
The Pen & Press

September - October 2015



Meet NCPA Communications Director, Norma Thornton



Norma with New York Times best-selling author James Rollins at Sacramento Capitol Crimes April 2015 Workshop

Norma Jean Thornton has been an active NCPA member for over seven years. She joined our organization in February 2008 after registering for her first writing conference—the 2008 NCPA Conference. The evening before the conference, she attended the NCPA Awards Banquet, where she met book-award winner and first-time attendee Frances Kakugawa. They sat at the same table and became fast friends.

Norma is a born “volunteer.” She volunteered to work on the 2009 and 2010 NCPA conferences handling the venue, menu and event schedule. She also established and gathered donations for the silent auction and raffle. She is proud of her efforts and the giving spirit of the NCPA membership as \$375.00 in proceeds went to The Mustard Seed School in 2009 and \$525.00 to the Children’s Receiving Home in 2010.

When the annual conferences ended, so did the silent auction and raffle, until Norma re-established them for the 2012/13 Awards Banquet—this time for a student scholarship of \$350.00 in 2014.

Norma says, “Thanks to my very generous donors, and the help of our NCPA Board Members, we increased the scholarship to \$1,000 at the 2013/14 AB that was given to Tia Jenkins in 2015.” Our very industrious Norma, was born and raised in Sacramento and moved to Clearlake Oaks at the age of seven. She returned to Sacramento after high school to attend American River College.

After reading her professional history, I realize why she is so good at “juggling” so many NCPA functions and positions. At one point in her life, as a single-mom, she worked SEVEN different part-time and/or seasonal jobs, all at the same time! Her varied and colorful early work history includes waitress, cashier, secretary, typist, transcriptionist salesperson, and store supervisor. Always looking for the chance for upward mobility, Norma obtained work for Sacramento County and worked in the Sheriff’s Department, the District Attorney’s office, Fugitive’s Division, a short time at the court house transcribing for Family Court Services, became secretary in the SACA (sexual assaults and child abuse division) and **then** she became an Eligibility Worker for the Sacramento County Welfare Department—retiring after twenty-six years. And this is just a brief synopsis of her work experience!

Norma shares that she was married twice. Both times to police officers. Years after a divorce from her first husband, she married Wayne, the love of her life. Wayne worked with the Sacramento Police Department. She had two children at the time and he had four. Norma says, “When we got married, the six lived with us, giving us a total of six children, ages three to thirteen. We eventually wound up with 14 grandkids and 9 great grandchildren ... so far.” Sadly, Norma lost Wayne to cancer in 2005, after 33 years of marriage.

In terms of her writing experience, Norma shares that her genre is “Heinz-57”—nonfiction (cat stories), humor (slices of life), rhyming children’s stories, rhymes, cooking (cookbooks), & doodling - doodle-art adult & children’s color books.

She has eight books self-published through LULU.com:

- *"Nonie's 1st Big Bottom Girls' Rio Linda Cook Book 2012"*
- *"Candy & More Sweet Stuff: Nonie's BBG's Rio Linda 2014 Cook Book"*
- *"Cookies, Cakes & More BAKED Sweet Stuff: Nonie's BBG's Rio Linda 2015 Cook Book"*
- *Nosie Rosie's Diary Year I (Cat's Diary) (Sep 2003-Sep 2004): TRILOGY*
- *Nonie's 1st Cat Anthology: "Kitty-Cat Tales & Kitty-Cat Kisses ... from Rio Linda"*

- *Nonie's 1st Wet Kitty Kisses Anthology From Rio Linda ... (short slices of life stories)*
- *Noniedoodles Adult Color Books 1, 2 & 3 : 2015*
- *Noniedoodles Color Books 1, 2 & 3 : 2015*

Her story, “*Love Never Dies*,” was published in an Inspirational Harlequin Book Anthology, *A Kiss under the Mistletoe*, compiled by Jennifer Basye Sander. Norma wrote about the gift her husband gave her on his death bed. And, her short story, “*The Challenge*,” was included in NCPA’s 1st Anthology, *Prose & Poetry*.

