



The Newsletter Of The San Fernando Valley Branch

The Valley Scribe

Vol. 3

November, 2010

No. 3

Next Meeting November 20, 12:30!



November

Featured Speaker:

Beverly Gray — *The Ins and Outs of Biography!*

Beverly Gray has spent her career fluctuating between the world of the intellect and show biz. After completing her doctorate in Contemporary American Fiction at UCLA, she surprised everyone (including herself) by taking a job with B-movie maven Roger Corman. At the legendary New World Pictures, she edited scripts, wrote publicity material, cast voice actors, and tried her hand at production. She collaborated with such soon-to-be-famous directors as Joe Dante, Jonathan Demme, and Paul Bartel, and thought up the twist ending to the cult classic, *Death Race 2000*. Later, as story editor at Corman's Concorde-New Horizons Pictures, she oversaw the development of 170 low-budget features. She has written six produced screenplays, and played several cameo roles (in all of which she kept her clothes on).

Since 1994 she has worked as a journalist, while also teaching screen writing workshops through UCLA Extension. Beverly's first book, *Roger Corman: An Unauthorized Biography of the Godfather of Indie Filmmaking*, made its debut in the #4 slot on the Los Angeles Times' hardcover nonfiction best seller list. One year later, she published *Ron Howard: From Mayberry to the Moon . . . and Beyond*. She followed this with an expanded paperback edition of the Corman bio under the new, improved title, *Roger Corman: Blood-Sucking Vampires, Flesh-Eating Cockroaches, and Driller Killers*.

Beverly's talk, "Biography: Taking Private Lives Public," will cover choosing a subject, and offer tips on how to research, organize, write, publish, and publicize a biographical project. Beverly will pay special attention to the delicate matter of writing about a living person. She welcomes questions that touch on the whole field of biography and its cousin, memoir.

(For more information, go to www.BeverlyGray.com.)

Special: November Meeting
Each member may bring one guest FREE.
No donation!

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.
(Priority will be given to those who did NOT read in September.)

In this Issue

Feature

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October Meeting-in-Review: Brothers and Selling — Voices of Experience by Ray Malus

PRESIDENT'S Stephanie Sharf

CORNER

Our October meeting featured two very accomplished speakers: Lecturer, **Bernard Selling**; and Writer/Member, **Peter H. Brothers**.

Speaking to a large group comprised of our CWC Members and Selling's own visiting students, Selling emphasized the point that "character drives story." He led us in an analysis of the traits of characters in two major motion pictures: *Sullivan's Travels*, and *Patton*. By analyzing these traits, he demonstrated that they — and other characters' awareness of them — provide the 'fuel' for the conflicts upon which the plot hangs.

Following this, Selling called upon member Mary Black, for a short, improvised, demonstration of the use of dialogue in writing: how it illuminates mood and motivation and how one character's words and attitude motivate the other's.

Brothers' Member Showcase presentation preceded Selling's — actually opening our meeting. He started by showing a clip from a movie by Japanese Monster-Film Director, Ishiro Honda, the subject of Brothers' new book, *Mushroom Clouds And Mushroom Men*. He then segued smoothly into his experiences while writing the book and the purgatory of landing a publisher — an ordeal that, evidently, dwarfed the monster tales of Honda. Throughout the "horror story," Brothers was charming and personable. Although 'personal,' his talk carried a lot of general information that members will find valuable.

The combination of both speakers made October's meeting a valuable and informative experience. —mm—

When we join the Club or pay our dues, we become or remain proud members of the California Writers Club—which is what? A professional writers' organization founded in 1909 which currently has 18 branches. What does "professional" mean? Is writing a profession in the same sense as medicine, law, or accounting?

These issues are front and center in the current Central Board debate over membership categories. CWC currently has ten membership categories—with the ones most relevant to our branch being: Active, Associate and Lifetime. With the changes in publishing brought about by technology, the Central Board has been confronted with questions like: Does someone who publishes exclusively on the Internet and gets paid for it meet the standards for an Active member?

Ray summed up his opinion nicely in the last issue of the *Scribe*, which is that **intent** trumps all. If you intend to contribute to the art of writing by sharing your work with others, that meets his definition of a professional writer. He feels all such writers should be admitted on an equal basis.

