



## June Meeting to Feature Bradbury Film

Ray Bradbury, who wowed members and friends of the CWC/WV last February, will again be featured at the June meeting. His presentation was filmed by MPTV's in-house TV station, Channel 22. This program will be screened as the meeting's feature presentation.

The writer's talk has been embellished with sound effects and illustrations from his books and movies with star participants. It is a rich record of this brilliant man and his lifetime of creative productions.

Station Manager Jen Clymer supervised the creation with the permission of Bradbury's management. Marie Tang, of Channel 22's staff, added rich color and sound expansion from other Bradbury films and productions.

A copy of the DVD will be made available to CWC members at the meeting for a donation of \$25 to MPTV. 🐉



**Have a Happy  
and Safe  
4th of July.**

*See you in September!*

## Di Johnson Tells How To Connect the Dots

by Kathy Highcove

**E**VERY FAMILY has a story, but not every family has a talented storyteller. Di Johnson, direct descendant of Charlemagne, has made a second career as an author of historical fiction novels, all products of her family's deep vault of stories.

"I use actual historical facts, but add dialogue, thoughts, and emotions to inject life into my family's oft retold stories," Ms. Johnson explained to our May gathering of CWC/WV. The author went on to explain her varying methods of research: her recently published novel, *Cradle of a Nation*, was researched differently than the earlier Charlemagne trilogy set in the 8th century.

To gather data for the Charlemagne biography, Di's first stop was the Cal State Library, specifically the medieval French history stacks. Di committed herself to a painstaking search through several volumes that contained data and records from Charlemagne's historical period. She marked and copied every section that gave information for her future novel.

Further explorations in other libraries and bookstores refined and enriched the outline. Sometimes the information was found in surprising places: her characters were dressed in the proper style of the time thanks to a children's book on costumes.

"To write historical fiction, one needs to be innovative," Di advised her audience. "Think first of the most logical reference sources and next the varied places one might find buried information on your family history. Dig out your facts! Find the real stories, the truth behind family legends. Be bold and resourceful!"

Di's recent historical novels, set in early American history, called for a change in research techniques.



PHOTO: W. E. HITCHINS

*Di Johnson "connecting the dots."*

When she prepared for *Cradle of a Nation*, Di knew that her ancestor's family name in Virginia was Dangerfield. She networked with historian contacts in Virginia for resource ideas before she traveled to Virginia for research. Di also researched on the Net beforehand and knew upon arrival which libraries to visit, which local expert to contact, and she knew the location of the Dangerfield farm/plantation where she would scout for geographical features. Physical landmarks and structures, still intact after two centuries, were integrated into her story.

Similar research techniques are currently used as Di diligently writes *More Than Gold*, the story of her great great-grandfather who was born in Greencastle, Indiana, in the early 1800's. In 1850 the young man left home and

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### COMING EVENTS

**June 2.** Branch elections. Program to be announced.

**July.** No meeting.

**August.** No meeting.

**September 1.** Speaker to be announced.



**WHERE TO FIND US**

FROM the 101 Freeway exit on Mulholland Drive south. Go to Steven Spielberg Drive. Follow the drive through the MPTV parking lot. Exit on the other side. Pass the traffic circle and park your car. Assigned spaces are tow-away zones. Go through the lobby of the apartment building and exit on the other side. Turn left; 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, June 2, 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
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- Site Relations . . . . . Betty Freeman
- Publicity . . . . . Katherine Highcove
- Critique Groups . . . . . David Wetterberg
- Member at Large . . . . . William R. Johnson

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- “Mark Paul” Sebar . . . . . sebar@sebar.com

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*Review and Refresh*

By David Wetterberg

# The Semicolon

**H**ARDLY ANYONE USES semicolons to hitch sentences together any more. Semicolons used to be very popular for this. The Victorians used them on every page. Sam Clemens liked them. In *The Bear*, William Faulkner held one thirty-six page sentence together with them. Anyway, just in case they come into vogue again, here’s how to use them...

The semicolon has several uses. One of them is to link two closely-related sentences together in the absence of a conjunction (*and, but, for, nor, so, yet*), like in this sentence...

