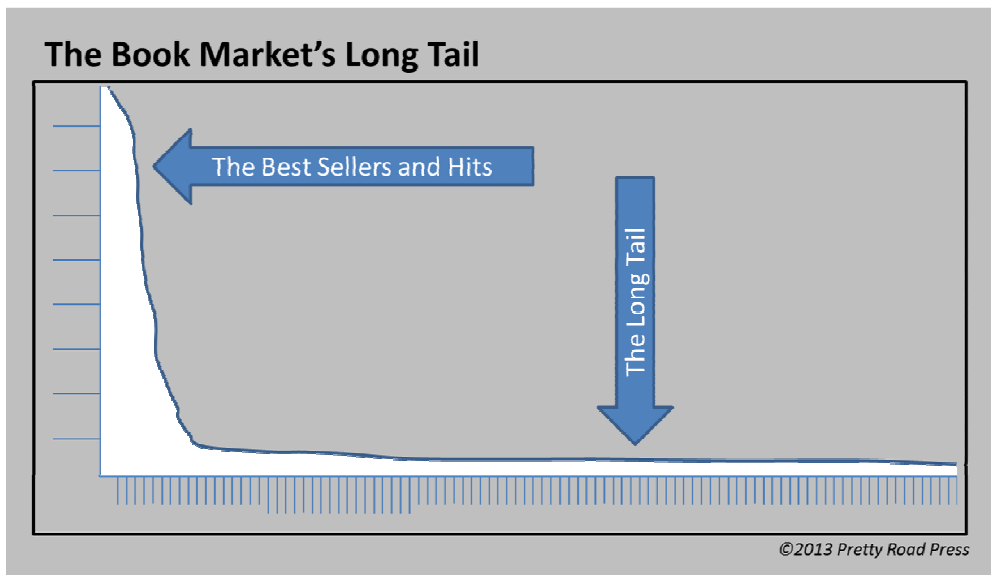
Three Tips for Selling in the Book Market's Long Tail

By Ted Witt, *Pretty Road Press*

Once upon a time printing and production costs stood as a barrier to entry for new publishers and authors trying to enter the book market. Today production costs can be so low – bordering on free – that consumers face a glut of new books and innumerable choices.

It is the best of times and the worst of times for small publishers. Production costs are historically low, but it is exponentially difficult and expensive to be discovered.

This phenomenon pads the coffers of Amazon, Smashwords, Lulu, and Barnes & Noble, but makes it difficult for the small publisher or self-published author to earn pin money, let alone make a living. The overwhelming majority of us are working in the long tail of the book market.



A few books make it big, generating beefy profits and royalties. The elite New York publishers design schemes and concoct formulas to ensure some of their titles sell hundreds of thousands of books. Let's congratulate James Patterson and J.K. Rowling. These books, when charted by sales, represent the head or spike of a graph.

The rest of us fall somewhere along the flat tail of the graph. It is a very long tail. Amazon alone is flooded with more than 4 million books, according to Chris Anderson of *Wired* magazine. How big a number is that? In their heyday, the biggest of the big megastores could only stock 175,000 titles. If you spent one second browsing each book in Amazon's massive inventory, you would be awake constantly for 46 days and need new glasses.

Amazon loves this glut. Why? Within the long-tail market, a single sale for every electronic book still adds up to millions of dollars in revenue. It's OK with them if a book gets an occasional hit.

What, then, can we learn from the long tail? Chances of us becoming an Amanda Hocking or John Locke are remote. However, it is still possible to sell a reasonable number of books publishing on the long tail of the market.

1. Do not limit yourself to one market platform. Start to create your own long tail by making your book available in many electronic outlets. If you limit yourself to selling only on Amazon, you are stuck in Jeff Bezos's long tail. Can you find 10 to 20 other electronic markets? Add Smashwords. Join up with Apple. Don't forget Kobo and the Nook. Apply to participate in Overdrive. Sell on blogs. Market on your own site. Offer affiliate commissions to other websites that direct traffic to yours. Supplement your Internet presence with bookstores and retail outlets. Get distributors. Participate in book fairs. Be in a lot of places. And never, ever depend on your own personal presence to be successful. You cannot be in the multitude of places necessary to sell a lot of books.

2. Find and communicate with people in your niche. Build your own long tail of relationships, that is, many people from diverse platforms. Stop thinking your market is the entire reading public in the United States. You do not have the money, time, or infrastructure to reach the general public. If your book is about dogs, build a database of dog lovers. Buy e-mail addresses from dog magazines, pet stores, and veterinarian associations. Tweet among people who post dog pictures.

Start building a relationship with people in your database, your blog readers, and your Facebook friends. When you market to people you know, the response rate for your book offer can rise as high as 10 percent. If you bought a blind list of e-mail addresses purporting to be dog-lovers, expect only five responses for every thousand contacts.

The goal for books I publish is to sell 1,000 copies of any given title over the course of three years. To sell that many, I have to work backwards. I must find 50 small niche markets that will each get me 20 sales. In any given micro market, I can expect no more than 5 percent of the group to buy a book, even if they are super friendly.

