



The Newsletter Of The San Fernando Valley Branch

The Valley Scribe

Vol. 2

December 2009

No. 4

Next Meeting December 19th Gala Holiday Party!

We've earned it!

It's been a busy year: Reorganization, great speakers, Open Mikes, Awards, Member Showcases! Whew!

It really is party time!

Time to kick back, and kick up our heels. Time to take a bow, and applaud ourselves for a job well done. Time to get ready for an exciting new year.

Food, fun, frolic!

Oh sure, there'll be a business meeting (Eeeuuu!), but it'll be short.

Judy Presnall will be our showcased member. (Hmmm. Twenty-three published books!)

Mostly, we'll celebrate the various Holidays that end the year.

... and Boutique

Last minute Holiday shopping? No problem. Our members will be exhibiting and selling their works.

Books! DVDs! CDs! All right there for you.

Chat with the authors. See what they're doing and how they're doing it.

Ideas galore, and one-stop shopping!

Bring guests!

If you miss this one, you'll have to wait a year for the next.

**Come party like it's
\$19.99!**

Our December Member Showcase: Judy Presnall



Judy has been a member of CWC-SFV since 1986. At that time she had only taken one writing class. It was through Pierce College Community Services and Joan Jones, the first president of the SFV club, taught the class. Joan had invited most of her students to an Open House CWC meeting in Woodland Hills on a Saturday afternoon. Judy made the mistake of signing the charter. She thought it was a guest sheet. Oh well. Now, she was an official member. Through the ensuing years, Judy found children's nonfiction her niche.

Come and hear how Judy parlayed a 1987 third place Asilomar Conference Contest win into twenty-three published books over the past years.

In this Issue

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Stathis Orphanos

(Click on title to jump to story)

November-in-Review: Stathis Orphanos — A Life Less Ordinary

An unusual name; an unusual life!

At our November meeting, Fellow CWC member, Duke Howard, interviewed photographer and publisher, Stathis Orphanos. We listened intently as Orphanos shared stories about his life and careers.

He was born in Greece, to a rather well-to-do family. His mother was an amateur photographer with her own dark room. Naturally, when the King and Queen came to visit, she took pictures. Stathis' father gave him his first camera — a Brownie, and both parents encouraged, what became, his passion.

Orphanos tried school but it did not suit him. So he traveled to California where a friend was living. After studying with Dorothy Parker for one semester at UCLA, Orphanos quit and made a dark room out of his bathroom.

A self-professed "man who didn't know how to do anything," Orphanos nevertheless quickly proved his artistry — taking black and white portraits of people like Norman Mailer, Graham Greene, John Irving, George Cukor et. al.

How do you get in to see famous people like Norman Mailer? Apparently, if you are Orphanos, you just ask.

Eventually you don't even have to ask. "People don't like their own pictures — but they like other people's."

That is how he was invited to photograph former Vargas girl, Mamie Van Doren. She'd seen his work in a show near her home and called the studio. Orphanos prefers natural light, so Van Doren — like most of his subjects — was photographed in her home.

"She had this skylight and the shaft of light hit her as she entered the room." He paused, remembering her beauty. "She had nothing on but a, a... what do you call it? A corset? A bustier? She was sixty at the time she asked to be photographed nude, but she had it in her genes. She was great."

Many of Orphanos' photographs were used for book covers: Gore Vidal's *Point to Point*, William Styron's *Darkness Visible*.

When Orphanos took his picture, Styron pointed his finger to his head. The marketing department hated the photo, but the head of Random House — and Styron — loved it. It was printed over twenty



Musings from the President

Ethel Ann Pemberton

Have you ever received a rejection letter with a comment? I ruined two paper shredders with the rejects I've received.

Some have read, "Nice try," "Almost," or "It doesn't fit our publication, but try again." I can't figure out whether the editor is really encouraging me or has a habit of jotting a few lines on every rejection letter.

I can understand comments such as "Wrong point of view," "Dreadfully long," or "Lacks focus," because they take away any spark of hope ... unless I think any personal scratch on a manuscript is an indication of re-do me and send me back, which I don't. A friend of mine does, however, and keeps re-writing the same article, which gives rise to the question: How many times should a person re-write an article before dumping it? As many times as the author wants to re-write it is the correct answer. Seven has been my standard. On the other hand, a personal letter is the best you can receive, short of an acceptance.

