



The Newsletter Of The San Fernando Valley Branch

The Valley Scribe

Vol. 3

September, 2010

No. 1

Next Meeting September 11, 12:30!



September Featured Speaker: Marcia Meier — PUBLISHING

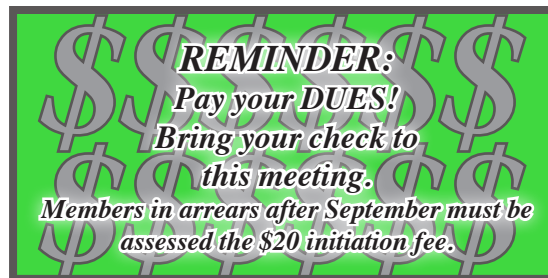
Marcia Meier is an award-winning writer, teacher, published poet and former director of the Santa Barbara Writers Conference. She will be talking about publishing and her latest book, *Navigating the Rough Waters of Today's Publishing World: Critical Advice for Writers from Industry Insiders*, which was published in June by Quill Driver Books.

Navigating the Rough Waters of Today's Publishing World shows both new and experienced writers what's happening now in fiction and nonfiction book publishing, including the new rules on packaging your book, working with agents, getting published in magazines and newspapers, online and e-book publication, and marketing and promotion. *Midwest Book Review* recently said: "*Navigating the Rough Waters of Today's Publishing World: Critical Advice for Writers from Industry Insiders* should be considered mandatory reading for anyone and all aspiring authors seeking to become successful professionals."

Marcia has written for numerous publications, including the *Los Angeles Times*, *Santa Barbara Magazine*, *The Writer Magazine*, *Miller-McCune Magazine* online and *The Huffington Post*. She has recently had her poetry and a short story accepted for publication. Her first book was *Santa Barbara, Paradise on the Pacific*, a coffee table book published in 1996 by Longstreet Press in Atlanta.

A print journalist for more than 20 years, she worked for four daily newspapers in the role of reporter, copy editor, assistant city editor and editorial page editor. She also wrote a personal column for five years. Marcia was director of college communications for a small liberal arts college for seven years before joining the writers conference, which she directed from 2004-2009.

She has a degree in journalism and has taught a number of college-level writing classes for various institutions in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo. Marcia is a member of the Author's Guild and Pen USA. □



OPEN MIKE! 12:30 SHARP!

The first 6 members to sign up will be given 5 minutes of FAME.
Please bring 2 copies of your material so the hearing-challenged may also enjoy your reading.

In this Issue

Feature

Page

(Click on title to jump to story)

June Meeting-in-Review: Lawyer Reveals Cozy Secrets *by Scott Gitlen*

At its final meeting of the year, our chapter hosted attorney Linda O. Johnston as the featured speaker. The website, www.cozy-mystery.com, nicely summed up her career: “Johnston, a contract lawyer, writes the Kendra Ballantyne, Pet Sitter Mystery series. The main character is an attorney and pet sitter. Her sidekick is a cutie pie Cavalier King Charles Spaniel named Lexie.” After briefly mentioning she remains available for legal work, Ms. Johnston wasted no time qualifying her audience’s familiarity with her topic so we could all get cozy — mystery writing, that is!

As if citing some fiction writers’ penal code, Ms. Johnston defined cozy mysteries as mysteries written for adults where an amateur sleuth solves engaging local crimes (i.e., a murder) which include interesting minor characters (who may be actual law enforcement professionals). The inciting hook often threatens the smart and savvy female protagonist as the presumptive suspect so as to compel the need to solve the mystery (and entice the reader to care about it). The emphasis is on plot and character development. Lastly, she reminded us all rules are generalities which are meant to be broken.

In the series classic “Murder She Wrote,” Angela Lansbury was welcomed into our homes from Cabot Creek, Maine, where she brilliantly solved murder mysteries, much to the amazement of her friends. To her foil, Sheriff Amos Tupper, our beloved heroine was a mere mystery writer and not a law enforcement professional. Her sleuthing was inspired by natural curiosity which lead her into dire situations until she extricated herself (no damsel in distress) and solved the case.