*She was slightly nervous when she was with him; she was frantic when she was without him.*

But, as I said, few writers use the semicolon for this purpose any more. Most contemporary writers favor ending the first sentence with a period and beginning a new sentence, with or without the conjunction, like this...

*She was slightly nervous when she was with him. She was frantic when she was without him.*

**MAY BOARD MEETING**

David Wetterberg, Central Board Representative, reported that the CWC Central Board has financial concerns because of the number of meetings a year and the cost of mailing *The Bulletin*. His suggestion that North and South California have separate meetings was rejected but the State Board decided to meet three times a year instead of four and to conduct more business by e-mail.

Dean Stewart, Treasurer, reported that we had a beginning balance of \$1,115.

Arthur Yuwiler, Membership Chairman, stated that membership now stands at 55.

Leslie Kaplan and Betty Freeman are working on next year’s list of speakers. Several prominent speakers have been approached.

William Hitchins, newsletter editor, reported that he had received columns and other material for *In Focus* earlier than in the past. The result was that he was able to publish earlier. Diana Johnson suggested that he install staff writers to write regular columns, *e.g.*, Opportunities for Publication, *etc.* David Wetterberg volunteered to edit and proofread in the future.

Bill Johnson reported a good working

or

*She was slightly nervous when she was with him. But she was frantic when she was without him.*

A semicolon, rather than a comma, is placed before the conjunction in a compound sentence when there are other commas in the sentence...

*Much to his surprise, Sam, the Anderson’s watchdog, bit the trespasser in the leg; and after that, Murphy never complained about Sam’s barking again.*

A semicolon is used to separate items in a series if the items have commas within them. In this sentence, the semi-colons make it clear that Calpurnia is taking three people with her, not six...

*On her trip to New York for her Emmy, Calpurnia Conway brought along Madge Reed, her secretary; Marco Manheim, her makeup consultant; and Josie Farquar, her hairdresser.*



Next issue: *The Colon*.

## No In Focus for July, August

There will be no issue of *In Focus* for July and August. The next issue, September, will be sent out in early August with information on the September 1 meeting plus the usual contributions and other news.

Members are encouraged to keep sending their contributions for publication. If enough material is received, extra pages will be added to give as many people a chance to have their stories published.

THE EDITOR

relationship with “Mark Paul” Sebar, who has also prepared a forum. The vote on the forum was deferred to the June meeting.

Kathy Highcove was selected to be the intermediary between the Board and Sebar.

A vote on the Jack London Award was scheduled for June with four candidates, Kathy Highcove, Leslie Kaplan, Bill Hitchins and Ann Stalcup. ☺



## SFV to Sponsor Writers' Seminar Next September

The CWC-SFV is sponsoring a writers' conference called *Laugh All the Way to a Best Seller* on September 8 and 9. The meeting will be held at the Valley Cities Jewish Community Center in Sherman Oaks.

Keynote speaker is Elizabeth Forsythe Hailey, author of *A Woman of Independent Means* and the current play of the same name now playing at the Freemont Center Theatre, Pasadena. Also in attendance will be Bruce Cameron, winner of the Best Humor Columnist Award in 2006; Marcia Wallace of screen and stage; Hillary Carlip, author of *The Queen of Oddballs*, and Mary Rose Betten.

More than 30 speakers, instructors, agents and publishers are expected to attend.

Cost of attendance is \$90 for one day and \$200 for both days with an early bird discounted rate of \$85 and \$190 respectively.

Details are on SFV's Website, [www.CalWritersSFV.com](http://www.CalWritersSFV.com) or from the conference director, Carol Wood, at (818) 704-0153.

✂

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### Connecting the Dots

journeyed into the melée of the California Gold Rush.

Di compares research for historical fiction to a child's numbered dot to dot puzzle page. Clues appear in old documents that lead to the next clue, and the next event, until a full picture gradually takes shape. When the story has an outline, the author needs to fill in the imagined details of conversation and emotion. An author of historical fiction "colors" the stark historical images, in contrast to a scholarly history book limited to only the dates and facts, and general knowledge.

