



The Newsletter Of The San Fernando Valley Branch

# The Valley Scribe

Vol. 3

April 2011

No. 8

## Next Meeting April 16, 12:30!

### April Featured Speaker:

#### Deborah Riley-Magnus: Author Success Workshop



Deborah Riley-Magnus is an author and an Author Success Coach. She has a twenty-seven year professional background in marketing, advertising and public relations as a writer for print, television and radio. She writes fiction

in several genres as well as non-fiction.

Deborah produces several pieces weekly for various websites. She also writes an author industry blog, <http://rileymagnus.wordpress.com> and teaches online and live workshops as The Author Success Coach. She belongs to several writing and professional organizations. In 2011, she has two novels and one non-fiction, *The Author Success Coach Book*, being released.

She's lived on both the east and west coast of the United States and has traveled the country widely. A native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, she currently lives, works and writes in Los Angeles.

(Editor's Note: Deborah has done presentations for several other Branches — to RAVE reviews.)

DO NOT MISS!

Other Deborah links:

<http://theauthorsuccesscoach.com>

<http://coldincalifornia.com>

<http://deborahriley-magnus.com>

<http://whispersofthemuse.org>

<http://twitter.com/rileymagnus>

<http://www.facebook.com/deborah.rileymagnus>

### BOARD MEETINGS

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

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

### 12:30 Sharp!

#### MEMBER SHOWCASE

*Lenora Smalley — "Poetry"*

### In This Issue

Feature

Page

(Click on title to jump to item)

**READ THIS ISSUE CAREFULLY - THERE'S GONNA BE A TEST!**

The Newsletter of The San Fernando Valley Branch

The Valley Scribe



## April Meeting Starts Promptly at 12:30! — Or Whenever People Show Up

### Feds Announce New Transportation Initiative: Cars To Run On HOPE!

The Obama administration announced today that it is allocating \$500,000,000 to the Ford Motor Company for the development of new automotive HOPE (Highly Oxygenated Poly-Ethanol) vehicles. The grant will



Optimist prototype

be used to develop Ford's new 'Optimist,' which uses this new extremely inexpensive energy source. (Currently HOPE is trading at a mere \$1.20/bbl.)

In a related story, British Petroleum announced today that it has successfully negotiated ninety-nine year lease agreements for all HOPE deposits in the contiguous forty-eight States. This gives B.P. a virtual monopoly on HOPE development. They have contracted with well-respected contractor, Haliburton, who is expected to begin development of sites early in 2031, but warns weather conditions could lead to delays which might increase costs slightly. However, they are optimistic that such delays would be minor. A spokesman for the company said in (See "HOPE," pg. A-45)

### HOPE On The Rise

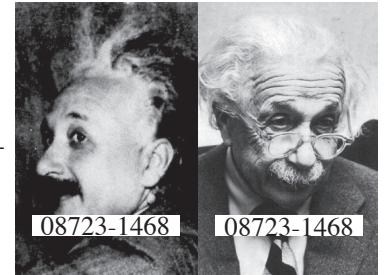
(NYSE 4:50 pm) Commodities traders announced a sudden, unexpected surge in the price of HOPE (Highly Oxygenated Poly-Ethanol) futures, just before the closing bell today. This was accompanied by a spike in the price of raw HOPE from \$1.25/bbl. to \$175.

Analysts are reassuring the market that this is temporary: "The US is the World's largest exporter of HOPE. We have vast untapped reserves, that will easily last into the 2030s at our present rate of export. Unless something unexpected happens to grossly increase the World's rate of HOPE consumption, there is absolutely no threat of a shortage."

Even at the present rate of use, our (continued on pg. D-12)

### Doping Scandal: 'Genius' Einstein Discredited

(Geneva) Famed Physicist and Intellectual, Albert Einstein, was stripped of his title of 'Genius' today, when



Einstein: 'Genius' or 'Juicer?'

drug testing on his exhumed body revealed the presence of abnormal amounts of both fish and safflower oil — both considered to be powerful brain-enhancing substances. Exhumations of Leonardo DaVinci, Rene Descartes, and Issac Newton are scheduled for later this month, as 'Braingate' continues. □

### Lieberman To Keynote 2012 Tea Party Convention!

(Washington DC) In a surprise announcement, today, Tea Party spokesman, Andre Lipton, announced that the Keynote Speaker for next November's National Convention will be Senator Joseph Lieberman (I. Conn.).



Joseph ('Joe') Lieberman. "I don't even like tea..."

Lieberman, a former Democrat who changed affiliations in 2006, has asserted that he is not a candidate for 2012. Speculation is rife that this may signal a move on his part to more active role in the fledgling Tea Party movement.

