



NEWSLETTER OF THE CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB/WEST VALLEY

IN FOCUS

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Leslie Kaplan chats with Ray Bradbury.

World's Greatest Lover Exhilarates CWC/WV

by Danielle Ste. Just

VOU'RE looking at the world's greatest lover. What do I love? I love being alive."

That was Ray Bradbury's opening quote at the Motion Picture and Television Fund Home on Saturday, February 3, 2007. He is 86 years old and in love with life.

During the exhilarating talk, Bradbury explained to the California Writer's Club, West Valley Branch, about how his many loves have threaded themselves through his entire life.

He remembers looking at the back of his hand as a child and really seeing it for the first time. "My God!" he explains his realization, "I'm alive! Why didn't somebody tell me?"

Later in his childhood, Bradbury attended a carnival. He recalls seeing Mr. Electrico being shocked until his hair stood up on end. The next day, grieving over the death of his uncle, the young Bradbury ran back to the carnival. He spent time with Mr. Electrico,

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Get Ready for Branch Elections Next June

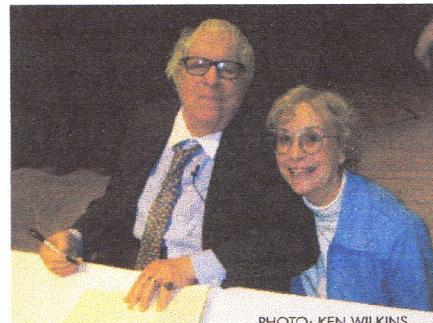
by Diana Johnson

WHAT a delight our February third meeting was! Everyone I've spoken to was so impressed with meeting and hearing Ray Bradbury. This 83-year-old legendary author recounted his life experiences, which led to the writing of some of his most popular books. His messages: Be open to the creative possibilities of seemingly ordinary events, write from passion, not for fame and fortune, and live with love. Bradbury's loves for writing, for the people who have surrounded him, and of life itself showed through every word.

And now, your Board of Directors is gearing up for the first-ever West Valley Branch election to take place during our June meeting. We're planning to have at least some of our current members run or serve for the upcoming two-year term, so there is continuity in our leadership. But, we are counting on many of you to express your willingness to serve this new and vibrant branch of the CWC.

Dave Wetterberg and Art Yuwiler have agreed to form a nominating committee on which they will represent the current Board. They will be asking three non-board members of our branch to serve on the nominating committee with them. If they ask you please say, "Yes."

I am planning to use a slot in Open Mike to discuss the importance of this election with all of you. We have everything needed to make this branch a success. A strong membership, 51 at last count, a lovely meeting place and minimum expenses. All we need is for each of you to take your turn in serving the branch as an officer, board member, writer for the newsletter or one of many other jobs that make this organization a

PHOTO: KEN WILKINS
Bradbury and W. V. President Diana Johnson.

success.

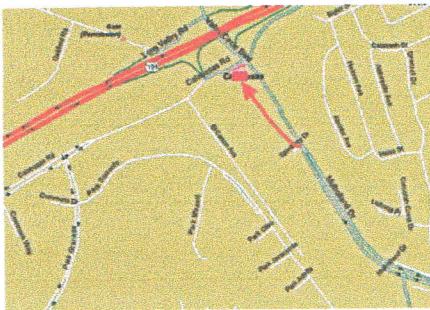
In April, we will be passing the mike during Open Mike, and asking each of you who are members of West Valley to say a bit about yourself. Tell us something personal, your writing accomplishments and goals, and your dreams of what this branch can do and be for you and for all of us in the next few years. Plan ahead what you might say, because you'll only get 3 minutes each so that as many as possible can be highlighted.

In May our nominating committee will present a slate of officers as well as recommendations for board of directors positions for your consideration. At that time, nominations and volunteers from the floor will also be accepted.

In June we will vote, and then spend the summer preparing for the year ahead. It's an exciting time to be a member of West Valley, and I am looking forward to the many ways in which we will evolve. ☺

COMING EVENTS

March 3. Speaker, Gene Perret.**April 7.** Speaker, Ann Stalcup.**May 5.** Speaker, Diana Johnson.**June 2.** Branch elections. Speaker to be announced.



WHERE TO FIND US

FROM the 101 (Ventura) Freeway exit on Mulholland Drive south. Continue to Steven Spielberg Drive (on the west opposite the shopping center). Follow the drive as it turns right then continue to the MPTV parking lot. Continue to the other side of the parking lot and exit on the small road. Pass the little traffic circle next to the apartment building and park your car. Be careful not to take an assigned space as you may be towed away. Go through the lobby of the apartment building next to the tree and exit on the other side. Turn left and Villa Katzenberg is on your right.

