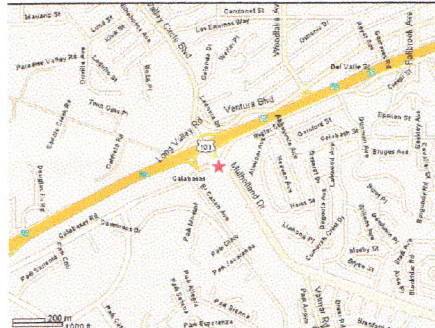


IN FOCUS

ELECTRONIC EDITION

SEPTEMBER 2006

VOLUME 1, No. 1



Star indicates location of the Motion Picture and Television Fund buildings where the CWC/WV meets. (Directions on Page 2.)

MEETINGS

The California Writers' Club/West Valley meets on the first Saturday of each month at the Motion Picture and Television Fund building (Villa Katzenberg)

23388 Mulholland Drive
Woodland Hills, CA 91364-2733

NEXT MEETING

Saturday, September 2, 2006
at 12:45 p.m.

Officers and Board of Directors

President Diana Johnson
V.P. & State Rep. David Wetterberg
Treasurer Dean Stewart
Secretary (To be assigned)
Membership Arthur Yuwiler
Programs ... Betty Freeman & Leslie Kaplan
Newsletter Editor William E. Hitchins
Sound Ken Wilkins
Site Relations Betty Freeman
Publicity Katherine Highcove
Member at Large William R. Johnson

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Newest CWC Branch Chartered on July 23

By Diana Johnson
President CWC/WV

On Sunday, July 23, Bill and I attended the CWC Central Board meeting to request chartering into California Writers Club. We handed in our letter of intent, a roster of members to date, and checks to cover our members' portion of CWC dues. Our application was accepted and we were granted a charter at 16th branch of California Writers Club.

Starting a new branch is exciting...and time-consuming. But with the willing and expert help of our core membership, we have qualified in record time. (Most new branches take a year or more to get up and running.)

And running we are. On August 5, we held a potluck planning lunch for members who were willing to volunteer for jobs on the newsletter, meetings, and many other club duties. I want to express my personal thanks to each of you who, from the beginning, have said, "I can do that," when a job was mentioned. With all of you who volunteered, we are looking forward to the first meeting of the California Writers Club/West Valley with confidence.

It should be an exciting meeting, at the Motion Picture and Television Fund Home in Calabasas. This exquisite facility is offered to us free of charge. Our hosts will be residents who choose to attend. Please make it a point to introduce yourselves to the MPTF residents and thank them for their hospitality.

Our first speaker will be Shelly Berman who is still a very active performer. While he doesn't live at the MPTF home, he volunteers there, leading a poetry workshop. I can't wait to hear what he has to say to us.

I want to include a reminder. For those of you who are transferring your CWC membership, the deadline is October 1. After that, your membership lapses and you have the re-



Di Johnson, President,
CWC/WV

qualify and pay initiation dues. October 1 is also the deadline for joining as a charter member. All members (new, MPTF, or renewal) who join by October 1 will be recognized as charter members at our October meeting.

I'm happy to have you join us, as visitors, MPTF hosts, or renewal CWC friends. And I look forward to seeing you on September 2.

Our First Speaker

Shelley Berman

Please be early



CWC/West Valley receives its charter at the 16th branch. Left to right are Barbara Truax, State membership chairman; Dave Cunningham, outgoing State president; and Di Johnson, first president of CWC/WV.

From a Horse Ranch to a New Home in Calabasas

by Betty Freeman

In 1908, three men from the Alameda Press Club, Jack London, Poet-George Sterling, and short story writer Herman Whitaker began the first California Writers Club. They were incorporated in 1913 and chose the motto, "Sail On!" from Joaquin Miller's poem, *Columbus*. Joaquin Miller, the environmentalist, was given an honorary membership, as was Ina Coolbrith, the first California Poet Laureate.

In 1985 I attended the CWC Writer's Conference held at the beautifully wooded Asilomar. Dorothy Benson, the State Secretary signed me in and became my guide for many months that followed. At that time there were four branches of CWC, all in the north. I knew we must have one in Southern California.

On returning home, my friend Kitty Darling and I spoke to Joan Jones, a well known writing teacher from Pierce College. She was delighted with the idea. With her support and class name lists, we held our first meeting on a horse ranch. (The horses were put out to pasture). The state president flew south for the occasion and we signed up 98 members. To this day, several charter members are still active in the club.

Our 1986 charter was granted and there have been six spin-offs, six separate clubs developed in our neighboring south areas. It

was amazing. One woman drove from Bakersfield to our meetings, someone from High Desert, another from the beach area. From those contacts the chapters grew. Our first meeting place was at Fallbrook Mall, where they provided a big meeting room. After several years, they tore down the mall and began again, but no meeting room. We met in libraries, plural, because we were

Betty Freeman is a founding member of CWC/SFV, was branch president and State CWC president. She is a life member and mentor to countless writers.

bounced in and out. We survived several other meeting places.

