



The Newsletter Of The San Fernando Valley Branch

# The Valley Scribe

Vol. 2

October 2009

No. 2

## Next Meeting: October 17<sup>th</sup>!

### October Featured Speaker:

#### Burt Prelutsky



Who is Burt Prelutsky, and why does his name seem familiar to you? Perhaps his credits on television for several movies and the best serial programs offered: *Dragnet*, *McMillan & Wife*, *MASH*, *Dr. Quinn*, *Diagnosis Murder* – the list goes on and on. Or maybe you’ve seen his name in print? He was the first movie critic for *Los Angeles* magazine,

wrote freelance for the *NY Times*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Modern Maturity* and more. He wrote his humor/interview column in *The LA Times* and the blogs on his site, [www.burtprelutsky.com](http://www.burtprelutsky.com) are sharp, humorous and thought-provoking. When he visited our branch in 2005 he introduced us to his book, *Conservatives Are From Mars, Liberals Are From San Francisco*. He was a wonderful speaker, and I believe he sold more books than any speaker since.

Some writers shake in horror when they discover writing a book may take two, three, even ten years – well, Burt took forty years interviewing people such as Groucho Marx, Gerald Ford, Judith Krantz, Ginger Rogers, George Carlin, Oscar Levant, Father John Caroir...a fascinating list that resulted in 78 fascinating interviews packed into *The Secret of Their Success: Interviews with Legends & Luminaries*. Burt will share with us his most memorable experiences, and how unpredictable subjects can be. He summed it up for me: “Forty years of asking dumb questions, hoping for smart answers.” Based on how much I enjoyed his first book, I’ve already asked Burt to reserve my copy.

— Cara Alson

### OPEN MIKE RETURNS

NOVEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup> — 12:30

The first 6 members to sign up will be given 5 minutes of FAME.

If you read at the September meeting, you cannot read in November, unless there is available time and space.

### MEMBER SHOWCASE

Yolanda Fintor will discuss queries and proposals and tell you how she found a publisher, what you need to do to land a contract, what a publisher expects of an author and what an author can expect from her publisher. She will relate what marketing strategies she used to promote her two cookbooks.

For those who are interested, Yolanda will pass out copies of the query letter that led to a request for the proposal of *Hungarian Cookbook*, *Old World Recipes for New World Cooks*.

Yolanda has been a member since the San Fernando Branch was chartered in 1986 and has served on the board in several capacities: Guest Greeter, Membership, Secretary, Special Events Coordinator and Program Chair.

### In This Issue

Feature

Page

(Click on title to jump to story)



## President's Message

**Ethel Ann Pemberton**

Jack London firmly believed in “writing what you know,” and that’s exactly what he did. But look at the many jobs he held, the traveling he did, and the resultant experiences from which he had to draw. A more suitable axiom for today’s writers would be: “Know what you write.”

We don’t have to personally experience the things we write about, nor do we have to travel to exotic places to get the flavor of the area. We can sit in our underwear and do research over the Internet or utilize any number of news media from which to glean information about what inspires us. These venues were not available in London’s era. Once we make money at our writing craft, we can travel to those exotic places and write off the trips as necessary deductions on our income taxes. After all, they are being incurred in order to write the article or manuscript.

Several years ago I was writing humorous articles and essays for magazines and newspapers and made

about \$4,000. I decided to use that money to take a trip to Hungary, the land of my roots. My intention was to write about my grandparents, their family, and life on their farm in Gyor. My story took a different slant, however, when my billfold was stolen at a Mc Donalds in Budapest. It also underwent a new title, “Pickpockets Ain’t What They Used To Be,” and it’s still sitting in a file drawer, unsold. Although I tried to market the essay, it was rejected because it didn’t fit in the travel, human interest, or family magazines. It also wasn’t funny. Thank heavens the write-off wasn’t questioned.

One day I plan to re-write the essay, focusing on my grandparents, and I plan to check out the guidelines for the human interest and family magazines. I could also slant the essay towards the things to do and see in Hungary and send it to a travel magazine. I found out the hard way that it’s best to first research the markets to find an appropriate niche before writing the essay. I also plan to take the tact, “know what you write” instead of “write what you know,” and I’ll pen it from home.

□

## September in Review:

**Bargain Babe — Blogger in a Blue Dress**  
by Gil Roscoe

We were honored to have Julia Scott as our guest speaker at the September meeting. A former reporter for the LA Daily News, last January, she set out to discover if she could survive on the earnings from her blogs. As of September, “I’m almost making a living at it,” she said. During her one hour talk, she came across as a woman with a lot of savvy and determination.

For those who were unfamiliar with blogging, she demystified the blog by simply describing it as, “A type of website that is often updated.” Julia has two blogs, BargainBabe.com for those looking for tips on saving money nationwide and BargainBabeLA.com for local money-saving opportunities.