Despite his protests ("Hell, I don't even like tea..."), Lieberman has a reputation for "being his own man." This led to his breaking ties with

the Democrats (although some speculate that it was his failure to win nomination, rather than ideological



Tea Party Caucus, 2010

(continued on pg. B-42)



**March Meeting-in-Review:****E. P. McKnight**  
by the Scribe Staff

Photo by Mark-Paul Sebar

My *Webster's Dictionary* lists fifteen definitions and synonyms for "Community." According to our March meeting's motivational maven, Ms. McKnight, members may multiply those many meanings.

Using examples from her personal experiences and a myriad of familiar axiom, she asserts that true Community begins with realizing we're all one and we need each other. To further this lofty goal, we must lead by example, use our talents, find our passion, make ourselves accountable to someone, and then channel these to help someone in need — and you don't have to be J. Paul Getty (maybe not the best example, but it's the first millionaire's name that whispered into my mind's ear. Again with the inappropriate allusion: the disembodied ear).

It's not quantity, it's quality! Be like children! Enjoy life!

Check out E. P. on the web:

<http://www.iquestionamerica-fannielouhamer.com>

**PRESIDENT'S***Stephanie Sharf***CORNER**

**This is a JACK LONDON AWARD year... and we have a winner!** At our March meeting I was proud to announce that our Board has chosen **Ray Malus** as our **Jack London Award winner!** The Award is given every two years to a California Writers Club member who has done exceptional service for their branch.

Ray is our pre-session leader at each meeting, *Scribe* editor, and webmaster. In addition, he was a member of the team that put our branch "back together" a couple years ago, and he arranged for our current meeting place at the Church. Personally, I can't think of anyone more dedicated to the branch than Ray is, as evidenced by the time he puts in to help.

The Award will be given on July 31<sup>st</sup> in Oakland and we hope Ray will make it up there to receive it in person.

I want to thank each of you who helped make our March meeting a success. We had a dynamic speaker, **E.P. McKnight**, and an enthusiastic audience. Thanks go to **Peter Brothers** for suggesting our speaker and providing the refreshments, as well as to **Pirhiya Goldstein** for setting a lovely table and making sure we had coffee and tea.

Speaking of coffee, **Mark-Paul Sebar** ran up the street to get us regular coffee and hot cocoa when he saw that we had only decaf (caffeine addicts thank you, Mark).

Our next speaker, **Deborah R. Magnus**, is receiving rave reviews wherever she goes. When I attended the Southern California regional meeting on February 27<sup>th</sup> in Pasadena, I heard that Deborah was a wonderful speaker for two of our branches already and a third was trying to get her. Please join us to hear this sought-after author coach at our next meeting on April 16<sup>th</sup>. April is Poetry Month, and we will have one of our very favorite resident poets, **Lenora Smalley**, to kick off the meeting with a Member Showcase. Don't miss this one! □

***Something To Ponder***

All that we are is the result of what we have thought. The mind is everything. What we think, we become.

— Buddha

## 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!)*

**Fantasy Magazine** is an online magazine. It is open for new submissions on 1 May 2011. They are looking for fantasy, fiction, creative nonfiction, and interviews. Pays: \$0.05/word. See their website for more information. Website: [www.fantasy-magazine.com](http://www.fantasy-magazine.com). E-mail: [sean@fantasy-magazine.com](mailto:sean@fantasy-magazine.com).

**American Markets Newsletter Short Story Competition** accepts fiction and nonfiction up to 2,000 words. It is presented to give short story writers more exposure. All entries are eligible for worldwide syndication whether they win or not. No limit to the number of entries you may send. See website for more info. Prize: 1<sup>st</sup> Place: \$300, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: \$100, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place: \$50. Entry fee: \$12/entry, \$20 for 2, \$25 for 3, \$30 for 4, \$5 each entry thereafter. For guidelines, send SASE or e-mail. Deadline: June 30 and December 31. Actively encourages published and unpublished stories. Open to any writer. All kinds of fiction considered. They especially want women's pieces — romance, with a twist in the tale — but all will be considered. Results announced within 3 months of deadlines. Winners notified by mail if they include SASE. Address: 1974 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94116. E-mail: [sheila.oconnor@juno.com](mailto:sheila.oconnor@juno.com).

**Dead of Winter** is a winter-themed horror fiction contest with a new topic each year. Open to any writer. I know it's too early in the year, but keep this contest in mind for the coming winter season. Dead of Winter 2011 opens October 1, 2011 and closes December 21, 2011. After October 1<sup>st</sup>, visit their website to learn about the contest theme and word count parameters. Follow their online submission guidelines. No entry fee. Your cover letter should include name, address, e-mail, word count and title. Entries must be unpublished. Accepts inquiries by e-mail. Prize: Amazon gift certificates in the amount of \$20, \$15, \$10, and publication in *Toasted Cheese*. Contact: Stephanie Lenz, editor. E-mail: [editors@toasted-cheese.com](mailto:editors@toasted-cheese.com). Website: [www.toasted-cheese.com](http://www.toasted-cheese.com).