Several months ago I sent a short story to *Woman's World*. A personalized note written on my cover letter was returned, saying, "The heroine's grandfather is too brusque with his grandson." So I made him a hands-on grandpap, playing on the floor with the kid. I wondered what this had to do with a man falling in love with a woman who had a kid—but what do I know? So I sent the revised story back, reminding the editor that I'd made the suggested changes. The editor called and asked what changes I'd made, and I told her. (Evidently she hadn't kept a copy of my story and wasn't expecting a re-write.) The following week I received the story back with no comment and no contract. Rather tacky, I thought, since this magazine had bought stories from me before.

Another dilemma. A while back I got a request for a partial of my manuscript, *She Always Gets Her Man*, to which I promptly forwarded by return mail. After many months of painful waiting, I got a rejection letter saying a lot of flowery things, but the bottom line read, "I find your main character is unsympathetic." That wasn't much to go on, for sure, but I got busy re-writing. I made my heroine's mother die at childbirth. Lexie's dad mistreats her because he'd always wanted a son. But since my heroine's motivation changed, I was now put

(*Less Ordinary cont'd from pg. 2*)

feet high and used as a backdrop. The book became a best seller.

Orphanos related stories about the famous folks he has photographed. Once, he and a friend went to see movie star and political activist, Melina Mercouri (*Never on Sunday, Topkapi, Stella*). After the performance, they spotted Mercouri. She waved to them to follow her, "Come on!"

All the theaters were being let out at that time and the people just "parted like the dead sea" as the Star walked past them. They followed her to a steak house. As she walked to the back room, where other cast-members were waiting she suddenly turned and blew a kiss to Orphanos.

Twenty years later, when Orphanos was taking photographs of Mercouri's dying husband, director Jules Dassin, he asked her if she remembered the night when she blew the kiss. She responded in her deep throaty voice "It happened every night!"

It seems these kinds of things happen to Orphanos "every night" too.

Orphanos and his partner, Ralph Sylvester, now publish exquisite hardbound books — with wonderful paper, and hand-made covers. "They are all hand done."

Their work compliments the authors like the three Nobel Laureates they published. These are limited runs with actual signatures in the books.

Orphanos is now exploring the world of color digital photography. Recently he photographed the King's Guard in Greece. He was "quite delighted with the way it all worked." He is a man who leaps forward into the future while carrying with him the expertise of his past.

He closed with some words of wisdom: "Always make sure the eyes are lit. Don't have a cluttered background. Use available light where ever possible."

He makes it sound so simple. □

To learn more, visit www.orphanos.com

(*Musings cont'd from pg. 2*)

in the position of changing her husband's motivation. How about the hubby being a football coach, and Lexie being pregnant with twin daughters? Her husband seems happy, but is he? Is that enough conflict and motivation, I wonder, or should I place more obstacles in their paths? With this slim scenario, I can see the novel ending in five chapters. It's my call. Should I have the husband react like the heroine's father had? Should I cause him to be in a terrible accident or cause her to lose the babies? I throw up my hands in despair.

I've made my character sympathetic, but this certainly wasn't the novel I'd planned to write or want to write. So, after much deliberation and 75 pages later, I ran the novel through the paper shredder and began writing another novel. A small price to pay for learning the meaning of an unsympathetic character written on a rejection slip.

Did you know Alex Hailey, author of *Roots*, racked up seventeen rejections before getting published by *Reader's Digest*? The number was over one hundred for Jack London. I can't help wondering how many re-writes went into the writings that resulted in so many rejection letters and whether Alex and Jack destroyed the letters by tearing them up by hand or by using scissors. At least writers today have the convenience of paper shredders. □

The Central Coast Writers Club Spring 2010 Writing Contest

Poetry and Short Story Winners Published and \$500!

The two winners will get \$500 each and will be published
(print and on-line)

in the 2010 *Homestead Review* (Hartnell College - Salinas).

(Note: All contest entries will be considered for publication.)

