

# SEPTEMBER 2017 Newsletter



## FROM THE PRESIDENT by Kathleen Thomas



August rolls around and I once again found myself at the Napa Expo grinning at my 17-year old granddaughter & her steer, all fattened and cleaned up, ready to shine for auction. The place was chock full of cowboys and cowgirls, all duded up in their boots, levis, and hats-a whole lot of good company

supporting our Junior Livestock auction.

A few weeks later, I observed first hand the professionals at work in the Queen of the Valley E.R. when I carried in my youngest grandson with his broken arm. He definitely got the royal treatment!

The days of summer took me to a ball game, had me peeling & slices peaches for hours on end, running off to the beach, and cat sitting for a another friend. I needed that solar eclipse, if only 78% of it.

In just a few weeks, I'll be headed off to my favorite writers conference in my old stomping grounds in Crescent City CA. The North Coast Redwoods Writers' Conference always inspires me. The drive is amazing and I always seen to find a bit more time to spend on the sea around the conference dates.

Members of your NVW Board met recently in a Sunday retreat at the Wycombe's home, where Madeline and Michael took good care of us. Our monthly Board meetings are crammed with ongoing monthly duties and new projects. We needed to take some time out for reflecting and planning for your club, based on your suggestions and recommendations.

We're planning to apply for grant funding to support upcoming collaborative community-wide projects with other arts organizations. Do you have experience in writing grants? We could use your help.

Beginning September 13, we'll test run small group breakout sessions during the networking time at our monthly meetings.

We're embarking on a joint writing contest with

Wednesday, September 13, 2017

7:00 pm- 9:00 pm

**Napa Valley Writers Presents  
Kevin Thaddeus Fisher-Paulson**

***Every Writer Has One Column in Them***

***The trick is to be the kind of writer who has one column in them every week.***

Kevin Fisher-Paulson will speak about the craft of writing from the perspective of purpose and structure. Specifically, Kevin will talk about the process of writing a weekly column for a major newspaper.

Kevin will expand on how to open your soul without telling every one of your secrets, learning to tell the truth and then let the world act as fact checker. He will show how the writing process begins with a commitment to the creative self. As Kevin explains, everyone has an autobiography but not everyone has a memoir.



Visit Kevin's work with The San Francisco Chronicle:  
<http://www.sfchronicle.com/author/kevin-fisher-paulson/>

**NVW Member Reader  
Freddy Piedrahita**



**Freddy Piedrahita** will be September's NVW Member Reader. Piedrahita offers his investigations and experiences to people who are facing adverse situations and have an honest desire to make significant changes in their lives.

He will read from his book, *Sed de Venganza*, which can be found on Amazon.

***Napa Valley Writers meets*** the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Napa Valley Unitarian Universalists Church, 1625 Salvador Avenue in Napa.

Cost at the door: \$8 for guests, \$5 for CWC members. Students with ID, free. Refreshments, networking, books published by local authors and *NVW's First Press: Collected Works by Napa Valley Writers 2017* all available for purchase and review.

For more information about this upcoming meeting, or any other questions, please contact Publicity Chair [Sarita Lopez](#) or see [Napa Valley Writers](#).

students at Vintage High School. I know many of you have said you want to work in the schools with NVW. Now is your chance. Talk to Lenore Hirsch.

We're excited for the possibilities and we will be calling on you for your expertise, asking you to share your skills, your knowledge, your time and enthusiasm.

You know. We know. It takes a village.



NVW events are open to the public.

*NVW fosters professionalism in writing, promotes networking of writers within the Napa Valley writing community, mentors new writers, and provides literary support for writers and the writing community through education, networking, and leadership.*

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**Coming October 11**

**Ellen Sussman  
"Fiction: Truth or Lies"**

The New York Times bestselling author of four novels, *A Wedding in Provence*, *The Paradise Guest House*, *French Lessons*, and *On a Night Like This*, Sussman is also the editor of two critically acclaimed anthologies, *Bad Girls: 26 Writers Misbehave* and *Dirty Words: A Literary Encyclopedia of Sex*. She teaches through Stanford Continuing Studies and in private classes.



[Ellen Sussman](#)'s novels are not autobiographical. Yet she claims that by writing other people's stories, she can get closer to her own truth. In this presentation, she'll talk about how we as writers can transform life stories into fiction. She'll also discuss ways in which we can dig deep to write more substantial fiction and memoir.