My thoughts (which I have expressed solely as my opinion to the Central Board) are even more egalitarian—I'm for eliminating all membership categories and criteria (except Lifetime) and moving toward making CWC a social club for anyone interested in writing, at all levels. I see writing as both a full profession and a legitimate part-time "fine arts" hobby. If we do eliminate membership qualifications and categories, it's important to establish other ways to honor those who have been published, and perhaps even establish some kind of milestone awards such as honoring a member who has signed a publishing contract.

At our Sept. 11th meeting, I asked you to share your thoughts on the matter with either me or Ray. I will be attending another regional Board meeting on Nov. 14th in Anaheim, and will be happy to express the thoughts of our members at that time. Please e-mail me directly at stephaniesharf@yahoo.com to weigh in on this.

A program note: At the start of our Club year in September, we promised programs that would have more "takeaways" (practical tips that you can use **now** to improve your writing and marketing efforts). Our last two programs featured publishing takeaways and fiction takeaways. Our November 20th speaker, Beverly Gray, will focus on some nonfiction takeaways, including how (and how not!) to interview.

You may not be writing a biography, as Beverly has. Maybe your writing interest is in fly fishing, dirt bike racing, or Thai cooking. But just think about the practical applications her tips may have when you interview someone about your chosen topic—that dirt bike champ or gourmet chef may not want to open up and share secrets...until you recall Beverly's special techniques for getting them to spill. Don't miss it! □

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!)

Bradford Literary Agency represents nonfiction books, novels, novellas, within a single author's collection, anthology. They are actively seeking: romance, romantic, women's fiction, mystery, thrillers, and young adult. They do not want to receive poetry, short stories, children's books(juvenile) or screenplays. Currently handles nonfiction books 10%, novels 90%. Query with SASE. Submit a cover letter with the first 30 pages of completed ms., synopsis and SASE. Do not send attachments via email; send only a query letter. Accepts simultaneous submissions. Responds in 10 weeks to queries and to mss. Contact: Laura Bradford. Address: 5694 Mission Center Road, #347, San Diego, CA 92108. Phone: (619) 521.1201. E-mail: laura@bradfordlit.com. Website: www.bradfordlit.com.

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Freya's Bower is a small, independent press, known for working with newer/unpublished authors and editing to the standards of NYC publishers. Responds promptly to submissions. Publishes paperback originals and e-books. Needs erotica, and romance of ALL genres. Query with outline/synopsis and one sample chapter. Accepts queries by e-mail only. Include estimated word count, brief bio. Responds to queries in 2-4 weeks. Accepts unsolicited mss with critiques/comments on rejected mss. Responds to mss in 6-8 weeks. No simultaneous submissions. Publishes ms 2-5 months after acceptance. Pays royalties 10-40% Contact: Marci Baun, publisher. Address: P O BOX 4897, Culver City, CA 90231. E-mail: mbaun@freyasbower.com. Website: www.freyasbower.com.

Loose ID wants non-traditional erotic romance stories, including gay, lesbian, heroes and heroines, multi-culturalism, cross-genre, fantasy, and sci-fi, straight contemporary or historical romances. Query with outline/

synopsis and three sample chapters. Accepts queries by e-mail. Include estimated word count, list of publishing credits, and why your submission is "Love Unleashed." Responds to queries in 1 month. Considers e-mail submissions. Publishes ms within 1 year after acceptance. Pays e-book royalties 35%. Contact: Treva Harte, editor-in-chief. Address: P O Box 425690, San Francisco, CA 94142-5960. E-mail: submissions@loose-id.com. Website: www.loose-id.com.

Samhain Publishing needs erotica of all genres and all heat levels of romance(contemporary, futuristic/time travel, gothic, historical, paranormal, regency period, romantic suspense, fantasy, action/adventure, etc.), as well as fantasy, urban fantasy or sci-fi with strong romantic elements, with word counts between 12,000 and 120,000 words. They are planning anthologies that include red hot fairy tales, steampunk romance and red hot winter. SEE THEIR WEBSITE. Publishes paperback originals and e-books. Pays royalties 30-40% for e-books, average of 8% for trade paper, and author's copies (quantity varies). Accepts queries by email only. Query with outline/synopsis and either 3 sample chapters or the full ms. Include estimated word count, brief bio, list of publishing credits, and "how the author is working to improve craft: association, critique groups, etc." Responds to queries and mss within 10-16 weeks. Accepts unsolicited mss. Sometimes critiques/comments on rejected mss. Contact: Laurie M. Rauch, Executive Editor. Address: 577 Mulberry Street, Ste.1520, Macon, GA 31201. Phone: (478) 314-5144. Fax: (478) 314-5148. E-mail: editor@samhainpublishing.com. Website: www.samhainpublishing.com.

