

CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB

Public Relations/Publicity Report for CWC Central Board

25 January 2015, Holiday Inn Express, Oakland

1. Webmaster. The CWC has a new webmaster, John Byrne Barry. He will work with the MRMS Director on technical issues such as updating Simple Machines, and with the Public Relations/Publicity Director who will provide the content. The motion has been made and carried to increase the CWC webmaster's monthly stipend from \$50 to \$100.

2. Website Goals and Content
 - a) Goals include telling the public who we are and what we can do for them, informing members of upcoming statewide activities such as the annual picnic, maintaining key CWC documents, linking up prospective members with nearby branches, helping branches in general to sound more appealing to join, and serving on some level as a community and state resource (for instance, with material about the legacy left us by the California Writers who preceded us).
 - b) We post branch links on the CWC website. Branches are encouraged to keep their links and websites current, inasmuch as our activities are almost entirely conducted at branch level.
 - c) Note that the websites of parent writers organizations and large writers organizations such as Western Writers of America and Outdoor Writers of America promote organization-wide programs and initiatives, and not the activities of their sub-groups.

3. Keeping PR/P in the loop. If a CWC branch will represent the CWC at a major writers conference or book fair, or if a member of the branch will speak there or sit on a panel, please advise the PR/P Director, and please include the PR/P Director in email CCs about these events.

4. Update on Public Relations/Publicity matters raised in last (1/25/15) MRMS report
 - a) The Policies & Procedures (XI/F/2) state the duties of the Public Relations and Publicity Director as "The Director shall act as gatekeeper for all public notices describing, defining, or referring to, in an expository manner, the CWC as a state organization. This responsibility excludes Branch and Regional specific broadcasts."
 - b) The CWC president has suggested a Special Presidential Program to promote the benefits of MRMS to the membership. We will renew efforts in this regard for the 2015-16 year.
 - c) As a general observation, note that official reports belong to the permanent record posted on the CWC website available to the general public. Any negativity expressed in a report remains in the permanent record, and could reflect negatively on the organization.

Scholarship

1. The Policies & Procedures have retained the current scholarship policy (with one modification in March 2015 concerning the time required to revise or replace the policy) for approximately seven years. We could not find volunteers to serve on the committee, so were unable to seek applicants or present scholarships.

2. Approximately a year and a half ago (February 1, 2014), the PR/P Director saw an opportunity to advance the CWC mission and gain widespread visibility in California, statewide and at the branch level, by aligning with a prestigious university that would offer the scholarship, publicize it

as the CWC Scholarship in its catalogue, and put out and review applications. CWC would set the criteria. This did not get sufficient support to become policy.

3. Several subsequent discussions continued at face-to-face CB meetings and the forum.
4. The motion currently on the floor, moved on March 31, 2015, was frozen in accordance with forum vote and tabled until the July 26, 2015 face-to-face CB meeting.

Sponsorships/Endorsements/Member Benefits

1. The PR/P Director sees these as strong opportunities to make membership more attractive and, through various forms of co-promotion, to increase penetration of the CWC message and mission into the writers community overall.
2. Different members perceived the potential offerings differently – some feel that a nonprofit cannot endorse, some feel that all offerings should be paid ads, and so on.
3. In the experience of the PR/P Director, many of the best potential partners are start-ups who will gladly offer CWC discounts and co-promote the CWC, but they will not pay for ads, and they expect that we will say something substantive about them on our website and in informing our membership.
4. A committee was appointed to pursue this. One committee member became unavailable almost immediately after the last CB meeting, and the other has had to withdraw for health reasons.
5. A chart will be distributed at the CB meeting, setting forth the different variables and how the CWC might handle them. It is a draft, not for discussion at the meeting, and is not part of this report. Feel free to bring it to your boards and membership for discussion but, again, it has no formal status. Depending on your informal feedback, it or some form of it may go on the forum after the CB meeting. We do not at this point request or expect a vote..

Respectfully submitted,
Donna McCrohan Rosenthal,
Public Relations/Publicity Director
4 July 2015