



The Newsletter Of The San Fernando Valley Branch

# The Valley Scribe

Vol. 3

October, 2010

No. 2

**Next Meeting October 16, 12:30!**



**October  
Featured Speaker:**  
**Bernard Selling —**  
*Creating Interesting  
And Important Minor  
Characters*

“What would your life be like if you could see deeper of layers of meaning: if you could see your best character qualities which may be

hidden from view; if you could uncover creative abilities which lie within; if you became more aware of your place in the world by seeing it with ‘new’ eyes.”

Musician, photographer, writer, director, producer and writing teacher, Bernard Selling holds graduate degrees in English literature from the University of Michigan and theatre arts/cinema from UCLA. He has written, produced and directed award winning documentary and short fiction films based on stories by major American authors.

He created the autobiographical writing program for the adult division of the Los Angeles Unified School District and has taught at the USAF Academy, Loyola Marymount University, University of California at Santa Cruz, UC Riverside and UC Irvine. He gives lectures and writing workshops throughout Europe and the United States and lives in Topanga Canyon, California. □

*(As part of his presentation, Mr. Selling will use the story. “I’ll Fly Away,” included on page 4.)*

**12:30 Sharp!**  
**MEMBER SHOWCASE**

*Peter H. Brothers*

**Peter will be talking about**  
*Mushroom Clouds and Mushroom Men*  
**his new book about the life and work of**  
**Ishiro Honda,**  
**Director of ‘Godzilla,’ and countless other Japanese Monster Movies.**

## In this Issue

Feature

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## September Meeting-in-Review:

Marcia Meier — PUBLISHING

by Stephanie Sharf

**Marcia Meier**, the former director of the Santa Barbara Writers Conference, was the speaker at our September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting when we kicked off our new season. What a blastoff! Marcia let us in on what is happening now in the publishing world in keeping with the theme of her book, *Navigating the Rough Waters of Today's Publishing World: Critical Advice for Writers from Industry Insiders*.

Her message for us was: The publishing world has been turned upside down in the past few years, and what was down is up, so to speak. That means, for example, that your chances of getting a major publisher to look at your novel without having an agent submit it for you are about the same as getting hit by a lightning bolt on the way home from a CWC-SFV meeting and perhaps slightly worse as we do get the occasional thunderstorm here in the Valley.

She outlined four major trends in publishing: technology-driven change (and the opportunities for self-promotion it presents); the decline of big publishing houses (the New York "big six"); the rise of smaller presses and advantages of working with them; and self-publishing. Marcia asked us to think of ourselves as "content providers" who are marketing a product that can be broken up into chunks and be sold across many platforms, such as print, dvd, film, audio, and interactive games.

A lively question-and-answer session followed. Among the topics: how to find an agent and submit your work; the process of self-publishing and the costs; what should be in a synopsis; the breakpoint for getting a publisher to notice your self-published book (selling 10,000 copies); and the mostly unknown means for getting your book into bookstores.

If you didn't get to the meeting, then I encourage you to order Marcia's book and check out her website, [www.marciameier.com](http://www.marciameier.com). Each offers many resources and tips for you to get going with your writing this year. □

## PRESIDENT'S

Stephanie Sharf

CORNER

**Is there intelligent life out there in the universe?** A recent paper by a scientist at the University of East Anglia suggests that the probability of life out there is low, given the time it has taken for humans to evolve on Earth and the remaining life span of our aging planet. In other words, the existence of human life on this planet is probably an extremely rare and incredible event.

Not to be discouraged, last month I started researching a related question: **Is there intelligent life out there in the CWC universe?** Scientist Stephanie is here to say yes, and I can prove it! I attended the CWC Southern region meeting in Anaheim on Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> where I encountered a delightful bunch of life forms from such diverse planets as the CWC branches in the High Desert, Inland Empire, Orange County, and Long Beach, among others.