Highland Press Publishing needs children's/juvenile (adventure, animal, easy-to-read, fantasy, historical, mystery, preschool/picture book, series), comedy (romance/suspense), contemporary (romance/mystery/suspense), family saga, fantasy (space fantasy), historical, horror (dark fantasy, futuristic, supernatural), and many other types. Send query letter. Query with outline/synopsis and sample chapters. Also accepts query by e-mail. Include estimated word count and target market. Send disposable copy of ms and SASE for reply only. Responds to queries in 8 weeks. Accepts unsolicited mss. Considers simultaneous submissions, e-mail submissions. Sometimes critiques/comments on rejected mss. Responds to mss in 3-12 months. Ms published 12 months after acceptance. Pays royalties 7.5-8%. SEE THEIR WEBSITE. Contact: Leanne Burroughs, CEO (fiction); she will forward all mss to appropriate editor. Address: P O Box 2292, High Springs, FL 32655. Phone: (386) 454-3254. Fax: (386) 454-3927. E-mail: the.highland.press@gmail.com. Website: www.highlandpress.org. □

SPOOKY SHORTS SUBMISSIONS

For our October meeting, members were invited to submit works designed to scare us.

Here, in no particular order, are the submissions: “Crows Fly Up,” “Chatterbox,”

“The House In Hope Ranch,” and “Black Dog, Brindle Cat.”

crows fly up

black crows huddle on unleafed limbs of a dying oak

crowds cheer when they see the woman

being dragged up the steps by hooded axe-men.

a sudden hush—

a cacophonous roar—

crows fly up, caw with fright

circle the madness of the crazed crowd

that screams and dances with hypnotic glee

when Marie Antoinette’s beautiful bloody head

rolls into the guillotine basket.

— Lenora Smalley

Chatterbox

Ray Malus

My wife started talking on our wedding day. It was as if “I do” was the start of an interminable monologue. Oh, she’d talked before, but not like this. This was an unstoppable torrent of words, a cataract of inane babble. She was like some demented mockingbird — or one of those mindless car alarms gone berserk. She was an infant who, having discovered she could produce sound, incessantly filled the air with it.

It would start in the morning as soon as the alarm clock went off, and continue until, mercifully, I drifted off to sleep at night — probably far longer.

She babbled about the weather, the neighbors, her relatives, my relatives, our diet, anything. EVERYTHING!

On car trips, she prattled road signs: “Speed Limit: 35,” “Gas, Lodging 5 Miles,” “Motel — Vacancy,” “Newman For Sheriff,” “Deer Crossing,” “Slippery When Wet.”

My opinions were instantly parroted back — endlessly expanded — fatuous and banal Doctoral Theses.

THE HOUSE IN HOPE RANCH

Nance Crawford

The first day we saw it, high on the bluff, front porch draped with bright pink bougainvillea framing a pristine view of the Channel Islands from the living room, we fell in love.

My husband’s father had been dead for over twenty years. Not that it mattered: early on, asleep, I’d been awakened by my husband’s body temperature — he seemed to be burning up. Asked if he was well, his answer was, “My father’s here.”

He followed us north.

Someone else was there, too. When the kids napped and my husband was at work, I would get a funny prickle of unease around my neck and upper back, knowing someone waited behind me or was just inside a room as I passed by. Negative, it was such an uncomfortable feeling that I began talking to the house, saying how much we loved it and, after a while, it felt more benign, even at night. Eventually, it came to me that he was probably with Portola on the first journey north and, as the party hugged the coast, sacks of mustard seed leaking the trail home from pack burros, he, one of the great man’s lieutenants, had seen this place and vowed to come back. It hadn’t happened for him. I told him I understood and he seemed to be content.

But not Dear Old Dad. Came the night I pulled the obstreperous bedroom door closed until the latch grabbed tight; it was never locked because of the kids. Sleeping, I was awakened by the burning hot body next to me. There was a click from the door and it swung open. I waited to hear a child’s voice.

Silence; then, to my left, “My Dad’s here. Better close the door.”

I burrowed deeper into the covers. “You close the door. He’s your father.”

We were there two years. We never saw the Channel Islands again until the day we left. □

Black Dog, Brindle Cat

Mary Black

The first childhood experience Emily could recall was the terror she'd felt upon hearing the noise of thunder, seeing the explosions of lightning. Even to the present day, she carried that fear with her...a phobia.