MEETINGS

The California Writers Club/West Valley meets on the first Saturday of each month at the Motion Picture and Television Fund complex (Villa Katzenberg), 23388 Mulholland Drive, Woodland Hills, CA 91364-2733.

NEXT MEETING

Saturday, March 3, 2007
at 1:00 p.m.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President Diana Johnson
V.P. And State Rep. David Wetterberg
Treasurer Dean Stewart
Secretary Ann Stalcup
Membership Arthur Yuwiler
Programs Betty Freeman, Leslie Kaplan
Newsletter Editor William E. Hitchins
Sound, Photographer Ken Wilkins
Site Relations Betty Freeman
Publicity Katherine Highcove
Critique Groups David Wetterberg
Member at Large William R. Johnson

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A Much Younger Man

By Leslie Kaplan

I slept with a much younger man this weekend. One of the qualities I love about him is how open and honest he is. He's never afraid to say, "I love you so much!"

He loves to snuggle and cuddle. Affection is a priority for both of us and we can't seem to get enough of it. He's got a great sense of humor and a contagious laugh, so we both laugh 'til the tears run and our noses run at the same time. Then we laugh some more. He's very ticklish so if he doesn't think I'm funny I know how to make him laugh anyway.

Even though we're years apart, there is no generation gap when it comes to music we both enjoy. He loves Frank Sinatra and I admit I introduced him to this legendary singer.

This weekend we went out for breakfast, stopped at the bookstore, bought a Sinatra CD, came home, got into the bed to watch the Olympics and snuggle some more.

When this modest younger man undresses he says,
"Don't look."

So I pretend to cover my eyes and say,
"I'm not looking!"

Me and this much younger man have what I feel is pure and unconditional love, affection and respect. Who could wish for anything more? Age doesn't matter.

His name is Jeremy Andrew Miller.
He's my grandson and he's five. ☺

Meet Our People

She's More a Reader than a Writer

Valerie Capeloto was a guest at our November meeting. The Cal State Northridge '99 liberal arts grad considers herself more of a reader than a writer. Capeloto teaches creative writing to elementary school children and enjoys writing when she's called upon to do it. If she had to squeeze herself into a category, it would be non-fiction. She would like to participate in a social group that attends plays, then critiques and discusses them.

DAVID WETTERBERG

Limericks

*There once was a tree in the wood
Who was always anxious to do good.*

*He was chopped down one day
With nothing to say*

Now a house stands where he stood.

LILLIAN RODICH

*There once was a writer named Dave
Whose address be asked us to waive.*

*We'll delete the old,
Add the new in **BOLD***

*Then click **Enter** to save.*

KEN WILKINS

CLOWNS

The clowns are
here,
painted faces, false
smiles,
cartwheels of
candor,
inappropriate tears,
armfuls of daisies,
wilted and
wondering,
clay apple
misgivings,
juggles with
uncertainty,
smashed in laughter.



Words of Wisdom

God gives every bird a worm, but He does not throw it into the nest.—Swedish proverb

*Do not wait for extraordinary situations to do good.
Use ordinary situations.— Jean Paul, German
writer (1763-1825)*

*Yesterday ended last night. Learn the skill of
forgetting. And move on.— Norman Vincent
Peale, preacher, writer (1898-1993)*

*Every vice has its excuse ready. -- Publius Syrus,
Latin writer (1st century, BCE)*

Ray Bradbury from Page 1**World's Greatest Lover**

who introduced him to the other carnies, among them an illustrated man. This was the genesis of one of Bradbury's most famous story collections, *The Illustrated Man*, about a man's tattoos coming to life.

Bradbury loves movies. While growing up in the Los Angeles area he collected 6,000 autographs from stars, directors, and other Hollywood luminaries. Bradbury takes his loves and his work seriously; in 1951, given the opportunity to go to dinner with John Huston, Bradbury declined. He explains the refusal of the invitation this way: "I hadn't accomplished enough yet as a writer to show John Huston how much I love him."

Two years later, after publication of *The*

Quotes:**On Work:**

"I want you to all be as passionate about life as I am."

"I've never written for money. I've always written because of passion."

On Writing:

"All my short stories and novels are written like screenplays."

"All my stories are my favorite."

On Critics:

"To hell with them!" — This was his reaction to the scanty reviews and critical acclaim his first books received.

