



WEST VALLEY BRANCH



Of Man of the Future

By Jack London

Of man of the future!
Who is able to describe
him?
Perhaps he breaks our
globe into fragments
In a time of warlike
games.
Perhaps he hurls death
through the firmament.
Man of the future! He
is able to aim at the
stars,
To harness the comets,
And to travel in space
among the planets.



VOLUME 2

ISSUE 9

June — Tradition, Ceremony, and Dad in the Spotlight



President's Message As We Bid Adieu

With the June meeting we close the third year of our West Valley branch of the California Writers Club, held in a little spot of heaven called the Katzenberg Villa of the Motion Picture and Television Fund residence. I'm grateful to Betty Freeman and the other residents for their generosity and for a very pleasant relationship.

Bill Sorrells and Open Mike were a pleasant kick-start to each meeting this year, and we tried our best to present some challenging speakers and provide some interesting experiences.

The most pleasant part for me was seeing you all once a month, interacting with you, and getting to know you a little better.

My deepest thanks to our outgoing Board of Directors, who, in 2006, our first year, volunteered to get things going. At the end of the year, they were elected officially and served again another two years—a generous three year term in office! My thanks to them for their loyalty and their hard work.

Leaving their positions on the Board are Claude Baxter, Vice-president; Art Yuwiler, Membership Chair; Leslie Kaplan, Program Chair; Dean Stewart, Treasurer; Lillian Rodich and Helen Katzman, Historians; and Samantha Berley, Secretary.

Staying on to greet the new Board are Kathy Highcove, Newsletter Editor; and David Burr, Webmaster.

Please read candidate slate on pg.11

Learn Self-Publishing Secrets

Our June guest speaker, author Amy Berger, describes herself as having lived more lives than your average cat! Throughout her career, she has worked at multiple jobs in the public and private sector with an emphasis on market research and writing. She holds two bachelors' degrees from UC Berkeley, one in International Development Studies, the other in Spanish. She also has a masters degree from MIT in Urban Planning.

She has written a humor book for working women entitled *The Twenty Year Itch: Confessions of a Corporate Warrior*. Her second book, *What to Do When You're Awake: An Insomniac's Guide to the Night* was completed in 2001 and has traveled to many publishers for evaluation.

Considering the throes of the market today and the increasing popularity of publishing one's own material, Ms. Berger's topic, "The 5 P's of Self-Publishing," is a very timely one and a very important one to us as writers. Come and hear about the five magic P's.



WRITE FROM THE HEART BUT USE YOUR HEAD



It's a hard luck life out there in movie land, and that's no lie. In the past, script writers have earnestly related that truth to our membership in guest appearances. Our May speaker, Don Kopaloff, presented another version of frustration and foment in Hollywood's creative world. The former studio executive, who once searched through hundreds of submitted scripts for a winner, colorfully spelled out the vagaries of studio budgets and studio executives' yens and gut level choices—the unknown forces behind film making.

Kopaloff, a Hollywood agent extraordinaire, explained the facts of studio life to our crowd, "You can have a great idea, do all the right things, think it's a sure sell, have all your ducks in line, and still ...the whole set-up goes south." Kopaloff proceeded to give detailed examples of his hits, misses and the scripts that got away. So much pain. So many missed chances for greater glory and a golden Oscar. Who knew that even the Big Guys got royally roughed up in the Hollywood Game? None but the insiders, apparently—And

our guest was once a true insider!

Kopaloff often went back to basics in his address to the CWC/WV members and any newbie script writers listening in the audience.

"What does a script need?" Kopaloff asked and answered his own question: "Your script needs a beginning, middle and an end. There must be a problem, growing conflict, a big climax, and finally a resolution. Write what you know, write from the heart, and no phony stuff. If your message isn't clear, doesn't grab the attention of the studio heads, the material is thrown on the slush pile." And goes down the oblivion chute, we learned, sometimes into the eager hands of a small studio and independent funding. And Oscars for the competition. More pain for the Big Guys. But — take note, hopeful script writer — perhaps there is life after death for your script. The enterprising script writer is resourceful and persistent, emphasized Kopaloff, who was the savvy agent behind *Shaft*, *Lion in Winter* and several other hits in his long career.

"Look for your break anywhere and everywhere. Shop your script!" said our guest speaker. "It's your dream but you have to pitch it to the money guys to make the dream come true! Only you — and your agent — will take the time."

Kopaloff left us with an admonition to remember the time tested for-



Leslie Kaplan and Don Kopaloff

formula of a good script: grabber, conflict, climax, and resolution. "Write a mass murder opening, for example," said the veteran agent with a grin. "Write it, leave it alone and then go back and maybe make changes. Trust your instincts, then hope you find a studio head who wants a mass murder scene. You never know what those guys want to buy. I'm serious, people!"

Don Kopaloff's lecture on The Movie Business made our members much more aware of the power games and realities of the movie trade.

HOLLYWOOD GAMES	
Writers	©©
Studio	\$\$\$



"It's your dream but you have to pitch it to the money guys to make that dream come true!"



— Kathy Highcove

Opportunity Knocks

- Lenora Smalley



In the summer, writers find more time to write or attend workshops, conferences, submit work to

publications, or enter contests. Since CWC West Valley will be dark during July and August, here are markets and internet resources for the summer writing endeavors.

Coffee House Press

27 N Fourth St., Ste. 400
Minneapolis, MN 55401

www.coffeehousepress.org

Description: Publishes literary novels, full-length short story collections, poetry, essays, memoir, and anthologies.