Our speaker explained publishers prefer protagonists’ crime solving process in the form of: (1) a series [three or more independent novels of 75,000 words], (2) with no explicit violence or graphic gore, (3) without explicit sex or swearing, (4) in a setting local to the protagonist’s everyday life, (5) involving interesting local characters who keep the protagonist going, and (6) where the protagonist achieves a satisfying ending although romantic interests or dramatic issues remain unresolved (enriching the fabric of the series).

Cozy mysteries employ themes which have precious little to do with murder most foul. Hobbies (antiquing, crocheting, cooking, scrapbooking), games (sudoku,

PRESIDENT’S *Stephanie Sharf*

CORNER

Will e-books ever replace print books? (A recent study showed that on average it takes a reader longer to read an e-book.)

Should you write or format your manuscript differently for an e-book?

Will publishing online change the way you get compensated for your work?

Bring your e-publishing and regular publishing questions and join us at our Sept. 11th meeting to hear the answers from our speaker, **Marcia Meier!**

Here at CWC-SFV we have an exciting list of speakers booked for the coming year, with an emphasis on the nuts-and-bolts information you need to improve your writing skills and market your work. Some of our members have said that they want to hear more practical tips from our speakers about what does and doesn’t work in the here and now. I think as you attend our next few meetings you’ll find that we are presenting programs with many tips for writing and publishing your work. In the business world they call that a “take-away.”

Future topics include: creating interesting and important minor characters; writing a biography and interviewing tips for nonfiction writers; and mystery writing.

In the coming months you may want to think about how you can become more active and involved with our branch. Okay, maybe you’ve already thought and you don’t have time. But if something drops off your plate, remember that we would welcome your participation—and please keep in mind that we need help with everything from setting up for meetings to sitting at the table in front to greet guests.

For the foodies out there—nope, no food trucks in sight. But we will have a sign-up sheet and may be asking you to take a turn in bringing refreshments, too, as this task will rotate from month to month. Give it a try! You will be reimbursed for what you bring and have much appreciation from our snack-time crowd.

Cozy (cont'd from pg. 2.)

bridge clubs, mah jong), pet ownership, or non-criminally related vocations provide perfect settings and themes. Devoted readers expect story solutions to be revealed in challenging recipes (included), needlecraft designs (included), or a playful puppy (not included). A cozy mystery novel theme may be found in the paranormal (ghosts, vampires, E.T.s).

How does an aspiring writer choose a theme? Write what you know and love. If it intrigues you, does it intrigue others? Choose what your ideal reader would truly love as a part of your story's journey. Is it any surprise cozy mysteries involve a protagonist's experience shared with a beloved pet?

Ms. Johnston blended one cozy mystery into the world of domesticated weasels. Although owning them is a crime in some states, the chirpy little darlings have quite a passionate following of folks who do read. What better theme for ferreting out crime?

Approached from a different analytical perspective, cozy mysteries are comfort reads bought for enjoyment (so justice always triumphs) leaving off-stage yucky sex or oral osculation (kissing). Grisly, bloody, Cormac McCarthy carnage is *verboden*. As an illustrative circumstance, Ms. Johnston cited a complaint letter from the father of a young girl decrying Kendra Ballantyne's use of epithets commonly heard on any elementary school playground. Yet, are these stories propelled by conflict? Certainly. Just keep crude language "off the page." Explicit sex happens "off the page."

Ms. Johnston generously shared with her audience tips for participating in writers groups such as the Romance Writers of America, www.killerhobbies.blogspot.com, Mystery Writers of America (local chapter meets at Tom Bergin's Irish Pub on Fairfax), and Sisters-In-Crime (meets at the South Pasadena library where even men can join as "Mister Sisters"). These organizations can facilitate meeting an agent.

When our speaker put on her lawyer hat, she knowledgeably advised about aspects of publisher relationships. Editors come with the territory and so does inevitable genteel arguing and polite explaining by a writer. Copy editor discussions can dissect issues of grammar. Humbly keeping in mind that in a living language, proper usage evolves, Ms. Johnston resigned her audience to the

fact editors have the final say.