Submission Period: Sep. 15, 2009 through Jan. 15, 2010 (by postmark)

For contest rules, go to: <http://www.centralcoastwriters.org/2010-contest-rules.htm>

Questions: E-mail ccw-contests@comcast.net



**JANUARY 16, 2010 IS THE DAY,
AND DAN POYNTER WILL BE THE SPEAKER
AT THE CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB – SFV BRANCH.**

MR. POYNTER, KNOWN AS THE GURU OF PUBLISHING, IS AN AUTHOR OF MORE THAN 120 BOOKS, HAS BEEN A PUBLISHER SINCE 1969 AND IS A CERTIFIED SPEAKING PROFESSIONAL (CSP).

TWO HOURS OF PRESENTATIONS BY THIS RENOWNED SPEAKER WILL BEGIN AT 1:00 P.M. ONE HOUR WILL BE DEVOTED TO INTROVERTS AND BOOK PROMOTION FOLLOWED BY ONE HOUR OF OPPORTUNITIES IN PUBLISHING—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

WHAT A COUP FOR THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY BRANCH AND YOU.

MEMBERS ATTEND FREE. GUESTS PAY \$5.00.

This generous gesture by Mr. Poynter is offered by special arrangement to provide valuable information to published and non-published writers eager to make their mark on the world.

More in the January Newsletter.

Mark this day on your calendar — it's not to be missed!

The Wright Word — by Ray

"Deck The Malls..."

Well, the Holidays are here — as if you didn't know. Food to cook. Parties to plan! Gifts to buy.

GIFTS TO BUY!?

Don't panic! I'm going to depart from my usual themes, and as a public service present:

"The RayCo® Patented Holiday Shopping Method".

Here's a classic situation: You, I, and several others are members of a small group, which intends to exchange Christmas gifts (for the sake of high culture, we will assume a six-member Bowling team). The members are Sally (that's you), Skip, Babs, Pete, Trish, and me (uh, that would be me).

Now, I call you up and say, "Sally, I'd really like to give you something you'll appreciate for Christmas; but I don't know you that well. On the other hand, I don't want you to tell me what to get for you (too much like catalog shopping). Let's agree on a price limit. Then, I'll give you a list of 10 things I'd like; and you give me a list of 10 things you'd like. That way, I can be sure you'll like what I get for you — but you'll still be surprised — and you can do the same."

Being a reasonable person, you see the wisdom in this, and agree. We will meet for coffee tomorrow at 10:00, and exchange lists.

When we meet, I accept your list; but (Wouldn't you know!) I've left my list home (Silly me!). Well, no prob-

lem. I'll drop it by your home later.

So far, so good.

Now the genius part: I've made the identical arrangement with Skip, Babs, Pete, and Trish.

I now go to meet Skip. I get his list, and give him... yours (I can hear your moan of appreciation). Naturally enough, during the day Babs gets Skip's list, Pete gets Babs', and Trish gets Pete's. The day culminates with my apologetically (for my tardiness) handing you Trish's list.

I'm done until Christmas Day. While you all go out and frantically shop, I recline peacefully at home with a diet pop, watching my fifth re-run of "It's A Wonderful Life."

On Christmas Day, things are even simpler. You give me the gift you bought for me (which I LOVE). I give it to Trish (Just what she wanted!). She gives me the gift she bought for me (which I ADORE), and I give it to Pete ("How did you ever guess?!"). I pass on the gift from Pete to Babs (Isn't this fun?). Babs' gift (of course) delights Skip, and Skip has gotten the PERFECT thing for you (How dumb of me to have left it in my car!).

It's the perfect solution. Of course, I don't think anyone has actually tried this yet...

No, no. Don't thank me! I'm glad I could be of some help to you. Meanwhile, I've got some writing to do... and someone's at the door. Probably Trish with that dog-gone list... and "It's A Wonderful Life" is on in twenty minutes.. —==

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!)

Writers' Journal Annual Horror/Ghost Contest is looking for fiction and short stories. Open to any writer. Deadline: March 30. Fee: \$7. Prize: 1st Place \$250; 2nd Place \$100; 3rd Place \$50; plus honorable mentions. The prize-winning stories and selected honorable mentions are published in *Writers' Journal*. Check their website for guidelines. Contact: Leon Ogroske. Address: Val-Tech Media, P O Box 394, Perham, MN 56573. Phone: 218.346.7921. Fax: 218.346.7924. E-Mail: writersjournal@writersjournal.com. Web-site: www.writersjournal.com.

