



Throughline



Newsletter of the *California Writers Club-North State Branch (NSW)* Volume 2, Issue 1, February 2016

NSW promotes the art and craft of writing across genres, connecting writers, editors, illustrators, publishers, reviewers, agents, and others interested in the continual renewal of creative thought and the written word.



FEBRUARY SPEAKER – February 15, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. - **Media Workshop for Writers and Authors** at Shenanigan’s Bar & Grill (corner of Esplanade & Tona Way)

Join us for a reporter’s forum and workshop with Mary Nugent and Kyra Evans, Chico Enterprise Record reporters. Learn the do’s , don’ts and how-to’s when interviewing with the media.

March Speaker: Teresa LeYung Ryan, Margie Yee Web and Elsa “Sasa” Southard have agreed to speak at the March 2016 meeting of North State Writers regarding Author Branding.

April Speaker: To be announced

Notice of Still Photography, Video/Audio Recording: North State Writers, is providing this notice to inform members and guests at our events that Still Photography will be taking place and Video and/or Audio Recording may be taking place. By entering the venue, members and guests are granting permission that their likeness may be used for publicity purposes.

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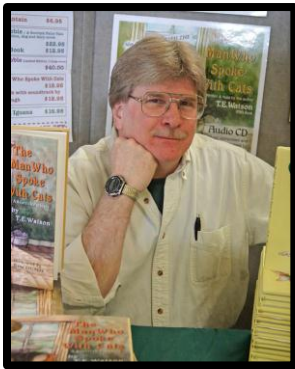
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Recently, I was asked by one of our members a question about our NSW Newsletter, The Throughline.

They asked, “Why would anyone want to read what I have to write? I am just a beginning writer. Why would anyone want to read an article I wrote?”

It did not take me long to explain to them why writing an article is not only vital to the content of the newsletter, and to our members’ knowledge base, but to the feeling of expression and need to share we as writers have.

When I was teaching, I placed an exercise on the board that expressed a thought that said. “There is no one in this room smarter than all of us.” Then the kids had to think about it and tell the rest of the class why they thought this was right or wrong. The statement is correct. Not one of us, even those who have been authors for many years, and have many works published, can know everything.

Authors and writers are a curious bunch. We need to know everything we can about everything we can. It is in our being. We cannot help it. It runs in your blood. It is the times at 3 in the morning when you must get up and find that one piece of research that has been nagging you to complete the work you have so diligently slaved over. The times when every writer sacrifices the togetherness of family and forgetting about dinners because you will “Be there in a minute dear”. (Believe me I cannot tell you how many times I have had a meal I needed to reheat in the microwave) all because of my need to write.

The need to write for our newsletter is one of those items that gives us, each and every one of us, the drive to share what we know, no matter what it is, regarding writing. There is not one person with ALL the knowledge of what we do.

Everyone has experienced a different journey, made mistakes, done great things successfully, messed up and given up, but somehow we came back stronger. It is those of us who have ended up on a completely different path entirely, and done the work we never thought we could.

There are those of us that feel intimidated by the process or by others who have succeeded. I have to tell you there are times when I just wanted to quit. (That is a different topic) but I am still here, and I am here because someone shared their writing and helped me keep going. They had a topic that was there when I needed it.

You as writers have wonderful ideas and processes floating in your minds. You have knowledge that others do not. It is okay to share it with others. If it is not what they need at the time, that's okay, other's will need it and they may need it later!

The best suggestion I ever got was when I was 8 years old, from a man I will always admire. He said this and I will never forget it: "Write what you know, and you 'll always succeed."

Follow this and you will always have topics and articles to write and submit. They will become endless.

Share what you know. After all, that is what writing is about.

Thanks

Tom Watson
President, *North State Writers*
Branch 21-California Writers Club



Photo courtesy of Kathi Hiatt at our January 2016 meeting, speaker was Quincy Tatum, manager at the Chico State Bookstore.

EDITOR'S CORNER



If you are a Romance novelist February is your month. With Valentine's day looming it might be a good time to use Romance as a writing prompt and work what emerges into your current writing project.