"Historical fiction makes the history live for the reader," Di told us. "But," she cautioned, "If you enrich, stay real! Never be too 'out there' and stay true to historical facts. Be logical and true to the period and the lives of your ancestors."

Di Johnson has learned to *be* her characters in her imagination and to also *be real* for today's readers.

This expert story teller believes that "If you have researched well the situations should be in the outline. History tells the story." In other words:

Connect the dots and give new life and form to your family's history. ✂



PHOTO: KEN WILKINS

West Valley's Dave Wetterberg was "traffic cop" at WV's May meeting. With all the construction at MPTV, some of the roads were closed, so Dave helped members find their way to the meeting room.

### OUR MEMBERS

## Norman Molesco Is Savoring Life and Flourishing from Sunshine

by Lillian Rodich and Helen Katzman

New member, Norman Molesco, lives by a certain philosophy which is reflected in his work. "I am savoring life and flourishing from the sunshine within."

Since his retirement, his writings reflect on the aging population. He focuses on composing insightful poetry for and about seniors. Many of these poems are meant to elicit from the reader, "Yes, I've felt that way too." He also dabbles in other genre.

Over the past sixty years he has written intermittently, starting with a high school year book. He has authored professional and operational materials as well as love letters and poetry to his spouse.

He served as a psychologist in the Armed Forces, a college professor in psychology, a human factors specialist and a nursing home administrator. Over his lifetime, he has been engaged in many diverse and rewarding assignments.

At present, he is the poet for the Pierce College ENCORE Older Adult Program News and Resident Poet for the Valley Voice Newspaper. He has been accepted as a Poet for the Wilkinson Multipurpose Senior Center Newsletter.

He is an active member with the California Writers Club, San Fernando Valley Branch and is looking forward to participating with this new West Valley branch. ✂

### Wisdom to Ponder

"Hegel was right when he said that we learn from history that man can never learn anything from history."

— GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

"Mankind must put an end to war, or war will put an end to mankind."

— JOHN F. KENNEDY

One way to increase moral willpower is to build moral want power – what we get when we do the right thing.

— MICHAEL JOSEPHSON

Be courteous to all, but intimate with few, and let those few be well tried before you give them your confidence.

— GEORGE WASHINGTON

## Road Blocked: How to Get To WV's Meeting

One road to the Katzenberg Villa, WV's meeting room at the MPTV Home at 32288 Mulholland Drive, is all boarded up. Instead, enter the first turn-in to the MPTV home (it has a big sign down at street level). Continue down that short street till you come to its end. Then turn left and drive until you see the Motion Picture Home with lots of parking on the left. Park and then walk to the Katzenberg Villa.

If this is not clear, contact Art Yuwiler at (818)348-1027 or by e-mail: [ayuwiler@earthlink.net](mailto:ayuwiler@earthlink.net). ☞

## CWC Dues, Branch Elections in June

by Diana Johnson

**CWC dues** are payable July to October 1. All CWC branches collect the 2007–2008 renewal dues of \$45 from July 1 (may be paid at the June meeting) through October 1. All branch dues must be received by October 1, and the treasurer must have his/her reports and money to the Central Board by October 20, or the member is dropped from CWC. In order to be reinstated, you will have to go through the application with its \$20 enrollment fee. Pay in June, and you won't have to worry.

**Branch elections** will be held at the June Meeting.

Elections for the four officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer; will be held (following the refreshment break) during the business portion of our CWC West Valley Branch meeting on June 2. The officers and returning Board Members will appoint people to fill any vacancies on the board. ☞



## History Lesson

"History teaches us that men and nations behave wisely once they have exhausted all other alternatives." — ABBA EBAN (1915-2002)

## Part I

# The Art of Plotting

by "Mark Paul" Sebar

**P**LOTTING is actually a very unique part of literary art and probably the most important too. While many authors have trouble getting ideas, the greatest thing they have more trouble with than anything else is the art of plotting. Many authors who have finished their literary artwork and endeavors can attest to this main issue. If you can plot, you can generally story tell. If you cannot plot, than you may well have an ongoing mess on your hands. Before you can plot your story, you must find ideas for it. The best way to find ideas is to watch the news on television, jot down ideas from stories you hear. Its free except for the electricity your TV uses. If you want additional resources, just turn on talk radio at your local dial and listen to the topics of the day. Buy a newspaper like the *L.A. Times*, plenty of true life happenings in there. So ideas shouldn't be a problem.