Proposals: Query with sample chapters (20-30 pages) and SASE. Considers simultaneous queries. Send hard copy only; do not send via e-mail or fax. Responds in 4-6 weeks to queries, 4-5 months to manuscripts.

Tips: No genre fiction (mysteries, gothic romances, westerns, science fiction) or books for children.

Why not query red, white and blue presses in July?



Red Rock Review

Primary Contact Person, Rich Logsdon, Sr. Editor, 3200 E. Cheyenne Ave., N.L. Las Vegas NV 89030

<http://www.ccsn.nevada.edu/english/>

White Pine Press, (Poetry)

P.O. Box 236, Buffalo NY 14201, Contact Elaine LaMattina, Website <http://www.whitepine.org>

Blue Mesa Review

Contact person, Julie Shigekuni, Dept. of English, Humanities Building, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131
Web Site: <http://www.unm.edu/~blumesa/>

There are so many sources on the internet. It is incredible the help out there. Perhaps it would be a good idea to start a personal address book, bookmark or favorites of places that prove useful.

Anthology Update



Our Collage
of ideas and
verbal Images
takes shape.

For those members who missed our last CWC meeting, or who are unclear about developments with our anthology, I am pleased to share the CWC/WV anthology developments.

We are most grateful to all of you who submitted material. An expanded committee look over the material, keeping in mind word numbers and the publisher's requirements.

We will try to include something from everyone in our club who has submitted material and expect to have a fine collection.

This is not a contest. However space will not allow our including everything. Thirty members submitted material — between 1 and 5 pieces. Every one who sent something will be included in the anthology. Some will have one published submission, others will have more than one.

Our editors will decide the contents.

The next step is for us to "edit" the material and format the book. As soon as the exact number of submissions is decided, we will notify the individual writers.

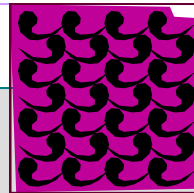
Our committee will meet to arrange material so that we can get an idea of cost break-down. Bill Hitchins has volunteered to work with the printer with whom he has a business connection.

The theme of the anthology is *Collage*. An artist acquaintance will help us design the cover.

Thanks for your patience. One of our committee members will share more details at our June 5th meeting. Stay tuned.

- Lillian Rodich

The Comma --- Part One



Note: Let's get it straight. There is no rule that says you insert a comma somewhere within a sentence because of some vague notion that a comma belongs there. And there is no rule that says you insert a comma because you can feel a "hesitation" in the sentence. And there is no rule that says that when you're in doubt, plug a comma in "just to play it safe." On the contrary, whenever you're in doubt, leave the comma out. You'll be right more times than you're wrong. I guarantee it.

Items in a Series: Something New ... NOT!

Put a comma before each item in a series when the series has more than two items:

The only dissenters of the plan were Bill Murphy, Al Newman, and Mark Kitahara.

Some would say leave the last comma out, that this rule has changed, that it should be:

The only dissenters of the plan were Bill Murphy, Al Newman and Mark Kitahara.

I don't know where this notion came from. I have five composition textbooks in my personal library, including Strunk's *Elements of Style*, ruling that the comma goes there before the second "and." You'll see seven more sources under *The Case of the Serial Comma* at <http://www.protrainco.com/essays/serial-comma.htm>. None of them say to leave the comma out. What goes!?

The Appositive

An appositive is a word or a word group placed after a noun that identifies or supplements the noun. Commas are necessary to set off an appositive. ("Set off" means one before and one after.)

I haven't seen Tillie and Barbara, two of my closest college chums, since 1977.

In some cases commas are not necessary when the proper name comes first and the appositive shows a close relationship.

My brother Bob and my sister Sue are in the Air Force.

A reverse order would call for commas, however.

Bob, my brother, and Sue, my sister, are in the Air Force.

The Compound Sentence

The conjunctions *and*, *but*, *or*, *for*, *nor*, *so*, and *yet* are the only words that can join sentences together correctly. When they do, a comma before the conjunction is necessary.

The car raced off after the shooting, but a bystander got the license number.

If the compound sentence is a short one, the commas may be left out.

The dog barked and Melissa screamed.

Sometimes the pronoun *it* is confused with a conjunction and is used incorrectly as a conjunction.

He looked down at the map, it was drenched. (incorrect)

The following are examples of the pronoun *it* used correctly in the same situation:

He looked down at the map, but it was drenched.

He looked down at the map. It was drenched.

He looked down at the map; it was drenched.

**MORE NEXT TIME... "I WAS ANGRY, LIVID,
SHOCKED, AND SO I SAID..."**

- D. WETTERBERG



"Why Do We Need To Learn That?!"



"We often use culture to mean the cultivation and nurturing of national aspirations and ideals. Culture. What a wonderful word!"

Ray Malus



Years ago when I was teaching Computer Science at UCLA Dental School, I was invited to speak at a National Dental Conference in Dallas. A colleague went with me. He was Chinese-American and a dentist. We had little in common and were not close friends.

As we walked down a corridor, someone passed us carrying a human skull on a tray. (It was a dental conference, after all.) I quipped, "Alas, poor Yorick."

Jim, the colleague, instantly responded, "I knew him, Horatio, a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy."

I was startled. I was amused. I felt a sudden, unexpected kinship with this person with whom I'd thought I had nothing in common.

Above all, I had found the answer to that anguished wail I'd heard from countless fellow students in Arts, History and Language classes over the years: "Why do we need to learn that?!"

We "need to learn that," because familiarity with our culture is a major part of the social glue that holds us together, the mark of our tribe, the password to social belonging. Culture!

Culture is the framework within which any society functions – the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of any social group. Everyone intersects and interacts with many different cultures – social, professional, racial, or recreational.