That means for each micro niche, I need a universe of 400 people. Maybe that's people attending a convention. It could be a mailing to all the school principals in Western Pennsylvania. It could be a talk in front of Rotarians. Sometimes it is a fund-raiser sponsored by a service organization. If 5 percent of those people respond, I will get 20 sales. If any sector fails to match projected response rates, then, guess what? I must develop additional niches beyond my original 50. Having 50 niche markets is the start of a long-tail marketing organization.

Now, let's twist those numbers around again. Fifty niche markets times 400 equals 20,000 people. That's a small city. Get working on those Twitter followers.

3. Expect to spend money. All the money you saved by today's low production costs must be plowed back into marketing. The rule of thumb for self-publishers used to be that you should spend as much money on marketing as you did on production. In today's environment, put the sum total of that money into marketing.

Building your own long tail cannot be done on a dime and goodwill. Build your own long-tail marketing plan. Get exposure in a lot of venues. Don't depend on just one ad, flyer, or website. Supplement your efforts with a strong bundle of collateral materials, literature, webinars, and traditional media. Use your marketing money to build

relationships, solve reader problems, and pique reader curiosity. Just asking someone to buy your book only generates sales from friends and family. Spend your cash to promote. Budget expenses into the cover price of your book.

When a stranger hears about you on a remote venue and develops an interest in your topic, that's the long tail wagging in success.

California Writers Club, Sacramento Branch Activities

*CWC-Sacramento has overlapping membership and some shared interests with NCPA. The Sacramento Branch is one of 18 throughout California. Starting in March 2013, monthly luncheon meetings are at **Cattlemens restaurant**, 12049 Folsom Blvd., Rancho Cordova. Meeting fee is \$12 for members and \$14 for non-members, and includes a buffet lunch.*

See www.cwcsacramentowriters.org for more information on CWC, Sacramento Branch, and its meetings and activities, including nonfiction writing contest, now under way.

Upcoming California Writers Club, Sacramento Branch, Luncheon Meetings

- **March 16, 2013.** Annual “genre workshop.” As of March, **new location** for the CWC, Sacramento, monthly meetings: **Cattlemens restaurant**, 12049 Folsom Blvd., Rancho Cordova. The restaurant is in the complex of shops and eateries adjacent to Hazel Avenue and Highway 50.
- **April 20, 2013.** To be announced.

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. Visitors are welcome. No charge, but attendees pay for their own breakfast. April 5, 2013, speaker is to be announced. (The March 1st meeting took place before this issue of *The Pen & Press* was distributed.)

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. Barnes & Noble, Birdcage, 6111 Sunrise Blvd., Citrus Heights (Sunrise just south of Greenback). Contact: Julie Bauer, joolieb@aol.com.

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.

✓ NCPA Secretary Tom Kando has created a new version of his autobiography, *A Tale of Survival: From War Ravaged Europe to the Promise of America*, as an e-book on

Smashwords. The new version has a new cover, and 23 pictures have been added, including many beautiful old sepias.

✓ Cindy Sample, author of *Dying for a Dance*, the 2011 NCPA Fiction winner, will be joining mystery authors Todd Borg, Robin Burcell, and Nan Mahon at the Assistance League of Sacramento's Third Annual Author's Day event. The event includes lunch and will be held at the Rancho Cordova Marriott at 11211 Point East Drive, Saturday, March 2, 2013, from 9:00 until 3:30.

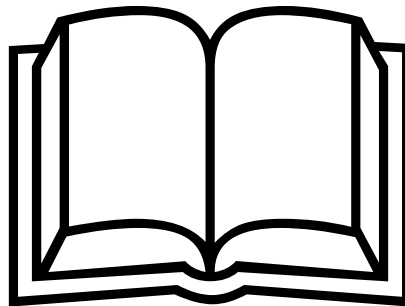
For more information: www.sacramento.assistanceleague.org/download.cfm?ID=47993 .

✓ See the box on the next page of this newsletter for current mailing address for NCPA. Please note that the old O Street (Sacramento) mailing address is GONE. Send no mail there, as it will be returned or discarded. The old voice-mail phone number is also gone. Currently, president Ted Witt is offering his phone number as a point of contact. See the board list below. Note that other mailing addresses are provided for some purposes (for membership and for book awards, specifically, at this time). See the pertinent forms and procedures. If in doubt, you can email ken@umbachconsulting.com for assistance.

✓ 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 newsletter to Ken Umbach, ken@umbachconsulting.com.

Use “NCPA NEWSLETTER” as the email subject heading!

Please provide submissions in Microsoft Word (or compatible) format or in plain text (preferably *not* in pdf and definitely not in jpeg or other image format for text). 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 April 23, 2013. **Please submit material before the deadline if possible!** 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.

— 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.

Mailing address:

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www.norcalpa.org

Board of Directors of NCPA

The following list is updated for 2012-13

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Secretary

Tom Kando
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Treasurer

Vacant

Communications Director

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

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Ken Umbach
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916-733-2159

Past President

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

Awards

Position is open!
Acting chair: Ted Witt

Speakers Bureau

Position is open!

Conference Chair

Position is open!
No conference for 2013.

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.