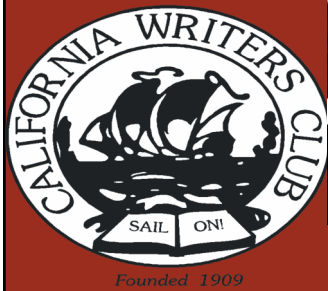


WEST VALLEY



CWC/WV

NOVEMBER 2008

VOLUME 1, ISSUE

SPONTANEOUS CONJUNCTION IN THE KATZENBURG



The goblins and gremlins made mischief early this October at the Stark Villa. A nasty virus seeped into the MPTF residence hall which forced the Villa administrators to quarantine most inhabitants. As a result, guest speaker Bob Banner was forced to cancel his speech to our CWC/WV membership on Saturday afternoon. Understandably, he didn't want his Villa friends to miss his presentation. Banner will return in January.

No speaker? Not to worry. Our branch President Dave Wetterberg invoked his writing workshop leader mode, and gave us an assignment.

Dave confides, "Caught short at five-thirty Friday evening that the Saturday speaker had cancelled, I dug into my old Creative Writing lessons for a lively exercise that would whip up some latent creative juices and provide an interaction among members so everyone would get to know each other a little better."

Our group settled down after refreshments and received our assignment: "Form groups of six, circle your chairs and I'll pass out the exercise. We're going to write some fiction together." Yes, Mr. Wetterberg. We split into several subdivisions of writing talent and looked over the writing assignment.

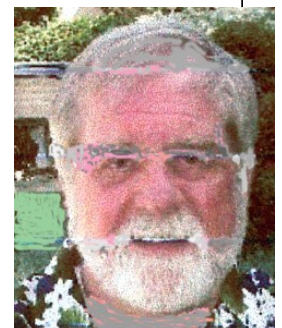
Hello Friends and Fellow CWC Member, I send to all my first edition of InFocus. Thanks for Your patience and Much thanks to former editor Bill Hitchins and my Co-Editor and Techie Consultant, Joe Highcove. Enjoy, and hope to see you all on November 1st. Cheers,
Kathy Highcove

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to our new newsletter editor Kathy Highcove and her staff, Samantha Berley and Claude Baxter. Our newsletter will continue to spotlight our members' writings and share information with sister branches.

I hope you enjoyed my last minute fill-in exercise in creative writing in lieu of a speaker at our October meeting. I was happy to hear some of you got to know a fellow member or two a little better because of the group activity. That was what was intended.

This month I attended the quarterly meeting of the CWC/Central Board, held in Ontario, quite a long drive from Woodland Hills. Most of the time I fly for an overnight in San Jose. Vice-president David George conducted the meeting due to the bereavement absence of President Casey Wilson, who lost his wife unexpectedly. I've sent our condolences to him and his family. Some you know Casey from his years with the San Fernando Valley branch before he moved to Ridgecrest and established a CWC branch there.



Among other matters at Central were the establishment of new branches, a projected
See Pres. Mess., Page 3, Col 1

For November: Joe Sutton Heard the Heart of Hollywood

November speaker Joe Sutton has a history in the entertainment industry that spans over forty years. At the beginning of his career as a publicist, some of his clients included Bill Cosby, the Smothers Brothers, and Tennessee Ernie Ford. Branching out into personal management, he guided the careers of stars like Neil Diamond, Ricky Nelson, and Lou Rawls.

Joe also spent years in the music business. He was vice-president of the MCA music division and later had his own Shadybrook Records label. He sold this business and went back into personal management and public relations. Since 1993, Joe Sutton's client roster has included the likes of Martin Lawrence, Jerry Seinfeld, Oprah Winfrey, and a host of others.

In 1998, Joe put his years of show business expertise and philosophical beliefs before the Los Angeles radio public with his radio show "The Heart of Hollywood." The show grew with leaps and bounds, featuring among his guests motion picture/television actors and other film dignitaries.

Joe's initial book "The Heart of Hollywood: From Hollywood to Hell and Back," drawn from his long career among the stars, is about the spiritual and ethical core of his beliefs in life and how they can be used to live in "the fantasy world we live in called Hollywood."

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS FOR THE FREELANCER

There are so many emotions attached to the holiday season. Thanksgiving especially is a happy time when families and friends gather for dinner with turkey, pumpkin pie and all the trimmings. If not traditional fare, it still provides feelings of joy sometimes sorrow, happiness, laughter; memories which give writers inspiration for stories and poems.