Glimmer Train's Very Short Fiction Award (February) Open Feb 1-28. Word count: 3000 max. See complete writing guidelines and submit online at website. The winners will be called and results will be announced in their May bulletin and in a number of additional print and online publications. Prize: The winner receives \$1,200, publication in *Glimmer Train Stories*, and 20 copies of that issue; 2nd prize: \$500; 3rd prize: \$300. Looking for fiction and short stories. Contact Linda Swanson-Davies. Address: Glimmer Train Press, Inc., 1211 NW Glisan St., #207, Portland, OR 97209. Phone: 503.221.0836 Fax: 503.221.0837 E-Mail: eds@glimmertrain.org Web-site: www.glimmertrain.org.

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Something to Ponder: "Be always resolute with the present hour. Every moment is of infinite value"

— Johann von Goeth.

Check Out Our New Look!

We have a stunning new face on the World Wide Web!

**Want to feel extra proud to be a member of
The San Fernando Valley Branch?
Take a gander at our new Web Site!**

CWC-SFV.ORG

**has been completely revamped,
and it's sensational!**

**It's high-tech, elegant,
and packed with information.**

**... and we have a new look that would make a
Beverly Hills Cosmetic Surgeon preen.**

**Our new site gives an exciting new face to
the most dynamic Branch in CWC.**

**We expect the site to grow and expand,
and be a model for other branches.**

1000 thanks to our Webmaster, Glenn Wood.

Christmas Benefit

by Ray Malus

The year was 1973. I was headlining at Harold's Club, Reno. My buddy, a comic named J. C. Curtis was sharing the bill. It was a week before Christmas. Harold's Club had decided to close the show room for Christmas Eve — which was the following Monday. J.C. and I were riding with Cork Proctor, another comedian, in Cork's station wagon. As we passed Harold's Club, I said, "You know, we're all off on Christmas Eve, we ought to get a group and go caroling (this brought no reaction from the two comics in the front seat) — or do a benefit show!"

This was received far better. "I know just the place," Cork responded, "I'll call Joe."

It turned out "Joe" was Joe Conforte, and "the place" was Mustang Ranch.

For those uninitiated into the nightlife of Northern Nevada in the 1970s, Mustang Ranch was the largest legal House of Prostitution in North America.

Personally, I thought it was a fine idea. I had romantic notions of these poor forlorn girls, away from home on Christmas, and the joy we would bring into their lives. Kind of a "Little-Match-Girl-in-bra-and-panties" thing.

Yeah, right!

Reno is located in Washoe County, Nevada — where Prostitution is illegal. Mustang was located in adjacent Storey County — where it is not. So Christmas Eve found us packed into Cork's car, along with my guitar and amplifier, driving into the wilds of the Northern Nevada Desert.

At the time, Mustang Ranch was little more than a large bunch of house trailers — all connected — surrounded by a chain-link fence. One parked, walked through the darkness to a security gate, and entered a small room. There, a guard looked you over (I suppose to prevent robberies). After that, the guard rang a buzzer, and you entered the parlor.

It's hard to describe the scene inside. In general, it consisted of upholstered chairs and couches. The girls — all barely [sic] covered by skimpy lingerie — sat around the room. (The heating bill must have been epic.) When the buzzer rang, the girls would stand up to greet the guests:

"I'm Sugar."

"I'm Candy."

"I'm Honey."

That night it was business as usual — except for the décor. Against one wall, was an enormous buffet table arrayed with cold cuts, cheeses and desserts. Near the center were two huge, silver serving bowls big enough to bathe the average toddler in — one filled with iced punch, one filled with hot buttered rum. In the corner was an enormous pine tree whose top had been cut off to squeeze it into the low-ceilinged trailer. It was probably 30 feet around at the base, but it was hard to estimate because it was completely covered with a pile of brightly wrapped presents. Any thought I had of poor waif-children went right up the chimney. WOW! It was like the Ghost of Christmas Present had upchucked all over the room!

