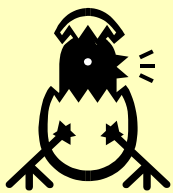




# The Valley Scribe

Newsletter of the San Fernando Valley

APRIL  
2012  
VOLUME 4  
ISSUE 8



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## Lookin' Good

Ellen Reid, author of *Putting Your Best Book Forward, A Book Shepherd's Secrets for Producing Award-Winning Books That Sell*, is our April 7th speaker in the Katzenberg Room. Since 1999, Reid has worked as an executive book producer for authors and others who want to establish their own independent publishing companies, or who want to learn the new technologies of the independent publishing business. Reid is president of Ellen Reid's Book Shepherding®, a division of Smarketing LLC. She assembles a team of creative people who include cover designers, copy editors and copywriters and more.

She and her team manage — or shepherd — the thousands of details that go into turning a Word file into a professionally-produced book. She also helps professionals create their own publishing companies so they can retain all their publishing rights, including electronic rights, to create e-books, printed books, audio books and



Ellen Reid



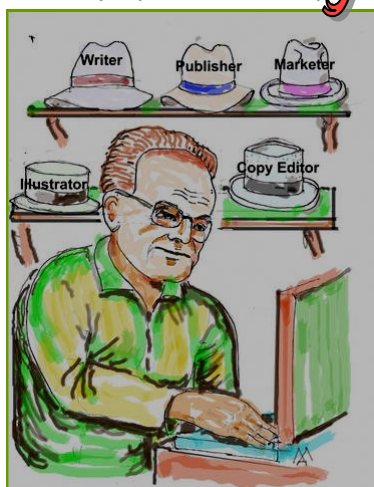
other products. Even though e-books and digital printing have made self-publishing an easy process to start, finishing the task in a satisfactory manner is another story.

"It's never been harder to get a book produced well," said Reid, who has produced numerous award-winning books. "If you don't create a book that stands up well next to the books published by big houses, your brand image will suffer as a result," she said.

Come hear her unique and expert perspective on self-publishing. For additional information: [www.bookshep.com](http://www.bookshep.com)

## West valley whimsicals

A Schwartz / Highcove Production



George tried to be patient. After he sent his manuscript to a hotshot agent he waited and waited and waited ... but nothing happened for six months. Then the busy agent phoned and said, "Hmm. Just took a look at your chapters. Speaking frankly, with your best interest at heart, I think you should rewrite the entire book. Don't count on doing the illustrations. Publishers call the tune. Be flexible.

I'll get back to you in a month."

At first George felt like a real loser. Then he got mad ... and decided to find a better way. *I wrote the book, he thought, and I'm gonna publish it! Me, myself and I!* And that's how George got into self-publishing and self-marketing.

George now wears many hats: writer, copy-writer, illustrator, marketer and publisher! In addition ... he wears the banker-at-PayPal visor.

### Executive Board

President ... Yolanda Fintor

Vice-president/Membership ... Andrea Polk

Vice-president/Programs ... Rita Keeley Brown

Secretary ... Position open

Treasurer ... Pirhiya Goldstein

### Board of Directors

Editor ... Kathy Highcove

Webmaster /Photographer ... Ray Malus

Publicity ... Karen Gorback

On Site Coordinator ... Betty Freeman

Critique Groups Facilitator ... Lillian Rodich

Open Mike ... Bill Sorrells

Member-at-Large ... Judy Presnall



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

#### *This and That*

A concern: How can our club best serve home-bound members who want to attend our meetings? This problem came to my attention when I heard from a long-time member, very active for many years, who now has mobility problems. He wants very much to hear our speakers' important information. After input from this member, I thought of several more members in the same predicament. Consequently, the SFV Board is considering ways to share our meetings with those at home.

I've made a fact-finding inquiry to the Media Operations Director for the Calabasas Public Access Station in hopes that their personnel would suggest ways to meet our needs.