With regard to contract negotiation, attorney Johnston stated certain clauses are utterly non-negotiable, while others can be put on the table. For example, publishers firmly require their writers to indemnify their company for any lawsuit arising from the misuse of actual persons' names. Sure, books print the standard disclaimer, "This novel is a work of fiction. Any references to ..." Publishers leave the writer to experience the joys of pre-trial law and motion and extortionate settlement negotiation all alone.

Thankfully, compensation is negotiable. Option clauses are negotiable. Most significantly, Ms. Johnston mentioned that at the negotiation table, a savvy agent who shelters a stable of similarly talented writers may, by weight of clientele alone, assure an author of better treatment in negotiable areas. Perhaps that is why some publishers are open to unrepresented writers.

During the question and answer session, Ms. Johnston graciously was open to provide services as a mentor inasmuch as she has previously taught at CSUN Extension, UCLA Writers courses and the Learning Annex. Chapter members were invited to contact her through her website, www.LindaOJohnston.com. Without a doubt, those members in attendance truly experienced a delightful, generous, and masterful speaker.

Ms. Johnston commented cozy mysteries are not the sole domain of women writers portraying the adventures of female protagonists. There could be gay cozy mysteries. The cozy mystery genre's great tent is as welcoming as that of the G.O.P. and just as Log Cabin Republicans have their place, a little person with an enormous magnifying glass could provide the late Hervé Villechaize his own cozy mystery series. There may be a readership hungry to hear him shout, "Da poisoned champagne! Da poisoned champagne!" □

DUES ARE, uh... well... DUE!

Primary membership for the year is only \$45.

Rewewal: \$45. New Members: \$65.

Secondary dues (those already in another Branch)
are only \$20!

Pay by October 1st, and avoid the late (initiation) fee!

TO MARKET, TO MARKET

by Ken Watts

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

Flash Fiction Prize open annually to any writer.

Deadline: November 30. Fee: \$5/entry (make checks payable to NLAPW, Nob Hill Branch). Prize: 1st Place: \$100, 2nd Place: \$50, 3rd Place: \$25 "Three flash fiction (short-fiction) stories per entry, under 500 words. Previously published material accepted. Indicate category on each story. Identify only with 3x5 card." Contact: Eileen Malone. Address: The Webhallow House, 1544 Sweetwood Dr., Broadmoor Village CA 94015-1717. E-mail: pennobhill@aol.com. Website: www.soulmakingcontest.us.

Jerry Jazz Musician New Short Fiction Award is awarded three times a year to a writer who submits the best original, previously unpublished work of approx. 3,000-5,000 words. The winner will be announced via a mailing of their Jerry Jazz newsletter. The work will be published on their home page and featured for at least 4 weeks. Publishers, artists, musicians, and interested readers are among the subscribers. Guidelines available online. Deadline: September, January, and May. Prize: \$100. Address: 2207 NE Broadway, Portland OR 97232. E-mail: jm@jerryjazzmusician.com. Website: www.jerryjazz.com.

Writer's Journal Annual Fiction Contest is open annually for previously unpublished fiction. Open to any writer. Guidelines for SASE or online. Writer's name must not appear on submission. A separate cover sheet must include name of contact, title, word count, and writer's name, address, phone, and e-mail (if available). Deadline: January 30. Charges \$15 reading fee. Results announced in July/August. Winners notified by mail. 1st Place: \$500; 2nd Place: \$200; 3rd Place: \$100; plus honorable mentions. Receives fewer than 350 entries. Address: Val-Tech Media, P.O. Box 394, Perham MN 56573 Phone: (218) 346-7921 Fax: (218) 346-7924. E-mail: writersjournal@writersjournal.com. Website: www.writersjournal.com. Contact: Leon Ogroske (editor@writersjournal.com). □

President (cont'd from pg.2)

Speaking of appreciation, I want to thank our fabulous Board — **Lenora Smalley** (VP-Membership), **Judy Presnall** (Treasurer), and **Ken Watts** (Secretary) — for their support during the summer transition. Another big thanks goes to **Ray Malus** (Valley Scribe editor and pre-session leader) not only for this newsletter but for being a resource on all things CWC-related.

I also want to welcome **Pirhiya Goldstein** as our new Hospitality Chair. Pirhiya will buy supplies, coordinate the signups for bringing refreshments, and see that our table settings look attractive.