Along with:

Ailurophobia and *Cynophobia* (fear of cats, fear of dogs).

Coulrophobia (fear of clowns).

Anthrophobia (fear of flowers).

Aichmophobia (fear of pointed objects... including fingers).

It felt sometimes as though each fear leached out another fear...a new phobia.

Her parents accepted the necessity of home schooling for her. Anything else would guarantee Emily's confronting buttons and becoming near catatonic from *koumpounophobia*.

She'd grown, guardedly, to the age of twenty-eight.

Her parents had, long since, died comparatively young. Some whispered it was the first time they'd known any peace.

Emily was heartsick at the loss but, nevertheless, remained in the family home, rarely with human contact.

Until she met Thomas. He'd moved in next door, with his two teenage children, Bruno and Kitty.

Emily and Thomas fell in love. He, without hesitation, banished from his life buttons, scissors and flowers. (Clowns were no problem at all.)

Thomas proposed.

Emily accepted.

Emily even accepted Bruno and Kitty, Thomas's strange-eyed children.

The night before the wedding, Emily lay alone — for the last time — in her bed, tremulous, not with fear but with joy

Then she heard a noise.

On the stairs?

Could someone be in the house?

What if they came with a knife?

Or were wearing a coat with buttons?

The noise came closer.

The noise was just beyond the door.

Then the door slowly opened.

To reveal Bruno and Kitty....

Who, before Emily's terrified eyes, became a black dog and a brindle cat. □

(Chatterbox, cont'd from page 3.)

She would describe, in exquisite detail, things we were both already looking at. Watching a DVD, she'd comment and converse with the T.V.: cinema for the sight-impaired!

She shredded silence. Ground contemplation under her heel. On, and on, and ON, AND ON, AND ON. FOR. TWENTY! SEVEN! YEARS! — until, finally, a massive, crushing, head wound mashed her brain to useless pulp and put an end to it.

Now really, how could you even suggest that I had anything to do with that? □

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.

ARE YOU AN ASPIRING AUTHOR LOOKING FOR INSPIRATION ?

Chatsworth Library presents "Book Publishing 1-2-3: From the Writer's Fingers to the Reader's Hands," an entertaining lecture/workshop on:

- How to find a literary agent
- Self-publishing and e-books
- The children's literature market
- How a manuscript becomes a book
- Ideas about how writers can sell their work.

This workshop will also include writing exercises and an "Editor's Tips on Craft" segment.


Presenter: Book editor/proofreader Laurie Gibson, whose projects range from "The Color Purple" (Alice Walker) to "Tales from Margaritaville" (Jimmy Buffett) and several titles by Brian Tracy, the bestselling business author. Laurie also taught at both UCLA and U.C. San Diego (Extension programs) for nearly a decade.

SATURDAY , NOVEMBER 13, 2010

10:00 am-11:00 am

CHATSWORTH BRANCH LIBRARY

21052 Devonshire Street
Chatsworth, ca 91311
(818) 341-4276

 **LOS ANGELES
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

The Wright Word — by Ray

Lyrical

Many of you know that, although I consider myself primarily a playwright, I occasionally dabble in poetry. What you probably do not know is that I also write, and sing, music. Friends who do know occasionally ask me to write music to their poetry. I almost always have to disappoint them and demur.

There is a very good reason: Although, superficially, song lyrics and poems seem to resemble one another, their aims and roles are very different.

Now, before I explain, let me define some terms. By 'song,' I mean the kind of thing that you hear on the radio, in Broadway shows, and (yes) commercial jingles. Yes, there are other 'songs' — such as German Lieder, and art songs — but this is not what we commonly mean by the word. I am discussing the 'pop' song.

Commonly, song lyrics have certain characteristics: rhyme, and meter. Many poems share these characteristics, which can lead one to believe that they are alike. They are not.

I believe that most of my readers already understand the goals of poetry: brevity, vividness, emotional impact.

The goal of a song is simpler: 'catchiness.'

A poet has the right to expect that his audience is prepared to devote attention to his poem. A songwriter has no such assurance. The song may be part of a dramatic presentation, background music for a dance-floor seduction, or even supermarket Muzac. The lyricist's job is to grab your attention and make the song stay in your memory. His primary tool is repetition. The two most common forms for 'pop' songs are "Verse-Chorus" and "Rondo," and each is repetitive.