These human-like beings engaged in all manner of lively conversation on such diverse topics as possible revisions to membership requirements and other changes to the California Writers Club Policy and Procedures. Your investigator will be on the scene to ferret out more details in Nov. at our next regional meeting. Some good news on the journey—I didn't need the space nutrition bar I brought as the planetary hosts brought yummy sustenance native to their region.

Back home on planet CWC-SFV, I noticed that our indefatigable Hospitality Chair **Pirhiya Goldstein** has filled her sign up sheet for the hospitality person of the month. Thanks from me to all of you who stepped up to the plate on this. Now we're all looking forward to the treats that **Doug Douglas** selects to bring to our Oct. 16<sup>th</sup> meeting (no slipping in ghostly grimy gummy bears for Halloween, Doug).

**Speaking of our October meeting, did you get out your short-shorts yet?** We want you to enter our writing contest (details on page 10) and bring your best short-short fiction, poems, or brief prose pieces so that we can all be scared witless when the winning entry is read.

Until next time, rest assured we are still buzzing



## 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!)

**Hardboiled** is 100% freelance written. A semi-annual covering crime/mystery fiction and nonfiction. Considering hard-hitting crime fiction and private-eye stories. Wants to see more non-private-eye hardboiled stories. Bylines given. Pays on publication. Offers 100% kill fee. Buys one-time rights; buys first North American serial rights. Publishes ms. an average of 18 months after acceptance. Accepts simultaneous submissions. Nonfiction: Needs book excerpts, essays, exposes. Buys 4-6 mss./year. Query. Length: 500-3,000 words. Fiction: Needs mystery, private-eye, police procedural, *Noir*, hardboiled crime, all on the cutting edge. Requests no pastiches or violence for the sake of violence. Buys 40 mss./year. Query or send complete ms. Length: 500-3,000 words. Pays \$5-\$500. Contact: Gary Lovisi, editor. Address: Gryphon Publications, P O Box 209, Brooklyn, NY 11228. Website: [www.gryphonbooks.com](http://www.gryphonbooks.com).

**Nickelodeon Writing Fellowship** is offered annually for unpublished scripts. Deadline: February 28, 2011. No fee charge. Prize: The Fellowship provides a salaried position for up to one year and offers hands-on experience in writing spec scripts and pitching story ideas in both live action and animation. This is a great opportunity. Go for it! See more info and guidelines online at their website. Submissions that do not adhere to their guidelines will not be considered. Contact: Karen Kirkland, Contest/Award Director. Address: Nickelodeon, 231 W. Olive Ave., Burbank, CA 91502 Phone: (818) 736-3663 E-mail: [info.writing@nick.com](mailto:info.writing@nick.com). Website: [www.nickwriting.com](http://www.nickwriting.com).

**New Writer's Magazine** is 95% freelance written. Address: Sarasota Bay Publishing, P O Box 5976, Sarasota, FL 34277-5976. E-mail: [newwriters@aol.com](mailto:newwriters@aol.com). Byline given. Pays on publication. No kill fee. Buys first rights. Accepts queries by mail. Guidelines for #10 SASE. They are looking for nonfiction, fiction, photos, poetry and fillers. All of these categories should have a tie-in with the writing life or writers in general.

**Wergle Flomp Humor Poetry Contest** is an annual contest seeking today's best humor poems. 1<sup>st</sup>

Prize: \$1,000, 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize: \$800, 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize: \$400, plus 12 Honorable Mentions of \$75 each. All winners will receive online publication at WinningWriters.com. Previously published work is OK. Considers simultaneous submissions. Submit one humorous poem of any length, in any form. See the website for examples. Entries accepted only through website, no entries through regular mail. Guidelines on website. Please, follow closely. No entry fee. Deadline: August 15 – April 1. Receives 750 entries/year. Winners announced August 15 on WinningWriters.com and in free e-mail newsletter. Address: Winning Writers, 351 Pleasant St., PMB 222, Northampton, MA 01060-3961. Phone: (866) 946-9748 Fax: (413) 280-0539. E-mail: [adam@winningwriters.com](mailto:adam@winningwriters.com). Website: [www.winningwriters.com](http://www.winningwriters.com). Contact: Adam Cohen, Award Director.

