

## February 2018 Newsletter

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Kathleen Thomas



I recently attended the 2018 Napa County State of the Arts event. There were a few of us writers amid a grand collection of art and culture connected folks from both the Napa Valley and the Bay Area.

It was there that I reconnected with a young man I'd met during the past year or so. Xulio is a poet and local socio-ecological justice activist, active in the arts in the

local Latino and indigenous communities. He was one part of a three-person panel during a breakout session which discussed various means of reaching our diverse Napa Valley communities through experiences in the arts.

Last year, during an extensive discussion at the 2017 State of the Arts, on just this topic, I heard a comment that stuck with me. "If you want to reach out to the Latino community, you need to go to them."

How? A year later, sitting in my seat, listening to the panelists, I knew I hadn't made many inroads in that area. Beyond that, how do we, as a writers' group, reach a younger crowd, a more diverse group of people, new people in general, to attract a bit of the proverbial new blood to the organization, to share what we can, and to learn from them as well? NVW continues to grow and thrive with members and friends committed to themselves, to their writing, and to colleagues in the writers' world. Leadership and community is critical to continue that growth.

The recent Napa Valley Writers' sponsored Vintage High School writing contest certainly bridged a gap between old and young. More than that, those young

Wednesday  
February 14, 2018  
7-9 pm

### Presenting Open Mic with Chocolate *Bilingual Version*



Napa Valley Writers, in conjunction with Xulio Soriano, a local socio-ecological justice activist and poet, will host NVW's first Spanish-English bilingual Open Mic With Chocolate! The evening will feature local and regional English speaking, bilingual and indigenous language poets.

In Mexico and other Latin American countries, countries that speak Spanish and hundreds of indigenous languages, Hispanic

Valentine's Day is celebrated as a day of love AND friendship. In the U.S. the celebration focuses on romantic love. We encourage you to dig into and expand upon the meaning of love; all prose and poetry is welcome. What kind of love do you share with your romantic partner? Is your call for love along the lines of Martin Luther King's calling for love and justice to be brought to the streets? Is love memory and recalling our ancestors? Latin American poet Eduardo Galleano tells us that "Recordar" (re-cardio), to remember something in Spanish, means to "run again through the heart."

All original work is welcome, and attendees may read up to five minutes. Yummy treats will be offered, along with great company. As an added bonus we are offering the standard \$5 member cover to non-members. Doors open at 6:30pm. Event is from 7pm-9pm at Napa Valley Universalist Unitarian Church, 1625 Salvador Ave, Napa, CA 94558.

All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn't

people focused on their own words of wisdom and how to share that with the world.

Back to Xulio. I approached him after the panel closed. I told him the NVW February 14th monthly meeting did not have a guest speaker lined up. We'd be presenting an open mic on Valentine's Day to provide our members and guests the opportunity to read their Valentine's Day themed work.

Xulio and I discussed the idea of presenting a bilingual Open Mic. We kicked it around, met up later, and are now excitedly finishing the final details for February's Open Mic with Chocolate - Bilingual Edition. Xulio's invited several indigenous and Latino poets and writers to be part of the open mic meeting. Tie that in with our own members and guests who will be reading, and I expect February to be a lovely meeting.

Many thanks to everyone for making this happen!



Perfect Symphony: Ed Sheeran & Andrea Bocelli

## Notes from the January meeting of NVW

### VINTAGE HIGH WRITING CONTEST

Congratulations to our winners!

You could hear a pin drop during the readings of Fernando, Shaylynn, and Olivia. Thank you for stepping up and taking the chance to write with Napa Valley Writers. Thank you also to their teachers and parents for a job well done!

hurt.

- Charles M. Schulz

Please join us in reading your work alongside our featured poets for this special Valentine's Day event: Blanca Huijon, Gervacio Peña López, Laura López Ledesma, Karla Gómez-Pelayo, Graciela Rodríguez García, Charlie Toledo, Kevin Valdovinos, Pomo Joe, Gary Silva, and Xulio Soriano.