**Rattle Poetry Prize** is open to writers worldwide. Poems must be in English (no translations). No previously published poems or works accepted for publication elsewhere. No simultaneous submissions. Submit no more than 4 poems/entry. Multiple entries by a single poet accepted, however, each

4-poem group must be treated as a separate entry with its own cover sheet and entry fee. Include cover sheet with poet's name, address, e-mail address, phone numbers, and poem titles. No contact information should appear on poems. Include SASE for results only, no poems will be returned. Poems may also be entered through online submission on website. Fee: \$18, includes one-year subscription to *RATTLE*. Deadline: August 1 (postmark). Contact: Timothy Green, Editor. Address: *RATTLE*, 12411 Ventura Blvd., Studio City, CA 91604. Phone: (818) 505-6777. E-mail: [tim@rattle.com](mailto:tim@rattle.com). Website: [www.rattle.com](http://www.rattle.com).

**Necrology Shorts: Tales of Macabre and Horror** is an online publication. Guidelines on website. It is searching for fiction, poetry, and nonfiction. Nonfiction: needs humor, interview, photo feature, profile, reviews. Buys 1,000 mss/yr. Submit complete ms. Length: 300 - 25,000 words. Fiction: needs fantasy, horror, sci-fi. Buys 1,000 mss/yr. Responds in 1 month. Send complete ms. Length: 300-200,000 words. Submit complete ms by e-mail to [submit@necrologyshorts.com](mailto:submit@necrologyshorts.com). Please, allow them 1-2 weeks to review your work. If selected, it will be added to *Necrology Shorts* in 72 hours. You will be notified when it is posted. Poetry: seeking avant-garde verse, haiku, light-verse, and traditional poetry in genres of horror, fantasy, and sci-fi. Buys 500 poems/yr. Submit up to 5 poems at one time. Length: 4-100 lines. Columns/ Departments: Book Review (2,000 words), Movie Review (2,000 words), Biography of Famous Authors (2,000-10,000 words), Interviews of Authors and Artists (2,000-5,000 words). In all submissions, they want and expect the deranged, warped, twisted, strange, sadistic, and things that question sanity and reality. Contact: John Ferguson, Editor. Address: Isis International, P. O. Box 510232, Saint Louis, MO 63151. E-mail: [editor@necrologyshorts.com](mailto:editor@necrologyshorts.com), [submit@necrologyshorts.com](mailto:submit@necrologyshorts.com). Website: [www.necrologyshorts.com](http://www.necrologyshorts.com).

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## Writeous — by Ray

### “CUT...!”

(NOTE: This poem actually evolved as the column was being written. It is not previous work.)

This is only my opinion, but I see a lot of over-written poems. There is a belief that “Poetry is just prose, broken into short lines.” I disagree. I have said it before: “Breaking prose into short lines and calling it poetry is like putting a saddle on a giraffe and calling it a race horse.”

If novels are landscapes, then short stories are busts, and poems are jewels. It’s all a matter of scale. Even long poems are like strings of matched pearls — each section its own precious gem — if it’s a good poem.

Here’s some prose I just made up:

*It is a cold winter’s night in the middle of January. Ribbons of ice hang from the eaves of the house. The mood is somber, as if the house is in mourning — waiting for spring.*

It’s nice prose. Descriptive. Evocative. Even ‘poetic.’ I like it. Let’s make it into a poem:

*It is a cold winter’s night in the middle of January.  
Ribbons of ice hang from the eaves of the house.  
The mood is somber,  
as if the house is in mourning  
— waiting for spring.*

Believe it or not, I see a lot of this. Is it a poem? Well, many people think so. I don’t!

Why?

It wastes far too many words. It’s not brief, terse. It’s flabby. It has too much useless verbiage. It’s still *prose*. If it’s a jewel, it’s certainly not polished. But it can be a good start.

Ask yourself, “What is the writer trying to say?”

Well, *most* important, is the mood: somberness.

Then: It’s winter, cold. There’s a house. Ice hangs from it.

Now, the above is brief and terse. But it’s not poetry either. It’s not evocative. It doesn’t *affect* us the way the original did. We’ve lost something: the ‘humanity.’ Let’s go back.

Look at the first sentence. Do we really need to tell the reader that January is in the middle of winter? Maybe not. And phrases like “It is” are usually unnecessary, too. So that leaves us with: “Cold January night.”