**There are writing opportunities** on the Internet. Here are a couple of them. Each covers many subjects. Good luck! (1) [www.suite101.com](http://www.suite101.com). (2) [www.online-writing-jobs.com](http://www.online-writing-jobs.com). □

### 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

When we are listened to, it creates us, makes us unfold and expand. Ideas actually begin to grow within us and come to life.

— Brenda Ueland

**I'LL FLY AWAY****By: Dale Crum***(This story will be part of Bernard Selling's presentation, on October 16<sup>th</sup>.)*

Five letters for the "Fatal Attraction" crossword puzzle clue stump me at LAX. I glance up. A pretty young twenty-ish woman sits down beside me in the United Airlines Terminal. Her short skirt leaves little to my imagination. Whew! Why wasn't I born in her time, instead of many years ago? Other young women mill about in front of me.

A man about her same age plops down between us. The carpet, ceiling, even the air turns green with my envy. Youth, the best time in life wasted on the young, someone said.

I notice that "Close" or "Glenn" for Glenn Close, the star in the 1987 movie, "Fatal Attraction" doesn't fit in the crossword space.

Bertie, my wife, touches my shoulder. "Scoot down. Would you believe that the gift shop charged me seventy five cents for a small bag of M & M's?"

I shrug. "M & M's used to give me energy when they cost only twenty five cents. This old codger doesn't need all that sugar. Let me feed them to you one at a time. Make them last 'til we get to Phoenix."

She twists in her seat. "What did you say? Old? You? Not old here in 1990."

"You tell me. I look around here and feel real old."

She frowns. "You look at your wife and feel old? What a thing to say."

"No, I mean yes. We've taken lots of flights together."

She sings, "Come fly with me, Come fly with me..."

I give her a big hug. "Did you read Erica Jong's book?"

She squeezes me back. "That book you brought home from Seattle? Oh, I remember the main character's name, 'Isadora.'"

I continue, "She wanted everyone to wear zipperless, buttonless robes for easy sex anywhere, anytime."

The two lovebirds leave. Bertie scoots away. Her lips form the name, "Isadora."

"Yes, I had an Aunt named 'Isadora.'"

Words flow from my cupped hands. "I think, 'Fear of Flying' meant fear of sex to her. Yet, she acted like a nympho."

Our conversation makes me think ahead to my mother-in-law's small two bedroom house in Prescott. I hum Glen Campbell's "By the Time I get to Phoenix."

Bertie interrupts, "Your mind's an open book. My Mom can hear everything you start in her little house. You will stay quiet there for a week."

A lousy inhibiting thing for her to say. Many times she's told me,

"I'm ready anytime. Just show me you want me."

What a fantastic wise woman! I won't, I won't, I...A voice rumbles in my belly,

*You think about it all the time. Why not? Not much of a man, now. Huh, huh?*

I stand up and stretch. My ego responds,  
*Don't put yourself down. Nobody turns sex on at the snap of fingers. Not at your age.*

Young people laugh and hug each other in front of me. My super-ego makes my eyes squint.

*Yes, you can at the right moment.*

A young woman gives her male friend a bite of her apple.

Bertie giggles, "Should have bought some fruit. Shared with you instead of the M & M's which you won't eat."

My mind wanders back and forth on the airplane. Times were great in the late fifties, sixties. No, the seventies felt better because we didn't have to worry about her getting pregnant. One thing stands out, even now. My mind never grows tired of Bertie. My body just feels a little pooped sometimes.

Doctor Sigmund Freud's ID speaks to me. *Hold your ego in check for a week in Prescott. Then fly high.*

Mother-in-law, Lily's little cracker box seems to expand in and out when we breathe. The thin walls don't stop any sounds. "Squeak" goes the bed when I sit on it. Any thoughts of dalliance between these sheets vanish. I move back to the living room.