Napa Valley Writers, a branch of the California Writers Club, holds monthly meetings at Napa Valley Unitarian Universalists Church Sanctuary, 1625 Salvador Avenue, Napa. On this occasion, cost at the door will be \$5/person. Students with ID, free. For more information, contact [publicity\\_nvw@outlook.com](mailto:publicity_nvw@outlook.com) or see [napavalleywriters.net](http://napavalleywriters.net). Always 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.*

Do you have a favorite Valentine's Day themed song? A ballad that always brings you happy memories, or something that makes you want to get up and dance? We're putting together a playlist of songs for a little background music to play at our Valentine's Day meeting. If you'd like your song to be included, please send a note to [HeartSongs](#) with the name of the song & performing artist. We'll do our best to include your special melody.

### 14 de febrero de 7-9 pm, "Escritores del Valle de Napa" nos presentan Micrófono Abierto Bilingüe

La organización Escritores del Valle de Napa y el activista y poeta de justicia socio-ecológica, Xulio Soriano, les invita al primer "micrófono abierto" bilingüe. Este evento se celebrará con chocolate. Se presentarán invitados de honor del valle y de sus alrededores que nos compartirán sus poemas y escritos en sus lenguas natales.

En México y en otros países de las Américas, cuyas lenguas incluyen Español y cientos de Lenguas Indígenas, la celebración Hispánica de "San Valentin" conmemora el amor y la amistad. En los Estados Unidos, esta misma celebración se enfoca en el romanticismo. Les invitamos a que profundicen y amplíen el significado del amor, aunque todo tipo de poesía y literatura será bienvenida. Cual es el amor que compartes con tu pareja romántica? Tu amor es el amor y la justicia que Martin Luther King exigió que fueran manifestados al público en las



First Place  
Fernando Cisneros, "Trust"

Second Place  
Shaylynn Sublett "Transition of 1979"

Third Place  
Olivia Ilsley "Light Within"

Honorable Mention  
Ally Peterson.  
Other honorable mentions not in photo: Paola Machuca, Dariya Stuter

You can read the story printed in the Napa Valley Register, along with the full text of the winning entries here:

[http://napavalleyregister.com/lifestyles/writing-winners-napa-valley-writers-hold-a-first-student-writing/article\\_b3ada37c-405e-5596-8b6d-fd38bd68e505.html](http://napavalleyregister.com/lifestyles/writing-winners-napa-valley-writers-hold-a-first-student-writing/article_b3ada37c-405e-5596-8b6d-fd38bd68e505.html)



**We'd like to add another word of thanks to last month's Napa Valley Writers guest speaker, Scott James**, who gave his audience much to think about and and several ideas on which to follow-up.

Scott was so touched by the extraordinary talents of the Vintage High School contest winners who read at our meeting, he asked that his honorarium return to the NVW coffers to enable a second similar project with our young people here in the Napa Valley.

A few highlights of Scott's talk:

calles? Es el amor los recuerdos y el evocar nuestros ancestros? El poeta Latinoamericano Eduardo Galleano nos dice que "Recordar" (re-cardio) significa "pasar otra vez tras el corazon".

Se les invita a compartir sus propias obras y poemas. Pueden compartir sus obras por un máximo de 5 minutos. Habrá bocaditos y buena compañía. Por este evento especial, la entrada general será la misma que la de los miembros de Napa Valley Writers. La entrada general es de \$5. Estudiantes con identificación escolar pueden entrar sin costo. Puertas abren a las 6:30pm. Evento es de 7pm-9pm en Napa Valley Unitarian Universalists, 1625 Salvador Ave, Napa, CA 94558.

*Invitados de honor incluyen: Blanca Huijon, Gervacio Peña López, Laura López Ledesma, Karla Gómez-Pelayo, Graciela Rodríguez García, Charlie Toledo, Kevin Valdovinos, Gary Silva, and Xulio Soriano.*

**FEB. 14**  
7pm-9pm

**Bilingual Open Mic.**

**Microfono Abierto Bilingüe**



**\$5 General**  
Students/  
Estudiantes Free  
with Student ID

Presented by  
Napa Valley Writers

**Con/With Chocolate**

**Profundicemos y ampliemos lo que significa el amor.**  
Dig into and expand upon the meaning of love.  
Todxs bienvenidxs a compartir sus obras literarias originales. All are invited to share original works.  
info: [publicity\\_nvww@outlook.com](mailto:publicity_nvww@outlook.com) | [www.napavalleywriters.net](http://www.napavalleywriters.net)