Her advice to the group was to find something you are passionate about and create a blog dealing with that subject. For her, it is saving money, but it can literally be about anything. Members of CWC might be interested in creating blogs about poetry, playwriting, short stories or other creative writing activities. Your blog site could contain your writing, your critiques of

others’ writing or advice for other writers based on your experiences. She described blogs as an “open scratch board” waiting for your input. She also advised everyone to make your blog interactive so those viewing your site can comment and get involved in the process.

The measure of a successful blog is how many eyeballs are reading it. Julia described many ways to get people to visit your site, such as, handing out flyers and joining blog directories. She said the best way to get people to your site is by getting linked to similar sites. The easiest way to do that is to comment on established sites and then leave your blog address. This will encourage people to come and see what you have to offer. The more you comment on other sites, the bigger the highway to yours.

Julia also described several ways to make money from your blog. The most common ways are selling ads and pitching yourself as an expert in your particular area. She also pointed out that there are grants available if your blog can be connected to a public benefit.

It was an interesting and informative hour that helped the members get a better understanding of how to make the digital age work for us

Thanks Julia. □

## The Wright Word — by Ray “Grow Up!”

There are all kinds of writers. Anyone who puts words down on paper — for almost any purpose — qualifies. But in this space I deal mostly with “creative” writing. For this occasion, I’d like to make one more qualification. Let us define the term: “Character Writing,” which we’ll abbreviate “C.W.” to save space.

Character Writing: A piece of writing where any “voice” other than the writer’s is represented. This would include dialogue, quotations, or even first-person narrative where the narrator is assumed to be other than the stated author.

C.W. presents its own set of challenges. Although the author’s prose is usually pristine — free from errors of grammar, usage, diction, et al., a character’s prose is usually not. Mostly, this isn’t a problem. Words in quotes are treated leniently by editors. There is one notable exception: Sex.

In general, sex rears its head in one of two forms: “description” and “profanity.”

Our society has become fairly tolerant in these two areas. For better or worse, explicit discussions of sex are commonplace, and even fewer “expletives” are being deleted.

So I am baffled by the squeamishness I find within CWC. Manuscripts are returned because of “objectionable dialogue.” Writers are asked to delete “graphic” scenes. I have even seen fine writers embarrassed to read their work, shifting from foot to foot like adolescents during “Open Mikes.” Guidelines for anthologies include the stipulation: “No ‘Adult’ Material.”

C’mon people! Grow up! This is a WRITER’S Club!

It’s easy enough for memoirists, journalists, and non-fiction writers to adhere to these guidelines. But it’s an unrealistic restriction on writers of C. W.

For me, the writer has many goals, but primary among them are “Truth” and “Passion.” Sex is one of the primary founts of passion in life. Real people “swear” all the time. Yet, we advocate ignoring both of these? Get real. No, I mean it. Get REAL!

Anyone who writes dialogue knows that, once you know your characters, they say what they want to say. (If that doesn’t make sense to you, please avoid writing dialogue at any cost. Write cookbooks!) It’s all very well to write “Gosh darn,” and “Gee willik-

ers,” if you’re writing a script for Happy Days, but if your characters are street pimps (yes, Dorothy, there are street pimps), putting those words into their mouths is pandering of the most egregious sort. And it’s inane to expect the writer of a love scene to fade to descriptions of trains entering tunnels, rockets being launched, and other childish phallic metaphors.

And these strictures come from the members of America’s foremost Writer’s Club?!

To be fair, these guardians are not, themselves, prudish. No. Invariably, they are “protecting” some unspecified niece, grandchild, or (presumably) Cleric that might be “corrupted” by reading the piece. This is the equivalent of putting childproof caps on Viagra bottles.

Now, I’m not advocating “Open Porno Mikes,” or “Erotic Newsletters.” But the world is what it is, and writers are supposed to represent that world TRUTH-fully. Not every story takes place in Narnia, Neverland, or Grover’s Corners.

I’m grateful that this publication has an “Adult” section. I advocate other editors incorporate one. Readers: Open your minds! Writers: Write what you see and feel! Display your work proudly! Expose yourselves! It’s our highest calling. —

### The Beaded Purse Poetry Contest

(Poetry only!)

Theme: “Catching Dreams Bare-Handed”

Each winner wins a lovely beaded purse

Plus 1st place: \$25, 2nd place \$15, 3rd place \$10

The judges may award Honorable Mentions.

Rules (Deviation will disqualify entry)

- Deadline: November 1st, 2009.
- Up to three (3) submissions per person. No Fee.
- Original, unpublished work.
- Must fit theme.
- No hate language, racial slurs or inappropriate slang.
- Submissions must be no longer than 60 single-spaced lines.
- For mail in entries: DO NOT put any writer information just the title and the poem. Include address and phone/email address on SEPARATE sheet of paper.