Bertie and Lily's voices drone back and forth. Lily comes on as a forceful woman. Why did Rufus, her late husband put up with her? She was right most of the time from what I hear. That and who knows what else? Bertie holds her own with her mother. I see lots of Lily in Bertie. My eyes wander to an embroidered inscription hanging on the wall, *Don't Blame Eve.*

Lily takes off her glasses. "Kids, my eyelids feel heavy. See you at breakfast in the morning."

The mattress feels nice and firm even though it squeaks a little. Just as I feel myself floating away a sweet voice whispers,

"Honey, Mom removes her hearing aids at night."

In an instant my body tingles from head to toe just like old times. Without another word we roll onto the soft hooked rug, oblivious to any sounds we make.

Afterwards I chuckle, "Did the thought of your Mom in the next room give you an extra thrill, too?"

I feel her nod against my shoulder.

For some strange reason the unfinished crossword puzzle and the inscription on the wall pop into my mind. So does the girl giving her friend a bite from her apple. Hmmm, five letters... "Apple," does that fit for "Fatal Attraction?"

No, but wait. The Bible doesn't say that Eve gave Adam an apple. She offered him fruit. Aha, I visualize the puzzle again. "Fruit" does fit. What a far back and



***STRANGE SPLENDOR***  
***(Why Honda is My Hero)***  
 By Peter H. Brothers

There is a moment in *King Kong Escapes* (1967) where the mighty ape finds himself standing in the middle of Tokyo (his second time around, as a matter-of-fact) when he hears a noise and looks up to see two Chinook tandem-rotor helicopters flying overhead with their navigational lights blinking. The scene lasts for only a second or two and is inconsequential to the plot, yet it perfectly encapsulates all that one finds wonderful about the Japanese monster movie genre: their diversionary exuberance, their preposterous believability, their sheer poetic beauty and a heartfelt human drama directed by Honda which was the essential ingredient — the guts of the fairy-tale — for any of these films to become truly unforgettable.

Honda was born in Yamagata, a small village north of Tokyo, and when he was six years old moved with his parents to the Big City where his father would work as a Buddhist priest. As the Fates would have it, it was during a “movie night” at Takaido Elementary School that Honda was exposed to his first cinematic screening. For the other children it was mere entertainment, but for Honda it was a night that would change his life forever.

Honda’s career covered nearly the entire spectrum of filmmaking. Not only had he learned screen writing, editing and camera-work during his tenure at Toho Studios, he also directed films of various types: documentaries, promotional films, films about man’s conflict with nature and with his fellow man, social dramas and even “Salaryman” comedies. But it was not until 1954 when he reluctantly accepted an assignment turned down by another director that his life and career took a profound turn in another direction. The film was about a monster, and the monster and the movie were called, “Godzilla.”

A mere 20 years later — when Honda’s career as a director of full-length feature films came to an end with *Terror of MechaGodzilla* (1974) — he still had nearly 30 years left of life to ponder where his career might have gone had not *Godzilla* come along. Would he be remembered as a director of conventional movies or be remembered at all?

For Honda, the thrill of filmmaking never left, reflected in moments such as Kong’s wonderment seeing those two helicopters soaring in the sky

*‘President’ continued from page 2.*

along here in our own little corner of the biosphere with upcoming speakers on Creating Interesting and Important Minor Characters (Oct. - Bernard Selling); the Ins and Outs of Biography (Nov.- Beverly Gray); and Book Publicity on a Budget (Dec. - Paula Margulies). It’s enough to make you board your own personal “space shuttle” to a meeting, I’m sure! See you there. □

*‘Away’ continued from page 4.*

far out clue for “Fatal Attraction.”