Not all culture is absorbed through dogged rote learning. Much (probably most) of our culture is absorbed effortlessly, through a sort of osmosis--exposure within a group and/or family.

Several years after the Dental Conference, I sat having lunch while doing a crossword puzzle. A dear woman, a

recent émigré from mainland China, and whom I mentored, sat down beside me and asked, "How long would it take me to learn how to do one of those crossword puzzles?"

I thought for a long minute, and answered sadly, "Never."

How could a person raised in another culture possibly remember "Desi's love?" Or "Opie's Dad?" Or "One, if by ___?" How could one explain who "Toy that plays the cello" is? (For those interested—all the previous clues have four letters.)

Culture is the proverbial mixed blessing. It can exclude as well as include. Signs, countersigns, and passwords bar doors, just as they open them. Unfamiliarity with a given culture can often be a detriment. Having an unpopular one can be can be worse. Good or bad, for those who seek to be comfortable within a group—to belong—familiarity with a culture is essential.

We writers have a special relationship with our culture. We are its custodians—documenting and preserving its elements. We are its disseminators—exposing and distributing it to the world. We are its architects—molding, correcting, and enhancing it. A writer's participation in our culture is an opportunity, a responsibility, and a privilege.

The next time you might hear some pouty student whine, "Why do we need to learn that?!" the answer is simple:

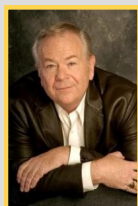
"Because it makes you one of our family."

Appearing Now in Person

Dave Burr stars in **Bus Stop**
June 5 through June 28, 2009
Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays - 8:00pm
Sundays - 2:30pm

Woodland Hills Community Theatre
7242 Owensmouth Ave., Canoga Park

Call (818)884-1907 for more information



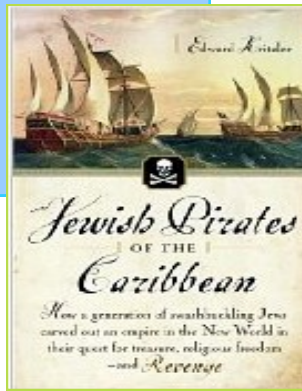
And in Print ...

Kathy Highcove has written a book review, *Waiting For the Apocalypse*, that can be found in the May issue of the Internet Review of Books: <http://internetreviewofbooks.com/may09/contents.html>

Kathy also reviews Casa Don Rolando Cuban Restaurant of North Hills in the June issue of *Valley Scene Magazine*. Go to www.valleyscenemagazine.com to see the review.

BOOK REVIEW

Title: **Jewish Pirates of the Caribbean**
 Author: Edward Kritzler
 Publisher: Doubleday, New York
 Edition: Hard cover
 Publication date: November 2008
 Release date: June 2009
 Pages: 336
 Price: \$13 to \$27
 ISBN 978-0-385-51398-2



I got two surprises when I bought my copy of *Jewish Pirates of the Caribbean* at the gift shop at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles. The first was the title of the book, "Jewish Pirates..." I did not know there was such a thing. I showed it to several people there. Most made the same comment.

The book tells the story of what happened to some of the Sephardic Jews who were expelled from Spain in 1492 in one of the Spanish king's major lapses of judgment. The history books record that Spain's Jews dispersed among other nations, another Diaspora. They ignore the Jews who decided to fight back, men like Samuel Palache, the rabbi pirate; Sinan, "the Great Jewish Pirate;" and Moses Cohen Henriques, who made the biggest haul of any pirate in history before or since.

That brings me to my second surprise. Moses Cohen, I learned following up on information in the book, was an ancestor of mine.

Kritzler gives an excellent description of how the Spanish treated secret Jews by giving the story of a converso who was found to be a secret Jew, how he was humiliated and tortured by the Inquisition and how he fled to Holland, changing his Christian name, Antonio Vaz Henriques, to Moses Cohen Henriques.

These Sephardic pirates cooperated with the British and especially the Dutch, but preyed on Spanish shipping and that of any nation that treated Jews badly. Much of their booty was taken to Jamaica, nominally Spanish but the private property of the Columbus family where the Discoverer's descendants would not permit the Inquisition. The result was that the island was populated for a large part by Jews and conversos and made it a prosperous place.

The book is not just about pirates, however. Kritzler tells the story of how Jewish merchants helped build Amsterdam into a thriving city and how the English Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell, wanted to do the same for London so he invited the Jews back to England after they had been banned for nearly 400 years. He contradicts traditional history which claims that Cromwell's capture of Jamaica was an afterthought following a failed attack on Santo Domingo. The author says that the attack on Jamaica was the prime purpose of the British expedition.

The reason was that the Spanish king broke the agreement with the Columbus family and decided to send inquisitors to Jamaica. This worried the Jews who approached Cromwell, even offering to help pay for the force.

Kritzler's story is entertaining, very readable and provides eye-opening information on a lost era of history. The author is an American historian and former reporter for *USA Today* who lives in Jamaica. For his research he received the cooperation of Jamaican Ainsley Henriques, the historian of the Jews of Jamaica and another descendant of Moses Cohen.

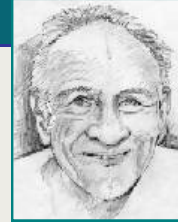
Pirate tombstone with Hebrew lettering



- William E. Hitchens

My Story on Self-Publishing

- Max Schwartz



Self-portrait

During my book-writing career I experienced several methods of publishing and self-publishing. The first book was published in the conventional style. While an instructor in UCLA Extension, I wrote a textbook, *Civil Engineering for the Plant Engineer*. McGraw-Hill published the book, which my students bought. That was easy — no advertising required — just buy my book if you want my class.

