



**August, 2014
Volume 2, Issue 8**

**The Writers of Kern
PO BOX 22335
Bakersfield, CA**

**The Writers of Kern
Executive Board**

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sunshine@writersofkern.com

August Speaker

**Screenwriter,
David Congalton**



Writers of Kern is thrilled to host David Congalton, screenwriter for the hit movie, *Author's Anonymous*, Saturday, August 16 as he presents "Chasing Your Writing Dreams."

Congalton will talk about his 25-year odyssey of pursuing his dream of writing and selling a Hollywood screenplay at the age of 61. The result of his perseverance is the 2014 comedy based on events from his own life, starring Kaley Cuoco, Chris Klein, and Dennis Farina.

While showing excerpts from the film, he will discuss screenwriting and the challenges of coping with success and failure.

In addition to screenwriting, David Congalton is a nonfiction

author, freelance writer, and radio talk show host. His Central Coast news talk show, *Hometown Radio*, airs weekday afternoons from 3 pm to 7 pm. He is the co-author of *The Talk Radio Guest Book: How to be the Perfect Radio Guest*, published in 2011, and is currently in the re-writing phase of his second movie, *Seven Sisters*. It is scheduled to go into production at the end of this year.
~TWW

**Membership
Dues**



Membership dues are now due and payable by August 31, 2014.

For current members, renewals are \$45.00, giving you another year of benefits. If your membership has lapsed, \$65.00 will reactivate it.

Pay online at www.writersofkern.com; at the August meeting, by check or credit card; or by mailing your check to Writers of Kern, P.O. Box 22335, Bakersfield, CA 93390-2335.

Members in good standing (dues paid) are eligible to enter the **WOK Fall Writing Contest**. See the website for details and submission guidelines.

Membership questions? Email: membership@writersofkern.com

President's Message July 2014



Last month I asked for your suggestions. Many of you took the time to share what you wanted from Writers of Kern. At the July meeting we heard ideas such as posting requests for book reviews, learning how to edit in MS Word, starting online discussion forums, and understanding more about the business of publishing. I also received many written suggestions such as learning how to copyright and protect one's work, self-publishing savvy, finding an agent, having writing prompts and more general Q & A sessions at the meetings.

When the WOK Board meets each month we plan meetings we believe would best benefit our members and guests. Knowing what you want helps us design meetings of value and find the speakers you want to hear. From listening to you, we have a new list of topics to explore and speakers to find.

Please don't hesitate to share any other suggestions and ideas. Together we will continue to build Writers of Kern to be *the* resource for writers.

~ Joan

Looking Ahead

August 16

David Congalton, Screenwriter
"Chasing your Writing Dream"

September 10 - December 6

Annual WOK A-Z Blog Challenge

September 20

James Magwood, Writer
"Seeing and Writing in Reality"

September 30

Deadline - Fall Writing Contest

October 25 (4th Saturday)

Wendy Hornsby, Mystery Writer
"Make a Commitment to your Writing"

November 15

Rebecca Langston-George,
Children's Writer
"Writing for the Children's Market"

December 13 (2nd Saturday)

Winter Dinner Meeting at Hodel's,
6:00 PM
Fall Writing Contest winners
&
WOK Blog Challenge recognition

plaguing the country of his father's era in his latest book, *Bull: the Journey of a Freedom Icon*.

Golden's works mimic the poetry of Nikki Giovanni. Yet, with a modern twist, he was able to portray the pain and anguish, the frustration and courage of the men and women during the Civil Rights era.

His voice echoed throughout the room as he told stories of lynchings, rape and a betrayal of a people. He impressed me with his ability to use poetry the way a novelist would write a novel. Each poem told a continuous story that brought you deeper into his life, his father's life, and the amazing life of his family.

His poems were candid visions of the world that shaped the hearts and minds of men and women not unlike his father. As I looked around the room, I saw eyes trained on Mr. Golden as each scene and each story enveloped us all.

Listening to the poetry by James Golden, I felt alive yet saddened by the hurt and anguish the characters had suffered. I could smell and see the neighborhoods full of impoverished children and my heart ached, for it was no different than what I lived through as a child. My mind wandered to my own father and grandfather. My dad would have been a teenager in the 60s. Are Bull's experiences the same as my father's? Did my father face racial discrimination? It was an eye opener for me. A window into a world twenty years before my time.

July Meeting ~ a window into history



James B. Golden

There was silence in the room as James Golden, poet laureate from Salinas and an artist of the spoken word, mesmerized the Writers of Kern members and guests with his bold take on the racial tensions



by Donneé Harris

Book Review by Anna Stewart



Dark Places by Gillian Flynn

Libby Day’s money is running out. She has never had a real job and has spent her life living off donations received in the wake of the trial that put her brother in prison for the brutal murder of their family. Offered a chance to earn some cash, she agrees to appear at the “Kill Club,” where murder and mystery enthusiasts meet to discuss famous killings. There, she is confronted by a small group of fans fixated on her family’s murder, the idea that Libby’s brother is innocent and the theory that Libby’s childhood self lied on the stand.

Desperate for money, Libby agrees to gather more information on their behalf and starts a journey into her past and toward a truth she might not be prepared for. A first person narrative of Libby’s investigation interspersed with third person flashbacks to all the major players involved in the events leading up to the murders, this story pokes at the concept of truth and guilt and how the two shift depending on perspective.

I enjoyed this book very much, found it suspenseful and the main character oddly compelling. Torn between distaste for her

attitude and sympathy for her situation, I was drawn with her into the mystery while the third person flashbacks allowed me to connect with the people, suspect and victim, who were once her world. As the pieces came together and I (Libby too) was forced to think and rethink my various theories, I could not put the book down.