Joe Conforte greeted us and introduced us around, and after we had a drink or two, the show started.

It went well — considering it was constantly interrupted by the entrance of *clientèle* (BUZZ. "I'm Sugar." "I'm Candy." "I'm Honey." ...).

When it was over, Conforte stood up with his ever-present cigar butt in his mouth, and said, "Ain' nobody nevva done nuttin' fa you broads like dis before. What eva deese guys wan' it's on da house!!"

Cork decided he would return to Reno, but said the Ranch's limo would take us back, so J.C. and I spent about a ½ hour chatting with the girls. Then it was time to leave. The only problem was that Conforte had taken the limo into Reno to go to Midnight Mass, and wouldn't be back for several hours. We were marooned in a 'Cat House,' with *carte blanche*.

Oh well. If you're gonna be stranded, this was the party to be stranded at! We made the worst of a great situation.

I won't tell you the details until I get a literary agent, but several hours later, Joe and the Limo returned, and J. C. and I were chauffeured into Reno.

The car dropped us off right in front of Harold's Club. It was dawn. Snow had fallen — a White Christmas. J.C. and I stood in the middle of Virginia Street in 6 inches of new snow. Dazzling neon light from a dozen marquees flashed and danced on the chaste, untrodden powder, and the smell of wood smoke from neighboring fireplaces sweetened the air — as we hugged, and wished each other "Merry Christmas."

Mustang Ranch has been closed for many years now, so as far as I know, this was the only Christmas Benefit show that was ever done there.

There's a short coda to this story:

Although, officially, The Great Mustang Ranch Christmas Benefit Show had never happened, all Reno's entertainment community knew the story. A few years later, when I was working at the Riverside Hotel, the entertainment editor of the local Reno paper called me up. They were doing a feature on "What was your favorite Christmas?" I thought, and then told him, "Just say it was the year I did the benefit show for the homeless."

He chuckled and did as I asked. When the story was published, my quote was amid a lot of others of the "year-I-got-a-new-bicycle" kind. I got a lot of winks and smirks from friends in town. But Jessie Beck, the owner of the Riverside, called me up to her suite, on the top floor of the hotel. She hugged me, and said she just wanted to commend me.

She said mine had been the only unselfish quote, the "true spirit of Christmas." —rm—

ME AND MY ROOMMATE AND ANOTHER CHRISTMAS TOGETHER

By Ethel Ann Pemberton

It seems like yesterday that a gorgeous long-haired male Himalayan cat joined my household and took immediate charge of my personal possessions and my heart. I don't mind, though, because he's very loving. He lays his head in my lap, looks up at me adoringly, and purrs when I touch him -- not like the other undomesticated male who no longer lives here.

Although Moxie is a bit controlling, he knows instinctively how to get me to do things for him without being offensive. And he eats everything I put in front of him, even liver pâté. He never leaves socks or underwear lying around, and he's very careful to tinkle directly in the litter box and not on the carpet -- not like the other hellcat who shall remain nameless.

Moxie and I have been together for ten years. We bonded immediately and like everything about each other. We shared a lazy Christmas last year playing with streamers and lapping up dishes of French vanilla ice cream. This year I bought an electronic gadget with a hanging mouse that flies around in a circle, tempting my tomboy to catch it. I have it hidden at the top shelf of my closet under his other Christmas-wrapped toys. Last year, about a week before Christmas, I lined up bottles of cologne while he sat patiently on the bed, waiting for a sniff of each one. When I placed a bottle of Vanilla Fields under his nose, his eyes rolled to the back of his head, and he remained in a transfixed state for about twenty minutes. Since that's his scent of preference, that's what he'll get this year, along with fishing poles and a battery-operated dog who walks and barks.

When the other roommate and I were together, I'd get bombed out of my mind during the holidays just to blitz out his irritating behavior. Nothing seemed fun to him but the remote and beer. The appreciation he expressed was a half-smile, half-sneer and an arm lock around my neck.

That nerdy male and Moxie do have some things in common, however. They both love spending time in the garage. My former roomie tinkered with his tools out there for hours on end -- never did make anything worth keeping. I don't know what Moxie does out there, but I hear boxes opening and closing and objects being moved around. I hope he's cleaning out the garage because it could use it.