Once you have several stories, it's time to get an idea here. Lets have each story idea be a subplot. Let us look at several Los Angeles examples. Bus Tagger (graffiti) problem troubled youth, Celebrity on the red carpet (fame fortune and drugs and mental problems), Poor city counselor (Latino guy on edge of losing his home to eminent domain). There are three stories from the *L.A. Times* and that is just a start. Now who is the main character? Excellent question, but rather simple. The Counselor is who the story will revolve around. The Movie Star celeb and the Tagger Gang Banger will need his help.

**S**EE how easy this is? No, huh, okay, let's progress. You will soon see how easy this story is to do. We need some additional sub plots to the celeb subplot and what would their be without a celebrity stalker to cause trouble and pesky paparazzi too. On the flip side we can add the subplot elements to complicate the tagger's life. Maybe he has two strikes already. Then there is his gang banger family, lots of action elements in there. Finally, the Counselor for rehab may be on the edge of losing his home while helping the other guys. Now the tagger could help him later perhaps by getting his bad guy buddies together to stop the demolition crews. Or perhaps the celeb with their endless finances could hire the best attorney in the world to help the counselor. The rest of this story becomes a fill-in the



PHOTO: W. E. HITCHINS

"Mark Paul" Sebar

blanks as you can see.

The main thing here is that we showed you how very easy it is to take three different subjects from a local newspaper and tie them together very easily, than rapidly develop but subplot and supporting characters to become perhaps a hero later on, and the endings are unlimited. We will progress on this series of articles on the art of plotting and perhaps we can fashion a story out of this after all. But please don't copy this idea. Rather, I want you to learn from this and be able to develop your own story plots for yourselves. Its easy fun and as you progress, you will find that the power to tell stories is something that will allow you to create endlessly new ideas, and finish off old ones. A great resource I would like give to you is a fellow member's book on plotting, and she is a real cutie too...! Her book can be purchased through amazon.com and the title is *Block Buster Plots* by fellow CWC member Martha Alderson (ISBN 1-877809-19-5).

While I don't use all the methods she has pioneered here, I understand many of them. Like I said earlier, as an author you should learn many different techniques and adapt them to your own needs and style. You will never quit learning as life is a learning process that goes on and on and on. ☞



## Fate

"I do not believe in a fate that falls on men however they act, but I do believe in a fate that falls on men unless they act." — G.K. CHESTERTON, British writer (1874-1936)





PHOTO: KEN WILKINS

*Leslie Kaplan addressing the WV membership.*

## Some Things Never Change

*by Arthur Yuwiler*

**S**OME THINGS never change. He glowered at the dead body on the kitchen table. A body is a body is a body, he said to himself and he'd seen them all, fat ones, skinny ones and naked ones like the one before him. You can't be in the business as long as he had without seeing them all, without getting used to it. Yet it was gruesome enough, when you thought of it, cut off at the neck like that. Heaven knows where the head went.

Chewing his frayed toothpick, he turned around the room on fat, flat feet. Someone brought it, he thought. It sure as hell didn't just fly in the window. Someone placed it on that table. But who and why? No blood on the polished wooden floor. Likely long dead before being brought here. And no footprints either though the rains last night soaked the grounds. Whoever had put it there was neat. He opened a kitchen drawer. Plenty of knives he noted. And sharp.

A star shaped chandelier hung from the ceiling in the next room, each of its eight arms ending in a cluster of elongated light bulbs, the kind that flickered like candlelight when turned on. Beneath it a long cherry-wood table glowed blood red in the light from the living room windows. But it was the portrait on the wall that struck him. She emerged from a yellow background, long auburn hair framing an oval face; laughing grey eyes; cheeks touched with rose; full, red

lips parted in a shy smile. An adorable face – young, happy. He looked at it for a moment. She doesn't look like that now, he thought, his face grim.