The NSW board and committee members have been hard at work. We've started some enhancements to our web presence and will be asking that members provide us with a photo and an author bio. Our intention is to have each member listed along with information regarding works they have done and

links to your own website. I would recommend perusing some of the bios listed on other CWC branch websites for ideas on creating your own bio.

Plans for the "All About Books" fair at The Paradise Chocolate Fest are progressing. Signup forms and information will be passed out at our next regular meeting. This fair is an amazing opportunity to get your name out there in the community and improve your skills in selling your works. Do you have a 1 minute "Elevator" speech ready?

What's an elevator speech you say? According to UC Davis.edu it is defined as follows:

"An **elevator speech** is a clear, brief message or "commercial" about you. It communicates who you are, what you're looking for and how you can benefit a company or organization. It's typically about 30 seconds, the time it takes people to ride from the top to the bottom of a building in an elevator."

Look for more ideas on developing your own elevator speech in next month's issue.



Linda Sue Forrister
NSW Newsletter Editor

Have a great month Writing!

MEMBER MILESTONES

New NSW Members

Join us in officially welcoming members who were recently approved as NSW members

- Cathy Chase - associate - science fiction
 - Janice Condon - active - children's books
 - Marsha Dowd - associate – fiction
 - Marie Haggard - associate – fiction
 - Nancy Leek - active - history/biography
 - Naty Natividad - active/dual membership with Mendocino - children's books
- This brings us to 43 paid members!



FREE BOOK ALERT!!!!

NSW member, Heidi Nalley, just released an eBook on marketing for authors. *Reserve My Room at The Asylum: Marketing Makes Me Crazy* is available on AmazonBooks.com for 99-cents **but**, for a limited time, she is offering it to NSW members for free. To download, go to: <http://www.thatchernalley.com/about-us.html>

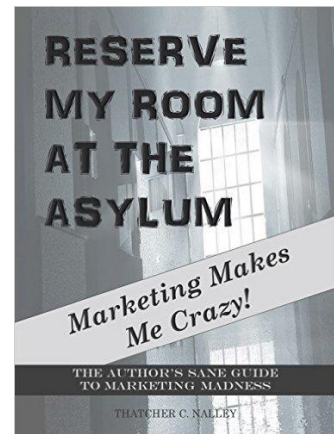


NSW member, Heidi Nalley (pen name, Thatcher C. Nalley) is the author of three psychological fiction novels and, more recently, has shared her knowledge on marketing in her new book titled *Reserve My Room at The Asylum: Marketing Makes Me Crazy*. Heidi sold over 10,000 copies of her first novel *LETTERS FROM THE LOONEY BIN* within just eight months from its release and this novel since August has remained as [#1 Best Seller](#) on Amazon in its category. Her third novel *THE LITTLE GIRL* recently topped in its category as #2 Best Seller on Amazon.

To find out more about Heidi and the books she has authored go to <http://www.thatchernalley.com/>.

RESERVE MY ROOM AT THE ASYLUM: MARKETING MAKES ME CRAZY!

The easy and effective guide for authors who find self-marketing to be a maddening experience! Designed to provide creative simple steps and low cost/no cost ways in making the promoting process a little saner (and successful)!



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Cindy Young
Reporter, North State Writers

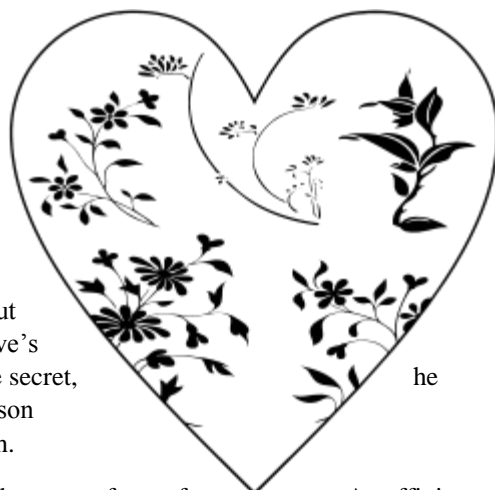
Steve Ferchaud, Artist/Illustrator

In 2007, I purchased the first Paradise Chocolate Fest Cookbook for two reasons: first to support this great cause, and secondly, I had fallen in love with the artwork that graced the section dividers, in particular, the whimsical illustration for 'Candy and Confection', by the award-winning artist (The Carpenter's Legacy), Steve Ferchaud.