Now the second sentence. “Hang” is kind of a tepid word (unless your grandfather was a horse thief). Surely, we can find a word that carries more emotional impact. How about “Ribbons of ice *dangle* from the eaves...?” Well, it’s really not somber, is it? “Droop?” Lets leave it and come back, later.

“The mood is somber.” This is definitely unnecessary — and bad writing. We’re *telling* the reader instead of making him *feel* it. If we do our job well, we don’t want, or need, it.

The last part is kind of nice. It does evoke the mood. But

we can certainly tighten it without losing the effect. How about simply, “The house mourns for spring?” Doesn’t seem to lose anything. Let’s see where we are:

*Cold January night.*

*Ribbons of ice dangle from the eaves of the house.*

*The house mourns for spring.*

I like this better, but I still see three things.

Two are problems: We repeat “the house” twice. (Do we really need to? Should we?) And “dangle” definitely conflicts with the mood we want to evoke.

The third is an opportunity: My rusty English Lit. education tells me this is close to an established form. It looks a lot like a *Haiku*! Let’s see.

Both a *Haiku* and our fledgling poem have three lines. Check!

A *Haiku*’s first line has five syllables; ours has six. Close!

A *Haiku*’s third line has five syllables. So does ours! Great!

The middle line has twelve syllables. *Haikus* have seven. This would need a *lot* of changing. Let’s see if it’s worth it by playing with the first line.

Now, surely, there’s nothing sacred about the month of January. (Yes, it’s closer to the “middle of winter,” but is that so important? I mean, any cold month will do, really.) How about “December?” “Cold December night.” Five syllables! Voila! Houston, we have lift-off!

Now, that damned middle line: “Ribbons of ice dangle from the eaves of the house.”

Well, we’ve already said that the part about the house should go. And ‘dangle’ is not right either. We need something sad, mournful. How about “weep?”

“Ribbons of ice weep from the eaves?” Well, this is nice. Very nice! But, really, what are these “ribbons of ice?” They’re icicles, of course! So now, we *do* have a *Haiku*:

*Cold December night.*

*Icicles weep from the eaves.*

*The house mourns for spring.*

Nobody would argue that this is not a poem. (Is it a good one? You, the reader, must decide.)

We’ve watched the evolution of a poem. As with ‘real’ evolution, there are many paths we *could* have gone down. This is only one; yours will be different. That’s what makes us individual artists. It’s ‘style.’

In particular, the branch we took when we decided to adopt a *form* will not always be available — or attractive. (We will discuss this next month.)

But this is a path you *must* travel. Cut useless words! Replace tepid verbs and adjectives with powerful ones! Always *evoke* an emotional response (never *dictate* one)! It’s painful, hard work. But it’s the essence of being a writer. □



## Entering the Aviary (for beginners)

by Jackie Houchin

*"All the little birds on J-Bird Street,  
Love to hear the robin goin',  
tweet, tweet, tweet...."*

Thirty plus years ago Bobby Dee popularized the song Rockin' Robin. But today there's a plump little Bluebird "tweeting" in the world's tree tops, via a mobile micro-blogging network called Twitter. For writers, Twitter can be a powerful tool to market yourself and your books, and stay connected to your readers. Here are a few tips for "Newbies" who want to "try their wings."

**Building your nest:** Go to [www.Twitter.com](http://www.Twitter.com) and set up a user profile which includes your user name (best to use your actual name or pen name), location, a website URL, and a short bio of who and what you are. Be sure to upload a photo or image. (Absence of a bio or photo could say "spammer" to perspective followers.) You can also customize your background.

**Finding your flock:** You will be prompted to see if your friends are on Twitter (It may surprise you how many are already tweeting). But be aware that Twitter does this by importing your email address lists and you must enter your email passwords to do it.

You can also click on "Who to Follow" for Twitter recommendations, or fill in a name or topic in the "Search" field. If you find an interesting "bird of a feather" click on the "Follow" button.

**Tweeting** is basically writing (and posting) tiny chirps of information (140 characters or less) that people want to read. **Following** someone (or their tweets) is simply reading what they say on a regular basis. **Re-tweeting** is passing on tweets that you like to your followers. You can also **Reply** and **Message**.

Be succinct and abbreviate; think text messages. There are also URL shortening sites such as [tinyurl.com](http://tinyurl.com) or [bit.ly](http://bit.ly) that will take your 56-character page address and shrink it to just 20-26.