Enter at [www.LenoraSmalley.com](http://www.LenoraSmalley.com) OR email to [www.beadedpurse@hazelst.com](mailto:www.beadedpurse@hazelst.com) (doc or txt attachment.)

• Or **mail** in your entry to:

Hazel Street Productions (Beaded Purse), PO Box 5936, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413

- We need TWO means of contact with your entry.

Criteria for judging

- Fits the theme? Well written? Moving?

Winners will be published at [www.LenoraSmalley.com](http://www.LenoraSmalley.com).

**Spread the word!!**



## MADLINE FOREPAWS\* AT THE KEYBOARD

Ohhhh . . . I am so excited to be a part of *The Scribe*. This will be my third published article. I am a beautiful grey cat with white markings. My mommy is an author and I've been around to help her with most of her twenty-three published books.

I am eleven years old now so with my maturity I've had a few medical issues. For example, I think I might have had the stomach flu accompanied with a cough. I vomited several times in the room where my litter box is kept. I also had some episodes of diarrhea, but not in the box — on the floor next to my box. That way, my mommy would be sure to notice. She did. A trip to the veterinarian was promptly scheduled.

I like Dr. Debra, although not necessarily all the poking and prodding. First, she took my temperature. (How embarrassing!) She looked in my mouth and ears. And she squeezed my tummy. Of course, I couldn't cough on demand so she never saw my pitiful look during a home episode.

Blood tests and even an electrocardiogram (translated via telephone in New York) followed. They didn't show anything unusual. Dr. Debra thought that I ate something bad for me — maybe a piece of string or even a spider. Spiders don't have much meat on them so why would I bother? She also x-rayed my stomach and lung tissues. Nope, no strings or spiders there!

Dr. Debra brought my x-rays into the examining room and put them on a light board on the wall for us to see. She compared my lungs side-by-side to a healthy cat's lungs. The healthy cat's lungs showed up clear. But mine were clogged with threads.

To clear my lungs, she gave me two injections — one was an antibiotic, the second was an anti-inflammatory. Dr. Debra thinks I have an allergy to something.

After paying a \$472 bill, my mommy and daddy took me home. Follow-up visits showed my lungs clearing. They included more x-rays and more injections costing

another \$344. The vet bills are whoppers! At least that's what my mommy says. She told me that I used up all my birthday and Christmas presents for years to come.

Several months later my cough came back. I heard my mommy mention going to the vet again. To delay another expense, I hid in the hall closet whenever I had to cough. But my mommy heard me anyway. Then I decided not to eat for a few days. I was sooo exhausted that I just lay around. So, off we went to see Dr. Debra again. We all like Dr. Debra, we just don't like paying the bill. The next two visits totaled \$482!

Dr. Debra did the usual check-up, which included blood tests and x-rays, and injections. Plus this time since I was so dehydrated, she also added under-the-skin fluid therapy. At this visit, my mommy

inquired if there was a pill that would keep this allergy at bay.

YES! That would be cheaper than doctor bills. Let me tell you about my expertise in NOT taking pills. We cats have to uphold our reputation in pill-taking and I am really good at it.

When my mommy and daddy mentioned that it is a challenge to give me a pill, the doctor suggested using pill pockets. Pill pockets are soft cat treats (mine were salmon flavored). They look like tiny hot dogs in a bun. A pill is inserted inside the treat and we cats are

supposed to gobble them up. Ha! That didn't work. Do I look stupid? I just let that treat lay on the floor. But my sister cat April enjoyed it. April is not that picky when it comes to treats.

After the "pill pocket" trick failed, my daddy bought a gadget called a "pill-shooter."



**JACK LONDON**  
**THE MAN WHO GAVE OUR CLUB LIFE**  
by Ethel Ann Pemberton

JACK LONDON, a short story writer, novelist, writer on economic and political affairs, and propagandist, was also one of the founders of the California Writers Club. In 1909 CWC took root, and as of this writing, eighteen branches have sprouted up throughout California.

In 1986 our San Fernando Valley Branch was formed. This year, at the celebration of CWC's 100th year, we not only celebrate our life as a club, but the man who gave our club life.

London was the illegitimate son of W. H. Chaney (an astrologer and spiritualist), a father he never saw. Soon after Jack's birth, his mother married John London, an impoverished widower with eleven children. Wanting to belong, Jack adopted his step-father's name. Although the mark of illegitimacy seemed to have disturbed Jack London deeply, his friends believed that's what motivated him in his struggles to attain fame and fortune.