The dining room opened onto a living area. Tall french windows opened onto the garden. On one side, a graceful staircase curved up to split into balconies rimming the upper floor. On the other, a massive stone fireplace cut into the wall. An arc of white couches surrounded it.

He heard rustling above him and darted back into the darkened dining room.

**S**HE descended the staircase slowly in her black dress, an ageing ingenue. Plump now, arms heavy, grey spotting her auburn hair, she considered her red nails.

He stepped from the shadows and she turned, eyes still fixed on her nails.

"There is a body in the kitchen," he said. "Would you happen to know who put it there and why?"

"The butler did it," she answered, then added, "We are having six for dinner, Gaston. I would like you to barbecue that turkey."

"Again, madam?" he asked

She turned sharp grey eyes on him. Her full, red lips flattened into a sharp line. "Yes, again. Barbecued!" she said firmly.

He turned toward the kitchen muttering to himself. "A cordon-bleu chef and she wants barbecue again, and again, and again. Some things never change." ☞

## My Inner Mind

*My inner mind is one of a kind.  
It's my reality, my soul. It's me,  
How I think, feel and be.  
If these feelings and ideas of mine,  
Continue to remain undisclosed,  
A person can never know what's inside me.  
Unless I reveal my soul to another,  
Letting him detect some of my inner me,  
A person cannot know how I think, feel and  
be.  
My inner mind is indeed quite immense.  
You are exposed only to that tiny part,  
That I allow you to sense.*

NORMAN MOLESKO



## Total Recall

*Paper thin memories  
crumbling before me,  
too delicate to retain their texture ....  
Just a glimpse on tissue  
before the text turns to dust.*

*If once viewed  
only for a second,  
if once articulated  
only in a whisper,  
then a picture must remain,  
however dim  
or torn at the edges ----  
and sounds speaking without a voice.*

*This body and intellect experienced  
boldly and painfully and joyfully.  
That time was real,  
the pain vivid,  
the joy overflowing,  
the music embracing me.*

*Where is the path  
I once so cavalierly followed?  
Where did it lead?  
I still remember the flowers  
winking on the side of the road ----  
and my pen is ready.*

LILLIAN RODICH



## ARTHUR YUWILER'S COLUMN

# June Is Busting Out All Over

**T**HE JOY in Rogers and Hammerstein's line "June is busting out all over" is palpable, infectious and true. Look around you! Until June 21 at 18:13 hours when the summer solstice occurs, it's still spring, and then comes the heat of summer. In the pagan wheel of the year, the solstice is the time of Litha, and Midsommar is celebrated in Sweden with a huge maypole log. In most of the United States, schools end, teachers relax and parents once more search for camps to take care of their kids

But it is also the time for harvesting all manner of vegetables—beans, berries, corn, peaches, and, yes, even tomatoes. Bees go crazy darting in and out of roses and honeysuckles and lilies. "Oh my love's like a red, red rose that's newly sprung in June" wrote Bobby Burns, and sure the colors of flowers fill the hills. Truly spring has come and then the heat of summer.

This, the sixth month of the year, is named after Juno, queen of the gods, wife to Jupiter attended by Iris, goddess of the rainbow. Since Juno is also the goddess of marriage, ancient Romans and today's contemporaries regard June as the luckiest month to get wed. And so they do. Love is in the very perfumed air, and matrimony is more than the male thinking about what the women have been thinking about all winter.

**J**UST to show the lasciviousness of the Roman and Greek gods, Jupiter (or Zeus), horny creature that he was, wanted to seduce Io, but instead turned her into a cow when Juno (or Hera) found out about his scheme. So Juno sent her servant, Argus, with a hundred eyes, to keep watch over the cow. But Jupiter, sly guy that he was, had Mercury (or Hermes) tell Argus such long pointless stories that Argus finally fell asleep. Mercury, then seizing Argus's own sword, cut off Argus's head. Juno was understandably distraught by all this and gathered Argus's hundred eyes and scattered them over the peacock, her favorite bird. Meanwhile Jupiter had his way with Io, and of course Juno could hardly punish Jupiter for his transgressions, for, after all, he was king of the Gods. And so instead Juno tormented poor Io with a gadfly. The gadfly buzzed up

and down driving Io mad and she continually moved about from place to place, land to land, hoping to get away from it. At last Io found respite on the banks of the Nile, and there she turned back into a woman, a very pregnant woman, who bore Jupiter a son named Epapus. Such was the lusty way of the Roman or Greek gods.