The Skype has been mentioned by a Board member, but the program might not be practical if it requires an expensive high tech tools and a knowledgeable technician. I'm sure there are other possibilities. If anyone has a suggestion or valuable input, please contact me at [yfintor@sbcglobal.net](mailto:yfintor@sbcglobal.net)

Another idea we are pursuing is community outreach. Our Program Chair, Rita Brown, and I will meet with the head librarian at the West Valley Regional Library to discuss a writing workshop program for the community.

By now you all should have received the inaugural issue of CWC's *Literary Review*. We are proud that the work of three members of our SFV branch are included: Kathy Highcove, Ray Malus and Lillian Rodich. Congratulations to all of you! Please note that submissions for the autumn issue will be open **May 1 through June 30, 2012**. I hope many of you will submit, but first, read page 34 of the *Literary Review* on "**What constitutes a high quality product.**" With so many talented writers in the SFV, I know our branch will be well represented in the next issue. — YF



### March 2012 meeting



Colin Gallagher  
and Diana Johnson  
entertain us during  
Open Mic.

Jackie Houchin and  
Carolyn Howard-Johnson  
share a laugh.





After her introduction at our CWC/SFV March meeting, guest speaker and author Carolyn Howard-Johnson, a jack of all trades in the world of words, quipped that she was accustomed to not being paid for making personal appearances.

But to demonstrate that she was a good sport, the author of the award-winning *The Frugal Book Promoter*, the latest in her *Frugal* book series, gamely shared a wealth of invaluable information on marketing, relayed in a clear and concise fashion.

Howard-Johnson, currently working as an instructor for UCLA's Extension Writers' Program, covered a wide range of subjects during her talk entitled *The Beauty of Marketing: It's Never Too Late or Too Soon to Promote Your Book*. Though the focus of her presentation was on taking advantage of the resources on the Internet, she occasionally delved into non-digital, traditional tools.

Our guest speaker immediately set a positive tone in her opening remarks when she told us, **"This is the best time to be a writer! Why? Because writers no longer have to depend on others to publish their books."**

Throughout her presentation, Howard-Johnson frequently returned to her central theme: today's writer needs to utilize Internet resources, which are "not that complicated." She underlined the immediate need to "...build a social media platform."

"If you go to a book expo — a trade show — all agents and publishers want to see your platform. Why? A platform shows that you're ready to be a professional and launch your book the right way."

To illustrate her point, she listed the key tools of the Internet used by one's platform: individual Web sites, branding, blogs, online book tours, sales pages, Excel contact lists, email blasts and even RSS (rich site summary or real simply syndication) and QRC (quick response codes). She also endorsed business cards with rave reviews in mini-fonts and thumbnail photos of book covers. As an extra bonus, she gave each member the leaflet, **"Primer: What's New in Marketing."**

Howard-Johnson strongly emphasized the value of social media for today's writers. "A manuscript in a drawer is not shar-



ing," she told us. "Keep in mind that it is never too late or too early to promote your book. Careers that are not fed die as readily as any living organism given no sustenance."

Other Howard-Johnson books include *The Frugal Book Promoter: How to Do What Your Publisher Won't*, *The Frugal Editor: Put Your Best Book Forward to Avoid Humiliation and Ensure Success*, *The Great First Impression Book Proposal*, and *Great Little Last-Minute Editing Tips for Writers*.

-- Gary Wosk

## Branch Bragging Rights

If you are a current CWC member, the long awaited CWC Literary Review should have made its appearance in your mailbox. The cover displayed a familiar photograph of our founder: author Jack London.

Our SFV branch made a good showing in the first issue: a memoir by Ray Malus, a flash fiction piece by Kathy Highcove, and two poems provided by Lillian Rodich.

Perhaps you missed the deadline of the first issue. If so, there's another opportunity coming up. See the guidelines for the autumn issue on page 11 of this newsletter. KH



## WHAT IS MEANT BY "DOING PR?"

You may well ask. In fact, the definition of "public relations" has changed with technological advances. Fifty years ago, it generally meant publicity and press agents. More recently, it extends to "engagement" and "relationship building."

In 2011/12, the Public Relations Society of America led an international effort to replace a definition adopted in 1982 by the PRSA National Assembly with: "Public relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics."