Ferchaud has been gifting the North State with his delightful illustrations for several decades. You may recognize his work in the thirty-plus beautifully illustrated children's books and more than fifteen book covers. Others know Steve's work from the Butte County Library Limited Edition print, which they later made into a jigsaw puzzle for their fundraisers, or from the whimsical labels for Butte Creek Brewing Company or Butte View and Capay Olive Companies.

At an early age, Ferchaud's talent shined. His father told an impressed kindergarten teacher that, as some children never crawl before walking, Steve's talent never crawled; it was present from the beginning. His parents supported and encouraged his endeavors and he was never at a loss for art supplies and art books. As an illustrator, Steve prefers watercolor and pen/ink to other media because these allow speed. Ideas come to him quickly and fly onto the paper.

Ferchaud always wanted to be an Artist. However, he also had this secret desire to be a comedy writer and performer. Steve's humor extends throughout his drawings. He loves to laugh, and better, to make others laugh. One of Steve's favorite sidelines is to be hired for an evening or day to draw caricatures. The secret, says, is to make the drawing unique: 'more muscular' or 'sexier' than the person appears. This makes the recipient laugh, smile and happy. Steve likes to laugh.



he art. An affinity to gnomes and fantasy guides Steve's style "Because there are no rules!" Steve has always appreciated the story, detail and honesty in Norman Rockwell's art. Once when viewing a Rockwell exhibit, he wondered, "What if Rockwell painted fantasy?" Consequently, Steve's work reflects this strong 'Rockwellian' influence.

When hired to illustrate books, there is a lot of weight on the artist to perceive what the author has in mind. With a cover, the illustrator has only one picture to be able to capture the book's essence. "When you worked on the book cover for *The King's Frog Hunter* (Ken Young), you dialed in immediately to both the core of the story and what the author wanted, and you only had one and ½ chapters to go by. What is the key you look for in a client and their writing to be able to get to the heart of what is wanted? *"I Listen! That is critical. We walk through similar genre books at the bookstore and I watch their faces to see what images excite them. I try some sketches. And, if I miss the target, I don't take it personal."*

When asked what a client can bring to the table that makes the best working relationship, Ferchaud responds quickly and simply: The client has a clear vision of what they want—as opposed to the perfectionist who does not know what they want. A perfectionist is ok, if s/he knows what s/he wants.

Steve's talents are not confined to paint and canvas. During his stand-up comedy period, he wrote and co-wrote plays. So, I could not hold back the question, "Why not write and illustrate your own books?"

His response: "I am." Ferchaud is hoping to complete three different types of books and have them out by the end of 2016. *Leaf Painter* is a children's story about a gnome who ... paints leaves. The other is a Christmas story, done in the Graphic Novel format for kids. The third story will be in the teen/adult category.

Asked if he will self-publish, "I already have the name for my publishing company. Ferchaud is French.

It means 'hot iron'. [Therefore,] 'Hot Iron Publishing'. This fulfills a promise I made to my dad."

I am already in line to buy all three books for my nephew and niece for this coming Christmas!

To reach Steve Ferchaud, you will find his contact info on his website: <http://steveferchaud.com/>

ARTICLES FROM MEMBERS

BEGINNINGS- Let us hear the first couple of lines from your novel or writing project, this can be either an existing work or something you are working on. Please email the newsletter editor at lindasueforrister@att.net

From “The Last Word” by Kathi Hiatt

“No!” Papa said. His dark eyes narrowed into a glare. Two deep creases formed at the bridge of his nose and the smile that had been there seconds earlier, disappeared.

“But...” she argued.

“No buts.”

Seven-year old Nellie Plunket sat Indian style on the gold shag carpet, her back to Papa. Pale blue eyes fought back tears as she stared at the Magnavox console looming in front of her. She knew a verbal disagreement with Papa would have been defined as ‘sass’ and ended with a painful swat to her butt. Her only option was to fume in stony, cold silence. The purple lace decorating the hem of her baby doll pajamas tickled the tops of her crossed knees. She tugged at the too small top in an unsuccessful attempt to pull it over the exposed skin on her legs. Her nana had sewn the pajamas for her birthday and she had already outgrown them, but she didn’t care. They were her favorites, even if the elastic on the panty style bottoms did leave ugly indentations around her thighs.