Later on, a construction publisher/bookstore, *Craftsman Book Company* printed six technical books I wrote for them.

Shepards, a legal publisher, printed *Engineering Evidence* that my son and I co-authored.

This book was followed by my bible-related non-fiction books which were published by the biblical publishers *KTAV* and *Revell*.

As my livelihood does not depend on royalties, I decided to self-publish. A local print shop produced the next two books, *Bridges to Victory* and *Builders at War* as soft-cover books. I did all artwork, composition, layout, etc., beforehand. These publishing tasks required more skills and labor beyond writing.

For my next book, I bought a *Canon* desk printer that was able to print on both sides of a sheet and print letter-size or quarter letter-size booklets. However, the final product still had to be bound, so I researched all types of binding. I read up on the ancient art of *Edition* binding, to *Perfect* binding, then to my inexpensive *Fellowes* glue binder that looks and works like a toaster.

My latest self-publishing attempt: I emailed my completed manuscript to *PublishAmerica*, who uses the latest state-of-the-art digitized, on-demand, pocket-size book publishing. They are able to edit, compose, and illustrate the manuscript, or print it as is. The author keeps the copyright, but buys copies at a discounted rate.

Self-publishing requires more skills and labor than writing alone. However, you do attain the satisfaction of being a published writer.

Regrets, He Had a Few...



Dread.

Staring straight ahead and never down,
His wheezing whistled through the climb,
And fumes of fast food fueled his frown,
Hands sweat melded to metal bar... and all the time
He fought to keep his Pepsi down,
Regret.

- Kathy Highcove

Bob tried not to look at the ground as the car climbed up and up the slanted metal track. The fairgrounds' blacktop released a warm updraft. He smelled the corn dogs, chili chips, fish tacos for sale below the Skyride tracks. Yuck. Food. He heartily wished he hadn't eaten the burger, fries and soda for lunch an hour before. Sarah had been too excited to eat. Smart kid.

Why am I doing on this roller coaster? Oh yeah, I promised Sarah. After she showed me a perfect report card. She's smart, but I was stupid to make that promise when her mother was standing there listening to me.

"How ya doin', Sarah? Still ready for the Big Dipper drop?"

"Oh yes! I'm so ready! At the top you've got to let go and hold your arms in the air! Everyone does that or else you're a big chicken! Look Daddy! There's Mommy waving her sun hat at us."

A fast look. Vertigo. He closed his eyes.

"Oh, okay, I'll put my hands up in the air," but he wondered if he could ever release his fingers from the safety bar.

Higher. Higher. Oh my God! I think I'm going to hurl. I taste the Pepsi. Got to keep control. We're at the top.....let go....raise the arms.....and... downwwwwn....weeeee....gooooooooo!

His stomach bounced up and hit his heart and he swore emphatically as he was thrown right and then left...rode a corkscrew upside down...heavy G's pinning him like a bug.... never ending hell-rideten story free fall ...a slow coast into the station. Still alive!

Bob opened his eyes and saw his wife and son waiting by the exit ramp. She waved and Timmy jumped up and down.

"Whew, Sarah! That was... fun ...sort of. Did you like that ride?"

"The bestest thing we ever did, Daddy. Thanks! And now let's hurry over to get in line for the Thunder Roller! You promised!"

BLUE JEANS

-Edward Louis Braun



You were born tough
For work that's rough,
To sit upon a cowboy's saddle,
To straddle railroad ties.

To cushion with care
A bronco buster
Flying off a raging bull
At a county fair.

Now I see you dancing
At a swank cotillion ball,
At the Chandler Pavilion
And Avery Fisher Hall.



You'll do anything
To make people stare,
Torn holes to bare
Whatever's there,
Ragged patches so bright
They light up the night.

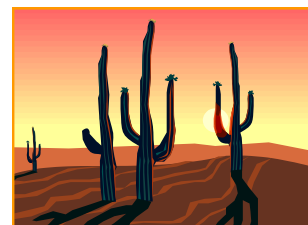


You're out to tease
And please everyone:
Tight tailored fit
For a cute derriere,
Sloppy misfit
For slobs who don't care.



Though you highlight assets
The young and slim bear
With savoir faire,
You show no mercy
To one with a huge derriere.

You've come a long way,
From a cowboy's saddle
To fashionable fare
With a certain flair,
And you're everywhere.
You even envelop
The President's derriere.





My Best Friend

- Geri Jabara



"Let's stop here and ask where we are," I ask my husband, who refuses to admit we are lost.

"No way, this is a bad area, I'm not getting out of the car here."

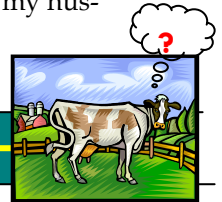
"Here's a 7-11, we can ask them?" I plead.

"I'm not wasting my time in there; I only buy lottery tickets in those stores."

"Hey, there's a gas station up ahead--let's ask them

"Are you kidding? In this neighborhood? Don't you remember the last time on the way to San Diego? The guy didn't even speak English."

Well, that's what it was like for eight frustrating years driving anywhere unfamiliar with my husband, now my ex-husband. I could never understand why men have such a difficult time admitting they are lost. And the fact that so many of my married female friends sym-



thize with me, doesn't help.

Soon after my divorce, I started playing my flute again and it wasn't long before I was asked to fill in as a substitute for other musicians. I hadn't played since college and it was great to be needed by fellow flautists. It also gave me the opportunity to meet some new people, people who shared my love of music. That was the fun part. The bad part was my knack for getting lost. You see, I have no sense of direction. I can lose my bearings just coming out of a closet. However, unlike my ex-husband, I am not too proud to ask for help.