**Featuring/Invitadx de honor:**

Blanca Huijon|Gary Silva|Charlie Toledo|Kevin Valdovinos|Laura López Ledesma  
Karla Gómez-Pelayo|Gervacio Peña López|Graciela Rodríguez García|Xulio Soriano

**U.U. Church, 1625 Salvador Ave, Napa** Preguntas:  
(707) 200-3712

**Coming in March to Napa Valley Writers!**

**Special Guest Speaker, Jeremy Benson**

"On the west coast, readers read each other's books. On the east coast, readers read each others reviews." In other words, writers seem to see each other often, socializing and networking, and learning from one another here in the golden state.

He spoke of being a journalist - that journalists aren't always welcome to ask questions of others when performing research for their articles.



He emphasized the importance of having a place for writers to write. Not to socialize, but to write, co-working spaces for writers. He's been part of several successful projects like this in San Francisco. This type of space provides a means

for meeting up with your work ethic; the group dynamic encourages everyone in the same place with similar writing ideas and goals. Not a place for talking, and not a place to be on the phone.

He reminded us of a few of the goals writers have on a regular basis, with or without a writing space.

1. Word count
2. # chapters written
3. Create query letter
4. Pitch your project
5. Fnd that agent

Two suggestions: Attend SF Writers Conference: pitch, meet and network with publishers and agents, and other writers. Check out this website: [publishersmarketplace.com](http://publishersmarketplace.com).

He reinforced the advantages of being part of a face to face writers/critique group during the writing process.

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## SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH



from Napa Valley Register, Marianne Lyon, Jim McDonald, and Jeremy Benson during Poet Office Hours at the Yountville Library. Credit: Maria Sestito.

Napa's newest Poet Laureate is an organic farmer at a winery by day, a poet all the time, and is actively promoting poetry throughout the Napa Valley.

Thirty-year old Benson moved to Napa in 2012 to pursue a career in organic farming. He holds a degree in creative writing from Hope College in Holland, Mich.

**Says Benson, "A poem creates community,"**

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## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Napa Valley  
Writers' Conference

**July 29 - Aug. 3, 2018**

Applications are now being accepted for the 37th Napa Valley Writers' Conference, [Napa Valley Writers' Conference](http://NapaValleyWritersConference.com). The admissions deadline for all applications, including requests for financial assistance, is April 2.

Poetry workshops focus on the production and critique of new work. The poetry faculty: Camille Dungy, Brenda Hillman, Jane Mead, and Carl Phillips. Fiction workshops will be led by Lan Samantha Chang, Lauren Groff, Mat Johnson, and Howard Norman.

A reading fee of \$25 is due with your application. Tuition is \$1,025. Financial assistance is available. Thanks to the Napa Valley Writers, two half-scholarships, one in poetry and one in fiction, will be offered

## Five Things About...



### Linda Bausch

1. I have spent thousands of hours reading thousands of books, most of those hours were spent in the bathtub. My books look waterlogged. I have read the book *Lamb*, by Christopher Moore more times than I can count, and I still laugh every time.

2. When my former husband and I got married, we agreed, NO KIDS! About 13 years in, after years of being a Rock-n-Roll wife--waiting for the band to get home--I changed my mind. Within three years we had two great kids, a son and a daughter. Changing our minds was the best decision we ever made. My kids are grown adults now. In one way or another, we speak with each other almost every single day.

3. A speech I gave at my first major art show, at the Napa County Library, in 2010, inspired a high school principal to invite me to present the Commencement Address to the graduates of Valley Oak High School that year.

4. Along with so many others, I was evacuated from my home in the Napa hills, at 3 AM the first night of the Atlas Peak Fire. Returning home was not possible for the next 11 days. After staying with friends for three days, then four more in a local hotel, I needed a change of scenery. With the the generous help of my friends, and an understanding boss, I got in my car and drove seven-thousand miles. Visiting my family, and watching the beautiful scenery as I drove by was a relief from the stress the disaster created. The fire damaged my home--but it did not burn down! I was blessed to have a home, and beautiful Napa Valley to come home to.

5. I am one half of a published, writing and photography team. I write weekly with my friend, and co-author, Derek Everhart. Known as Napa Valley Authors, we are writing our first novel, we accept it from the universe.