Moxie is such a cool cat -- loves all my friends, comes when I call him, and has me laughing all the time with his cute antics -- not like the other tomcat who used to sleep all day and come alive at night to raid the refrigerator. In fact, Moxie and I like each other more every day and plan to spend our best Christmas ever together now that we're rid of that lazy, ill-tempered, short-haired, feral nuisance who used to live here. □

OUR DECEMBER HOLIDAY PARTY WILL TAKE PLACE ON DECEMBER 19th.

THE MEETING WILL START AT 12:30 WITH A MEMBERSHIP SHOWCASE PRESENTED BY MEMBER JUDY PRESNALL, AN AUTHOR OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS.

A SHORT GENERAL MEETING AND WONDERFUL REFRESHMENTS WILL FOLLOW.
AT 2 P.M. IN LIEU OF A SPEAKER, PUBLISHED WRITERS FROM OUR OWN CWC-SFV BRANCH WILL DISPLAY AND SELL THEIR BOOKS OR DISCS. IF YOU ARE A MEMBER AND HAVE A BOOK PUBLISHED, OR A C/D, PLEASE CONTACT V.P. GLENN WOOD BY EMAIL (CTO@hazelst.com)

OR

PREZ. ETHEL ANN PEMBERTON BY EMAIL (humorist@verizon.net)
BEFORE DECEMBER 15 SO THEY CAN RESERVE TABLE SPACE FOR YOU TO SIT,
DISPLAY YOUR BOOKS, AND SELL THEM, IF YOU WISH TO DO SO.

YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS ASKS THAT YOU MAKE UP A SHEET LISTING THE TITLE OR TITLES OF YOUR BOOKS OR C/DS, AND THE PRICES,
AND HAVE THAT LIST VISIBLE FOR MEMBERS AND GUESTS TO SEE WHEN THEY MAKE THEIR ROUNDS.

THE BOARD FURTHER ASKS THAT MEMBERS STOP BY AND TALK WITH THE AUTHORS. WE REALIZE YOU CAN'T BUY BOOKS FROM EVERY AUTHOR, BUT YOU CAN STOP BY THEIR TABLES TO VISIT AND COMPLIMENT THEM.

DOOR PRIZES! YOU MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN!

The Beaded Purse Poetry Contest

We are delighted to announce
that the winners are:

First Place

J. Raymond Kent (*pseud, Ray Malus*), *Catching A Dream*

Second Place

Ray Malus, *Pegasus*

Third Place

Helen Katzman, *Once Upon A Time*

Fourth Place

Lillian Rodich, *Vacant Lots... Lost Playground*

Honorable Mention

Johana West, *Tending His Roots*

In Memoriam

Our Beloved "Tom"

2007 - 2009

"You were more than a meal..."



R. I. P.

It Could Be Verse

Echoes of the Night Before Christmas

by Lenora Smalley

Stars were shining,
sheep were asleep,
Shepherds guarded their flocks in the keep.
Watch fires kept the wolves away,
as they all awaited the dawning of day.

Then up from their watch the shepherds sprang
as the sky lit up and the valleys rang
with the voices of angels that sang in the air
the message that they were sent to share.

Shepherds stared,
sheep bleated in alarm,
dogs were barking to warn them of harm.
From the side of the hills there arose such a din,
the angels sang good will to them,

"Put away panic;
put away fright.
The Word is made flesh and is born tonight.
Go find the manger in Bethlehem
and see a baby born Savior of men."

The shepherds thought that nothing would be stranger
than to find a Savior lying in a manger.
The angels sang before they vanished from sight,
"Joy to the World on the first Christmas night."

CELEBRATION!

- by Darina Watts

WELL, THE TIME IS DRAWING NEAR,
UNDER THE TREE WE WILL PEER,
OPEN GIFTS WITH SLIGHTEST FEAR,
OUR FOOTBALL TEAM WE'LL CHEER,
'NUFF SAID - PASS THE BEER!!

The Recipe

By Stephanie Sharf

Reading Agatha Christie was her favorite pastime
Like a hobby, an avocation, this interest in crime.
He took no interest in books and such
In fact, he felt she read "too darn much."