BOOK COVERS

Reported by Rick Hubbard

“More books perish from bad cover design than bad writing.”

—Heather Lyon

April 2014

During North State Writers’ Inaugural Holiday Fete (14 Dec 2015), an oft-discussed topic in our authorial coterie—book covers—took a surprising...and surprisingly informative...twist.

“Have you heard about ‘Lousy Book Covers?’” Marie Haggard asked. “It’s a fabulous resource,” Graphics Designer Cebrina Nell added.

“No—but the name alone is...genius!”

<http://lousybookcovers.com/> is a gem of a resource. “LBC” merits the thoughtful attention and purposeful consideration of every author, publisher, designer, marketer, etc. Roughly in the same category as another “MUST READ, STUDY and UNDERSTAND” resource—the venerable QueryShark (<http://queryshark.blogspot.com/>)—<http://lousybookcovers.com> is an exemplar of “show, don’t tell” regarding why the cover of your book is so important.

Should any author retain a smidge of lingering belief regarding the wisdom of slapping a self-designed book cover on the front of their work (“Oh, you must have saved a lot of money creating your book cover in Microsoft Word. Very frugal...and, it’ll be fine...after all, as they say: ‘don’t judge a book by its cover!’ Must say...your choice of colors, fonts, and images—well, ah—clearly differentiate you from any competition, that’s for sure!”)...

...will benefit—as all NSW Members will—by taking a look at: <http://lousybookcovers.com/>.

LBC is home to one competition you don’t want to win...nor be entered as a contestant.

Save yourself immeasurable grief, time and cost: check out: <http://lousybookcovers.com/>.

Editor’s Note: *Local artists that can assist with cover design include Steve Ferchaud mentioned in our member spotlight section, If for some reason you choose not to use a local artist you might want to check out <http://www.selfpubbookcovers.com/>, <http://www.bookcoverdesignfor300dollars.com/> or <http://bookdesign.ca/> to search for your cover design.*

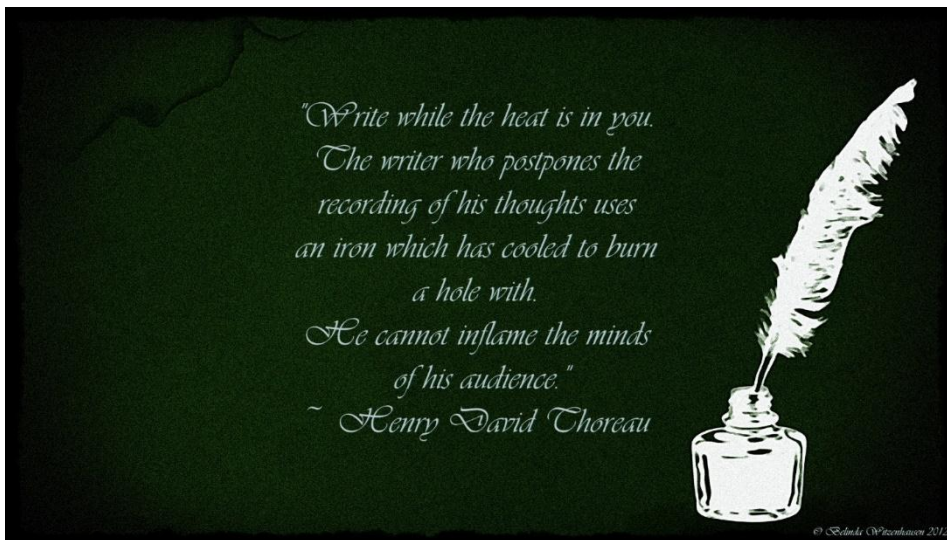
ITEMS OF INTEREST



CHALLENGE OF THE MONTH

Burr, it's still cold outside so keep stretching inside. Have you shared anything with the group yet? Sign up for a committee or to speak at a meeting. Share your experiences with marketing or present a question to the group.

GREAT QUOTES



COMMITTEES

Robin Waters, and Nick Hanson, our committee for the [“All About Books”](#) book fair on May 7th, 2016 continue their preparations. Additional information will be provided at our next meeting, additional information, including an application form can also be found on the website for The Paradise Chocolate Fest.