**What to Tweet:** Introduce yourself, your writing, your website. Announce releases, signings, reviews, updates. Be interesting. Be funny. Share a joke, a fact, a useful tip, an inspiring quote, a recommendation, a pet peeve, an article you liked, even a recipe! (Yes, it can be done, see: <http://twitter.com/#!/cookbook>)

Be helpful. Write about others more than yourself. Do a little teaching. Send holiday greetings. Review a book/film/product. Write a haiku poem. Comment on other people's tweets. Share someone's (or your own) website or blog. Re-tweet a good tweet. Ask for recommendations or favorites. Ask a provocative question. Ask for prayer.

**What NOT to Tweet:** Rude, useless, degrading, incendiary things.

**Who to Follow:** Those who follow you (see exceptions below). Interesting, fun, inspiring, informative people/organizations/businesses. True friends. People with similar interests and values. People with dissimilar interests.

**Who NOT to Follow:** People who don't post a bio or photo of themselves or image of their brand. People who never (or very seldom) tweet. People who follow too many people (compared to how many follow them: another sign of a spammer). People with websites that don't exist.

**Who to Un-follow:** Deadbeats, salespersons. (You can also Block offensive Tweeters from following you.)

**How to find stuff:** Use hashtags (#) to look for something specific. Type a hashtag and the topic in the search field: #thrillers #noir #pets #musicals.

**How to plug stuff:** Use hashtags to announce a new book, blog post, or interview: (Linda O Johnston, author of Kendra Ballantyne #cozies #mystery #books on Killer Hobbies <http://bit.ly/ffQOro>), (Ghost A La Mode now available on #Kindle #ghosts #mystery <http://amzn.to/e3sHRm>), (A true #lovestory that stretches back to #WorldWar2, Marion Green's "A #Valentine Story" <http://bit.ly/fXLroC>)

To search hashtag topics go to <http://hashtags.org/> and type your #topic.

**Sing like a Canary:** Post at least 10 tweets per day. (It's okay to repeat your most important tweets more than once in a day, but change them slightly or Twitter will nix them. Read other people's tweets. Visit interesting websites/blogs (and comment if you have time). Be an early bird and a night owl. Count on spending 20-30 minutes a day for good "presence."

For more info, check out Twitter's updated online tutorial (<http://tinyurl.com/39s27bs>); request "Twitter Basics" from author Avery Aames ([www.AveryAames.com](http://www.AveryAames.com)); or buy the latest "Twitter for Dummies" books (<http://tinyurl.com/24tt7sc>). □

(You can read more by Jackie at : [www.jackiehouchin.com](http://www.jackiehouchin.com))

### STUX'S HEIDI in NORTH HOLLYWOOD!

A stage show to take your children,  
your grandchildren, your neighbor's children  
to see!

It's the musical *HEIDI*

— based on the children's classic —  
written by Erica Stux.

It is playing at the  
North Hollywood London Music Hall  
10620 Magnolia Blvd.

Dates are Saturdays at 7 pm, Sundays at 2 pm,  
April 16<sup>th</sup> through May 15<sup>th</sup>  
except for the Easter weekend.

Tickets are \$10 and \$12.

Call (818) 762-7883 for reservations.

## [raymalus.com](http://raymalus.com)

Since we have not been deluged with submissions about members' websites, this month, I have been asked to review the site belonging to our editor, Ray Malus.

[Raymalus.com](http://Raymalus.com) is devoted solely to Malus' creative work. As such, it contains a lot of surprises. (You will need a high-speed connection to enjoy some of them.)

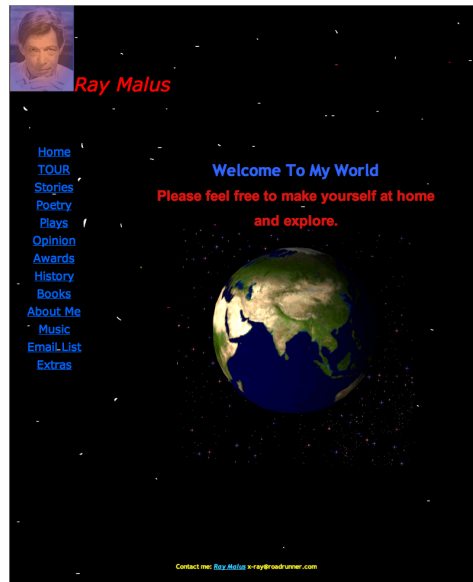
Since Malus also designed our Branch website, you may notice some design similarities. The page pictured is not the home page (which is a simple 'Welcome' screen). Rather it is the Main Menu, and is representative of the rest of the site.

In the upper-left-hand corner of a midnight-black page, is a rather youthful picture of Malus. In the center, an animated globe of the earth spins. (Those with sound capability will hear an orchestral theme. Since Malus claims the site contains only content written by him, we can assume the composition is his.) The Menu appears on the left-hand side. (Selections light up a floating 'Help' box.) It presents a vast number of choices. They are:

- **Home** — The Main Menu
- **Tour** — A description of the site, with links — for those who don't like menus.
- **Short Stories**
- **Poetry**

## MEMBER WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

BY (GUEST COLUMNIST) J. RAYMOND KENT



• **Plays** — Titles and descriptions (scripts must be requested by email) of several plays. This section also contains videos.