When the right time came, she left no hints
She did as Agatha said, and wiped off "prints."
Her "alibi" was faked, all was prepared
He drank poisoned tea, she waited nervous and scared.

A minute flew by, then two, then three
He fell fast asleep, still breathing free.
"Oh dear," she muttered, miffed as could be,
"I never could follow a damned recipe."

She tiptoed to him, and leaned over close by
Still breathing, the bastard, then he opened an eye.
"Oh Gerald," she stammered, confused as could be
"I thought that you slept after drinking the tea."

"That tea tasted funny, so bitter and coarse,
Matter of fact, babe, your tea could knock off a horse."
He grunted and rose, shaking his head
Then took a step forward and keeled over dead.

Star Prayer

Hovering Star, Star of Judah,
the Scepter and the Rose,
shine on the babe in Bethlehem
wrapped in swaddling clothes.

Guiding Star, Star of Wise Men
guide us by your rays.
Lead us to the child born to be King
to bring him honor and praise.

Covering Star, Star of Jesse
Canopy of Sharon's Rose
comfort the child who has become a man
as to the cross he goes.

Resurrection Star, Star of the Father,
heal us by your power.
Enter our hearts like a silent laser.
Make your Light our strong Tower.

Lenora Smalley

"But it's the truth — even if it didn't happen." - Ken Kesey (*One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*)

— ABOUT THIS ISSUE: **HOLIDAY!!** —

As we prepared this issue, we looked around for festive images. We also tried to make sure all the solstice holidays were represented: Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanza.

It turned out that our task was simple. Everywhere we looked, there was light. Decorations, candles, stars. Celebrations of joy, brilliance and illumination.

So, our wish for you is simple, too:

May your life be filled with joy,
your mind be filled with illumination,
and your writing be filled with brilliance.

— The Staff of, and Contributors to,
The Valley Scribe



GOOD NEWS / BAD NEWS

FOR MEMBERS

MEMBERS MAY DISPLAY:

- 1) Flyers regarding their own writing endeavors and/or writer-related activities;
- 2) newly-published books;
- 3) business cards, and
- 4) postcards.

Members displaying such items will be required to remove their material after the meeting or they will be discarded.

MEMBERSHIP QUALIFICATION

If you haven't been qualified as an Active or Associate member of CWC-SFV as yet, please request an application from Lenora Smalley, Accreditation Committee Chair, and she will provide you with one to complete. This information will be in the Roster, so get busy and get your membership status confirmed.

THANK YOU

Earn a Thank You — Volunteer!

Give a Thank You — Tell us someone's who's helped!

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.

(See application at www.cwc-sfv.org)

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 ...
ARE HELD AT 12:30 P.M.
ON THE 3RD SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH
AT ST. MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS EPISCOPAL CHURCH
7136 Winnetka Avenue, Winnetka – South of Sherman Way
(Directions & Map on last page)

UPCOMING MEETINGS
December 19, 2009 – Party and Socializing
 – Members who have published books will display and sell them
January 6, 2009 – Dan Poynter
 – Publishing! –

UPCOMING MEMBER SHOWCASES

December 19, 2009 – Judy Presnall
 February 20, 2010 – Tom Barnes

GUEST DONATIONS

Non-members attending meetings, are asked to pay a \$5 (tax deductible) donation. New membership is immediate upon application at door. For more information, contact Lenora Smalley, Membership Chair, at the meeting entrance or email membership@cwc-sfv.org.

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

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.

NEWSLETTER MAILINGS:
 NEWSLETTERS ARE EMAILED TO MEMBERS.
 Members not having email will receive B&W copies by USPS.

Cara Alson (818) 764-0807 is the contact for sending USPS copies. Courtesy copies will be mailed for three months to non-members and/or guests who request same. Copies can be downloaded from the Website: <http://www.cwc-sfv.org>

HELP!