How many times have we heard the axiom, "Write what you know?" Well, that's exactly what London did. At different times he was a newspaper vendor in saloons, a pin boy in a bowling alley, a cannery worker, a driver of an ice wagon, an oyster pirate, and a longshoreman. He also served as a seaman on an 8-ton sealing vessel which reached the coasts of Japan and Siberia. He later became a hobo and spent thirty days in jail for an attack on Capitalism. Yet he completed his high school education and even enrolled in college, which he quit in his second semester due to financial difficulties. He read Darwin, Marx, and Spencer and became an enthusiastic believer in socialism, which he saw as a vehicle to bridge inequities between the dirt-poor and the filthy rich.

The turning point in London's life, however, was when he was befriended by Ina Coolbrith, a poet and librarian, who recognized the younger man's capabilities and helped shape him by providing selected reading material to him which included Nietzsche.

In 1897 London ventured to the Klondike to mine gold, but instead he penned gold. His first published tale, "Two Gold Bricks," appeared in the *San Francisco OWL*. Later came stories in the *PACIFIC MONTHLY* and even the *ATLANTIC MONTHLY*. His first collection of short stories was *The Son of the Wolf* (1900). *Love of Life* (1906) is lauded as the best of his short story collection. *The Road* (1907) is a factual account of his hobo experiences.

London's first novel, *A Daughter of the Snows* (1902), stresses his belief in Anglo-Saxon superiority, seen often in his later books. His most enduring and popular book is *The Call of the Wild* (1903), in which the great dog Buck rejoins the wolves from which his ancestors sprung; directly opposite of *White Fang* (1906), the story of a wild dog brought to civilization. Among an endless flow of novels and exotic tales were *The Sea Wolf* (1904), based on the author's experiences on a sealer; *John Barleycorn* (1913), an autobiographical novel about his struggle against alcoholism, and *The Star Rover* (1915), a collection of related stories dealing with reincarnation. *Martin Eden* (1909) is frankly, and rather uncannily, also autobiographical; the hero commits suicide, just as London ultimately did.

Beginning his illustrious writing career when only twenty, London ended it at the age of forty. He always insisted that his books were not mere adventure stories, that they had a meaning. Although he received a stack of rejection slips that numbered in the hundreds before he became an established writer, that didn't daunt him. He kept writing.

London remains one of America's most significant writers. His stories depict the problems of the working class, the common people, whom he portrayed sympathetically. He wrote what he observed, what he experienced, what he knew best.

We honor Jack London, the man and the writer. He will live on through his rebel stories, novels, and essays. We also thank him, in this 100th year of its existence, for breathing life into CWC. □

## TO MARKET, TO MARKET

by Ken Watts

(As always, please check the websites for more information before submissions. When you see "ms" or "mss" this means manuscript and manuscripts respectively. Best wishes and good luck to all!)

**Odyssey Theatre Ensemble** needs full-length plays only with either an innovative form and/or provocative subject matter. They desire highly theatrical pieces that explore possibilities of the live theatre experience. Not reading one-act plays or light situation comedies. Responds in 2 weeks. Pays 5-7% royalty. Contact: Sally Essex-Lopresti, director of literary programs. Web site: [www.odysseytheatre.com](http://www.odysseytheatre.com) Address: 2055 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90025-5621 Phone: 310/477-2055

**I Love Cats** is a magazine for cat lovers of all ages. They need nonfiction, fiction and fillers (anecdotes, facts, short humor). Queries accepted by mail or email. Responds in 3 months. Editorial lead time 6 months. Submit seasonal material 9 months in advance. Publishes manuscripts and average of 2 years after acceptance. Address: 1040 First Avenue, Suite 323, New York, NY 10022 Web site: [www.ilovecats.com](http://www.ilovecats.com) E-mail: [ilovecatseditor@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ilovecatseditor@sbcglobal.net)

**Fido Friendly Magazine** is looking for nonfiction: Essays, general interest, how-to, travel with your dog, humor, inspirational, interview, personal experience, travel. No articles about dog's point of view — dog's voice. Buys 24 manuscripts/yr. 600-1,200 words. Pays \$10-\$20. Address: P O Box 160, Marsing, ID 83639 E-mail: [susan@fidofriendly.com](mailto:susan@fidofriendly.com) Web site: [www.fidofriendly.com](http://www.fidofriendly.com) Queries by e-mail. Responds in 2 weeks. Buys first North American serial rights, buys electronic rights. Responds in 1 month to manuscript submissions.