I would like to re-write the Bible with Bertie in mind. The five letter “Peach” fits her better. Sure and I would include, “Don’t Blame Eve.” □

*‘Strange Splendor’ (cont’d.)*

above him: the curiosity of what had just happened and what was going to happen next — in a world populated by monsters innocent of their origins and destructive in their designs — was a titillation Honda found irresistible and one he couldn’t wait to demonstrate. For to Honda, filmmaking was a magic canvas upon which to paint a mosaic of fantastic events made somehow believable, and the earnest integrity by which he made his movies was the defining factor as to why they are still so fascinating to watch today. Yes, you could say that Honda is my hero. His fantasy films are filled with scenes which stay in one’s mind forever: the plummeting into the bubbling pit of Chika and the *Abominable Snowman* (1955), the deadly embrace of *Fujichiyo* and *The Human Vapor* (1960) and the ghastly approach of *Gorath* (1962) have a strange splendor all their own.

Unfairly derided by those with preset prejudices unwilling to accept them on their face value and raised only on their horrible American mutilations, those seeing the fantasy films of Ishiro Honda for the first time in their original versions with an open mind are always pleasantly surprised to discover that they were made not by a hack, but by a craftsman of the highest order who loved movies as he loved moments of life itself: such as during that mystical twilight-time when a dark curtain rings down upon the day with the promise of a new nighttime act where the next thrill is just around the corner. □

(Peter H. Brothers is the author of the new book *Mushroom Clouds and Mushroom Men – The Fantastic Cinema of Ishiro Honda*, available at [AuthorHouse.com](http://AuthorHouse.com), the worldwide web and as an E-book).

## The Wright Word — by Ray

### Status Quo

It has come to my attention that there is currently a discussion within the Central Board concerning Member Status: “Active” vs. “Associate.” I would like to add my opinion, for what it’s worth.

Currently, the status is defined in terms of “published” vs. “non-published.” It often seems to be viewed by members as a hierarchy, with “Active” somehow superior to “Associate.” I have heard that there are two major questions:

1. Should there be different statuses?
2. If so, how should they be differentiated?

Judgments such as this are difficult.

Competence is not an issue. Membership in CWC, in itself, implies a level of skill in using the written word sufficient for accomplishing the member’s goals. This is a requirement for joining.

Commercial success is really not a valid criterion. Market tastes swing wildly, and generally — by definition — lag behind talent and innovation.

History has shown us that “medium” is immaterial. There was a time, when “pulp” publications were not deemed as “publishing.” I’m sure there was a time when those who wrote on parchment were considered *dilettantes* — leaving the status of *journeyman* to those who carved in stone. The same is now true for “House Publishing” vs. electronic — in all its forms. The medium is secondary.

I believe it is the intent — the targeted audience — which is important.

In my experience with the membership, I seem to see two major foci. There are members who seek mainly to express themselves to friends and acquaintances. Their primary goals seems to be illumination of their personal experience and a certain indelibility. I applaud that.

Then, there are members who seem to be seeking illumination of the more general human experience. The fact that they may do this in terms of personal experience is incidental. Their target audience is humanity in general. I think this is the essence of “art,” and of the concept of “Publishing.”

There is also a large group for whom ‘personal esthetics’ is secondary to ‘personal competence’:

ghostwriters, copywriters, editors, *et. al*, who simply sell their skills to others.

I try to put myself into the minds of our founders, to imagine why they made this distinction.

It would seem that at that time, the *general* level of writing skill would surpass most of our present-day skilled writers. Yet the concerns of the self-focused writer would always be different from those of the public-oriented writer. I imagine the distinction was important to members at that time. It still is. The fact that any artist or craftsman is willing to subject him (or her) -self to the judgment of anonymous strangers makes his position different from one that who is writing for friends and family.

And money changes the rules. As one who has recently been accepting writing ‘commissions,’ I can attest to the fact that ‘commercial’ writing is always an artistic compromise. Indeed, the professional lore of writing is rife with stories of commercially successful writers who dream of being able to “write for themselves.” There is a huge difference between “*selling* to the market,” and “*writing* to the market.”

I don’t believe that there is anything intrinsically ‘better’ about either position. The “public” writer may well think of the “private” writer as “narcissistic.” While the “private” writer may think of the “public” writer as “crass” or “commercial.” And neither category implies skill or insight, *per se*. It is simply a matter of “focus.” (To illuminate this, I point your attention to some of the execrable “commercial” successes we have seen “published.” Then I offer Anne Frank, who would have been mortified to find her diary distributed. I don’t believe we would call her an “Active” member — in the spirit which I’m espousing.)