One of my first few gigs found me driving around looking for a Senior Center in Simi Valley.

"Just go straight ahead on the 23 North until you reach the 118 freeway," simple directions from the kind grey-haired man getting inside his car at the gas pump. I did that, and ended up in the far end of the city of Moorpark, 45 minutes away from my destination.

My kind, grey-haired friend forgot to tell me to ignore the 118 freeway. I never got to my gig.

More recently, I was called to play Pachelbel's Canon for a wedding in Long Beach. Sure enough I passed the off ramp and had to stop for directions. I pulled curbside.

"Easy enough, you're very close. Just go up that street over there and then turn right." Comforting words from a young man walking leisurely with his wife pushing a blue baby stroller. Those little directions landed me in the Long Beach Harbor, driving on one of the berths, the ocean to my left and to my right! With a cotton-dry mouth and a thumping heart I made a u-turn on the berth and immediately stopped for help again.

"You're OK," chuckled the handsome sailor in his blinding white uniform. "Turn around and turn right at the 2nd street." *Thank you St. Anthony, patron saint for lost things, I said to myself.*

I stepped on the gas and turned right only to find the red flashing lights of a police car behind me. I don't remember what I saw first, the police car or the rows of parked cars all facing the same direction - towards me! I didn't get a ticket, but I did get a strong warning and the luck of being escorted out of the one-way street by the considerate cop.

Last week I did it. It wasn't cheap, but it was so worth it. I shelled out \$300 for a GPS electronic navigator for my car. I think I'm in love. I plug the device in the cigarette lighter and voila, my GPS man is there, always by my side. He has the most charming British accent as he tells me when and where to get off the freeway and when to turn right or left on this street or that. Never a raised voice, not even when I have made the wrong turn. Patiently, he directs me to an alternate route to my destination. And, he's the best listener of all my friends.

I am playing a lot more gigs now and never get lost anymore. I have even started dating a French horn player, Sebastian. We like the same music and long drives. It's nice dating again. One problem: he always gets us lost and insists on finding his way himself. And I can't talk or look at him when he's trying to find the route again.

Lately I find myself driving to the beach quite often, simply to be with my



faithful GPS man. He's not any ordinary bloke you know. He's my very best friend.

Church Sunday



Sunday

In the long morning shadows of the Church Patio,
You can feel the heat gathering strength,
Like an old fashioned fighter winding into a huge round-house uppercut.

In tiny cliques,
The children, of the children, of the children who came here long ago,
Stand and chat

about the fund drive for the new Church computer,
and the catering for the coming picnic.

In quiet corners, individual choir members sip coffee,
And worry demon phrases from the Anthem.

And the Children
Of the children, of the children, of the children,
Careen in cacophonous anarchy.
Waiting to be called to learn about
Baby Moses and
Baby Jesus.



- Ray Malus

And the doors open,
Expelling the 'Eight O'clockers' into the heat.
And the children, of the children, of the children,
Stream into the sanctuary of the Sanctuary.
They pass like hordes of pedestrians,
Bustling across an intersection from opposing sides,
When the light says 'WALK'.

With barely a notice.
Like smoke colliding with fog.

They sit in cooled church air,
In jogging shorts and designer sneakers.
Next to vague ghosts of
The parents, of the parents, of the parents,
Who sit,
better arrayed,
Cooling themselves with fans of cardboard
on sticks.

The choir,
All guitars and tambourines,
Stands next to the vestigial organ,
And, renders, with electric enthusiasm,
the Processional.

And the children, of the children, of the children,
Recite timeless prayers,
And nod through timeworn sermons,
And meditate on the week to come,
And thank God that
some things never change.



Judy Presnall, Yolanda Fintor
And Ruthie Collier

Loss of Two CWC Members

Yolanda Fintor shares memories of her good friend **Ruth Collier**: "Some of us have known Ruth for several years. She was a published writer of non-fiction books for children

and continued looking for markets for books she wanted published right up to the time she went into the hospital. She has outlived four husbands and two children but could not survive the pneumonia that caused her death May 12, 2009."

Judy Presnall recalls, "We last saw Ruthie on January 20th at our critique group's scheduled meeting in a local restaurant. Ruthie told me she had been in contact with her agent about new manuscripts. She always seemed to be working on something and sending her work out. She reminded me of the "Energizer Bunny." She was always in a cheerful mood and never complained."

CWC members will certainly miss the friendship and professional contributions of Ruth Collier.

We are also saddened to announce the death of member **Florence Kolber** after a long illness.

Keyle Birnberg-Golstein praises her old friend:

"Florence was a friendly, dedicated member of the California Writers Club since the early nineties, starting with the San Fernando Valley Branch, then continuing with the West Valley. She was a poet, a dedicated writer and an original member of one of our first critique groups."

Her CWC friends will miss her, and we offer our heartfelt condolences to her family. Surely, Florence's poetry and writings will be treasured by her family's new generations.



Leslie Kaplan, Florence Kolber and
Keyle Birnberg-Goldstein at critique
group gathering.



Sam and Max Schwartz watch the 1929 Pasadena Rose Parade

Remembering My Father

- Max Schwartz

Dear Kathy: You asked us to write some memorable advice our fathers gave us. My first reaction was, as a grandfather, how I can remember any thing about my father since the last time I saw him alive was when I was six years old. I was crying as he left to return to the hospital, now called the City of Hope. I learned later he died from tuberculosis.