**Did you renew  
your CWC Napa  
Valley Writers  
membership yet?**

If you have questions,  
please contact our

Membership Chair, [Roberta Wright](#).

September 30 is the final cutoff date. Anyone who renews after that date will pay the new member fees as well as the renewal fees.

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**LAST MEETING**



Our double whammy duo, Victoria Zackheim and Anne Perry presented a wealth of information based on Anne's extensive writing history. Anne offered her knowledge and tips to help the audience better understand and expand stories, providing readers a reason to keep turning the

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**MEMBER SPOTLIGHT  
FIVE THINGS ABOUT ME**

page - all the way to the last sentence of the book.

A few topics touched upon:

- When creating your characters, remember that everybody is vulnerable - somehow or other. What could you do to reach them? How would they react to adversity? What are his relationships and how do those relationships affect him?
- Build tension every step of the way with interesting characters. Make use of secrets, humiliation, embarrassment.
- Remember, even bad guys have something good about them. Give your readers a reason to care about what happens next. Why do people do what they do? Use your own experience and figure it out.



Perry writes pages of outline full of details in chapters and scenes before she starts on the manuscript - often writing ten drafts of her outline.

**Bill Moore**

- 1) I studied architecture at Cal, and urban planning at Athens Tech. Institute grad school.
- 2) I have lived and worked abroad in Germany and Greece.
- 3) My main career was planning and managing development of new towns and communities.
- 4) I taught in Architecture and Urban Planning departments at CALPOLY, San Luis Obispo.
- 5) My last day-job was Project Director for conversion of Mare Island Navy Shipyard from military to civilian use.



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Several of the Napa Valley Writers Board members and officers spent a bit of time getting to know each other and brainstorming possible activities and projects that have presented themselves to us. We looked at activities beyond the monthly guest speaker event, quarterly workshops and salons. Below is a short rundown of the possibilities. Of course 7 people can't do everything to create success in NVW. We're counting on your

## COMING SOON

### SEPTEMBER WORKSHOP COMING SOON!!

*Due to lack of pre-registrations, this workshop is in danger of being canceled.*

*If you're interested, please sign up today.*

#### The Story You Have to Tell: A Writing Workshop Facilitated by Melissa Cistaro

8:30 am: Networking and sign-in  
Workshop time: 9 am - noon  
Saturday, September 16  
Synergy Medical Fitness Center  
3421 Villa Lane in Napa.

How do we find the courage to craft our narrative truths? Sometimes we embed those truths into our fictional stories, poems, and essays. Whether you write fiction or nonfiction, mining the emotional landscape of a story gives it power.

Through writing exercises, reading, and discussion, participants will explore how to become more effective storytellers, using examples from writers like Dani Shapiro, Darrin Strauss, and Tim O'Brien.



Come prepared with a brief paragraph about the story you need to tell.

Melissa is the author of the memoir *PIECES OF MY MOTHER* (winner of the 'Best Nonfiction Book of 2015' selected by The Northern California Independent Booksellers Association).

We encourage pre-payment to hold your spot. For more information, or to register with pre-payment, please [Lenore Hirsch](#).

Workshop registration fee is \$25 for members of Napa Valley Writers and \$45 for non-members.

More information: [Napa Valley Writers Events](#)

So here you go:

- Potential writing contest at Vintage High School. (Contact Lenore Hirsch)
- Support group for members interested in participating in NANOWRIMO (National Novel Writing Month - November).
- Collaborative projects with Arts and Education Providers with a possible focus on ekphrastic art.
- Writers week celebration and Salon in October - perhaps in a dark and scary cemetery!
- Mentoring interested members into leadership positions.
- A NVW Members' art/logo competition to develop swag items: NVW shirts, hats, bags, USB drives, whatever you can think of, etc.
- A possible collaborative event with Redwood Writers.
- Members Discount pricing of *First Press* for holiday gift giving.
- Increased recognition of our members' achievements.
- Potential NVW presence at Napa Valley Film Fest.