When asked about her future goals for NCPA, she said, “I want to continue having great monthly guest speakers, make each annual Awards Banquet a success, and I want to re-establish the NCPA Conference—at least every other year, if not annually. If fact, thanks to great leadership within NCPA things are coming along smoothly for a potential 2016 NCPA Conference in either August or October 2016!”

—Linda Bello-Ruiz, Editor

Upcoming NCPA Meetings Mark Your Calendars!

- **SATURDAY, September 12, 2015** ~ Networking. Bring a copy of your book, your business cards and/or sample of your work to share with other NCPA members. You’ll have extended time for self-introduction, getting acquainted, and time for all those questions you have on anything writing and publishing related.
- **SATURDAY, October, 10, 2015** ~ to be announced. Look for more info in an email, or on the website closer to the meeting date.

Thanks go to Norma Jean Thornton for her energetic, creative, and effective recruitment of speakers and selection of topics for our meetings.

Norma Jean adds, “If you have any suggestions for guest speakers, and/or topics, please let me know (normathornton@yahoo.com). I’ll do what I can to make it happen.”

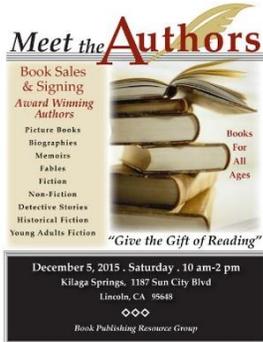
News from the NCPA Board

Vice-President: The Board of Directors is happy to report that Richard Steele is our new Vice President, replacing Amy Rogers who is now Treasurer.

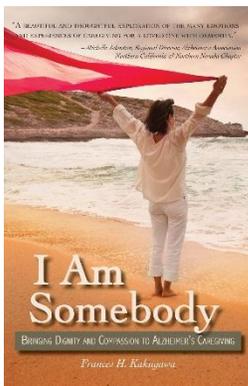
Student Scholarship Chair: Kimberly Edwards has accepted the Student Scholarship Chair position for 2016.

❖ The Board is looking to fill the *Membership* position, currently held by President, Sharon Darrow, and the *Newsletter Editor* position which will be vacant as of December 31st.

News from Members



Mark your calendars. NCPA authors will join authors from the Book Publishing Resource Group of Sun City Lincoln Hills for a group book signing on December 5th. This event of **23 authors** will begin at 10:00 a.m. in the Kilaga Springs Multipurpose Room located inside the SCLH community in Lincoln. Autographed books make GREAT holiday gifts! Contact Linda Bello-Ruiz for more details if needed.

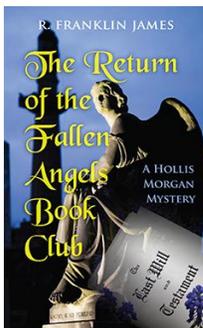


Frances Kakugawa signed a year's contract with Oceanic Time Warner and Core Group One to appear as herself in *Talks with Frances* in their newly created TV channel iAge. Five segments have been filmed in Hawaii and the first segment was launched on July 1st.

She's also proud to announce that one of her *Wordsworth the Poet* children's series is now an animated film on Oceanic. Her fourth *Wordsworth* book is due out in September.

And that's not all. Much to her delight, Frances's *Dear Frances* advice column for caregivers in the Hawai'i Herald has increased subscriptions, and her book *Teacher You Look Like a Horse* sold over 6,000 copies in China when published in Beijing.

Frances returns to Hawaii in the fall to speak at a Health Conference and at the Medical School, among other events on four islands. At one of the conferences, she will be receiving an award for her work with elders.



Author Rae James (writing as R. Franklin James) released *The Return of the Fallen Angels Book Club*, her third book in the Hollis Morgan Mystery Series. Rae will be signing her books at the Colorado Gold Conference next month in Denver, where she will also be teaching a writing craft course, *Subplots-A Writer's Best Friend*.



Local El Dorado Hills author, Sherry Joyce, had the thrill of a lifetime when she met Kevin Costner during his sold-out performance at the Harris Performing Arts Theatre in Folsom, on Saturday August 8th.