June's flower is the rose or the honeysuckle, and its birth stone is the pearl, Alexandrite or moonstone.

**T**HIS MONTH also is National Rose Month or National Dairy Month. Take your choice.

June may be a good month for newlyweds but most of us are simply far too busy relaxing to bother getting hitched. Besides, many of us have already done that

June 1 in 1792, Kentucky became the 15th state of the Continental Congress, followed by Tennessee, which became the 16th state in 1796.

On June 2 we meet for the last time this spring. We meet again in the fall, in September 2007.

June 5, 1968 Senator Robert F. Kennedy was shot by an assassin, ending the hopes of many people.

June 14 Truman officially recognized Flag Day, born in 1777 when the Continental Congress first adopted 13 stars and 13 stripes as our national flag.

On June 15, 1775 George Washington was appointed commander-in-chief of the Continental Army. On that same day in 1836, Arkansas became the 25th state.

**J**UNE 17, the third Sunday in June, is Fathers Day in the United States by decree of Lyndon Johnson in 1966. It was largely ignored until Richard Nixon made it official. It is also Father's Day in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Ireland and Canada. It is the one day a year when the necktie trade has a booming business.

On June 18, 1812, the United States declared war on Great Britain in part because American sailors were being seized and in part because of British restraints on trade. Busy with the Napoleonic Wars and the war in Spain, Britain paid minimal attention to its old colony until we attacked Canada. Then in

response to our burning of York in Canada, the British burned parts of Washington, D.C. The war finally ended in a draw, with both nations agreeing to peace and with prewar borders intact. Of course news then was not instantaneous and in the interim the Americans decisively defeated the British in the Battle of New Orleans. It was during that war that the lawyer Francis Scott Key boarded the British ship *HMS Tonnant* trying to get Dr. William Beanes released. Once there, Key was forced to witness the British bombardment of Ft. McHenry during the Battle of Baltimore. During the battle he scribbled down the poem *The Defense of Fort McHenry* and fit its rhythms to that of *Anacaron in Heaven* by John Stafford Smith. Better known as the "The Star Spangled Banner" the combination was made the national anthem by President Hebert Hoover on March 3, 1931.

Better known as the *The Star Spangled Banner*, the combination was made the national anthem by President Hebert Hoover on March 3, 1931.

On June 21, summer officially begins at 18:13 hours with the summer solstice, the time when the sun crosses the meridian, the longest day of the year. On that day in 1788, New Hampshire ratified the U.S. Constitution. In 1945, Allied Forces captured Okinawa during WWII.

On June 23, 1947, the Taft-Hartley Act was signed into law over Harry Truman's veto who called it the "Slave Labor Bill." Among its many provisions, it declared the closed shop illegal, and exempted employers from bargaining with unions.

**N**JUNE 25 in 1788, Virginia ratified the Constitution; on that same day, in 1876, Lt. Col. George Custer disobeyed General Alfred Terry's orders, divided up his forces into groups headed by Major Reno, Captain Benteen and himself, and then, though told to wait, directly attacked a mixed band of Cheyenne, San Ares, Blackfeet and Miniconjoux, Oglala, and Hunkpapa Sioux. A group of Oglala Sioux under Crazy Horse enveloped Custer's men in a pincer movement and wiped out all 197 of them. In separate battles, Major Reno lost 36 of his 134 men while 26 were wounded, and Captain Benteen lost 11 members of his 125 Cavalry men and had 29 wounded.

On June 26, 1945, the United Nations came into being in San Francisco with a charter signed by 51 nations. It has since grown to 192 nations and is dedicated to cooperation in international law, economic development, social progress and human rights. ☺