My mother made sure I always remembered and respected his memory. Every year we went to the cemetery, where I listened to her wailing "Why did you leave me, Sam? Why did you leave me?" Then an elderly man in a black hat would come to the grave site and pray in Hebrew to my Dad. This was repeated on every anniversary of his death, or Yahrzeit, until I left for the Army in 1943.

When our regiment lined up to board an old English merchant ship bound for England, our Chaplain's Aide passed out Bibles at the gangplank. I got the Jewish version. That's an ominous sign, I thought, as I pocketed the small book. Two days later while on the rough Atlantic

swaying in our canvas hammocks in the ships hold and as waves pounded the hull, I saw my Father again. He told me not to worry.

Most of my comrades were intensely reading their Bibles, but I was being reassured by my Father's spirit as I was certain a German torpedo would tear through the thin steel hull and explode in our midst. He was my Bible for the entire voyage and throughout the War in Europe and Pacific. He safely returned me home to raise a family, become a grandfather, and write this story about our fathers.



WWII Soldier Max Schwartz

That Man



Leslie Kaplan

I sleep alone now, but the scent of my man still lingers on his pillow. It's on the empty side of my bed. It smells of Old spice after shave and sweat.

Oh...That Man! I still feel him beside me. The one who left his mark on this pillow. That man had a tenderness to his touch. A tenderness that moved across my breasts like a warm summer breeze, caressing my heart.

Kisses like chocolate..., chocolate kisses, still lingers on these lips. Although a thousand and one nights have passed, since that man laid his head on his pillow... still... to me... it was but yesterday.

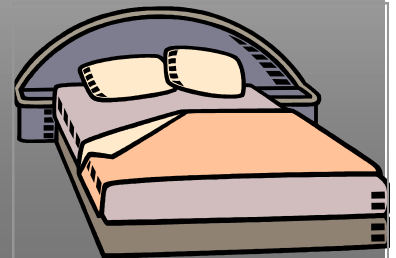
Your scent still quickens me! I am wild and untamed as I follow your scent no matter where it may lead. I smell... I feel... I see... I hear... I touch... and... I TASTE that man coming home as he calls out in his baritone voice...

"Honey, I'm here." I run to the door... but no one is there.

I sleep alone now... but the scent of my man... still lingers on his pillow.



S y Kaplan



PITHY PRONOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PARENTAL UNIT

"OR... DEAR OLD DAD OFTEN TOLD ME..."

"Common sense is not very common."

Our members remember:

"I wish you hadn't done that...Now prove that I was wrong."



"Don't ask for my advice, after you have already made your decision."

Upon asking Dad why he gave me so much freedom as a teenager...

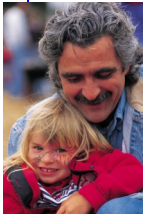
"I knew we raised you right and that you were a good kid, so I trusted you."

- Sylvia Molesko

Here is something re my Dad. (I got a whole piece published about him in the San Jose Mercury News, back in '98. This is a bit from that piece.)

To this day, my Dad doesn't consider himself much of a talker where his kids are concerned. Yet, I remember when I had my first experience with fearing death. He was the one appointed to explain how the old must give way to the new, and that the earth could not hold everybody if nobody ever died. I wonder if he recalls that conversation as clearly as I do.

- Tina B. Glasner



Kath...Since daddy died when I was five...I can only tell about our secret meetings in a recurrent dream where we would meet and he'd bring me toys and hugs...for about two years. When the dream stopped...was when I began to miss him...and I have never stopped.

- Leslie Kaplan

I remember when my father became aware that I was interested in the opposite sex he took me to lunch and explained to me that when you take a lady to dinner, you always pull out her chair for her and then gently scoot it back under as she sits. Gee, what had happened to that rather nice tradition?

-Dean Stewart

ETIQUETTE
ELEMENTARY



Here's one: My dad often said: "Enjoy life today because tomorrow you might get hit by a truck!"

- Judy Presnall



Success can be as close as the will to succeed. I learned this from my father who used to tell my sisters and me that we can achieve anything we set our minds to achieve. When I finally believed him, I overcame a youthful shyness that held me back for way too long. - Yolanda Fintor



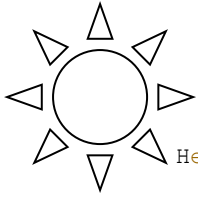
My father loved to send me greetings in the form of acrostics. His penmanship style of writing was beautiful, and I used to love to read his messages over and over. - Marganit Lish

"If you can't say anything nice about a person, say nothing at all. And if wishes were horses, beggars would ride." - Sheila Moss' father.

When I was about ten my Dad taught me how to treat a lady. We were walking home in the dark from a movie and we met Betty Irwin, a young teenager who was also walking home. She joined us, and when we got to our house, I turned up the front walk to go in. My Dad called me back. A gentleman always sees a lady to her door, he said. And we walked on, saw Betty to her door, and I remember it like it was yesterday.

- Dave Wetterberg





AND FURTHERMORE...

Here's a piece of advice from my dad:

Most persons are honest
But many are not.
Keep your eyes open to see
Whether someone is honest,
And behavior you observe
Agrees with promises made. - Ed Braun



My sisters contribute: When Dad was trying to teach me to parallel park - "Try to VISUALIZE what you are doing." I never could and I still can't. Janice (Hall) Nelte
I remember dad telling me to never be afraid to make a mistake because that's how you learn. When I did or said something imprudent, he'd tell me, "You're not making good sense," Peggy Hall-Kaplan

Our Dad usually advised flexibility in a dicey situation. He'd tell me, "You've got to roll with the punch." Try to work with the status quo, in other words.