The Paradise Chocolate Fest invites regional authors, illustrators and publishers to join the festivities of the 2016 Fest, in a fun-filled celebration.

- **Connecting Authors, Illustrators & Publishers to the Community**
- Book Signings & Sales
- Authors Panel
- Writing Contest
- Story Book Readings – “Storybook Characters Leap off the Pages & Come to Life!”

NSW BOARD NEWS

The last NSW Board meeting was held on January 6, 2016.

STATE & BRANCH NEWS & EVENTS

Advertising Opportunities Available in “The Bulletin”

The first 2016 issue of the new electronic *CWC Bulletin* will be coming out in February. The deadline for submitting advertising is January 29, 2016.

This is a way for *CWC* members, authors, and guest speakers to reach a large target audience of writers in a state-wide publication that goes out to nearly 2,000 writers.

The cost is very reasonable: Just \$35 for a 2x3.5 business card size ad; a 3x5 Index Card size for just \$60, and a 5x7 for \$90. Full details can be obtained by visiting <http://calwriters.org/advertising-in-the-bulletin/>

So if you have a book or writing service to promote, hesitate no longer! The Bulletin is an extraordinary way to get the word out to others with an interest in writing.

SACRAMENTO BRANCH

The Sacramento Branch of the California Writers Club is one of 19 branches located throughout California. The Sacramento Branch has monthly luncheon meetings at 11:00 a.m. the 3rd Saturday of every month

SOUTH BAY WRITERS

South Bay Branch regularly adds prompts to their website at <http://southbaywriters.com/wordpress/writing-prompts/>

We are collecting submissions with the hope of publishing an anthology if enough material is submitted to each prompt. All members of CWC in good standing are welcome to participate. Please send all submissions and inquiries to prompts@southbaywriters.com.

You might already be familiar with our Dollar Bill prompt:

<http://southbaywriters.com/wordpress/prompt-one-dollar/>

Length: 1,000 - 2,000 words

Deadline: March 31, 2016

We have published a second prompt today:

Vignettes

<http://southbaywriters.com/wordpress/prompt-vignettes/>

Genre: Every genre is welcome

Point of view: Third-person objective

Length: 20 - 2,000 words

Deadline: April 30, 2016



TOOLS FOR WRITERS

WRITING PROMPTS

Try using pictures to kick start your imagination. Pick up a magazine (or several), look for an image that interests you, study it for a few minutes then do a 10 or 15-minute fast write about what the picture brings to mind. What emotion does it evoke? What action is occurring? What story leads up to the photo and what happens after it is taken? Describe the characters or scenery. Now turn that fast write into an outline for a story and fill in the gaps...sounds like a good start to your next project.

10 MISTAKES A NEW AUTHOR MAKES (AND HOW TO AVOID THEM)

[NANCY L. ERICKSON](#)

Last month we had details on the first five new author mistakes, following is a recap of those and the details for the next five.

1. Thinks he has an original idea (but doesn't)
2. Loves the sound of her own writing
3. Thinks writing a book will be easy
4. Doesn't know how to begin
5. Limits his language and fails to expand his writing style
6. Misuses grammar and punctuation

You may not understand the rules of grammar and punctuation, but that doesn't mean others don't. They do, and they'll spot your mistakes in a flash. There are strict rules for both grammar and punctuation, and you had better sharpen those skills if you don't want to be dismissed as an amateur.

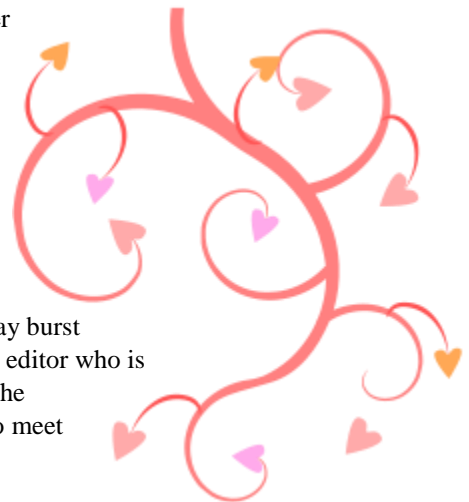
7. Doesn't invest in necessary resources

Do you need help with grammar and punctuation? Hire an editor. Are you unsure if there are mistakes in your manuscript? Hire a proofreader. If you plan to self-publish, hire a professional cover designer and interior designer. Just because you can do everything yourself, it doesn't mean you should. Publishing is a specialized, professional industry, and you should work with professionals.