In Verse-Chorus, each *verse* presents new material that relates to a central theme, which is repeatedly restated by the *chorus*. In Rondo, the first two sections are usually varied statements of a theme, followed by a 'bridge' — a short digression or generalization — and then a third restatement or summary. Listen carefully (or, better yet, write down) the words to some of your favorite songs! The repetition will be obvious. This makes the song memorable, but is usually not what we want in a poem.

While you're looking at this lyric, take note of how short the thoughts are. This is again to make them 'stick.' Compared to most poetry, most song lyrics are 'choppy.' Lines are short, and usually terminate with the rhyme. Again, it's not "poetically artful," but it is deliberate.

The second big difference is that a song lyric is written to meld with a melody. The two need to compliment each other seamlessly. This means that, in most cases, each syllable of the lyric will correspond to a musical note. The converse, however is NOT true. And this is a

huge difference. In poetry, the reader's eye progresses inexorably, from word to word. Short pauses may be achieved by formatting, but in general there is no way to make the reader 'pause for air,' or consider a thought. In music, there are often long stretches of notes that have no words. These 'comment' on the lyric, or transition to a different thought. They can also enforce a change in pacing, as words are 'spaced out' on the musical line, or crowded together in short musical bursts. The music provides a 'heartbeat,' against which the words can 'float.' This marvelous tool is really not available to the poet, but is essential to the lyricist.

Further, the singer may choose to phrase AGAINST the musical meter, adding his own emphasis to the lyric.

On an anecdotal note, I was once contracted to record (sing) the theme for a major motion picture. Before the record was released, the studio decided to pull our release because they had gotten a package deal for the movie's entire score. The producer was left with a very expensive 'track' (a huge orchestral accompaniment) to a song to which he no longer had rights. So, he decided to just write a new song to fit the accompaniment. (A not-uncommon idea.) He hired a poet to do the lyric, and the arranger (a very well-known one) wrote a tune to fit it. It was a very nice poem.

The problem was there was no space for the music. He'd written a nice metrical poem. Every musical beat was filled. It buried the tune. It left me virtually no space to breathe, and the listener no space to react. The result was a thoroughly ugly recording, which — thankfully — was never released. (Names have been omitted to protect the naive.)

Writing song lyrics is fun and expressive. If you've never done it, I encourage you to.

Simply take one of your favorite songs, and write a new lyric for it. You can use the old lyric as a kind of 'template.' You'll soon grasp the basics. After that, let your talent soar! If you like the result, sing your new version at a Karaoke Bar.

Uh, I'd announce what you're doing, first.—m=

CWC Members

Dean Stewart and Ray Malus

**will be appearing in a 15-minute Radio Play,
Christopher Angel, at
St. Martin-In-The-Fields Episcopal Church,
on December 12th.**

**The play, written — and with a musical score
— by Malus, is a Chancel Drama dealing with
the season of Advent. It will be presented at 8:00
AM and 10:00 AM. Admission is open, and free.**

J-Ray Explains It All

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

The “Good Old Days”

“Nothing’s ever as good as in the ‘good old days.’ “ I’ve heard that all my life. Extrapolating from what I’ve heard from my elders, I’ve often daydreamed about the utopia that must have existed just before the discovery of fire.

However, as I *become* one of my elders, I realize that they were right. The world *is* going to hell in a natural-cowhide-designer-Gucci-tote-bag! Wha happen?!

Well, after endless hours meditating by the light of my whale oil lamp (one must make *some* concession to progress), I’ve uncovered the answer: The Automatic Transmission!

The Automatic Transmission has single-handedly caused the downfall of our entire western civilization. It is the root cause of all the rife incompetence, political corruption, financial collapse, immorality, embarrassing nether itch, *and* the heartbreak of psoriasis! It has set us on an inexorable path to ruin that makes Vesuvius’ burial of Pompeii look like a kid wielding a sand bucket. Tragically, the process is irreversible, but at least we can strive to understand the root cause.

When the automobile was first invented, it took some learned ability and native intelligence to pilot it. (Don’t even get me *started* on the skills necessary for buckboards and chariots!) One had to steer, watch out for stray cattle (and pedestrians), and participate in charming conversation (with one’s date) — all while interminably up-, and down-shifting, clutching (*not* with one’s date), and scoring road-kill.

It took coordination. It took training. It took practice.

It took *SMARTS!*

But, not satisfied with marketing Model-Ts to the intelligencia, the greedy geniuses in Detroit developed the Automatic transmission!

Still don’t get it? OK.