Illustrated Man, *The Martian Chronicles* and *Fahrenheit 451*, Houston contacted Bradbury himself. Houston was so impressed with Bradbury and his body of work, he asked Bradbury to go to Ireland and write the screenplay for *Moby Dick*.

And the interconnectedness goes on. Love of the director Houston led Bradbury to accept the job; he wrote the screenplay for *Moby Dick* in Ireland. His discovered love of Ireland led him to write, among other things, the play *Falling Upward!* These are some of Bradbury's lifelong connections of love.

What should we take away from our time with one of the United States' greatest living man of letters? That when we are truly impassioned about our art and invite it with open arms into every aspect of our lives, we can't help but succeed. ☀

A Thought for Today

"The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow. Do good anyway. You see, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway." — Mother Teresa



PHOTO: KEN WILKINS

Part of the crowd at the Louis B. Mayer Theater that turned out to hear Ray Bradbury. The audience consisted of West Valley members, visitors from other C.W.C. branches and residents of the Motion Picture and Television Fund complex.

Dream Day

by Nonie Perlas

I T HAPPENED. I turned sixteen. My father promised I would be driving our 1957 convertible Ford Fairlane on my birthday. She was a beauty!

I couldn't wait to show her off to the Drill Team of Santa Clara High. They were washing cars at the supermarket parking lot to raise money for a field trip. With the top down, I drove in. Five of my girlfriends mobbed me.

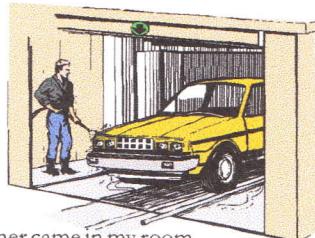
"You lucky girl! Let me have the honor!" Angela splashed a bucket of soapy water onto the Classic. The others joined. To avoid them, I began to drive off. Before I knew it, Dee-Dee had jumped on. As I careened, Dee-Dee could not hang on and fell. All the laughter and screaming stopped. I screeched to a halt.

I looked in the rearview mirror and realized a crowd gathering. It panicked me. With my heart pounding, I sped off toward home.

My mom was watching her afternoon soap opera. My dad had not yet come home from work.

"Hi, Mom," I slipped into my room.

Three knocks came at the front door. A neighbor whispered to my mom. I thought, "Oh my God! The inevitable. Dee-Dee is dead!" After the neighbor hurried off, my



mother came in my room.

"Did you hear about a bunch of girls messing around at a car wash?" she probed. "Will she turn me in? Am I going to jail?"

"One of them jumped on a car and fell off," she continued. "It's a good thing she just got a scratch on her forehead. I heard the girls were from your school." My mother looked at me.

Her wisdom in not saying any more as she gently closed the door magnified the guilt I already felt and made me realize that for every great joy came an overwhelming responsibility and Dream Day attained did not come for free. ☀

Arthur Yuwiler from Page 4**Lions, Lambs and Violets**

"grandfather clauses," etc., used to keep people from voting. This ensured everyone's right to vote, go to school, and sit anywhere he wishes on public transportation regardless of race, color or previous condition of servitude. ☀

ARTHUR YUWILER'S COLUMN

Of Lions, Lambs and Violets

MARCH winds and April Showers bring forth the May flowers," so says Mother Goose. The war-like Romans made March the first month of the year, naming it Martius for their god of war. It became the third month after January and February were carved from "The Winter" and the beginning of the year moved from March to the Kalends of January in 153 BC. The Romans called the first of each month the Kalends (from which we get Calendar). The seventh of the month for March, May, July or October or the fifth for the other months was called Nones. The same routine – the 15th or 13th, depending on the month – was used for the Ides. The Romans had no names for the rest of the month. Why, I don't know. The Ides of March that the soothsayer warned Caesar about in Shakespeare's play was therefore the 15th of March, and in 44 B.C. Julius Caesar died of stab wounds.

Like the Roman god of war, March roars "in like a lion" though it often goes "out like a lamb." To William Cullen Bryant waiting for winter to end,

The stormy March has come at last

With Wind and Cloud and changing skies;
while William Dean Howells compared March to a mad horse

Tossing his mane of snow in widest eddied and tangles

Lion-like March cometh in, boarish with tempestuous breath.

MARCH'S stone is the blue aquamarine and its flower is the purple violet. But poor March is a month without a national holiday or religious event. Still, statehoods abound and in 1981, Congress established March as National Woman's History Month with the rather prosaic theme of "Generations of Women Moving History Forward." Its honorees this year are Matilda Joslyn Gage (1826-1898), women's rights activist and historian; Virginia Foster Durr (1903-1999), civil rights activist and author; Martha Wright Griffiths (1912-2003), Congresswoman; Constance Baker Motley (1921-2005), First Afro-American woman

appointed to the Federal Judiciary; and Lupe Amguiano (1929–) Earth protector and activist for the poor.