8. Trusts the opinions of friends and family

Friends and family are wonderful, but are likely compromised when it comes to offering you objective feedback. To put it bluntly, when it comes to your book, their opinion shouldn't count. They are inexperienced, care too much about your feelings, and may only tell you what you want to hear. Perhaps even worse, they may burst your bubble and steal your confidence. Seek an outside opinion from a professional editor who is trained to critique writing. But brace yourself – this might sting! If you do employ the services of a professional, you should be prepared to make the suggested changes to meet professional standards.

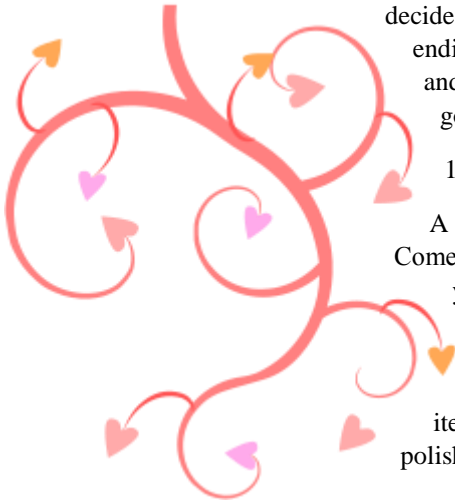
9. Doesn't know how to end the book



Just as your opening line is important, the ending can make or break a book. How and where do you stop? You must decide if you want to tie your story in a neat bow or allow it to continue. Write three or four endings, then choose the one that is most satisfying. Tie up loose strings on all subplots, and revisit those foundational questions to be sure you've accomplished your stated goals.

10. Sets arbitrary deadlines

A new author often sets unreasonable deadlines, then latches onto them for dear life. Come hell or high water, you're going to get your book finished by Christmas, or the new year, or by any other manufactured deadline that has nothing to do with the book itself. Know this: by the time you're in the home stretch, you're going to be sick of your book. You may even hate it. But that doesn't mean that you push it out the door just to get rid of it. Pull back and be thorough with every edit and research item. Exercise firm discipline and slow down so you can produce a professional and polished manuscript and become an author, not just another writer.



BETA READERS

Interested in locating a Beta Reader? Email your newsletter editor at lindasueforrister@gmail.com with details on your project including genre, approximate length and what you would expect from your reader.

Interested in being a Beta Reader? Email your newsletter editor with the genre you would be interested in reading so we can match you up with someone's project.

EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

Children's Storytime

Twice a week
Saturday 2:00 pm
Wednesday 11:00 am
Barnes & Noble
2031 Martin Luther King Jr Pkwy., Chico, CA 95928

Poetry Reading

Third Thursday of every month, 6:30 pm
The Bookstore, 118 Main St., Chico, CA 95926

Writing Workshops/Conferences/Festivals Directory

February 11 – 16, 2016 SF Writers Conference, Mark Hopkins Hotel in San Francisco. www.SFWriters.org

April 2016 – Butte College Word Spring Conference – more information will be provided when it becomes available.

May 7, 2016 9:00 am to 5:00 pm "All About Books" at The Terry Ashe Park & Recreation Center, 6626 Skyway, Paradise, CA

October 31, 2016 Kauai Writers Conference - Take advantage of discounted prices (until March 1) for Master Classes taught by top authors and literary agents from October 31 through November 3, 2016. Then, the Kauai Writers Conference runs from November 4 through 6. The three days are packed with presentations by best-selling authors, top literary agents, and publishing professionals. Attend the events separately or together. For more information, go to kauaiwritersconference.com.

October 15–18, 2020 Bouchercon World Mystery conference – Coming to Sacramento October 15–18, 2020. "Where Murder Is a Capitol Crime"
Distinguished Guest of Honor: Anne Perry
Local Guest of Honor: Cara Black

CONTESTS

[2016 Short Short Story Contest](#) – Sacramento Branch of California Writers Club – see their website for details.