June Elections In the Katzenberg Room

The following members have been nominated as officers for the coming year:

Vice-pres. Membership - Sheila Moss
Vice-pres. Programs - Yolanda Fintor
Secretary - Danielle Ste. Just
Treasurer - Jay Zuckerman

The slot for president remains unfilled, as nominee Tina Glasner is no longer able to serve in the coming year. However, Dave Wetterberg has reconsidered and agrees to extend his term in the office. Dave tells us in his own whimsical way, which belies his ability to run a tight CWC ship,

"I don't have a heck of a lot to do with my time, and with some recent days of pure boredom; I'm thinking I need something of interest outside my two cats and the tomato plants to occupy my time and my thoughts. " Stalwart Dave. Yes he can.

At the June meeting, further nominations for each office will be taken from the floor. If there are no more nominations, the offices will be filled by those on the slate.

President Dave Wetterberg and our CWC/WV members express many thanks to Leslie Kaplan and Lillian Rodich, our nominating committee, for all the time and work they put in on this fine slate of future officers.



Opportunity Knocks

cont'd from pg. 2

AllbooksReviews

A site for authors, publishers, agents and readers. Featuring current book titles, reviews, contact info and writing tips. An excellent promotional site for new authors.

<http://www.allbooksreviews.com>

CONTESTS

Annual Tampa Writers Alliance Contest

Michael Darling, president
darling@hopliterenegades.com
www.tampawriters.org

Description: Awards for unpublished submissions of fiction, nonfiction, play/script writing, poetry, and "excellence in Florida writing." Open to writers 18+ years of age. Entrants may submit one entry per category. **Deadline:** Oct. 1, **Prize:** Cash prizes (\$100, \$75, \$50) and publication in The Wordsmith (TWA's annual anthology,

Entry fee: \$10/entry (non-members), **Tips:** See Web site for forms, rules, and FAQs

Happy Summer writing and if you go on vacation, be sure to write about it. There are many travel publishers who might be interested.

-Lenora Smalley

Going Home

- Bill Sorrells



He just lay there, bleeding from an angry head wound; too tired, too weak. No pressing engagements, no problems at the store, no urgent calls for guest speakers at the Peoria Lodge or San Francisco; no pretty young thing to shave for and wear that white tie and blue sports coat he'd bought in Maui.

He'd be alright in a while and no need to bother folks with this. It wasn't at all like that stroke in '76. It didn't hurt so bad, really, when it happened. A kind of warmness in the head, a slight headache and then void.

Later the doctors said this cholesterol was the problem, kinda like glue in the arteries and veins. They were always finding some new deal like that and this new food,..well .-

Phil Harris, that was the guy! Used to sing all the good ol' Southern toons! I'm OK see, I remember! Phil Harris, married Alice Faye! Used to listen to that 45 record with Billy, Lord, what a kick he got out of that! *"I'm going down south to see my Mammy, she's frying taters and broiling hammy, and that's what I like about the south."* *"There's a little place called Dooh Wa Diddy, ain't no town and it ain't no city, it's awful small but awful pretty, little Dooh Wa Diddy!"*

Felt so proud in that Western Union uniform, I was somebody! Daddy had only died two years ago and Mommie said I was "near a man" and that one week I gave her more money than even Middleton did! They should have a holiday for Middleton and we could all go out to Stone Mountain Park and over to the church yard and pay our respects to Courtland and look at his stone; why didn't Middleton come back? I loved him, I loved him, but you don't say that when a guy's a Marine and a hero and cleaned up that mess in Nicaragua. The colonel just said "take over 'Mid,' I can't see; the bastard's shot me." God, he was tough and when everybody thought there was a Yankee ghost in the house, "01' Middy" just went up in the attic and said if there's any damn Yankees hiding up here, get the Hell out!! Jungle Fever, that's what they called it. If he'd come back, he'd just jerk me, up on my feet and dust me off and ask me if I'd like some of Mommie's apple pie, hot, with cheese melted on it, and last night they'd made some vanilla ice cream. He'd have Courtland to play a tune and sing a good ol' church song, *"Onward Christian Soldiers."*

Mommie said that Courtland might be a saint or something, everybody loved ol' Court, and never drank or smoked or... Maybe, if I hadn't been in the Philippines, I'd never have done that, but she said I love you, G.I., no shit! and maybe I shouldn't have given her all the two dollars cause I'd never seen something like that, skin all smooth and light brown and when she started to take off my skivvies... Never would have gotten these tattoos if I hadn't gotten good and... The U.S.S. Ranger, Flagship, our nation's first...

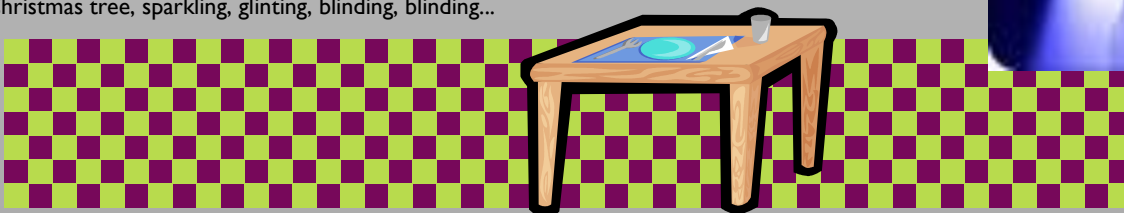
All the darkies came over to the house and Mommie just laid up and didn't have any chores to do. That kitchen smelled so good with the cornbread and biscuits and beans, all the while that chorus of voices with ol'plantation songs, and Mommie said, "Bennie, don't you ever call one of the Negros a 'Nigger,' and always show proper respect and treat them as our friends cause they are, and God made em just like us but a little more special, cause he colored em," and she told me that.