Now, for the first time, you didn’t need to be gifted to drive a car. You didn’t need practice. You didn’t need instruction. You didn’t even need the brains to memorize a shift pattern (Yes, the old familiar figure-H.) All you needed was a key.

That meant, for the first time, *any idiot* could drive.
That meant, for the first time, *any idiot* could date.
That meant, for the first time, *any idiot* could BREED.
... and there goes the old gene pool!

You don’t have to take my word for it. Just look around you. The evidence is everywhere.

So, the next time, you’re stuck for a half-hour in the express line at the supermarket behind some bozo that wants to negotiate seven coupons and a payment plan on a box of Frosted Flakes, the next time some salesman tells you your 150-lb mattress is one-half dust-mites, the next time you hear that you should buy a car because it’s got ‘a great stereo,’ the next time someone forwards an e-mail warning you NEVER EVER FORWARD E-MAILS, you’ll know where to place the blame:

The Automatic Transmission. □

Next time: Evolution, and the “Theory Of Genetic Entropy.” Sleep tight, and don’t let the dust-mites bite!

OPPORTUNITY

“I am interested in running a weekly short fiction submission on my site and am in search of local writers. The stories should feature North Hollywood or the surrounding valley in some way but other than that I am pretty open as far as content. I’m looking for one-time contributors or regular contributors. I’d love to find a writer interested in doing something similar to Armistead’s Maupin’s ‘Tales of the City.’ Think of it as a ‘Tales of the Valley’ type of thing. Each submission would pay at least \$75 with opportunities to go higher. I know this isn’t a ton of money but it’s a good chance for a writer looking to get recognition. There is also the opportunity for other Patch sites to run stories, in which case the payment would increase.”

Craig Clough
Editor North Hollywood/Toluca Lake
Cell: (213) 503-4117
Email: craig.clough@patch.com.
Web: www.Northhollywood.patch.com.

Something To Ponder

Spend time every day listening to what your muse is trying to tell you.

— Saint Bartholomew

IDENTIFICATION*Lillian Rodich*


*A leaf skeleton covers my finger print,
their patterns both uniquely designed.
each history etched in ovals and arcs
delicacy belying strength,
loss of youth and life redefined.*

*My fingers crush the leaf
and what was once recognized
by its green skin and place in the sun,
now so fragile it cannot survive,
returns to dust,
weightless and flicked away.*