• **Opinion** — Op-ed and satirical essays

• **History** — A brief bio

• **Books** — Titles and descriptions of several longer works

• **About Me** — Personal information

• **Music** — MP3 files and lyrics to Pop and Country songs (performed by Malus), and theatrical scores.

• **Extras** — Miscellany

The site contains a lot of examples by a writer who seems to be in search of a genre — but does well in many. It can be overwhelming

for people who need to 'pigeon-hole' artists, and several of the pages will provoke curiosity. Fortunately, each page contains a link to email the owner, and Malus welcomes correspondence. There is also a mailing-list sign-up page.

Well-organized (given its diversity), the site is easy to navigate. The 'Tour' is a nice feature we'd like to see included in more sites. Although the color-scheme (blue and red on black) is severe, the over-all tone of the site is warm and folksy. (One peculiarity is that most of the 'text' content is actually in image form — presumably to discourage copying.)

In summary, [raymalus.com](http://raymalus.com) is well worth a visit — if only for the free music.□

## 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.*

## It Could Be Verse

**Lara**

Edward Louis Braun

You are a poem ever new.  
The thought, the sight,  
The simple, sweet delight  
Of you,  
The endless skies  
In your loving eyes  
Send my spirits soaring.

You are like a wind  
That penetrates  
My heart and soul,  
Like some pervading drug  
You flow within my blood,  
Sweeping me  
To exhilaration.

When I drift  
Into a restless sleep  
Images of you  
Envelop me,  
My head swims  
As the current of you  
Swells about me,  
Pounds against my heart  
And with a start  
I come awake,  
All but drowned  
In thoughts of you.

In the fading light  
When day succumbs to night,  
I wash away  
The sometime sadness  
Of my life  
By dreaming of the day  
When I may  
Happily contemplate  
Songbirds and trees,  
Changing skies,  
And holding hands  
Lovingly descend  
Into the deep blue depths  
Of your eternal eyes.

## Inspiration Ray Malus

*We sit in gloom and mortal misery,  
imprisoned in the mire of mundane things,  
while taunting sparks of immortality  
flit through our darkened cells, where silence sings.*

*And oh! To capture even one! And for  
that blessed moment come to understand  
its radiance, and reverently explore  
the brief eternity held in our hand.*

*We build our fragile towers toward the skies  
with words — like rough, unsteady slabs of stone.  
In halting and abortive desperate tries  
we strive to climb where only gods have flown.*

*Then — snatch the sacred wind that sneers at death,  
and soar to ecstasy on heaven's breath.*

## MY POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Norman Molesko

Besides heart problems and concerns,  
life impairments and ailments  
have become commonplace for me,  
due to aging and family genes.

Before the first of two cataract operations,  
my eyes resorted to squinting day and night.  
Distant vision was blurry and bothersome.  
Corneal implants have restored my eyesight.

Before I was prescribed hearing aids,  
sounds were muffled, words misunderstood.  
My listening and hearing are improved.  
The hearing aids I use do me some good.

Before...I had tooth aches with dental bills.  
Upper teeth now exist, but they are not real.  
My denture allows me to live my lifestyle.  
I can still eat, talk, whistle and smile.

Fortunately I am one of those folks  
whose days are meaningful.  
Mostly I experience gratitude  
and a positive attitude.



## More Verse

### *The Night Before Easter* *Lenora Smalley*

*Easter basket, trimmed lilac and yellow,  
marshmallow chickens cluck and preen,  
peck m&m's for multicolored feed,  
lay pastel eggs on shredded plastic  
Chocolate bunnies hop up and down,  
play soccer on cinnamon pogo-sticks,  
throw kisses into hoops of candied beads,  
and play games of football with purple jelly  
beans.*

### *Rules Rule!* *J. Raymond Kent*

*"Never end a sentence with a preposition;  
always, find a more correct, discrete  
position!"  
"Split infinitives are things one must decry."  
These are rules to always doggedly live by.*

### *Brief Reflections on Love*

Edward Louis Braun

#### *Sweet Remembrances*

When nostalgia strikes  
Out of the blue  
I sometimes think of you,  
Happy moments we knew:  
Our kisses and smiles,  
Tender embraces,  
Clowning with funny faces,  
How you could start  
Music in my heart,  
Set my soul afire.  
I wonder where you are  
And if you remember, too?