When Sherry wrote the novel, *THE DORDOGNE DECEPTION*, she needed exactly the right middle-aged detective to inspire her and she chose Kevin to play the part of Brett Maxfield. She knew Brett had to be undeniably handsome, have a shrewd investigative style, a laid-back approach to life, but most of all, because the book is a story about growing through loss and finding true love, Brett had to be sincere and compassionate.

Sherry says, “When I met Kevin at the theatre performance, I was beyond excited. He asked me why I had chosen him to play the part of Brett Maxfield in my book. That was easy, I told him that no one else could.”

The protagonist Kevin plays in her book, is a retired Scotland Yard detective from Wisconsin, who lost his wife to cancer. A dear friend of his (Raleigh Aubrey) who was much like a father figure, dies of an improbable accident. Brett comes out of retirement to investigate the accident, and learns his friend was murdered.

The heroine in the novel, Cherise Eden, a successful executive in San Francisco, flees to the Dordogne, the Perigord region of France to start a new life after an unexpected divorce. Brett’s investigation takes him from the Cotswolds, to Switzerland, then Bordeaux and ultimately to the Dordogne as the investigation and clues unravel.

Sherry notes, “I was able to write a dedication inside my book and explain this all to Kevin, who hopefully will be reading the book on his tour bus.”

The Dordogne is available on Amazon. Sherry Joyce’s author website: <http://sherryjoyce.com>



Tom Kando wrote the text to a new book of gouaches and aquarelles by his mother, Ata Kando. The book is titled *Little Workers* and contains twelve watercolors painted by Ata when she was a student at the Bortnyk Art Academy. Tom’s text provides biographical anecdotes about Ata’s life as a starving artist in Budapest,

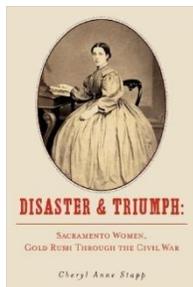
Barcelona, Paris and elsewhere. It was published in July 2015 by the First Bookstore of Bergen, Netherlands.

The aquarelles featured in *Little Worker* depict men and women applying themselves to various professions ranging from gardening, farming, construction, carpentry, printing and newspaper making, to laundry washing. They exude the youthful socialist idealism of that time--the prominence of the color red, the homage to labor, even the proverbial hammer and sickle of the Soviet flag. But done in a style infinitely nicer than social realism!

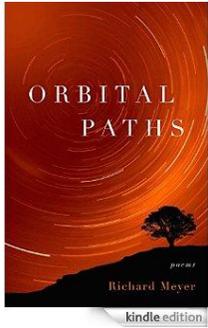


Tom shares, “Ata Kando has been a renown photographer for most of her life. Her work includes fairytale-like books, major *reportages* about industry and world events like the 1956 Hungarian revolution, magnificent work about native Americans, whale hunts and animal rights, high-fashion 1950s Paris pictures of Dior and Givenchy, retrospective anthologies plus countless other publications in major papers, magazines, and exhibits all over the world.

Less well known is that Ata Kando started her career as a graphic artist and a would-be painter, not as a photographer. In 1929, as a young adult, she enrolled at the Sándor Bortnyik Műhely (lit. “workshop”) academy, then widely recognized as the center of Bauhaus studies in Budapest.”



Cheryl Stapp, Author of the award-winning *Disaster & Triumph - Sacramento Women, Gold Rush Through the Civil War*, is teaching a class on Sacramento history at the Learning Exchange on Howe Ave on September 10. This is a ninety minute event, and she'll be selling books to the students after the event.



ScienceThrillers Media announces the release of *Orbital Paths*, poems by Richard Meyer, winner of the 2012 Robert Frost Farm Prize and the 2014 String Poet Prize.

In the lyrical tradition of Robert Frost and Emily Dickinson, the finely crafted poems in Richard Meyer's debut collection *Orbital Paths* are brimming with wisdom and wit. Accessible and begging to be read out loud, these poems travel from the depths of outer space to the backyards and back roads of Minnesota with mature (and often playful) insights into nature, relationships, religion, sex, life, death, mythology, and more.