A YOUNG FOLLOWER OF ROCK GROUPS*Lillian Rodich*

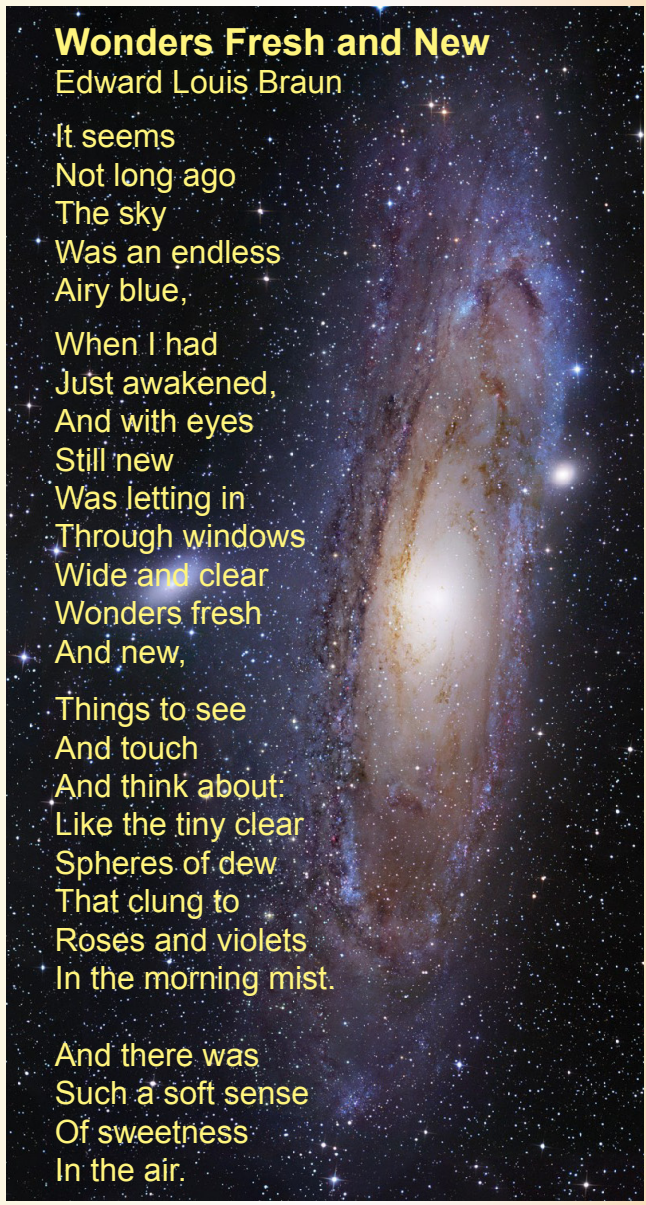

*weave songs into a gypsy's shawl
and colored threads tell a story
of pauper's jokes
while trashy icons
appear like blue lipped angels
never comprehending their misfortune
and chanting with evangelistic fervor*

*all her beads and bracelets
blaze with irony on pale arms
in the waning sunlight
and drum-driven wishes
gather strength in a starless night
needy trespassers cling to frayed edges
as if their rasping voices
could harmonize with rapture
between the silken threads*

It Could Be Verse

Wonders Fresh and New

Edward Louis Braun



It seems
Not long ago
The sky
Was an endless
Airy blue,
When I had
Just awakened,
And with eyes
Still new
Was letting in
Through windows
Wide and clear
Wonders fresh
And new,
Things to see
And touch
And think about:
Like the tiny clear
Spheres of dew
That clung to
Roses and violets
In the morning mist.

And there was
Such a soft sense
Of sweetness
In the air.



MARILYN
Nance Crawford

*Solitary rose
Torn apart to make perfume.
The fragrance lingers.*

More Verse

Retirement
Ray Malus

*One fresh fall dawn, a sleeping leaf awoke.
A portent in the wind proclaimed a change.*

*Its lot was always spent bound to its branch
exchanging sun and air, for sustenance
with trunk and root and soil — its universe.
And nodding in the fickle winds of life,
unconscious of the world beyond its bower,
it served its time with stolid tolerance
and staid devotion, never seeking more.*

*Now older, wrinkled, weathered, withered,
worn
and weary of the daily drudgery
and endless numbing photo-synthetic toil,
already loosely tethered — half-estranged —
it clothed itself in rainbow livery,
and gathering its courage, blindly leaped...*

*and caught the autumn currents in its arms!
It swooped and sailed the whimsy of the wind.
It skirled and frisked in riotous release
with swarms of fellow rebel harlequins
that soared for far horizons only guessed.*

*Until, consumed, it pillowed gratefully
as all exhausted, dying leaves must do
upon the waiting fertile earth below.*

STRINGS OF FOUR AND A WHOLE HEART
Helen Katzman

**Oh how wonderful to have a violin of strings of four
And not the broken heart of strings of three
This violin of strings of four
Beautifully sings
My life in full swing
Life in tune
Out of my cocoon
None too soon
Strings of four and a whole heart**

**No easy stroll
To achieve this goal
A frantic chase from place to place—
No one to embrace
Children far from birthplace
Slowly, ever so slowly
Step by step
Changes made
LIFE RENEWED
House of old
Life anew
Friends so true
Merci Beaucoup
Strings of four and a whole heart**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ABOUT THIS ISSUE:

WARNING: THIS ISSUE IS PACKED!

Laying it out was like doing a jigsaw puzzle. But it's all good stuff! There are lots of announcements. Some are on the Announcements page, but many more are scattered throughout the issue. Read it carefully! PLUS stories, poetry, reviews, and PICTURES!

As always, many thanks to our contributors.
ENJOY!
I'm gonna go take a nap.

— Ray



URGENT: *HELP* WANTED!

KUDOS COLUMNIST

*We are searching for someone to write our monthly Kudos Kolumn.
It's not hard. Simply compile all our Branch's good news 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!*

PROGRAM REVIEWER!

*Also urgently needed: Someone to write the "Last Month In Review" column.
Our Speakers are not paid. The least we can do is review their presentations.*

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** for helping with the October set-up and for the goodies.
Much appreciated!

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.)

MORE ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.

The 3rd Annual Beaded Purse Poetry Contest



1st Place winner receives a beaded purse containing \$50
2nd Place receives beaded purse with \$25
3rd Place receives beaded purse with \$10
Each winner will receive an award certificate and their work
will be shared on this site: www.lenorasmalley.com.