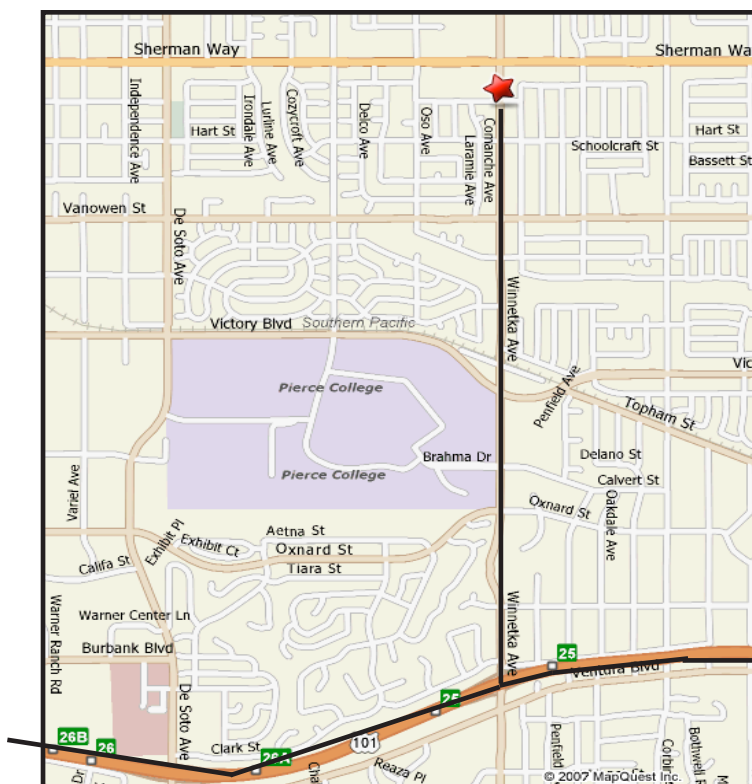
OUR TREASURY IS SHRINKING!
ANY IDEAS FOR FUND RAISERS?

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

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California Writers Club San Fernando Valley Branch

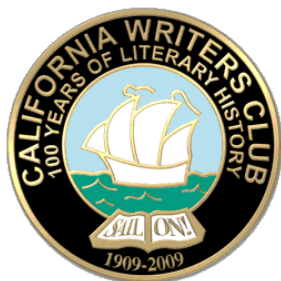
EXECUTIVE BOARD & BOARD MEMBERS

President, Ethel Ann Pemberton president@cw-c-sfv.org
Exec. Vice President, Glenn Wood vice-president@cw-c-sfv.org
Treasurer, Judy Presnall treasurer@cw-c-sfv.org
Secretary, Cara Alson secretary@cw-c-sfv.org
Central Board Rep., Glenn Wood

Other Board Members

Membership, Lenora Smalley membership@cw-c-sfv.org

Program Chair, Ethel Ann Pemberton president@cw-c-sfv.org
Pre-Session Leader, Ray Malus cw-c-sfv@roadrunner.com
Hospitality Chair, Stephanie Sharf stephaniesharf@yahoo.com
Webmaster, Glenn Wood webmaster@cw-c-sfv.org
Website: www.cw-c-sfv.org



ROSTER INFORMATION CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB - SFV

PRINT THE REQUIRED INFORMATION CLEARLY

NAME: (Last) _____ (First) _____ (Init.) _____

RESIDENCE ADDRESS: _____

CITY _____ ST. _____ ZIP _____

PHONE NO: (____) _____ — _____ Alternate: (____) _____ — _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____ @ _____

WRITING GENRES*: _____

*Please limit your writing genres to three (3)

Genres generally used:

Fiction, Non-Fiction, Poetry, Novels,
Scripts, Plays, Children's Books

STATUS: (Check only one.) ACTIVE: ____ ASSOCIATE: ____

PLEASE EMAIL OR SNAIL MAIL THE COMPLETED FORM BY 12-31-09 TO

Ethel Ann Pemberton

37126 Village 37

Camarillo, CA 93012

humorist@verizon.net

Rosters are anticipated to be ready by early 2010.

PLEASE NOTE:

Only dues-paying members will receive a copy of the Roster.
Each member will be requested to sign for his/her copy in order
to keep the Rosters private to members only.

If your Roster Information is not received by December 31, it will be assumed you do not
wish to be listed in the California Writers Club-SFV Roster for 2010.