Here are a few markets from *The Writer* that accept freelance manuscripts:

COUNTRY WOMAN

5400 S 60th St.

Greendale, WI 53129

www.countrywomanmagazine.com

For women living in the country or interested in country life. Recipes, craft projects, fiction and nostalgia stories, decorating, profiles of country woman, and poetry.

Fiction: Wholesome fiction with country perspective or rural theme; 1,000 words; \$90-\$125.

Nonfiction: Nostalgia pieces, essays on farm/country life, humorous stories, decorating features, inspirational articles; 750-1,000 words; \$50-\$75.

Poetry: Good rhythm and rhyme, seasonal in nature; 12-24 lines; \$10-\$25.

Queries: Not necessary **Unsolicited mss:** Yes

Submission formats: Hard copy

Payment: On acceptance

FAMILY CIRCLE

375 Lexington Ave.

New York, NY 10017

www.familycircle.com

General-interest women's magazine with focus on family. Special interest in marriage, family, childcare/eldercare issues, health, consumer affairs, psychology and humor.

See *Opportunity Knocks*, Page 3, Col. 2

GIVING THANKS FOR MY WORLD by Helen S. Katzman



I'm thankful to live in the United States America where we have the right and privilege to vote, where elections can be disputed, and governments not overthrown. I'm thankful to be a woman in the United States where I have the right to walk down a street, alone if I wish, without a chador covering my face.

I'm thankful for public education where classes for senior citizens are available at little or no cost.

I'm thankful for water that runs out of faucets, watering plants, nurturing flowers and for gas used for cooking and heating, and for electricity that illuminates the darkness of the night.

On a more personal level I'm thankful, or perhaps grateful would be a more appropriate word, for all I have in this world. I'm grateful to have had the love and support of the three wonderful men in my life.

I'm thankful and grateful my brother and I have had an ever closer relationship through the years. In his eyes I'm now "standing on my own two feet" and not in his shadow.

I'm grateful my husband and I raised two loving and caring children who in turn have warm and nurturing homes.

I'm grateful and delighted to have two beautiful granddaughters. I'm grateful and most thankful for my many friends. We are here for each other in times of joy and times of sadness.

I'm grateful for the strength, stamina and will to thrive and not just survive when "hard punches" are thrown my way.

I'm grateful to have vision to plan ahead for eventualities and the eyesight to enjoy the autumn leaves on the Modesto Ash tree outside my widow.

I'm grateful to hear birds sing, leaves rustling in the breeze and symphonies playing exquisite music.

Listen to LIFE. This is the POETRY OF LIFE for this Thanksgiving and for all those to come.

[Spontaneous Conjunction from page 1](#)

Our job: Write a scene together, using the subject and object of choice from two lists of possibilities. We would combine two very different story elements. Contrast between two unlikely elements should engender interesting and imaginative plots. Everyone got busy, and soon the Katzenberg Room hummed with creative fervor. Too soon for most participants, Mr. Wetterberg called "Time!" and asked for oral reports from each group. Combinations of dissimilar topics created some very odd fables, indeed.

One group chose a handicapped woman who met a cowboy; another group mused on a UFO who visited a funeral procession; one busy islet of authors introduced a snake to a jogger... and a pink horse. All the stories had two things in common: confused plotline and humorous juxtapositions.

By the end of the session our impromptu writing class had delivered Mr. Wetterberg's predicted results: we had interacted, enjoyed each other's fertile imaginations and produced several imaginative stories. In short, we had fun. No bad karma or gloomy goblins invaded Katzenberg Hall that Saturday afternoon.

[President's Message from Page 1](#)

In the budget, fund raising, membership, and a state anthology. Much of the meeting was devoted to plans for the CWC Centennial next year, one hundred years from the day in 1909 when Jack London and associates started it all in San Francisco.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS from page 2

Nonfiction: Useful articles for all phases of a woman's life; true life, dramatic narratives; 1,000-2,500 words; \$1/word.

Fillers: Humor about family life; 750 words.

Queries: Required **E-queries:** Yes **Unsolicited mss:** Yes

Submission formats: Hard copy, Electronic

Freelance content: 80%

Payment: On acceptance
No simultaneous submissions.



Thanksgiving Day, 1945. From my family album: Frank Hall carves the turkey for our family and his elderly parents seated at the dining table. Granddad Hall watches Dad closely as he carves the bird. Ross checks out his mashed potatoes. Janice and Diane look on, waiting for their slice of white meat. I was probably asleep in my crib. Mom appreciates sitting down after spending several hours in the kitchen making her special white dinner rolls, special vegetable dishes and three pies.