**Mad Magazine** is always on the lookout for new ways to spoof and to poke fun at hot trends. 100% freelance written. Publishes manuscripts an average of 6 months after acceptance. Buys all rights. Responds in 10 weeks to queries. Sample copy available online. Guidelines available online. Submit a premise with 3 or 4 examples of how you intend to carry it through, describing the action and visual content. Not interested in formats they're already doing or have done to death. Buys 400 manuscripts/yr. Pays minimum of \$500/page. Address: 1700 Broadway, New York, NY 10019 Web site: [www.madmag.com](http://www.madmag.com) E-mail: [submissions@madmagazines.com](mailto:submissions@madmagazines.com)

**New Letters** is for the general literary reader. They publish literary fiction, nonfiction, essays, poetry and art. Submissions are not read between May 1 and October 1, so now is the time to submit. 100% freelance written. Buys first North American serial rights. Queries accepted by mail. Responds in 1 month to queries, 3 months to manuscripts. Sample copy for \$10 or sample articles on website. Address: University House, 5101 Rockhill Road, Kansas City, MO

64110-2499 Web site: [www.newletters.org](http://www.newletters.org) E-mail: [newletters@umkc.edu](mailto:newletters@umkc.edu) Buys: essays, 8-10 complete mss/year. 5,000 word max. Pays \$40-\$100 Buys: fiction, 15-20 complete mss/yr. 5,000 word max. Pays \$30-\$75. Buys: poetry, 40-50 poems/yr, submit max of 6 poems. Pays \$10-\$25

**Mamm Magazine** is published 10 times/yr covering cancer prevention, treatment, and survival for women. They offer a mix of survivor profiles, conventional and alternative treatment information, investigative features, essays, and cutting-edge news. Needs nonfiction. Buys 90 mss/yr, 200-3,000 words. Pays \$100-\$3,000. Address: 54 W. 22nd Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10010 Web site: [www.mamm.com](http://www.mamm.com) E-mail: [editorial@mamm.com](mailto:editorial@mamm.com) Phone: 646/365-1355 Fax: (646)365-1369 Needs: book excerpts, essays, expose, how-to, humor, inspirational, interview, opinion, personal experience, photo feature, historic/nostalgic. □



## It Could Be Verse



## *Autumn Trees*

By Lenora Smalley

Autumn trees lining streets,  
tawny-haired colonnades on each side,  
shower shade and summer secrets,  
leafing sidewalks yellow-brown.

Burnished arches overhead  
they shed rusty coats, peeling to skin,  
bare themselves in winter wind;  
dance with abandon, stretch, twist  
feeling strength deep down in roots.

When air is still in chill of winter,  
chagrined they surrender with uplifted arms,  
subletting to silent, scrawny lions,  
gray sphinxes stoned in rows  
standing guard till warmth of spring--  
till bouffant shade and summer secrets  
touch heads above the streets again. □

## *Oh Woman!*

- Ray Malus

*Oh Woman! Why — for even just one hour —  
Would you pursue the vanities of man?  
Forsaking, in that foolish quest, your power,  
Forgetting you were formed a fertile flower,  
The fount of loveliness, since time began.*

*For men can only conquer and dismember,  
Erect tall spires empty, dark, and chilled.  
And write small verses no one will remember,  
Unable to enkindle any ember  
Of life, with which our living might be filled.*

*But you, and you alone can birth and nourish.  
And you, and you alone can heal and hear.  
Without your gifts, the world would quickly perish,  
For I — alone — can barely even cherish  
The silken strength that makes your nature dear.*

*Demolish my conceits with awe-ful beauty!  
And ravish my regard with ageless grace!  
Come, plunder my devotion as your booty,  
Command your adoration as my duty,  
And show me my salvation in your face. --rm--*



Friday Fractal LVII: A Tribute to Aphrodite by Karmen



## GOODBYE MR. LEARY, SORRY TO SEE YOU GO

*(An excerpt from a longer piece)*

by Duke Howard

It was one of those hot June days in the South. The sun was running havoc with the earth: burning up the fields, the meadows, drying up the ponds and creeks.

It's what we call in the South, a real strong "Dawg Day."

That's when a dog is driven out of the sun by the heat to find some shade, and once he finds that shade, he circles it, looking for the most comfortable spot; and when he finds it, he settles himself in.

But he's still that dog that came out of the sun, panting, and slobbering.

He's still a dog in a state of misery. □

## Happy 100th Birthday CWC

*From the Board and Membership  
Of  
The San Fernando Valley branch*

## Jest Desserts

## KUDOS COLUMN

by Erica Stux

*(If any member has good news to share, such as getting an agent, selling a book, script, essay, or even getting a personalized rejection letter, contact me at:*

[ericastux@aol.com](mailto:ericastux@aol.com). *We are interested in everyone's successes.)*

Ray Malus' 1-Act play, *The Ninth Bell* has been selected to be presented at the BeeKay Theater, Tehachapi, CA, Nov. 20<sup>st</sup>, 21<sup>nd</sup>, & 22<sup>rd</sup>.