[Winningwriters.com](#) has a list of both contents to join as well as contests to avoid. It's worth a trip to their website to check it out.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

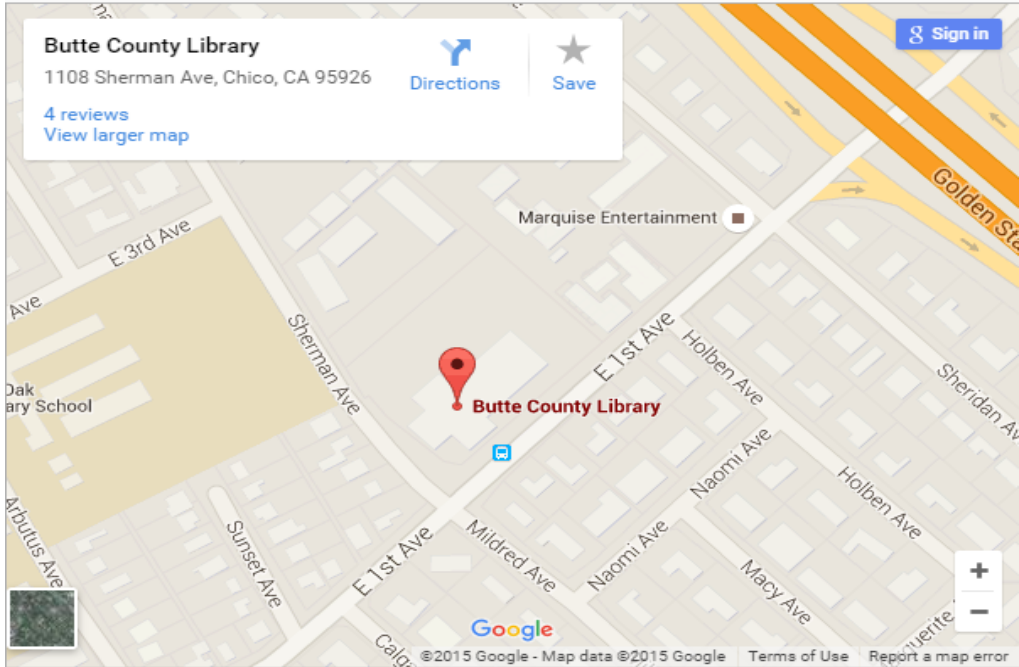
The deadline for newsletter content is the 25th of each month. Content submitted after this date may be saved for a subsequent issue. The Editorial Committee will review submitted material before selecting items to be included in each issue. The editor or *NSW* board may edit the material for length and content. Please email submissions to the Newsletter Editor, Linda Sue Forrister at lindasueforrister*att.net

SPONSERS



Mira Digital Publishing, a Division of the Graphic Connections Group, is a St. Louis based company serving self-published authors nationwide since 1977. Their experience in Printing, Publishing and Direct Marketing makes Mira a reliable resource to help you in every phase of the Self-Publishing process.

They help you design, edit, print, market and distribute your book on time and within budget. Their basic publishing approach makes the process simple, and they work closely with you every step of the way to make your publishing experience truly memorable.



Our meetings are the 3rd Monday of each month. 6:00 pm Social time, meeting starts promptly at 6:30 pm and ends at 8:00 pm, Butte County Library, Chico Branch, Community Room, 1108 Sherman Avenue, Chico, CA

COMMITTEES

- Digital Content Manager-Gail Stone
- Historian – Open
- Hospitality - Open
- Newsletter Proofreader – Suzanne Roberts
- Programs – Open
- Publicity – Kathi Hiatt
- Special Events- Robin Water, Nick Hanson

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BOARD MEMBERS

Note: Asterisks are in place of @ symbol to block SPAM

- President: T.E. Watson, tew*tewatsononline.com
- Vice-President: Dan Irving, danielnirving*yahoo.com
- Secretary: Lynn Tosello, lynnte*live.com
- Treasurer/Technographer: Rick Hubbard, rick.hubbard.author*gmail.com
- Director of Membership: Ken Young, northpoint157*aol.com
- Appointed Positions*
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