Submitted by Kathy Thomas

## Caption Me! In Six Words

### August Captions from our readers

Reflecting on the source of reflection.  
-Nancy Welty

In the hallway, escape seemed possible.  
-Jan Flynn

Who put Baby in the flowerpot?  
-Molly Detwiler



## September Challenge:

Test your imagination!

Use this picture to create a six-word story. Have fun! Be creative! Send your submission to [Cheryl Velasquez](#)

Next month we'll post your

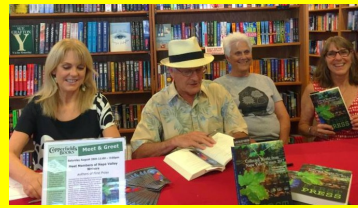


BOOK EXCERPT OF THE MONTH

UPTON SINCLAIR

By Lauren Coodley

## Copperfield's presents First Press



A good time was had by all the **AUTHOR EVENT: MEET AND GREET** Saturday, August 26 at Napa Copperfield's.

Several books were sold and autographed by the authors of Napa Valley Writers! We met some new folks who we expect to see again soon at a NWV event. Thanks to all the authors who took time to represent!

From member author M. Detwiler: "I enjoyed the Copperfield's

event, my first such experience. It was especially satisfying to sign the books we sold and tell folks who stopped by our table about NWV. We members also got to know each other a bit better and meet the Copperfield's staff. The day definitely raised the visibility of our club. (Our 11:00 shift sold six of the nine books--just sayin'.)



Looking forward to the next Copperfield's event in Calistoga on October 14.

Copperfield's will host a panel of four to six *First Press* authors who will discuss their work. NWV will provide a moderator to keep the conversation going and share information about the writing process. We expect the panel to run about an hour and then have time for a little meet and greet and book signing.

If you want to be part of this first next Copperfield's event, please contact [Madeline Rogers](#) today.

### Congratulations to Jeremy Benson

### Napa County's newest Poet Laureate!

"A poem creates community," Benson wrote in his application to become Napa County's Poet Laureate. "Most of my poetic engagement has been to encourage and sustain a community of poets and poetry lovers."

Benson has performed in various open mics throughout the community and holds informal workshops to connect with local poets. When you see him, congratulate him!

The Napa County Library, in partnership with Arts Council Napa Valley, conducted the search for Napa County's Poet Laureate earlier this year. The special honor has been supported by the county for almost a decade.

More information here: [Poet Laureate Jeremy Benson](#)

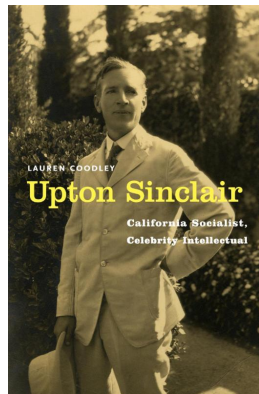


Upton Sinclair both disrupted and documented his era. The impact of his most famous work, *The Jungle*, would merit him a place in American history had he never written another book. Yet he wrote nearly eighty more, publishing most of them himself. What Sinclair did was both simple and profound: he committed his life to helping people of his era understand how society was run, by whom and for whom. His aim was nothing less than to "bury capitalism under a barrage of facts," as Howard Zinn describes it.

Upton Sinclair introduced himself to American readers in 1906 with the publication of *The Jungle*, his exposé of the meat packing industry. He was only 25 years old. For the next six decades, he would remain an unconventional, often controversial, and always innovative character in American life. He was also a filmmaker, a labor activist, a women's rights advocate, and a health pioneer on the grandest scale-

a lifetime surprisingly relevant for twenty-first century Americans.

A hundred years ago, investigative journalism was just being conceived, and Sinclair's undercover reporting on the conditions in a meat packing plant may have been its birthing moment. Filmmaking was beginning to change the way stories were told and how people gained access to



information. His friends were experimenting with sexual freedom and birth control, but the shadow of alcoholism was beginning to take its toll in the radical community, and Sinclair would record his own assessment of the dangers of alcohol in his novel-and later film-*The Wet Parade*.

If you'd like an excerpt from YOUR book featured in this newsletter, please send your request with a short Word or text excerpt and a jpg of your book cover to [Sarita Lopez](#).

### September's New Member Spotlight FIVE FACTS ABOUT ME

#### Christina Julian

1. I like to call myself the kooky klutzy gal next door. I never met a street or sidewalk that I didn't trip over. People who know me stay far away

from me at parties where red wine and white carpets reign.