Guidelines:

Theme: Seasons of Laughter (any up-beat poem will do)
Line Count: 40 lines single spaced
Mail entries to:
The Beaded Purse Contest
6545 Franrivers Ave.
West Hills, CA 91307

Do not put your name on the entry, just the title.
Include a separate page with your name and at least two
contacts (Phone, address, email) and a list of each title
submitted.

Enter as often as you like. No limit on entries.

Ends: November 30th, 2010 (all entries must be post-
marked by November 30th, 2010)

NANCE CRAWFORD

*Will begin podcasting an audio-book of her charming novel
Dragon Solstice
Starting November 20*

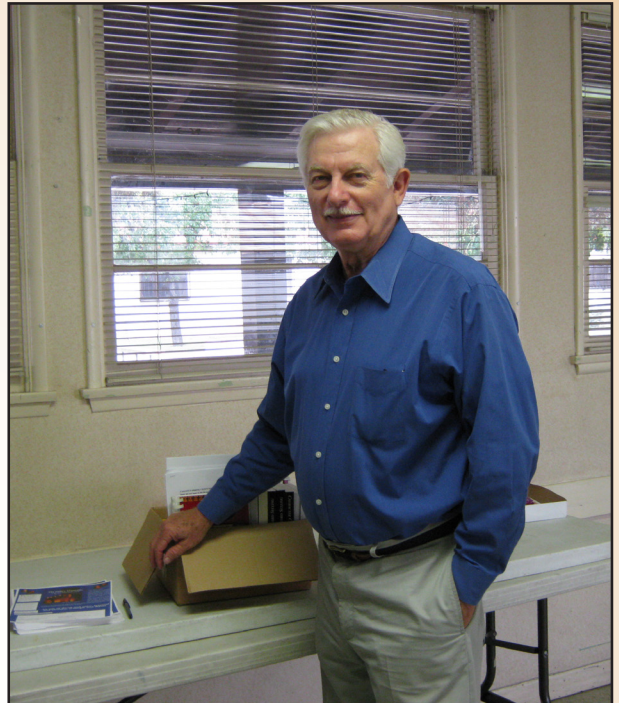
*Details at
www.NanceCrawford.com*

The Gallery

(Photos by Stephanie Sharf)



Bernard Selling...



Bernard, selling...



Peter at the podium.



Beauty & The Beast (Brothers and homeless man.)



"Hey! Who ate all the @#*%\$ salsa?!"

● 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
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.

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

December 18, 2010 — Erica Stux

The Fine Print

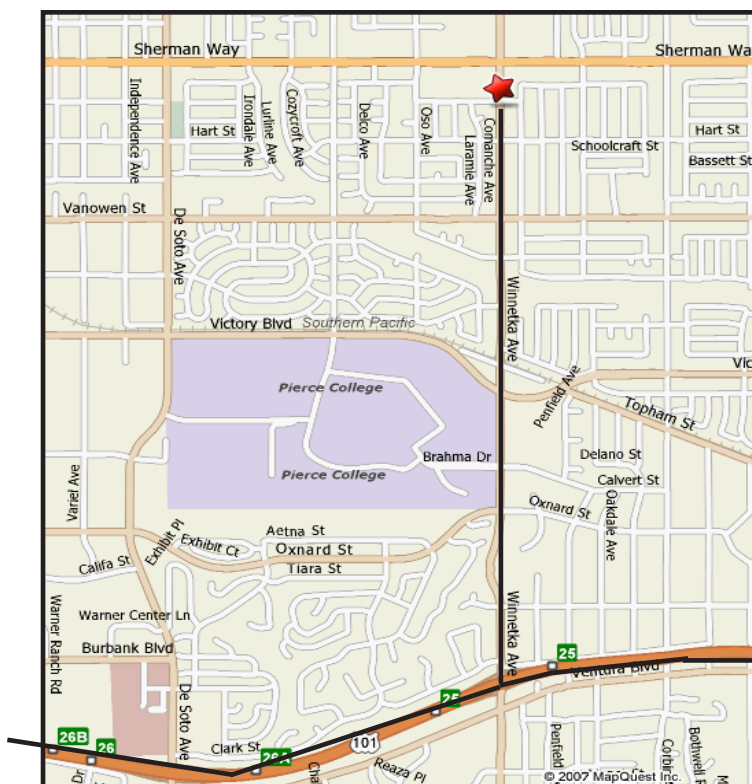
ST. MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS **7136 WINNETKA AVE** **CANOGA PARK, CA 91306**

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
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California Writers Club San Fernando Valley Branch

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