Thanks also to **Ed Braun** for offering to help with publicity and **Liz Cooke** for volunteering to be hospitality person of the month for our September meeting.

Look for a report from me next month about what's happening at our fellow CWC branches in the southern region as I report to you from the Central Board. I'm off to Anaheim on Sept. 12th to represent our branch at a regional meeting. □

BOARD MEETINGS

Our SFV Branch holds its Board Meetings every month after the Speaker's Presentation.

Non-board members are not permitted to speak or participate, but are encouraged to audit and observe these meetings.

Something To Ponder

"Analysis kills spontaneity. The grain once ground into flour germinates no more."
— Henri Frederic Amiel

Where I Get Ideas for Articles and Profiles

by Jackie Houchin

I'm not a fiction writer, but I still get asked the question, "Where do you get your ideas?" Of course they mean, where do I find interesting people and events to write about, but that's okay, I know what they mean.

Editor Assignments. When I first started writing for a local newspaper, the editor sent me out on specific story assignments: a quadriplegic that'd lived twenty years on life support (that actually turned out to be his mom's story), a trailer-park scandal, and my recent three-part story on Women in the LAPD.

He also assigned profiles on local businesses, including several restaurant reviews (yum and yuck!), and a calendar of community events. Easy, right? Just go where I'm told. Yes, that's true, and I did get "spin-off" stories from those assignments.

Observation. Eventually I began to "see" stories everywhere. A man in front of me in a Starbucks line had a crossword puzzle on his T-shirt. We started talking and I learned he was a cruciverbalist. He and his business made a great story!

Driving from Costco one day I saw a man walking a giant tortoise. I slammed on the brakes and pulled to the curb, utterly fascinated. An interview and photo shoot later, I wrote, "Walking Newman." It made the *Los Angeles Daily News* – front page!

Browsing in the Flintridge Bookstore, I noticed their barista making a latte for a customer. He showed an unusual amount of pride as he handed over the cup. Turns out, he was a "latte artist." He allowed me to take notes (and photos) on each step of his creative process. There's still a faded copy of the newspaper story in a frame on their counter.

While pumping gas one afternoon, I noticed a small faded sign across the boulevard that read "Adventure in Postcards." I investigated and found the little shop crammed with antique and collectible postcards, categorized and labeled in shoeboxes. The reclusive (for health reasons) woman gave me a fascinating interview, photo, and resulting story.

Friends & Family Referrals. Friends are also great sources for story ideas. From their suggestions, I wrote a series on a local Toastmasters chapter, two articles on a Pet Detective, and one covering the "Escape from Alcatraz" swim competition. From the elderly neighbors of another friend, I got a tender love story and some wise observations on life.

Collectors & Hobbyists. "Crafty" people always make good subjects. I discovered a woman who sews blanket-coats for dogs and vintage (1920s) dresses for women. Another collects Santa Claus figures.

My hubby is a hot-rod enthusiast. His contacts netted me stories about car owners and clubs (one club donates to the City of Hope, another collects toys for needy kids at Christmas). A man stopped to admire our flashy-red Roadster in the driveway and began talking about the vintage airplanes he restores. I got some terrific photos and a story about his current plane ... and the two he's crashed. (I declined a ride!)

Unusual Occupations. I've written stories on a local alpaca rancher, a magician who teaches kids about books, a man who drives a cesspool pumper truck (Oh the things they find in those portable potties!). An inside tour of a lifeguard station — with a few true-life rescue-stories — made another fine story.

A family-owned art glass company promised to be an interesting business profile, but then I heard the grandfather tell how he'd earned his apprenticeship restoring the ancient glass in England's Canterbury Cathedral after WW II. (Still gives me shivers.)

My horseshoer and large animal vet were fodder for interesting equine stories. The photo I took of the farrier ended up in *Country Magazine*, the equine dentistry shots on the vet's website. (Note: it helps to be able to "shoot" your subjects.)

Event notices. Pay attention to neighborhood signs and banners announcing upcoming events or shows. I've written several stories about events at a local institution for the developmentally handicapped. The American Legion once hosted an official "flag-burning" ceremony. An elementary school drama club and a new horse trail dedication also got ink as well.