2. I am a total softy when it comes to my rescue hound. She is about 17 or 18 and nobody melts my heart more than she. She is a rat terrier beagle mix with the sweetest, beadiest, big eyes you've ever

seen. She used to be a pet therapy dog at Children's Hospital in LA. I like to believe that she made their stay just a little bit better.



3. I am very indecisive. Especially over small choices, like what produce to buy at the supermarket or what to make for dinner. My husband is equally indecisive, which is a nightmare when it comes time to decide on a movie or what restaurant to go to. When it comes to big decisions, like moving across the country from the East Coast to the West or from SoCal to here, those types of decisions are a snap.

4. I love to swing dance! There is something so freeing about gliding across the dance floor to those retro beats. I love my swinging pop standards and the music that flowed freely during the roaring twenties.

5. I am known for my food obsessions and the great lengths I will go to get my goods. One example is the pressed sandwich from Tartine Bakery in San Francisco. Another obsession is the Peanut Butter cookie from City Bakery in NYC. I lived there at one point, and fell in love with this thing. I once sprained my ankle racing through Union Square to get this cookie on my way out of town. I could go on and on but I am making myself hungry.

You may just want to round a few friends and head out to Open Studios later this month. For those of you unfamiliar with Open Studios Napa Valley, it is a free, self-guided, art discovery tour which takes place over two weekends. Each year sixty to seventy-five participating artists share their artwork with visitors from all over the United States. Whether you're an avid collector or just curious about art, this is an incredible opportunity to peer into the creative spaces of Napa Valley, meet the artists, watch demonstrations and buy local art right from the source!

Open Studios Napa Valley is presented as a collaborative effort by the participating artists of Art Association Napa Valley who are committed to bringing you the best Open Studios event ever! The program exists today because the artists believe in the importance and value of opening their studios to visitors and sharing a unique artistic experience. Volunteers have contributed hundreds of hours and our generous sponsors have contributed financial support to ensure Open Studios Napa Valley continues to be an important event in our community.

Just opening the link below will excite you enough to get out of the house and into Open Studios.

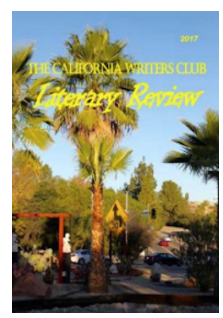
[Open Studios 2017](#)

# MEMBER NEWS

## CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB PUBLICATIONS

### 2018 Literary Review Magazine Seeking Submissions September 1st - November 30

CWC members may submit one or two pieces, published or unpublished, for the 2018 issue of the CWCLiterary Review.



Launched just a few years ago, The Literary Review is on its way to establishing itself as a CWC institution: a juried collection of superior poems, stories, fiction, and nonfiction by members of the California Writers Club.

For more information and submission guidelines, please see: [CWC Lit Review](#)

Be sure to check out the current Bulletin with news and information from CWC branches throughout the state. Lots of great stuff going on.

The Bulletin, an electronic newsletter, keeps our members informed about branch activities, updates on achievements of the state organization, and messages from our officers. It is published three times a year and sent to each member via email.

Advertising available for your convenience!

[THE BULLETIN](#)



## Napa Farmer's Market

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16



Napa Valley Writers' booth is open at the Napa Market each 3rd Saturday of the month until the season ends in October. All

NVW members with published books are welcome to provide their books for the booth. A wide range of genre and authors is welcome, along with new volunteers (around 4-5 a month) to be at the booth.

To sell your books and participate, please email [Sarita Lopez](#). The booth is no cost to club members; just donate your time."

The annual SLO NightWriters Golden Quill Writing Contest is under way! This contest is run by SLO NightWriters, the premiere writing organization on the Central Coast of California. The deadline is September 15, 2017. The theme of the contest this year is Liberation. For the small entry fee of \$15, you may enter one or more of the following categories.

#### Flash/Short Fiction

It's the writer's call with this new merged category. Test your skill in composing a Flash Fiction piece, or choose the standard Short Fiction format - your choice! Entries may be no longer than 1,500 words.

#### Poetry

Interpret the theme creatively in a poem up to 40 lines in length.