"Meyer is a siren. Just try to put this collection down." –Nicole Helget, author of *Wonder at the Edge of the World*, *Stillwater* and *The Summer of Ordinary Ways*.

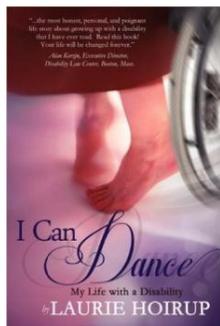
"Rich language and metrical music draw us in...[T]he poet's eye moves easily from wash hanging on the clothesline to meteors screaming through space. Anchoring it all is a cosmic sense of humor. The effect is enchanting."—John Thavis, author of the New York Times bestseller *The Vatican Diaries*.

"[These] companionable poems begin in wisdom and end in delight."—David Yezzi, author of *Birds of the Air*

Publication date: September 28, 2015

Available in hardcover (\$23.99), paperback (\$13.99), and ebook (\$5.99)

For an advance review copy or media requests, contact Amy@ScienceThrillersMedia.com



Laurie Hoirup, author of *I Can Dance* shares: "It has been an interesting summer in terms of my book and my writing. For the month of July, I spent four days at the Author's Corner at the California State Fair, which is always a wonderful experience both for selling books and for meeting some amazing people. Of course, there is also the time spent with fellow authors, which is the icing on the cake. In August, I participated in two events related to my disability and I am planning to attend a couple of county fairs in September and several disability awareness venues in October. So I continue to stay busy with marketing, while at the same time trying to get my second book, *Being Different is Okay*, into print. It is written and edited, but I'm still working on getting the illustrations finished. I am hoping to be published by the end of the year."

News from California Writers Club

Coming to Sacramento
California Writers Club, Sacramento Branch
Saturday, September 19

Nina Amir, Author, Blogger, Coach
Get On Your Author Attitude and Craft a Bestseller!
Prep Yourself and Your Book Idea for Success

Whether you write fiction or nonfiction, book-length or shorter pieces, vital clues are coming to Sacramento in the name of Nina Amir, author of *How to Blog a Book* and *The Author Training Manual* (Writers Digest Books).

The average book today sells about 250 copies per year and 3,000 total. Amir will tell you how to improve the odds by producing a business plan before you write even a word. Develop an Author Attitude, craft a marketable book idea, and evaluate your idea and yourself through an acquisitions editor's lens.

With 17 books under her belt and as many as four on the Amazon Top 100 list at the same time, Amir knows ways to sell books, land deals with major publishing houses, and create a thriving business. Her Author Training Process covers a nine-step tool that helps authors to determine if their book is ready for market—to be shopped to agents, publishers or readers—and how to prepare to “become” an author.

Amir will talk about how to use parts of a book proposal as a process for training in both the creative and the business aspects of writing and publishing a book and creating a business plan. This session is appropriate for writers planning to self-publish as well as to publish traditionally.

Meeting takeaways:

- ❖ Learn how to discover if your idea is marketable.
- ❖ Find out how to decide if you are cut out to write and market a successful book.
- ❖ Find out if you are an attractive publishing partner or savvy indie publisher.
- ❖ Discover what publishers and readers want.
- ❖ Learn how to produce a successful book.
- ❖ Take the nine steps in the “proposal process.”
- ❖ See through an acquisitions editor's eyes.
- ❖ Find out why you shouldn't write your book as soon as you get the idea.
- ❖ Learn how to be the business partner a publisher seeks.