I peruse newspapers and group newsletters for upcoming events that sound fun or informative (art exhibits, author signings, workshops, expos). I wrote stories on Pet Scanners, Protecting Pets in Hot Weather, and another on an FBI agent's class on Identity Theft from messages I found on announcement boards.

Organizations. You can write about things your club or organization does. *Sisters in Crime* sets up many interesting author panels and workshops. My critique group's "field trips" (a class on hand-gun safety at a local firing range and a visit to the famous Greystone Manor for a reenactment of a murder) made fun stories.

These are only a few suggestions. Use your natural curiosity, your observation skills, your contacts, and various announcements/notices. Soon you will have more stories than you have time to write.

Next, query or submit them to your local newspapers, club newsletters, magazines, specific interest groups, or online news venues. Some will pay; some won't, but your work and your name are getting out there, and you are gathering clips. □

The Wright Word — by Ray

As I see it ...

Hi. Welcome back! I hope you've all had a wonderful summer.

I didn't get as much writing done as I'd planned (When do we ever?), because I was busy (finally) putting up my own website. But I did work up the courage to discuss a kind of complicated subject. Here goes:

We've all read discussions — and pondered on — *Narrator Point Of View* issues. First-person, Second-Person, Third-Person, Omniscient, Limited Omniscient, on and on.

I think we can agree that Third-Person Omniscient is probably the most common (this is the one we use when telling fairy tales to children). But is it that simple? Take a look at this:

The inside of the church was a welcome relief from the summer heat outside. He sat in solitude, smelling the sweet floral scent of incense. Along the walls, dimly illuminated by banks of votive candles, statues of Saints kept a protective vigil. The Nave, where he sat, was warmed by the glow of sunlight from the Rose Window behind the High Altar.

Now, look at this:

The inside of the church was abandoned — cold, dank. Statues of long-dead Saints, partly revealed by rows of timid candles, glowered like gargoyles in the gloom that lurked along the walls. Light from the Rose Window behind the High Altar only served to highlight the wisps of cloying incense smoke that hung in the air like the pall from a funeral pyre.

Obviously, these are both descriptions of the same place. Here are “the facts”:

The inside of the church was dim, cool and unoccupied. It was illuminated by the light from a window, and flickering candles. Statues stood against the wall. He could smell incense.

But the first two are very different in ‘color.’ Why did the writer choose one over the other? Why did he choose either?

Well, obviously, the narrator is portraying a mood, an *impression*. But wait! I thought the narrator was Third-Person Omniscient. Isn't he supposed to be objective

— “above the fray?” Whose mood is this? Whose impression? These are presented as objective “facts.”

The narrator has adopted the CHARACTER'S perceptions.

In the process, the writer has transformed this brief description of a location into an exposition on the inner state of his character. In addition, he has set the mood and expectations of what is to follow.

Objectively, the emptiness is neither “solitude” nor “abandonment.” It is simply the absence of other people. The temperature, the statues, the incense, the light, are only neutral things. It is the character's perception that colors them: The emptiness becomes “solitude” or “desertion.” The temperature is “a relief” vs. “dank.” The statues “protect” or “glower.” The incense is either “sweet” or “cloying.” The sunlight either “warms the room” or “highlights the ... pall from a funeral pyre.”

It is all “in the eye of the beholder.” And the beholder is not the narrator; it is the character!

Here's another example (Charles is Jessica Nelson's lover. Ronnie is the 7-year-old who lives next door.):

The first thing Charles saw as he entered the kitchen was Jess, standing over the stove.

as opposed to:

When Ronnie went in, Mrs. Nelson was standing over the stove.

The narrator has adopted the relationship of the characters. To Charles, she is “Jess”; to Ronnie, “Mrs. Nelson.” In doing this, the writer has instantly established their relationship: Charles and Jessica are intimate peers. Ronnie is a little boy who is respectful of his elders.

Not bad for a single sentence!

Granted, things can get complicated when multiple characters are interacting, and which character's perception to adopt is a matter of taste and skill. The reader can easily get confused by the narrator's jumping around too much. But, as an omniscient narrator, you are God, and “with much power comes much responsibility!”