*(See Bulletin Board for details)*

## ANSWER TO LAST MONTH'S POSER

Homework Assignment:

Punctuate the following so it makes meaningful English:

that that is is that that is not is not that is it is it not

### ANSWER:

That that is, is. That that is not, is not. Is that it? It is.

This relates a simple philosophical proverb in the style of Parmenides that all that is, is, and that anything that does not exist does not. The phrase was first noted in Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable but was popularised when the 1959 short story *Flowers for Algernon* was adapted for the big screen in 1968 as *Charly*.

*"In order to have wisdom we must have ignorance." — Theodore Dreiser, American Author*



## IN OUR NEXT ISSUE: Major Works Showcase

**Do you write "Major Works" — novels, memoirs, screen plays, stage plays? Are you tired of seeing poets and short-story writers "grab all the ink?" Here's your chance to shine!**

We're interested in your writing, too.

In November's issue, we'd like to have a "sampler" of writing by our writers of longer works. Obviously, we can't publish novels here. But what we can do is print examples of your style and ideas.

Here's what we're asking for:

Find an excerpt (500-900 words) from your work that you feel exemplifies the kind of writing you're passionate about and do best. (If appropriate, start with a small paragraph in parentheses — "setting it up"). Then send it to us for inclusion in next month's feature issue: "Major Works." Other than the length (please 1000 words total), we not putting any restrictions on this — except that it must be part of a larger work.



(Note: Where deemed appropriate, certain selections may appear in the "Adult or Curious" section.) --rm--

## GOOD NEWS / BAD NEWS

### FOR MEMBERS

Your Board of Directors has approved of members' **displaying flyers** to tout their written works and writing-related activities. A special table will be set up at meetings for this purpose.

### FOR NON-MEMBERS NOW RECEIVING THE VALLEY SCRIBE

If this is your third complimentary issue of *The Valley Scribe*, it is the final one you will receive. To access future issues, go to <http://www.cwc-sfv.org>.

This is just another reason to join the San Fernando Valley Branch of the California Writers Club.

In addition, non-members will no longer receive special notices about meetings, and they will be missing out on speakers of note who provide writing techniques, how to get published, marketing material, and tips to effectively network.

### WHY MISS OUT – JOIN TODAY.

### The Centennial Celebration for the California Writers Club

is October 17<sup>th</sup>.

Please mark this date on your calendar  
and help us celebrate!

#### ALL JACK LONDON AWARD WINNERS, PLEASE PAY SPECIAL HEED.

You are invited to be a guest at the Celebration, whether you are from the San Fernando Valley Branch, or any other branch of the California Writers Club.

We want to welcome you and honor you.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP to  
Ethel Ann Pemberton, [President](#) at 805/383-1002  
or to Glenn Wood, [Exec. V.P.](#) at 650/279-9436  
on or before September 30, 2009.

ALL MEMBERS AND GUESTS  
are invited to celebrate and to pay tribute to these  
individuals of distinction.

Refreshments will be served and a copy of a  
*Murder She Wrote* script, signed by Thomas B. Sawyer,  
will be given to the lucky winner of a  
**FREE DRAWING.**

## FREE BEER!!

Setting up for meetings is a large task. If you can help, Please come at 11:30.

You'll get to hob-nob with friends, help the Club and, earn our eternal gratitude.

(OK. We lied about the beer.)

# The Bulletin Board

**MEETINGS ...**  
**WILL BE HELD AT 12:30 P.M.**  
**ON THE 3<sup>RD</sup> SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH**  
**AT ST. MARTIN-IN-THE FIELDS EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
**Hannibal Hall**  
**7136 Winnetka Avenue, Winnetka – South of Sherman Way**  
**(Directions & Map on last page)**

**UPCOMING MEETINGS**  
**October 17, 2009**  
**November 21, 2009**  
**Speakers and other meetings TBA in future newsletters.**

## NEWSLETTER MAILINGS

Members will receive copies of the Newsletter via email.  
 Those members not having email will receive printed copies by postal service.  
 Cara Alson 818/764-0807 is the contact for sending USPS copies. Courtesy copies will be mailed to potential members for three months.  
 If you like the Newsletter, the speakers, and what our branch has to offer, don't waste another minute.

**JOIN!**

## SUBMISSIONS

Members are encouraged to submit writing contributions to *The Valley Scribe*. This is your newsletter, and you should be part of it.  
 Submit your prose and poetry to [humorist@verizon.net](mailto:humorist@verizon.net)

It will then be proofed and sent to the Editor.  
 Type "Submissions" in the subject line.  
 If submitting a hard copy, please bring it to the meeting and hand it to the Editor, Ray Malus, or to the President.

Articles/Essays  
 Short Stories  
 Poetry

Submit your writings within ten days after the monthly Open Meetings.

The Editor (or President) has license to accept or reject any work submitted based on available space or editing problems.  
 All submissions must include an email address or a phone number.  
 Writings will not be returned and may be included in future issues.