We are well into our second draft. It is an inspirational story of a young man who makes universal, life-altering connections for, and with, people he meets  
By spring we were behind on rent and

Book Excerpt

Amber Starfire

exclusively to residents of Napa County.

For faculty profiles and application information, visit [Napa Valley Writers' Conference](#). To join the conference community online, "like" the conference at [Facebook Napa Writers' Conference](#) or follow [NVWC Twitter](#).

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## Hello Writers and Artmakers! Invite the Muse

Saturday, February 17, 1-3 p.m.

Introducing "Art-making Within a Dream, using collage, mixed media, paint, and interpretive writing." This workshop will focus on dreamwork and illustrating a dream you have dreamed.

Please note a little homework ahead of time before the workshop day. Think of a dream you recently have had: a going to sleep - having a dream - getting up and writing it down - type of dream. And a second dream that has some significance to you: could be funny, very colorful, with strange characters - or a dream that would be great if you could illustrate it.

Type up each dream and print it out on 8.5" x 11" paper, double space it so it looks good. Be sure to bring a dream you don't mind sharing with the group.

For this workshop, please plan on a donation of \$3 per participant per workshop, to cover art supplies.

As always, please RSVP if attending, [Emily Ann](#).

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Redwood Writers

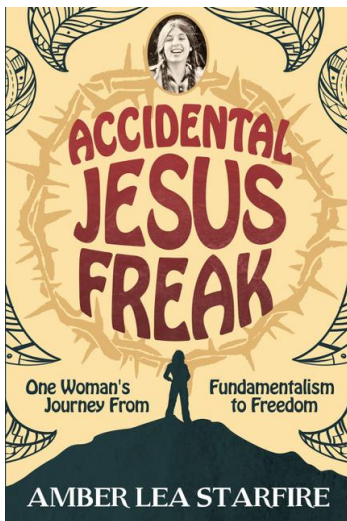
2018 Crime Fiction Contest  
submissions due 2/25/2018

April Conference on the Horizon!  
Pen to Published 2018

all this and more... [Redwood Writers-CWC](#)

utility payments and were running out of food. Paul was deep into one of his depressions, so the Beulah Band wasn't practicing or performing. Without the focus provided by our music and without Paul's guidance, the commune began to erode at the edges, crumbling into the sea of reality.

One by one, people drifted away, most moving back to Portland to take up residence with family or friends. Soon there was just a core of us left: three families, including Paul and Barney's, two married couples without children, and a few young bachelors.



I remember quite distinctly the day we gave up. The group had exactly \$20 remaining in our coffers—not enough to pay any of our bills. Not even enough to buy food

for dinner. So, in typical throw-it-to-the-wind fashion, we traipsed up the street to the local Dairy Queen and bought \$20 worth of banana splits to share. It felt reckless and fitting to celebrate the demise of our grand communal experiment in this fashion.

I have a polaroid taken that day outside the Dairy Queen. Fourteen adults and five children smile and squint into the sun like one big happy family. Eric and I stand at the back of the group, round-faced in our youth, his hand placed protectively on my arm. I remember feeling both relieved and sad. I was tired of the strain of trying to keep food on the table, tired of the squabbling, the lack of privacy, and feeling shut out by the men. I was ready to live like a normal married couple, just Eric and me on our own. Yet there was a bitter-sweetness to those banana splits.

NVW Member Jim McDonald's art show will continue through February at Community Hall, 6516 Washington Street in Yountville.



Congratulations, Jim!

### Lance Burris - Poetic Spirit at Work



Congratulations to Lance Burris on his recent Napa Valley Register column, The Poet's Corner.

Introducing the Poetic Spirit: A romantic way of looking at the world that gives coherence to life's experiences in a

memorable way.

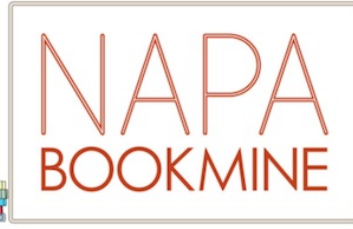
# ARTS IN APRIL

Inspiration Beyond the Vine

The jar on the mantle had not miraculously filled with money, no matter how much we prayed or gave our lives over to our musical calling. And so we were walking away, each in our own direction, hearts weighed down with the failure to be all that we had aspired to be, of having fallen short, and of misinterpreting God's intentions for our lives. What could we do but make the best of it and move on? We decided it must have been God's will for the commune to dissolve and for us to move back to the city-all part of His divine plan for our lives.