Bertha had nursed me and kept me alive when everybody had the sickness and Jim died and Hazel died and Billy has his own family, no need to bother him the telephone's right there if I really needed... Ginger is a nice girl and I tried to do the right things - you gotta have discipline - especially with a girl. and Mrs. McAdan told me herself at that Eastern Star meeting that all the girls up there at the high school were just a bunch of little whores, but Ginger wasn't like that, just liked to have fun... like her Mom; dance and sing and throw parties...

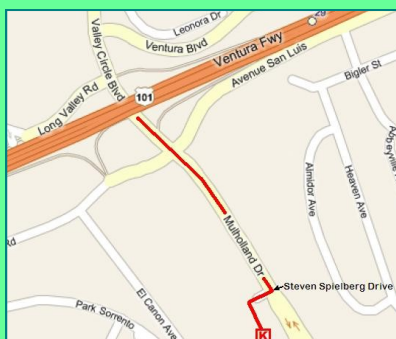
Why didn't the doctors know about pneumonia? Just because Ginger was a terrible hard delivery doesn't mean that... I miss her now. We were supposed to get grey hair together and we laughed about "Silver Threads Among the Gold," and she jumped on me and felt my muscles and called me Charles Atlas and said she was giving me a million baby kisses all over my head and my face. She was too good for this world.

Ginger would help me, she always did the dishes with Billy and lots of chores around the house, but with all her kids and...

I don't really need help. If I really put my mind to it, I could just reach over there and pick up that phone. My arms are just a little tired right now and this linoleum feels so cool and nice on my cheek... Grandpa Bud walked all the way home from Atlanta with that Yankee bullet in his leg and after Ceilia Ann took it out, he marched right back! And Grandma Celia cooked like no one else and Thanksgiving and Christmas she made turk... that little star high on the Christmas tree, sparkling, glinting, blinding, blinding...



From the 101 Freeway exit on Mulholland Drive. Travel south on Mulholland and turn right at Steven Spielberg Drive. Then turn left and follow the route to the large parking lot on the left for Villa Katzenberg. If you are stopped by the MPTF Security, tell the official that you are attending a CWC meeting.



MEETINGS

The California Writers Club meets the first Saturday of the month at the Motion Picture and Television Fund complex:

Villa Katzenberg
23388 Mulholland
Woodland Hills, CA 91364-2733

NEXT MEETING

Saturday, June 5th. 2009 at 1:30 p.m.

MAILING ADDRESS

c/o Dave Wetterberg
23809 Friar Street

Woodland Hills, CA 91367-1235

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cwcwestvalley.org



Dear Readers,

This June's *InFocus* is the last issue until August 2009. Thanks so much for all your contributions and your patience as I've learned my way around the newsletter publishing system.

I hope to edit in the coming year, and feature more of our members' creative work.

Next year will bring a few changes in the issue. We will have guest columnists from our CWC branches and other sources expounding on a variety of topics. All topics will relate to writing in some way: the creative writing process or the marketing side of publishing.

Hope you all have a wonderful summer.

Kathy Highcove



CWC/WV Branch Officers

President..... Dave Wetterberg
Vice –President..... Claude Baxter
Treasurer..... Dean Stewart
Secretary..... Samantha Berley

Board of Directors

Membership..... Art Yuwiler
Programs..... Betty Freeman
Leslie Kaplan-

Newsletter Editor,

Publicity Kathy Highcove
Sound, Photographer..... Ken Wilkins
Site Relations..... Betty Freeman
Webmaster..... Dave Burr
Critique Groups,
Historian..... Lillian Rodich
Historian..... Helen Katzman

InFocus Columnists.... Ray Malus,
Lenora Smalley, Dave Wetterberg, Leslie Kaplan,
Open Mike Host—Bill Sorrells

Submission Guidelines

1. Submit a work two weeks in advance of publication.
2. Keep prose short, between 200 and 300 words. Contact editor if work is longer.
3. Poems also should be short, approximately three to four stanzas.
4. The editor reserves the right to accept or reject any work submitted. Space might be limited and the omission based on editing difficulties.
5. Works not used may be stored and used in a future issue of *InFocus*.

Links for Help With Copyright Issues



Liz Babcock

*Editor's note: The following article is shared by the **Writers of the Purple Sage**, CWC newsletter of the East Sierra Branch.*

Liz Babcock writes:

In general, we writers think we need to know more about copyright law, but we're bewildered about how to acquire just enough knowledge to ensure that we're protected — and not violating anyone else's copyrights — yet not so much that our brains get muddled.

Here's some help, courtesy of the December 2008 issue of Write Angles, which suggests the following useful sites:

www.copyright.gov, site of the U.S. Copyright Office. Don't avoid this site because you're cynical about government-speak; the site is remarkably helpful, offering clear explanations of copyright laws and direct links to the forms and information you need to copyright your own work.

Lloyd Rich, who provides handy articles just for authors who need to understand the legal aspects of publishing. The free newsletter is Publaw Update.

www.dklex.com, created by attorney David Koehser, who specializes in publishing law and copyrights. The site has links to free articles about such subjects as subsidiary rights, permissions and tricky contract clauses. Koehser publishes the Copyright & Publishing Law Newsletter, a free, well written PDF newsletter without legal jargon.
www.publaw.com, the creation of well-known publishing lawyer

Dave Wetterberg
23809 Friar Street
Woodland Hills, CA 91367-1235