Welcome New WOK Members

Joining us in July ~

Kayla Cheesman-Miles
(student)

Barbara Roberts (associate)
And Andy Roth (associate)

Critique Groups

Are you interested in participating in a critique group this fall? Good. Attend the August and September meeting for details and look for information in the September newsletter.

Terry Redman, Critique Group Coordinator
critiques@writersofkern.com

Critique Group Leaders

Dan McGuire, Monday 1
danmcguire42@gmail.com

Jeff Hill, Monday 2
gimlocke@yahoo.com

Terry Redman, Wednesday 1
tredman@bak.rr.com

Terry Redman, Wednesday AM
tredman@bak.rr.com

Joan Raymond, Wednesday 2
joan.m.raymond@gmail.com

Member Profile

Nancy Edwards



My early years began in large cities such as Syracuse, Philadelphia, and Memphis, where I absorbed some very rich memories. There was an astounding change as I entered adolescence when our family settled in Henderson, Nevada, only 20 minutes from Las Vegas. I missed the big cities, sidewalks, and shopping. My mother and I would have hopped a train back to Memphis if only one came by. But, eventually I found a mysterious peace in the desert life.

I sought out colleges in green, lush California and completed a BA at Whittier and an MA at San Jose State. I became a tour guide to my college friends who came to Las Vegas to visit the hotels and casinos. While tourists expressed amazement at the glitzy signs and lavish casinos, I could not wait to return to the beaches, the art galleries, and upbeat places in Los Angeles and the Bay Area.

The incoming President of Bakersfield College recruited me to teach English at Bakersfield College upon completing my

MA. I served 40 years, teaching composition, literature, and creative writing. I was honored to teach many outstanding students, including our beloved and talented **Dana Martin**, who won national awards for her writing.

I published poetry and academic articles. Then, after my seventh year at BC, on my first sabbatical, I decided to enter the PHD program at Claremont Graduate University. My dissertation won a research award for California from the Community and Junior College Association.

Since retiring from teaching in 2009, I have volunteered to assist writers by co-sponsoring National Poetry Month and co-hosting readings and musical performances in local bookstores and colleges along with Dr. **Portia Choi**. I have coordinated an event for the Levan Center at BC, bringing five accomplished poets from Fresno to the campus along with local writer Nick Belardes. I taught poetry on a special grant for West High School gifted 9th graders.

This fall, I will be the facilitator of the CSUB 60Plus Club's creative writing interest group. We will meet once a month on Fridays at the Student Health Center Board Room on campus.

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Nothing factual that I write or say will be as truthful as my fiction. ~ *Nadine Gordimer*



The Annual WOK Blog Challenge is just around the corner. September 10th through December 6th. Thirteen weeks, 26 posts using the prompt "A-Z." You pick the theme.

Winners will be recognized at the Winter Dinner, December 13th.

Details at the August 16 meeting.

Upcoming Conferences and Competitions

30th Annual Central Coast Writers' Conference

September 19 and 20, 2014 at Cuesta College in San Luis Obispo

Keynote Presenter: Author, Anne Perry, "Put your Heart on the Page"

www.cuesta.edu/communityprograms/writers-conference/index.html

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Howl at the Moon Conference

presented by the High Desert Branch of CWC

Saturday, November 1, 2014 8:30 am – 4:30 pm High Desert Center

for the Arts 15615 8th Street in Victorville

Keynote Speaker: Author, Christopher Vogler

<http://www.hdcwc.com/conference-4---howl-at-the-moon-2014.html>

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Writer's Digest Short Story Competition

Choose your favorite genre and enter your best in 4,000 words or less.

Early-Bird Deadline: September 15, 2014 (Entry fee \$20)

Deadline: October 15, 2014 (Entry fee \$25)

Wondering what's in it for you?

- A chance to win the Popular Fiction Awards Grand Prize including \$2,500 and a trip to the 2015 Writer's Digest Conference
- A chance to win the \$500 Category First Prize
- Get your story promoted in *Writer's Digest* and on WritersDigest.com
- Win \$100 off a purchase at www.writersdigestshop.com
- Receive a copy of the 2015 *Novel & Short Story Writer's Market*

http://www.writersdigest.com/popularfictionawards?et_mid=685632&rid=246883121

A writer is, after all, only half his book. The other half is the reader and from the reader the writer learns. ~ *P.L. Travers*

THE BACK PAGE

Editors' Inkwell



Annis Cassells

James B. Golden's presentation last month was one I hated to miss. **Terry Redman** said, "Golden, described his poetry as transparent. I found it deeply moving and intense. The poem "Emmet Till" is the first time I really felt the terror of lynching. I felt chills in my gut and spine." From reading **Donneé Harris's** engaging review, I became engulfed with the emotion that must have emanated throughout the room as Golden spoke. And, I was grateful that we could bring this powerful writer to share his work. ~AC



We need **YOU**. Yes. You.

Are you one of those folks who would like to help but waits to be asked? We're asking. Writers of Kern needs a **Publicity Team** and a **Band of Bagel Angels**.

The **Publicity Team** would work with the Events Committee and be responsible for helping get the word out about WOK events. They would use social media, online community calendars, flyers posted in likely places (i.e. libraries, bookstores, coffee houses), and whatever other ideas they might come up with to generate interest to bring members and guests to WOK happenings.

The **Band of Bagel Angels** would figure out a schedule for providing refreshments for our monthly WOK meetings. Angels present their receipt and our treasurer reimburses them that day.

We'll need other folks to step up to help make Writers of Kern the best organization we can be. We have a lot of talent in this group. When filling out your membership renewal online, look for the section where you can list your expertise and ways you can help. Come on. You know how good it feels to work together to make something great. We need you.

Volunteers for either of these teams, please contact Joan Raymond (president@writersofkern) today, or see Joan or Dennis VanderWerff at the August meeting.