I did not know that day at the Dairy Queen that I was already pregnant with my first child.

You can order Amber's new book at [Amazon](#), [Barnes and Noble](#), and can also [order a signed copy directly](#) for \$15 plus postage.



Sunday, April 19, Open Mic at the Napa Bookmine, 3-5 pm. Open to all genres, 5 minute max reading time each reader.

Please arrive early to sign up to read. Always a great time!

Watch your favorite cultural, arts and news sources for news of other upcoming Aprts in April Events.

<https://www.visitnapavalley.com/events/arts-in-april/>

## ARTS IN APRIL EVENT!

Hill Family Estate Tasting Room  
6512 Washington Street  
Yountville



Poetry Month  
Arts in April

A Poetry/Prose Salon  
Sunday, April 29, 2018  
12:00pm - 2:00pm

Water and snacks will be served  
Wine: \$10 for two tastings

Bring a favorite poem or two  
or a short prose selection

3 minute limit for each reading

RSVP to reserve a spot  
(walk-ins welcome as time allows)  
[jlyon@comcast.net](mailto:jlyon@comcast.net)



We wish to extend a special 'thank you' to the leadership and members of [Arts Council Napa Valley](#), [Arts Associaton Napa Valley](#), and [Napa Valley Writers Conference](#) for your continued collaboration in our arts partnerships.

Thank you to the owners and staff at [Napa Bookmine](#) for your support of our writers and readers.

Our thanks to the [Boys and Girls Club of Napa Valley](#) for their monthly donation of NVW Board meeting space.

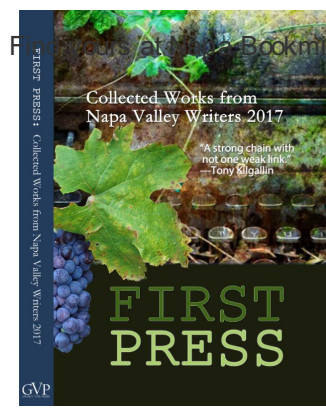


### The Perfect Gift

Are you looking for the perfect gift any time of the year?

Copies of *First Press: Collected Works from Napa Valley Writers 2017* is now available for your gift giving needs.

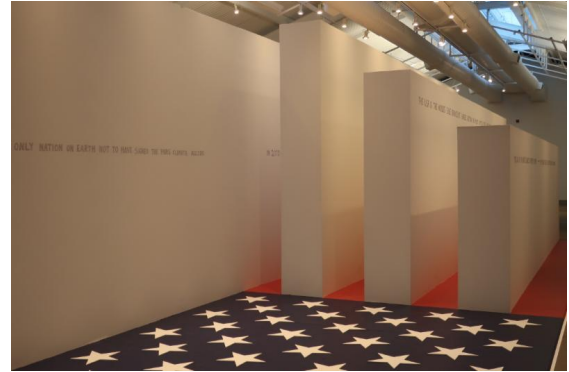
DiRosa Art features new exhibits!



Bookmine, Calistoga's in Napa and Calistoga, and online at Amazon.

\$15 for *First Press*!

## Galleries 1 and 2.



## Be Not Still Book Club begins in February

Each month beginning with February, DiRosa will feature a book that relates to one of the artist-selected topics in *Be Not Still: Living in Uncertain Times* Part I. Led by di Rosa's Director of Education and Civic Engagement, Andrea Saenz Williams, the book club will meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month in the program hub of Gallery 1.

Don't miss the breathtaking exhibits at DiRosa now!

Learn more here: [DiRosaArt](#)

### What Would Napa Valley Writers Be Without You?

As a member of Napa Valley Writers you are invited to display your published books, talk with others, and offer books for sale at our monthly meetings.

If you're interested in this opportunity to showcase your books, please contact [Sarita Lopez](#), NVW Publicity Chair. Doors open at 6:30. Browse, network, and gather with other local writers.



## 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 300 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.



### LINKS

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[Cheryl Velasquez](#)

Newsletter Editor