Using this technique is one of the great joys of writing narrative fiction. It is often called *Impressionism* — although if you try to research it, you will no doubt end up confused and discouraged. The “experts” don't seem to agree on what to call it.

I call it a “damned fine idea!” —rjm=

J-Ray Explains It All

From time-to-time, guest columnist, J. Raymond Kent will expound on the world's larger issues.

The Fly In The Ointment

A friend recently sent me a small article, claiming that urinals in Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam, have the likeness of a housefly etched into the inside of their bowls. It seems that men instinctively “aim at” the fly, and this keeps things tidy.



Upon consideration, this makes a lot of sense, and explains a ton of human behavior. For example, “War.”

Obviously, man (the male of our species) is genetically engineered to be a hunter!

Now, the average man is not going to be satisfied with a target the size of a housefly for long. They’re hard to hit, and as trophies, they have very small pelts. Pretty soon, he’s gonna hanker for something a little easier to hit — bigger game. I know. A BULL MOOSE!

Now, a little experimentation will disclose that the average moose will not be felled by a simple stream of urine.

We need something more powerful.

So, man invented the “gun.”

But a gun alone is just a stick — albeit, a very finely engineered and machined one. He needs something to raise the stakes. Something LOUD. I know! “Gunpowder!”

Careful observation will soon reveal that the average moose quickly becomes inured to loud sticks. In fact, they tend to annoy moose. The solution to this is to invent a “projectile” of some sort that will damage a bull moose. Since we’re designing this “thingy” to attack bull mooses (‘Meese?, ‘moosei?’), we could call it a BULL “it.”

The inevitable success of this gun-gunpowder-bull-it combination will inexorably lead to a massive proliferation of all of them, which demands to be put into service. The natural answer is to shoot people (smaller than moose, but far more annoying). And so we devise “war.”

Of course, none of this explains women hunters — who are anatomically helpless against a housefly. We’ll explore this another time. □

*This valuable space
intentionally reserved for
YOUR contribution.*

Fill it, next month!

KUOOS KOLUMN

(If any member has good news to share: getting an agent, selling a book, script, essay, or even getting a personalized rejection letter, let us know! We are interested in everyone's successes.)

Judy Presnall is proud to announce that Marshall Cavendish Publishers have made her an offer for her picture book, **YUKON: SLED DOG**, to be published in Fall, 2012.

Norman Molesko's new book, **RETIRING AND SENIOR LIVING**, Experiencing the Second Half of Life ... is available from Amazon.com, Lulu.com and Barnes & Noble (ISBN 978-0-557-41811-4).

Ray Malus has a new website with poetry, stories, book excerpts, music, and film clips. Visit: www.raymalus.com.

It Could Be Verse

THE BOX

Lillian Rodich

Somewhere
in a dark corner
surrounded by the musty smell
of many months...
a box taped
with yellowing plastic
and covered with a gossamer web
of memories,
its frayed edges
like an old novel
dusted with neglect.

One day noticed,
one day visible
and pulled into the sunlight
away from the anonymity
of my garage's crowded corner.

I sit alone, not wanting
the reality of today an intrusion,
as my gloved hands push away the cobwebs
and, wiping across the years' debris,
rip the fragile cardboard
and open the box.

I barely notice the dust
floating around me...
my hands tremble
as the memories settle
around me and I wonder...
what was fragile
and enveloped in the scent of storage...
what was treasured and preserved
resting in a cloud of tissue?

Slowly I touch each object.
I hum an old tune,
IS THAT ALL THERE IS?
And wonder why
the lyrics come to mind
as I caress my treasures...

Reversal

Gil Roscoe

I thought the full moon
and Reggae night at
the Hollywood Bowl
would be a fine combination.
It was and I have
seldom swayed so smoothly.
I have also seldom
been in such a thick,
blue marijuana cloud.
What entertained me most,
was watching a teenage usher
run up and down the
amphitheater
as he tried to get his elders
to stop smoking pot.