Certainly, there are differences in “why we write.” Whether these should be delineated by an overt “status” is the question. If it didn’t imply some sort of hierarchy, I can see no reason why a member would not want his/her focus known.

Perhaps the names should be changed, but I can’t think of better ones.

Fortunately for me, it’s not my decision.==rm==



## ***J-Ray Explains It All***

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

### ***Cellulite***

Every so often, a new concept enters our consciousness and obsesses us. It just seems to appear, like a huge zit the night before the Prom. Yesterday, it wasn't there. Today, no one can avoid staring at it.

Several decades ago, the term, *cellulite* suddenly appeared. (We were originally admonished that it was pronounced 'SELL-u-leete,' but saner heads seem to have prevailed, and one now commonly hears 'SELL-u-light.') This is a 'medical' term for the lumpy fat deposits that appear on our thighs and buttocks. Apparently, it is a huge concern — a medical pandemic on the order of the Spanish Influenza!

I must confess that a dimple here and there on a backside doesn't appall me. But the origins of this plague do concern me. Where did it come from? How did it develop? Is it the remnant of some Cold War biochemical scourge? Some research gone suddenly rogue — like Africanized Bees? Will there be a Telethon? AM I, PERSONALLY, IN DANGER?!

I have done my research, and I find this interesting:

In the early 1970s, a new boon to mankind was introduced: *Teflon*. This magical stuff provided a cooking surface that nothing would stick to. (The resulting decline in scouring-pad sales may be the single most important factor in the demise of the American Steel Industry.) Millions of non-stick pots and pans have been sold. The only 'weevil-in-the-flour' is the fact that, eventually, the surface wears off. But the utensil can easily be replaced.

My question is, "Where does the Teflon go?" (Many of you are now way ahead of me. You may need to stop reading to go into the other room and expel your gorge.) My belief is that the Teflon flakes off, mixes with our food, and is ingested. It then enters the blood stream, where it happily migrates to our thighs and derrieres. There, it accumulates as (wait for it) cellulite!

Shocking? Unbelievable?

Well, visit any cocktail lounge! Notice the disproportionate number of people slipping and falling off their stools! Coincidence? I think not! Non-stick posteriors!

Ever have a dinner napkin slide off your lap? Teflon!

Underwear ride up and bunch?

I think you're getting the picture.

Unfortunately, experiments have shown the one thing cellulite WILL stick to is a naugahyde sofa. (For this reason, prudence dictates people with excessive cellulite eschew "short shorts.")

But I can personally attest to the fact that it works really well on water slides.

Next time: A sure-fire way to get the kids out of the pool — using only an unwrapped Baby Ruth candy bar. Don't miss it! □

### **KUDOS COLUMN**

*(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.)*

**Betty Hectman's new book**

***You Better Knot Die***

**comes out November 2.**

**It is the fifth book in her Berkley Prime**

**Crime crochet mystery series**

**and her first hardcover release.**

**Ray Malus**

**has been named**

**California Senior Poet Laureate, 2010.**

**Four of his poems have been accepted by**

**The Bright Light Cafe.**

### **A thank you note from Marcia Meier**

***Dear CWC-SFV members,***

***Thanks so much for inviting me to join you for your first meeting of the year. I enjoyed it immensely, and hope I was helpful in sorting through the changes happening in publishing today. Please visit my website at [www.marciameier.com](http://www.marciameier.com) for more information about my writing and teaching projects. You can also sign up there to receive my monthly electronic newsletter on all things related to books, writing and publishing.***

***Again, thank you!***

***— Marcia***

## It Could Be Verse

*October*  
*Lillian Rodich*

*solitude*  
*motionless*  
*and alive*  
*with barely perceptible pulse*  
*wind chimes*  
*in the distance*