In July 2006, many charter members and others from CWC San Fernando Valley, became a chartered new branch, CWC/West Valley.

CWC West Valley is meeting in the beautiful Motion Picture Television Fund residence (MPTF). We will become one of the special opportunities they provide for their retired film world specialists, *i.e.*, poetry, improv, choir, several kinds of exercises, trips, even university studies. All are special.

Continued at bottom of Column 3

In Focus Wants Your Contributions

This first edition of *In Focus* is designed to tell you something about our new Chapter and to serve as the notice of our future meetings. But it is more than that. It is *your* publication. From time to time, we will feature articles written by you, our members, so please feel free to submit anything you would like to see in print. All will be considered.

Because of space constraints, please keep your submissions short. We cannot run thousand-word articles. There are no restrictions on what you may submit. News, a poem, an amusing story, a photograph...you name it.

While we will accept hard copy, we prefer to have submissions electronically via e-mail or on a CD. This will save us a lot of time in the preparation of the publication. Do *not* format your script. Please call the editor if you have any questions. The editor reserves the right to edit material but will do his best to leave your submissions intact. He realizes that authors do not like their creations altered.

And if you promise an article, please deliver *on time*. Deadline is the 15th of each month.

Send your contributions to:

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Cell (emergencies): (818) 203-8911

In Focus gives special thanks to Betty Freeman, who provided much of the material for this edition, and Dave Wetterberg for his great assistance and contributions.

The newsletter will be published monthly, before the monthly meeting, in two forms—an electronic version distributed by e-mail and a print version to members without e-mail. Because of cost, future paper issues will be printed in black and white.

The Editor

Continued from Column 2

Our CWC/West Valley branch has its first meeting Saturday, September 2, at 12:45 p.m. We look forward to our new beginning. The first speaker is Shelley Berman, the famous comedian and volunteer teacher for the Poetry Class at MPTF, which is a treasure of talent. They will give to us, and we will give to them.

It's possible this type of sharing may open up new possibilities for other CWC branches.



Villa Katzenberg at the Motion Picture and Television Fund home.

How to find us

Our meetings are held in Villa Katzenberg at the Motion Picture and Television Fund building at 2388 Mulholland Drive, Calabasas, CA.

Take the CA 101 Freeway to the Mulholland Drive exit and turn south. Follow the road to Steven Spielberg Drive (on the west opposite the shopping center). Follow the road as it turns right then continue to the MPTF parking lot.

Continue through the parking lot to the

other side and exit on a small road that leads to the residential area. Go around the little traffic circle (there's a tree on it) and park your car. Be careful *not* to take an assigned spot (you may be towed away). Go through the lobby of the large residential building on the east side of the road, facing the traffic circle. After you exit on the other side, turn left. Villa Katzenberg will be on your right.

Signs will be posted.

PROFILES

Di Johnson, President. She was President and Treasurer of the San Fernando Valley Branch and served as State Treasurer of the CWC. As for writing, she is an author, publisher, research specialist, and book designer. She has written and published five historical novels based on her family tree and is presently doing research on her great, great grandfather who came to California in 1850 during the gold rush. When Bill (her husband) and Di are not working on publications, they are traveling. They have seen most of every state in the Union, many when they puddle-jumped from Van Nuys cross-country in their own plane.

Dave Wetterberg, Vice President, served as president of the SFV and was active in many other ways. An advisor to all, Dave has years of experience and training in writing and grammar. He provides excellent skills and

instruction as needed. His critique groups are the best!

Art Yuwiler, Membership Chairman, is a professor emeritus at UCLA, biobehavioral sciences, and more. He has held offices in the San Fernando Valley Branch and won several writing contests.

Dean Stewart, Treasurer. Dean has been a member of CWC for ten years; he was past Treasurer of State Board, and was also Treasurer of SFV branch where he was awarded the Jack London and Betty Freeman Awards. Though he has always been involved with stage performances, he spent many years employed by two companies who handle residuals for people in the film industry. He is writing a novel and has done short stories and a screen play. He has appeared in two plays recently



ARTIST BRUSHES

Artist brushes
Dip into vivid colors
And hues as soft as blush
Colors blending with shades of
green
Flowers blooming must be seen
Quieting the soul
As we climb up a grassy knoll.

So much more to view
Sky above a sparkling blue
A river besides us nor so new
Tiaras of bubbles
Reflecting the sun's glow
Kisses to the river we blow
As we walk down
The grassy knoll
Artist brushes in hand.

Helen Katzman



By Betty Freeman

Leslie Kaplan and **Betty Freeman**, Program Chairmen. Both have served on the Board of the San Fernando Valley Branch in various capacities.

Kathy Highcove is handling publicity for the new branch. She previously handled this office capably in the San Fernando Valley Branch.

William E. Hitchins, Editor of *In-Focus*, the newsletter of the CWC/WV. He was born and grew up in Trinidad. He began his writing career on a newspaper, then moved into advertising and public relations. He arrived in the U.S.A. in 1968 and joined the public relations department of an electronics firm in Fullerton, CA. He continued in advertising and has since moved his agency into his home in West Hills. Bill has been a member of CWC for several years.