#### Creative Non-Fiction

This is a brand new category this year, by popular demand! Tell any true story within the theme with a personal story, personal essay, or memoir up to 1,500 words.



## Rebecca Levy Delivers!

All contest rules, information and submission information can be found here: <http://slongoldenquillwritingcontest.com/>

I was sitting in my office when a middle-aged patient came in, tears in her eyes. I was not unused to patients in various stages of emotional distress in my consultation room, often there for help with some physical, emotional or health-related issue. I stopped typing at my computer keyboard to give her my full attention. "What can I help you with?" I asked?

"It's just so SO sad!" She said. She looked down. I offered her tissues. I stared at her curiously, trying to discern if she was going to continue on with her story, which I assumed would include some explanation of what medical or family issue

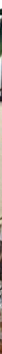
was in need of my attention, when I realized she was holding the book in her hand.

By "The Book", I mean the Napa Writers Anthology book, which I was so lucky to have been a contributor to. I suddenly realized she was referring to MY piece in the book, which, indeed was, SO SAD. I wasn't sure if I should thank her for reading (or buying) it, or ask if there was something I could do to help her get over her grief.

Since that day, I have had calls and text messages and emails from people—patients, friends and family—complimenting the book, asking where they can read more of these talented authors' works, and wanting to purchase the book for themselves.

I decided to put it on display in my office (Premier ObGyn Napa Inc, located at 3030 Beard Rd in Napa) so people could read it while sitting in the waiting area. It has been a great "tease", since no one waits in my waiting room long enough to read more than two pieces. They often end up wanting more. They either purchase one right there on the spot or go to Amazon and buy one (or more— for friends and family).

Being able to discuss my interest in writing, my passion for my work, and having written a true story that people find moving enough to bring to my attention during their office visits has brought a whole new dimension to my life, as a physician and now, as a medical memoirist!



## Wow! Look at what's happening at the Library!

(This is just a sampling.)

### Events Napa County Library

#### **Coffee, Tea and Society: America By the Numbers**

September 6; 10:00 am - 11:30 am

Join us for coffee, tea, and conversation on the 1st Friday of each month at 10 am at the Napa County Library. Each month we'll view an episode of the PBS series 10 THAT CHANGED AMERICA.

#### **Art in the Library: Joanne Uomini**

September 8, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

Joanne Uomini is a Bay Area painter. She began watercolor painting in 1990 and found it to be a respite from a very busy life.

#### **Surrender to the Imagination**

September 9, 2017; 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

During this creative writing workshop, participants will learn about the different types of creative writing and key qualities of creativity...Registration Required!

#### **Book Club @ Napa Library**

September 14; 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

*Commonwealth* by Ann Patchett. The acclaimed, bestselling author—winner of the PEN/Faulkner Award and the Orange Prize—tells the enthralling story of how an unexpected romantic encounter irrevocably changes two families' lives.



A Tradition of Stewardship  
A Commitment to Service

## YOUNTVILLE OUT LOUD

**Yountville Community  
Center Plaza  
Thursday, Sept 28 at 5:30 pm**



You're invited to read, act, or sing a passage from a poem, novel, or piece you have written. Several members of NVW were featured at the Spring event.

If you are interested in participating in the wonderful community event, please contact NVW member & Yountville Arts Commissioner, Jim McDonald, for more information at 925-998-4013.

## NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

We are eager to receive your newsletter submissions. Please keep poetry to 24 lines or less. Other articles of interest, including short prose, should be approximately 250 words or less.

Send us your photos, current events, news of interest to writers, new publications, conferences, etc., no later than the 15th of each month to be included in the next month's newsletter.

Thank you.

[Cheryl Velasquez](#)

Newsletter Editor

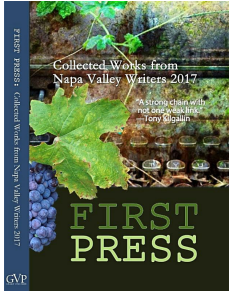


...Our thanks to the leadership & members of [Arts Council Napa Valley](#), [Arts Association Napa Valley](#), and [Napa Valley Writers Conference](#) for your continued collaboration in our arts partnerships. Thank you to everyone at [Napa Bookmine](#) for their support of our writers and readers in the Valley. Our thanks to the [Boys and Girls](#)



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