Beneath a Jacaranda Tree

Edward Louis Braun

*When I look into your eyes
The why's of why I'm here
Disappear.*

*When you're not near
I can brighten my day
By closing my eyes
To make you appear.*

*My favorite scene
Is the two of us,
Hand in hand,
Heart to heart,
Happily in love,
Hugging each other
Beneath the splendid
Purple canopy
Of a Jacaranda tree,
And caressed
By its blossoms
Floating down
To bestow its grace
On you and me.*

A Mystical Presence*Edward Louis Braun*

*Though life and the universe
Will always be
An irresolvable mystery
I've known rare moments,
As in certain passages
Of inspired music
(Saint-Saens Organ Symphony,
Faure's Requiem,
Mahler's Tenth Symphony),
Where there is a sudden
Pervasive exhilaration
From experiencing
A momentary glimpse
Of exquisite, elusive beauty,
A tantalizing, fleeting moment
When a door opens
Into a world sublime,
And I can feel the expansive
Serene presence
Of peace, harmony and love
I've always longed for.*

The Long Dance*Ray Malus*

*He bounces in his crib on rubber legs.
And, apple-fisted, holds himself erect
suspended from the bars. He reels and stomps
his pudgy feet and gurgles with delight
at hurdy-gurdy strains that fill the air
with flashing music only he can hear.*

*He slouches like the cigarette that hangs
from sodden, sullen lips that droop beneath
his hooded eyes which cannot hide the fire
of throbbing drum and shrieking trumpets' blare
and fevered rhythms pounding to the pulse
of howling music only he can hear.*

*He glides with polished shoes and polished hair
and polished grace on polished marble floors,
with studied style and faux-seductive grace
and serpent's choreography that apes
the muted horns and satin saxophones
that croon the music only he can hear.*



More Verse

FRIENDSHIP*Helen S. Katzman*

*Warm and nurturing
Friendships
They're with you
During illness
And grief
They're with you during times of joy
Birth of children
Grandchildren
Great-grand children
Speaking on the phone
Sharing the day's activities
Listening, listening
For a change of tone
A change of voice
A quiver
What can be done to ease the pain?
I know, let's go to a play
A movie
A joyous concert
Or let's just be together
Sharing memories
Sipping hot coffee
With a bouquet of flowers
On the table
Returning a sparkle of life
Into your eyes —*

*He bows in studied elegance, and treads
with courtly measured mien and stately step,
to arid harpsichord and string quartet
with poms and manners in a minuet
that shimmers with the crystal tinkle of
the stately music only he can hear.*

*His hands, like talons, claw the window bars.
He stares out at the world with milky eyes
that faintly see the vivid hues of youth.
He, toothless, grins in drooling fool's delight,
and gibbers to the karaoke strains
of vanished music only he can hear.*

HAIL, HAIL!

ELECTIONS

Elections were held at our June meeting. These Officers will serve for two years.
Elected by acclamation were:

President, Stephanie Sharf
VP-Membership, Lenora Smalley
Treasurer, Judy Presnall
Secretary, Ken Watts

The membership thanks the retiring Board members: Ethel Ann Pemberton, President; Glenn Wood, Exec. V. P.; Judy Presnall, Treasurer (continuing); Cara Alson, Secretary, and welcomes the new Officers.

Here's to an exciting year!

The gang's all here!



(L. to R.) Ray Malus, Stephanie Sharf, Judy Presnall, Glenn Wood, Ethel Ann Pemberton, Cara Alson, Ken Watts, Lenora Smalley. (Photo by Nance Crawford)

Out With The Old



In With The New



Our new officers: Ken Watts, Secretary; Judy Presnall, Treasurer; Stephanie Sharf, President; Lenora Smalley, VP-Membership;

Photos: Nance Crawford

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ABOUT THIS ISSUE:

Welcome back!

Hope you had a wonderful vacation — but 'Here we go again!'

Most of your favorite contributors are back — along with some new ones.

Our poets have had an active summer. There's good news in the Kudos Kolumn. Great speakers lined up! Valuable information in the articles and columns!

Come to think of it, it's pretty-much 'business as usual.' Enjoy!

— Ray



KUDOS KOLUMNIST WANTED!

We are searching for someone to write our monthly Kudos Kolumn.

It's not hard. Simply compile all our Branch's good new for the month into one place!

*If you like spreading Good News — PLUS being the first to hear it,
this is the job you've been waiting for!*

Just contact Stephanie or Ray.