Meeting Details: Where/When: Cattlemens Restaurant, 12409 Folsom Blvd., Rancho Cordova, Hwy 50 at Hazel, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Meeting fee: Members: \$17/Guests: \$20; lunch included www.cwcsacramentowriters.org

10 Productivity Tips for Serious Writers

Jerry Jenkins, an American novelist and biographer, is best known as co-author of the *Left Behind* series of books with Tim LaHaye. Jerry Jenkins has written over 180 books, including mysteries, historical fiction, biblical fiction, cop thrillers, international spy thrillers, and children's adventures, as well as non-fiction. I have followed his Blog for years, and share with you his thoughts on being a productive writer: Linda Bello-Ruiz

1. **Write in a life-giving place.** When my writing cave was a hotel room or some other remote location, my time away from my wife Dianna was far less productive because it was so lonely. Nowadays, my writing cave is 100 feet from the house, so we're together for meals or whenever I need a break or just want to see her. And when I'm done writing each day, she is my reward.
2. **Know your body clock.** First thing in the morning is the best time for me to write, before anything else has begun to cloud my brain. What I write before noon is usually my best work, and the most I'll complete all day. If you're a night person, write at night.
3. **Write rested.** Whether you're a morning person or a night person, both, or neither, write when you feel most rested. But don't wait until you're completely cogent, coherent, and inspired or you may never get to the keyboard. You get better by flexing those writing muscles.
4. **Set daily milestones.** I know how many pages I need to finish each day to make my deadline. If you keep track by number of words, fine. But monitor your progress for that satisfying sense of accomplishment—and, more importantly, to stay on pace.
5. **Tap into your muse.** Ideas seem to hit me most often in the shower. Maybe the water stimulates my brain. I learned years ago to trust what some call the Muse. My muse is spiritual, that vital part of the creative subconscious I have surrendered to God. Foreshadowing and plot threads appear as I write. I may not be sure at the time why I include certain things, but later in the manuscript, the reasons become obvious. It's important to know where your muse resides and to be able to access it.
6. **Talk out your story.** Many writers, primarily novelists, fear losing their creativity if they utter even a word of their story before getting it written. I find, however, that

when I tell my story to someone I trust, I tend to expand on it, embellish it, flesh it out. Try that and see if works for you.

7. **Jump-start the process instead of staring at a blank screen or page.** Like stretching before exercise, I start my writing day with a heavy edit and rewrite of my previous day's work. That seamlessly catapults me into today's writing.
8. **Turn off your internal editor.** Once you're into the new day's writing, leave its revision to the next day and get that first draft produced. Consider it a hunk of meat that can be carved later. If you're editing while trying to create, you'll stifle your creativity.
9. **Know when to stop.** If things go well and I reach my goal before noon, I resist the temptation to try to knock out another batch of pages to make the next day easier. That's it for the day. But on the other hand, if for some reason it takes till midnight to finish my pages for today, I stay with it. I don't want to fall behind and be forced to write more tomorrow.
10. **Stay at the task.** It's easy to beat ourselves up for falling behind or not producing at the level we or our editors) expect. The solution? Get your seat back in that chair and tell yourself yesterday is gone. Today is spilling over with fresh, pristine hours, and nothing—I mean nothing—will feel as good as actually *doing the work*.

Jerry B. Jenkins

JerryJenkins.com; Jerry@JerryJenkins.com

Other Notices

- ❖ The Capitol Crimes Chapter of Sisters in Crime will host special guest, Nancy Pickard on November 21, 2015. Nancy is a US crime novelist. She has won five Macavity Awards, four Agatha Awards, an Anthony Award, and a Shamus Award. She is the only author to win all four awards. She also served on the board of directors of the Mystery Writers of America.

Join Sisters of Crime on November 21, 2015 at 1:00 at the Rancho Cordova Library Community Room and hear Nancy talk about writing suspense and mysteries.

- ❖ Know someone who is looking for quality assisted living? Be sure to ask for a tour of our monthly meeting host, Brookdale.
- ❖ Searching for a special used book, or looking for bargains on reading material? Check out 2010 NCPA Conference sponsor Time-Tested Books, 1114 21st Street, Sacramento, CA 95811. See <http://timetestedbooks.net/> for more information.

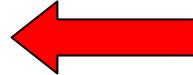
❖ Your notice or announcement could go here!

A Note from the Editor

Send your articles and announcements for the newsletter to Linda Bello-Ruiz at lbello Ruiz@gmail.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 close of business, **Thursday, October 22, 2015**. Please submit material, especially anything longer than a brief notice, well before the deadline. 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 Linda Bello-Ruiz.

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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.

—Linda Bello-Ruiz, editor

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

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