Time to eat. Before this photo was taken by a family friend, Granddad Hall said his improvised Grace over the meal. He said, usually, "Thanks for all You have given us, and keep us in good health....for Christ's sake! Amen!" He never swore so when he uttered that phrase so forcefully, like a curse, a ripple of light titters went around the holiday table. Grandmother Hall probably noticed but smiled tolerantly at her grandchildren. After Granddad's blessing we passed the warm food, served in our best china. And then we got busy with the knives and forks.

I meditated recently on what a tactful family host might say to today's off-spring and relatives for a Blessing. Have to be inclusive, politically correct and cover all bases, so to speak. I was inspired by this thought of modern feasts to write Turkey Talk - featured in the next column. Enjoy the spooof.



Turkey Talk

A BLESSING FOR TODAY

Please bow your heads: We gather together to feast in peaceful breaking of bread, offering thanks or good thoughts or nurturing mindsets, to the Creator, or The Source or The Universal Truth - yes I know you don't pray, you meditate...whatever works for you - for the bounty or produce or organic life forms, in memory of the Pilgrim or Anglo-Saxon Survivors or Post-Columbian Invaders, who feasted with the Native Americans or The People or The Wronged Ones, after surviving a hellish winter ordained by God or Buddha or Gaia, and so I'm carving this tofu turkey and everyone will now...please... pick up his or her knives and forks...or chop- sticks:

And dig in.

Centennial Edition CWC Anthology

Needs Your Fiction, Essays, and Poetry!

The California Writers Club, founded in 1909, is calling for submissions for its upcoming literary anthology. The anthology will help mark the club's centennial year.

We are seeking fiction, literary nonfiction, and poetry written by our members. Please carefully read the submission guidelines if you are interested in submitting.

Submission Guidelines:

1. No more than 2000 words per fiction/nonfiction piece, 750 per poem.
2. Only electronic submissions can be accepted. Include your name, address, phone number, and CWC branch in the body of the email. Submit your work as a text or a Microsoft Word file to the following email address: `cwc_anthology@yahoo.com`
3. Format your work in a professional manner, as you would when submitting to any agent, publisher, or contest:
 - Use white page background..
 - Use 10- or 12-point serif font (such as Times New Roman) for your copy.
 - Start your title page halfway down the page.
 - Include your name, address, phone number, and CWC branch at the top right of your title page
4. No more than 2 submissions in each category per author.
5. **Topic of your choice.**

Include last name, title (or abbreviated title), and page number in the header of every page except for the title page.

Deadline: November 14, 2008.

Please note that we have a limited number of pages and a selection process is in place in case of too many submissions.. Publication of submis-

FUN WITH MODIFIERS - WRITE RIGHT WITH WETTERBERG

Modifiers (call them adjectives and adverbs if you will) alter the view of nouns and verbs. With a modifier, a dog can become a *vicious* dog. A cat meows, but with a modifier she can meow *plaintively*. And modifiers come in larger sizes—call them phrases and clauses, if you wish—but they *alter* the view the same way. *Growling viciously at the salesman, the dog leaped at the screen door.* *The cat meowed as if she had lost her best friend.*

Use care in the placement of modifiers. Otherwise confusion and sometimes unintended humor can result. Grammarians classify the most rampant errors of this kind as *misplaced modifiers*, *squinting modifiers* and *dangling modifiers*.

Misplaced Modifiers

A misplaced modifier gives the impression that it modifies something other than what was intended.

We have some new bicycles for serious riders with adjustable seats.

(Adjustable tushes? Try ... *We have some new bicycles with adjustable seats for serious riders.*)

Bobby continues teasing the goat with a smile of satisfaction on his face.

(A goat with a smirk? Try ... *With a smirk of satisfaction on his face, Bobby etc.*)

Squinting Modifiers

When a modifier “squints”, it might be taken to modify either of two words.

Mr. Holburn said on the first day of class he would ask us to keep a journal.

Did Mr. Holburn say it on the first day or did he want the journal on the first day?

(Try ... *On my first day of class, Mr. Holburn etc.*)

I thought all this time you were in Grand Forks.

Did I think it all this time or were you there all this time?

(Try ... *All this time I thought you were in Grand Forks or*

I thought you were in Grand Forks all this time.)

Dangling Modifiers

A dangling modifier is a modifier with nothing in the sentence for it to modify.

Cleaning the garage, the shelf collapsed. Who’s cleaning the garage?

(Try ... *When I was cleaning the garage, the shelf collapsed.*)

Driving across the range, some buffalo came into view. Buffalo at the wheel?

(Try ... *As we drove across the range, some etc.*)

Try revising these:

He hit the dog driving the jeep.

I read a book on insects that I picked up.

I called him Fernando when I met him by mistake.