## UPCOMING

October 17, 2009 — Featured speaker:  
 Screenwriter/Columnist, **Burt Prelutsky!**  
 November 21, 2009 — Featured speaker:  
**Stathis Orphanos**  
 Details, next month!!  
**Watch this spot!**

## Member Ray Malus' Play, "The Ninth Bell"

is a winner in the First Annual Tehachapi 10-Minute Play Festival. It will be performed Nov. 20, 21 & 22.  
 For details, go to:

[www.tehachapinews.com/home/ViewPost/111260](http://www.tehachapinews.com/home/ViewPost/111260)

## GUEST FEES

There is a \$5 charge to guests attending meetings, but members pay no admission fee. Guests pay no fee when paying for membership at the door.  
 For more information, contact Lenora Smalley, Membership Chair, at the meeting entrance or email [membership@cw-sfv.org](mailto:membership@cw-sfv.org).

## The Fine Print

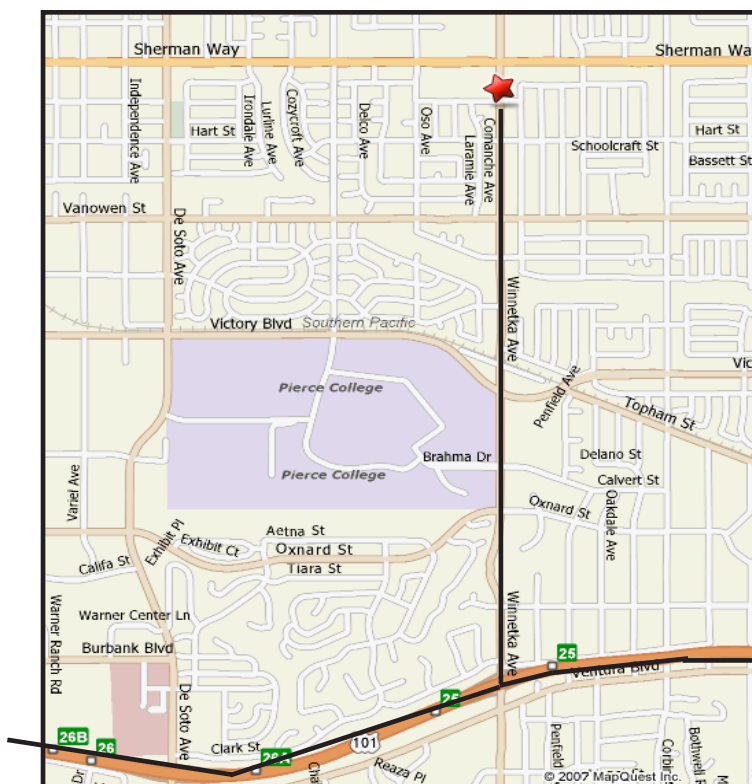
### **ST. MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS** **7136 WINNETKA AVE** **CANOGA PARK, CA 91306**

From San Fernando Valley  
 Take 101 Fwy to Valley. Exit Winnetka. Go North (From Hollywood, turn Right. From Ventura, turn left) past Vanowen (almost to Sherman Way). Church is on East side (Right side) 1 Bl. before Sherman Way.

From Simi

Take 118 Fwy to Valley. Exit DeSoto. Go South to Sherman Way. Turn East to Winnetka. Turn South 1 block. Church is on East side (left side) 1 Bl. after Sherman Way.

Walk into the campus. Hannibal Hall is at North end.



## *The Valley Scribe*

the Newsletter of the  
 San Fernando Valley Branch  
 of  
 California Writers Club

is published monthly.

We solicit submissions from members.  
 (See Bulletin Board: SUBMISSIONS )

Editor

[Ray Malus](#)

Staff

Proof Readers Judy Presnall, Ethel Ann Pemberton

Columnists Ethel Ann Pemberton,  
 Ken Watts, Erica Stux, Ray Malus

Guest Columnist

Liz Cooke

*All attributed works are copyrighted by the author  
 and are used with permission.*



### **California Writers Club** San Fernando Valley Branch

#### EXECUTIVE BOARD & BOARD MEMBERS

President, Ethel Ann Pemberton [president@cw-csfv.org](mailto:president@cw-csfv.org)  
 Exec. Vice President, Glenn Wood [vice-president@cw-csfv.org](mailto:vice-president@cw-csfv.org)  
 Treasurer, Judy Presnall [treasurer@cw-csfv.org](mailto:treasurer@cw-csfv.org)  
 Secretary, Cara Alson [secretary@cw-csfv.org](mailto:secretary@cw-csfv.org)  
 Central Board Rep., Glenn Wood