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.

A Big Thank You

To **Duke Howard** for helping with the June set-up.

To **Pirhiya Goldstein** for all her help with Hospitality and refreshments, and welcome as the new Hospitality Chair.

THANK YOU

Earn a Thank You — Volunteer!

Give a Thank You!

Tell us about someone who's helped!

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.)

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY BRANCH

The San Fernando Valley Branch is one of eighteen branches throughout California, organized and operating under the auspices of The California Writers Club. We are a non-profit professional organization whose goal is to provide a friendly and inclusive environment for members to meet and network; to provide professional speakers who will aid in writing, publishing, and marketing members' endeavors; and other writing-related opportunities that will further members writing enjoyment and careers.

Out And About

***With great regret,
SouthBayWriters reports that the
East of Eden Writers Conference***

September 24 to 26, 2010

Has been cancelled.

Anyone who has made a deposit or paid their full conference fees will be given a 100 percent refund.

PUBLISHING OPPORTUNITY

Bright Light Multimedia is calling for the submission of short stories – 100 words to 3,000 words - on the theme of uplifting, positive, romantic love between 2 people, for possible inclusion on our writer-showcase website, The Bright Light Café, and, more urgently, for possible publication in our anthology of Bright Light Café stories and poems, currently in development and scheduled for release later this year.

Guidelines and online submission form are available at

www.brightlightmultimedia.com/SubGuide.htm

● The Bulletin Board ●

**MEETINGS ...
ARE HELD AT 12:30 P.M.
ON THE 3RD SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH
(September — June)
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: Bernard Selling — Creating Interesting And Important
Minor Characters
November: Beverly Gray — Biography

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, VP-Membership, at the meeting entrance or e-mail membership@cw-csfy.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 cwc-sfy@roadrunner.com

Please type "SUBMISSION" 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.

- 500 words or less
- 800 words or less
- Limited to 40 lines

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 e-mail address or a phone number. Writings will not be returned and may be included in future issues.

UPCOMING MEMBER SHOW-CASES

October 16, 2010 — Peter Brothers
December 18, 2010 — Erica Stux

The Fine Print

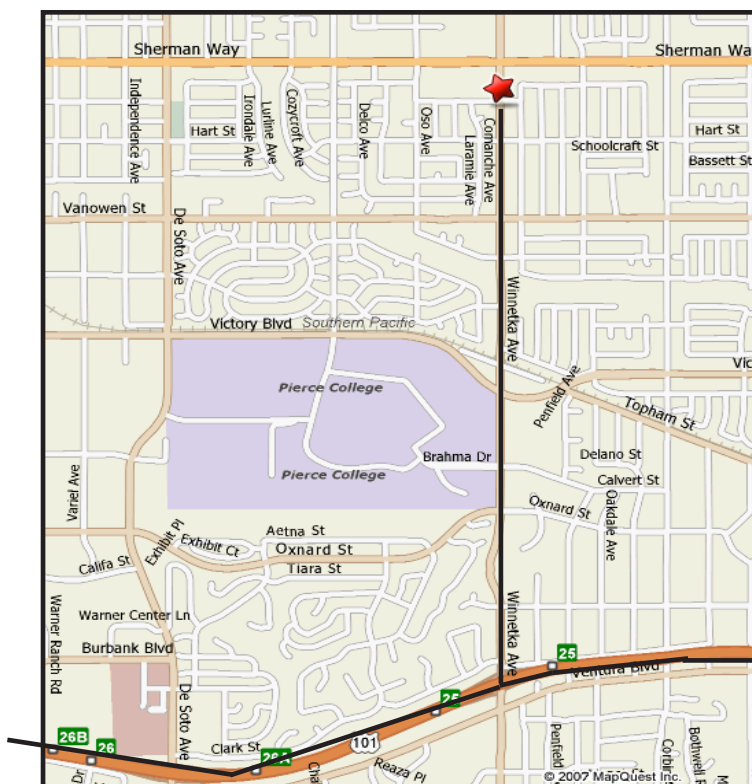
ST. MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS **7136 WINNETKA AVE** **CANOGA PARK, CA 91306**

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](#)

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California Writers Club San Fernando Valley Branch

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