#### *The Time of Love*

The time of love  
Can be short or long.  
The sound of love  
Can be a sad  
Or happy song.  
The time of love  
Can be a funny time,  
A sunny, exciting,  
Together time,  
A sad and lonely,  
Depressing, rainy,  
Tear running time.

#### *A Tree Outside My Window*

A tree outside my window  
Sends forth a bouquet  
Of leaves that form a lace  
Between the earth  
And clear blue sky,  
Expanding the beauty  
Of its earthbound place  
With exhilaration, grace,  
And honest delight,  
Lifting my spirit at its sight,  
And is so beautiful and true  
It makes me think of you.

## *Watts Towers of Triumph*

*Lillian Rodich*

*wonders of wizardry  
one man's  
monumental masterpiece  
a proud city  
built of towers  
pipes girded  
with wire mesh  
incongruous  
among its neighbors  
still at home  
unafraid with  
lopsided smiles  
and bones of steel*

*barred entrances  
hints of light  
hints of life  
behind the slats  
this prism city  
its mirrors just  
shards of glass  
looks down upon  
huts of humiliation  
tethered  
by black bars  
of fear  
and frustration*

*among the towers  
a chapel of stone  
and serenity  
its ceiling open  
welcoming the star  
filled night*

*within the  
dusty crevices  
a liturgy composed of  
broken glass  
broken lives  
mended with  
mortar and  
old news headlines  
of hope  
imprinted into  
awkward church walls*

*lopsided towers  
each one climbed  
painfully  
dangerously  
daringly  
to add one more  
embellishment  
one element closer  
to the sun  
twisted tendrils  
of steel  
balancing in  
silhouette against  
a fading sky*

*the towers  
never fall  
they stand stubbornly  
a city glued  
together of relics  
dishes and dolls  
beer bottles  
glass the colors  
of the sea  
stones  
pottery and porcelain  
and jewelry  
tears, torment  
the history  
of South Central LA*

*surviving earthquakes, riots  
neglect  
the arrogance of downtown's  
edifices of progress  
greed  
and abandonment by  
its maker*



## The Gallery

(Photos by Mark-Paul Sebar)

(Captions by the Editor)



Stephanie and E. P. McKnight



Everyone gets a smiling welcome



Open Mic: Nance Crawford



Steph & Ray: "I won WHAT?!"  
(See President's Corner)



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ABOUT THIS ISSUE:

Lots of really good stuff this month:

An important announcement about our State Bulletin (See pg. 13).

Jackie Houchin guides you through the maze of "Tweeting."

A beautiful tribute to the Watts Towers, by Lillian Rodich.

Poetry, reports, columns...

and, of course, our yearly April Fools Page.

ENJOY the issue!

— Ray



## URGENT: *HELP* WANTED!

### KUDOS COLUMNIST

*We are still 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.

### THANK YOU

Earn a Thank You — Volunteer!

Give a Thank You!

Tell us about someone who's helped!

### A Big Thank You

To **Peter Brothers** for the goodies,  
and to **Peter** and **Mark-Paul Sebar** for  
helping with the February set-up.

**Much appreciated!**

### FREE BEER!!

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

You'll get to hobnob with friends, help the Club  
and earn our eternal gratitude.  
(OK. We lied about the beer.)

# OUT and ABOUT

## California Writers Club Literary Review

### Announcement and Invitation Submission for first issue must be received by April 15, 2011

#### A New Publishing Opportunity Knocks

The California Writers Club will launch a literary review late this spring and thereafter three a year—spring, fall, and winter. Our magazine-style publication—think *New Yorker* but yet to be named—will host writing from members through a blind selection process, and include fiction, nonfiction and poetry. Unique graphics and photography may also sneak in on a limited basis. Your co-editors, Joyce Krieg of Central Coast Branch, and Dave LaRoche of South Bay Branch, solicit your work for inclusion. Your submissions may have been previously published or fresh from your vivid imaginations, and, of course, sent with single-use rights.

The *CWC Literary Review* (working title) will be mailed out to all members in hard copy and, in time, made available for non-member subscription. We intend a prestigious publication, both shining light on the included authors and bringing cachet to the club. You will want to be included.

Submission requirements and deadline dates will be repeated in each issue and apply to the next. For our first issue the following applies:

- Submissions in email attachment, MSWord, doc or rtf format, space and one-half with one inch margins, New Times Roman 12pt—no special formatting.
- Maximum length is 2500 words, fiction; 1500 words, nonfiction; 50 lines of poetry. These may be adjusted in future issues
- All work should be error free and must include a cover sheet with author's name, email address, number of words, and title. The remaining pages to be free of all ID except title: upper right, and page numbers: lower center.
- Submissions for the first issue must be emailed not later than April 15, 2011
- Include in your transmittal email the statement, "I (your name) own and convey the right to publish this work(s) (name it/them) one time in the CWC Lit-Review."