*dried leaves*  
*leaving lonely branches*  
*and a flutter of sound*  
*muted in frosted dawns*

*loneliness*  
*without regret*  
*within a gray frame ...*  
*crystal reflections*

*memories*  
*awakened within*  
*energy*  
*diffused from dreams*

*October evening*  
*canopy of stars*  
*cool and velvet night*  
*embroidered with music*  
*wind chimes*  
*in the distance*

*The Dance of Life*  
*Edward Louis Braun*

*Enjoy the comedy of life,*  
*The cocky, poignant, sweet,*  
*Complete sheer nonsense,*  
*The delirium, the serum*  
*Of life and love that fills you*  
*With longing for it, though*  
*At times despising it,*  
*Laughing at it, crying for*  
*Yourself, children, lovers*  
*The ill, old and dying.*

*To counter the cold emptiness*  
*You and I sometimes feel*  
*The world offers endless joys*  
*That can warm our hearts:*

*Children racing a kite in flight,*  
*An infant's bright smile,*  
*A lark's sweet song,*  
*A hummingbird hovering,*  
*Barely covering a blossom,*  
*The startled look of an opossum,*  
*The comedy of a chimpanzee.*

*The marvelous exhilaration*  
*From the perfumed trace*  
*Of a lovely graceful*  
*Woman walking by.*

*There's jazzy dancing*  
*And happy romancing,*  
*The intoxicating, captivating*  
*Girl and boy of life.*

*And though I'll never solve*  
*The unanswerable riddle*  
*Of the beginning or end,*  
*In the middle I can send*  
*A song into the sky.*



## More Verse

### MOONSTRUCK

Lillian Rodich

*The moon is a shiny new penny  
tossed on the sky's black oilcloth.  
I would pluck it, twirl it  
and make its magic mine....  
a glowing reminder  
safe in my pocket....  
but how sad the night sky  
without its lucky charm!*

### Autumn Is Ray Malus

*Autumn is the rekindled smoke of too-long-dormant hearths.  
The thrilling shiver of the year's first frost.  
The shrouded velvet dusk of hasty sunsets,  
and golden cider warmed and spiced with cloves.*

*Autumn is the waxy scent of freshly-opened crayons.  
The gleam of newly polished schoolroom floors.  
The smell of pristine notebooks, filled with promise.  
The must of textbooks, rife with unlearned lore.*

*Autumn is a tinkling harpsichord in muted, doily-ed parlors.  
The gleam of lemoned furniture in wanly sunlit dens.  
The camphor sting of cedar-chest-sequestered woolen blankets.  
The medicinal miasma of Vicks Vaporub.*

*Autumn is the caramel rainbow of a forward pass  
etched into an ice-blue sky, one Sunday afternoon,  
pomegranates, pumpkin pies and bowls of salted nuts,  
and dark arrays of sweet-sticky pitted dates.*

*Autumn is a meditation on eternity,  
A celebration of dearly purchased wisdom.  
It is the grace before the evening family meal,  
the quiet prayer before a Winter's sleep.*

### Children's Eyes Edward Louis Braun

*When I look in the eyes  
Of children at play  
I happily recall  
The days of fun  
When I was a child,  
Days long past  
Of summer suns  
And breathless runs  
Through meadow grass.*

*How I wondered about  
And took delight  
In so many things  
That gave my spirit wings:  
Flowers and trees  
Birds, butterflies, bees,  
Lightning storms and rain,  
Rainbows in the sky,  
Maple leaves rustling  
In the evening breeze,  
The star embellished sky  
That came with night  
After a long day  
Exciting and bright.*

*Whenever I see children  
Of early years,  
Their honest, bright smiles,  
The beautiful clarity of  
Their inquiring eyes,  
I think of all the happy,  
Laughing, smiling  
And fresh faces  
Since time began  
That graced our world  
With beauty, fun  
Happy, appealing innocence,  
Leaving their memory  
In our hearts and minds,  
And I am wrought  
With joy and sadness.*