On the first, in 1803 Ohio became the 17th state of the Union and in 1867 Nebraska became the 37th state.

On March 3rd, day that we meet again, Florida became the 27th state in 1845.

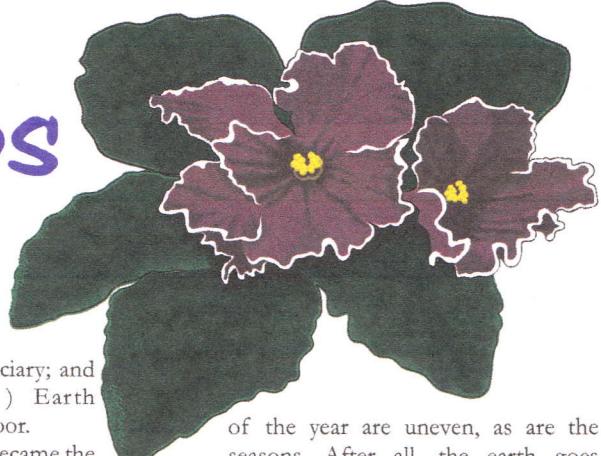
MARCH 4 is the day in 1791 that Vermont, torn by the conflicting claims of New York and New Hampshire for its territory, decided instead to be the 14th State of the Union.

And on March 15th in 1820, Maine became the 23rd state in the union.

Then on the 17th we have St. Patrick's day, celebrating the patron saint of Ireland, a national holiday there. St. Patrick is supposed to have lived from 373 to 493 BC and therefore lived 120 years. But St. Patrick is often confused with Phalladus, a bishop sent by Pope Celestine in 431 to combat the Druids and bring the heathen Irish to the Good Book. St. Patrick is famous for driving the snakes out of Ireland, though there probably were no snakes on the island. St. Patrick is also famous for using the shamrock, a three-sided clover, to illustrate the Trinity. While born in Roman Britain at Banna Venta Berniae, his place of death is uncertain. By one account he died at Saul Downpatrick, Ireland, on March 17 where his jawbone is preserved in a silver shrine. The other account has him die in Glastonbury, England. In any event, the day is one for wearing of the green (historically, sky blue) and much marching.

On March 18, Grover Cleveland, the 22nd and 24th president, was born

MARCH 21 is the first day of spring this year – the spring solstice when, in theory, days and nights are equal. Actually, days are a smidge longer than nights because of earth's curvature and the refractive power of the atmosphere. That is, the top of the sun appears and the tip of sun "sets" when the sun is actually below the earth's surface. The number of days and the length of the solstices are unequal. The days



of the year are uneven, as are the seasons. After all, the earth goes around the sun every 365 days, 6 hours, 9 minutes and 54 seconds. To account for this, the Gregorian calendar tosses in a leap year every four years, omits 3 Julian leap days each 400 years, and omits another in centuries divisible by 4,000. Further the earth's path around the sun is not circular but elliptical and, by Kepler's law, the earth moves fastest when closest to the sun. Normally, the earth tilts at 23° 27" and both skews and precesses like a top so that the earth's axis does not always point the same way.

FINALLY, other planets affect our orbit around the sun. As a result, the current seasonal lengths are 92.758 for spring, 93.651 for summer, 89.842 for autumn and 88.994 days for winter. Spring currently is reduced by about a minute/year and summer increased by the same amount. Winter is reduced by about ½ minute/year and increases in autumn. And this goes on despite global warming, great chunks of ice melting on both poles, hurricanes and very, very hot summers. But still, spring cometh and with it migratory birds fly north instead of south, trees begin again to bud and plants start to grow despite severe thunderstorms, tornadoes and rain.

On March 29, John Tyler the 10th president of these United States, was born.

And on the 30 of March, 1870, in the aftermath of our Civil War, the 15th Amendment to our Constitution was passed stating that the right to vote shall not be denied on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude. While at first this law and the defeat of the South worked, and more blacks took office than at any time in previous history, the Ku Klux Klan and others began their intimidation of neighbors and Rutherford B. Hayes withdrew all federal troops and overlooked violence against blacks. It took Johnson's Voting Rights Act of August 6, 1965 and Federal marshals to outlaw the "literary tests," "poll taxes" and

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