Our first issue, will include the rules for a Name-the-Lit-Review Contest—and identify a prize for the member whose name is chosen.

We are excited about this venture, another value in club membership, and have aspirations that will see the review on shelves in bookstores and in e-distribution. Of course you are a big part of it, so join in and have fun. Send your work, limit 2 on a given submission, to Dave LaRoche, [dalaroche@comcast.net](mailto:dalaroche@comcast.net) by April 15, 2011, then sit back and watch our *CWC Literary-Review* grow.

## • 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**  
April: Deborah R. Magnus – Author Success Workshop  
May: Linda Ballou – “Make Travel Writing Work for You”  
June: Eric Stone – “Taking Your Novel From Idea To Finished Work”**

### 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-sfv.org](mailto:membership@cwc-sfv.org).

### SUBMISSIONS

Members are encouraged to submit writing contributions to *The Valley Scribe*. This is your newsletter, and you should be part of it. Submit your prose and poetry to [cwc-sfv@roadrunner.com](mailto:cwc-sfv@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

Submission deadline is one week after the monthly Open Meetings.

### UPCOMING MEMBER SHOWCASE

April 16, 2011  
Lenora Smalley

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.



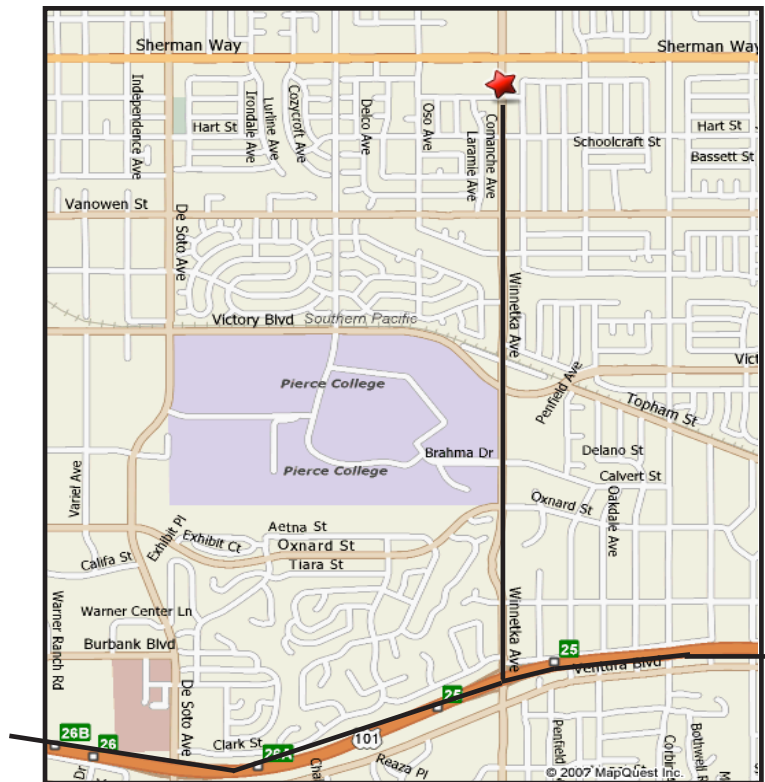
## The Fine Print

### **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

Proofreaders Judy Presnall, Stephanie Sharf,  
 Sharron Malus  
 Columnists Stephanie Sharf, Ken Watts,  
 J. Raymond Kent,  
 Ray Malus  
 Staff Photographer Mark-Paul Sebar

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

#### EXECUTIVE BOARD & BOARD MEMBERS

President, Stephanie Sharf [stephaniesharf@yahoo.com](mailto:stephaniesharf@yahoo.com)  
 VP-Membership, Lenora Smalley [membership@cw-csfv.org](mailto:membership@cw-csfv.org)  
 Treasurer, Judy Presnall [treasurer@cw-csfv.org](mailto:treasurer@cw-csfv.org)  
 Secretary, Ken Watts [onemomoe@earthlink.net](mailto:onemomoe@earthlink.net)  
 Central Board Rep., Stephanie Sharf [stephaniesharf@yahoo.com](mailto:stephaniesharf@yahoo.com)

Pre-Session Leader, Ray Malus [cw-csfv@roadrunner.com](mailto:cw-csfv@roadrunner.com)  
 Program Chair, Stephanie Sharf [stephaniesharf@yahoo.com](mailto:stephaniesharf@yahoo.com)  
 Hospitality Chair, Pirhiya Goldstein  
[pirhiya\\_goldstein@yahoo.com](mailto:pirhiya_goldstein@yahoo.com)

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

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