#### Other Board Members

Membership, Lenora Smalley [membership@cw-csfv.org](mailto:membership@cw-csfv.org)

Pre-Session Leader, Ray Malus [cw-csfv@roadrunner.com](mailto:cw-csfv@roadrunner.com)

Hospitality Chair, Stephanie Sharf [stephaniesharf@yahoo.com](mailto:stephaniesharf@yahoo.com)

Webmaster, Glenn Wood [webmaster@cw-csfv.org](mailto:webmaster@cw-csfv.org)

Website: [www.cw-csfv.org](http://www.cw-csfv.org)



**CAUTION**

## *For The Adult or Curious.*

*We recognize that our membership has a broad spectrum of sensibilities. However, we also believe that a "Writers' Publication" should allow as much latitude in content as possible. If you are neither "adult" nor curious, simply skip this section.*

**CAUTION**

### *The Cavalier*

by Ray Malus

*(This is an excerpt from Ray's unpublished memoir, "Stories You'd Give A Shit About, If I Was Famous." -Ed)*

In the late 70s, the live-entertainment industry started to die. Prior to this, most families had been single breadwinner arrangements, with the wife playing the role of "homemaker." She was basically stuck at home with little entertainment, and, by God, once a week, he was going to take her out to dinner and a show. That was the core of my following.

But gradually, women began having careers. By the end of the week, they were as tired as their husbands. Cable TV was expanding. VCRs and movie rentals had appeared. People were staying home — abandoning the bars and clubs to the singles scene. (Thank you very much T. G. I. Friday's!)

Now, when a guy is paying \$2 a pop to buy a girl a 20-cent glass of wine, the last thing he wants to hear is how good the guy singer is. No! He wants to get some bodily contact, find out where the limits — if any — are, and to take her home.

So it was that supper clubs basically disappeared — to be replaced by singles bars and discos. No longer could an entertainer demand attention from his audience. He was simply the pulse-beat of a seduction.

I scaled back my expectations and started looking for other venues. One was Cruise Ships. One was production shows, and one was Piano Bars (at which I played guitar).

As show-business-as-I-knew-it gradually died, to stay in Los Angeles, I would occasionally take a 'single.' This was a job where it would be just me and the guitar — usually in a small, up-scale cocktail lounge or restaurant.

One of these places was the Cavalier. At the Cavalier, I would sit behind a converted piano bar, and perform for the diners. In addition, people sat at the piano bar.

One night, the piano bar was crowded, and after about an hour's 'set,' I was about to take a break.

A fairly intoxicated woman at the piano bar was in a very loud conversation with her date and used the word, *motherfucker*.

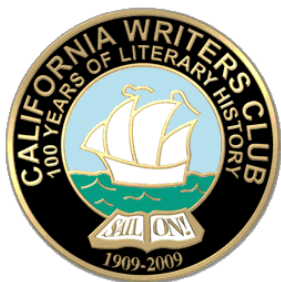
There was a general gasp of shock from the other patrons.

Without missing a beat (I was in my element, here), I said, "Oh no. You misunderstood. But that's understandable, because Mary is from Lithuania and you don't speak ancient Lithuanian. See, in ancient Lithuanian, *Muth* means 'flower.' *Ehr* is a suffix implying either 'plurality' or 'extremity' — depending on context, and *fook* means 'pretty' or 'attractive.' So the phrase *Muth ehr fook ehr* simply means 'an extremely beautiful bouquet of flowers.' " Everyone sort of chuckled. I heaved a sigh of relief and took a break.

Well, the whole interchange was "on mic," and had been heard by everybody in the restaurant. As I walked through the room, I was astonished at its effect.

All the patrons — men and women — now felt they had permission to use the word. The room hummed with elegant, well-dressed people commenting on the really good "motherfucking steaks," ordering another glass of "motherfucking wine," and complimenting each other on each other's stunning "motherfucking appearance."

It was astonishing! It was funny. It demonstrated what the comedian, Lenny Bruce, had always maintained: "They're just sounds."



## Membership Application

## CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB-SFV

## Membership Term

The current membership year is July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010

## Fees

**\$45 Renewing Members**

**\$65 New Members**

*(The extra \$20 is a one-time processing fee)*

**\$20 Dual Membership** dues, if joining another branch of the California Writers Club, such as West Valley, Long Beach, etc.

*(Payable to the second branch — in addition to the \$45 dues paid to the primary Branch.)*

**\$475 Lifetime Membership** dues for this Centennial Year only. *(Normally \$675)*

Make your checks payable to “California Writers Club-SFV”

Return checks and applications to:

California Writers Club-SFV  
c/o Lenora Smalley  
6545 Franrivers Avenue  
West Hills, CA 91307

## Your Contact Info

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list areas of interest, such as fiction/nonfiction/novel/short story/articles

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_