## 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.*

### **SPOOKY SHORTS CONTEST**

*(Not what you think. Murrrrraahhhhh!)*

**Bring your scariest short work to the October meeting!**

**Poem, short-short story or nonfiction.**

**One page double spaced on plain white paper.**

**Maximum 250 words.**

**Must have a title.**

**No identifying author information.**

**One entry per person.**

**Theme: "Spooky and scary."**

**Entries will be judged on: Scarieness, Quality of Writing, Originality.**

## **Out And About**

### **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](http://www.brightlightmultimedia.com/SubGuide.htm)



## ***Worth Repeating***

*Occasionally, with permission, we will re-print items from other Branch Newsletters.*

### **TALKING TURKEY**

*by Kathy Highcove (InFocus, the Newsletter of The West Valley Branch)*

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

*This valuable space  
intentionally reserved for YOUR contribution.*

*Fill it, next month!*

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ABOUT THIS ISSUE:

I guess you might call this our 'Activities Issue.'  
Lots of stuff for you to check out. Must do: Read the story, "I'll Fly Away," (page 4); write an entry for the "Spooky Shorts" contest (page 10); and, of course, enjoy our regular columnists and poets.  
Many thanks to all our contributors. You make it happen!

— 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 **Doug Douglas and Gil Roscoe** for helping with the September set-up.

And to **Liz Cooke** for the goodies.

Much appreciated, guys!

### 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.)



## ● The Bulletin Board ●

**MEETINGS ...  
ARE HELD AT 12:30 P.M.  
ON THE 3<sup>RD</sup> 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**  
November: Beverly Gray — Biography  
December: Paula Margulies — Book Publicity on a Budget**

### 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@cwc-sfy.org](mailto:membership@cwc-sfy.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](mailto: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

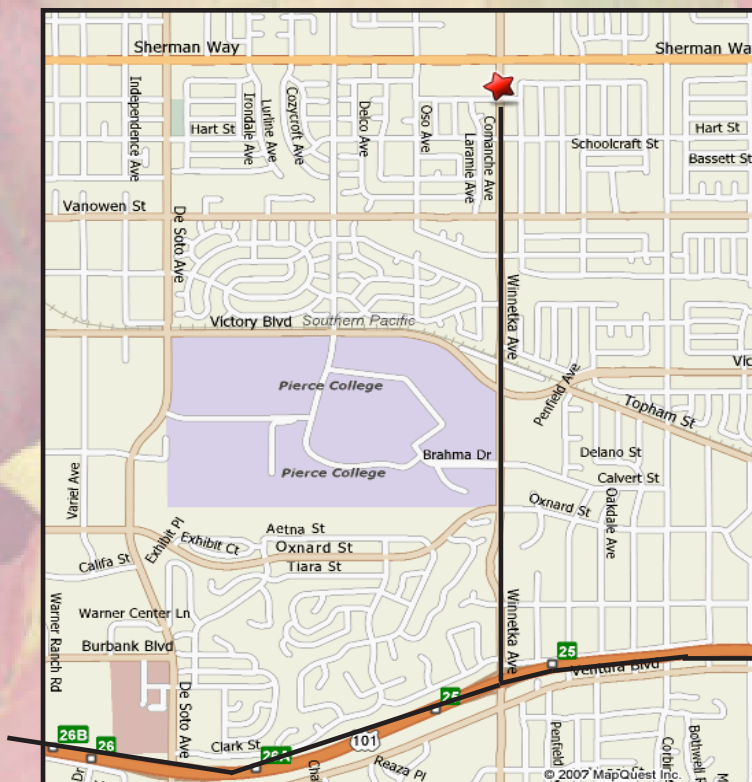
### **ST. MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS** **7136 WINNETKA AVE** **CANOGA PARK, CA 91306**

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](#)

Staff

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Columnists	Stephanie Sharf, Ken Watts, Ray Malus
Guest Columnist	J. Raymond Kent

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

#### **EXECUTIVE BOARD & BOARD MEMBERS**

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