Interestingly, the PRSA mentions marketing and fundraising and also "implementing the organization's efforts to influence or change public policy." Exercise caution in this respect. The CWC cannot, for instance, tell members how to vote.

For the CWC and its branches, public relations new or old, boils down to not just informing the community about what you do but making clear why it should matter to them. Do you offer a scholarship? Run a contest? Hold events they can attend? If you do, get the word out. Avail yourselves of current technology as well as tried-and-true handouts and posters. Above all, never miss the opportunity to network.

Speaking of networking, consider saving Saturday afternoon, July 21, for some face-to-face socializing at our annual pot-luck picnic that, in the words of CWC state president Bob Garfinkle, "Continues the glorious tradition that Jack London and his literary pals began over 100 years ago with informal outdoor literary salons — 'a blanket and a basket of chow' — on the lands that are now Oakland's 500-acre Joaquin Miller Park." We gather at the Fire Circle. Details follow.

Good luck and sail on!

Donna McCrohan Rosenthal, PR chair

[pr@calwriters.org](mailto:pr@calwriters.org)

## Special Events in Sister Branches

### Redwood Writers

"Next Step" Conference, April 28, 2012

Poetry Night - "Poetic Journeys" - April 27  
Sponsored by the Redwood Writers Branch  
of the California Writers Club

Redwood Writers branch of the CWC hosts a conference on April 28th in Santa Rosa which will be preceded by a Poetry Night program on Friday, April 27th, featuring former California Poet Laureate Al Young. Redwood's website for info:

<http://redwoodwriters.org/>.

## From Marin County CWC

Sunday, 2 – 4 p.m, March 25, 2012. Book Passage, Corte Madera.

### Bay Area Magazine Panel

Editors from Bay Area literary and glossy magazines share their wisdom and answer your questions about publication. Sunday, April 29, 2012, 2 – 4 p.m., Book Passage, Corte Madera

**For Young Adult fiction Writers:** Authors who have written both adult and YA fiction explain the difference between a novel *for* teens and one that is *about* them. Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2 – 4 p.m., Book Passage, Corte Madera

### TBA

Sunday, June 24, 2012, 2 – 4 p.m., Book Passage, Corte Madera

### Agents Panel: *It's Still About the Writing*

More info: <http://us.mg6.mail.yahoo.com/neo/launch?.rand=600nr51i4osk7>

## Look at it This Way ...

Every year *The Washington Post* has published the winning submissions to its yearly **neologism** contest.

Readers are asked to supply alternate meanings for common words.

Here's the 2012 list:



1. **Coffee** (n.), the person upon whom one coughs.
2. **Flabbergasted** (adj.), appalled over how much weight you have gained.
3. **Abdicate** (v.), to give up all hope of ever having a flat stomach.
4. **Esplanade** (v.), to attempt an explanation while drunk.
5. **Willy-nilly** (adj.), impotent.
6. **Negligent** (adj.), a condition in which you absent-mindedly answer the door in your nightgown.
7. **Lymph** (v.), to walk with a lisp.
8. **Gargoyle** (n.), olive-flavored mouthwash.
9. **Flatulence** (n.) emergency vehicle that picks you up after you are run over by a steamroller.
10. **Balderdash** (n.), a rapidly receding hairline.
11. **Rectitude** (n.), the formal, dignified bearing adopted by proctologists.
12. **Pokemon** (n), a Rastafarian proctologist.
13. **Oyster** (n.), a person who sprinkles his conversation with Yiddishisms.
14. **Frisbeetarianism** (n.), (back by popular demand): The belief that, when you die, your Soul flies up onto the roof and gets stuck there.
15. **Circumvent** (n.), an opening in the front of boxer shorts worn by Jewish men.

*The Washington Post* © 2012

## REVIEW AND REFRESH

### Titles

The ease of using italics on the computer has brought some adjustments in the rules for the punctuation of titles. The rules used to be to underline major works like novels, biographies, essay collections, etc., and to put quotation marks around minor works like short stories, articles, and poems.

A look at current newspapers and magazines, however, indicates that the old conventions seem to have faded away in favor of putting everything in italics. In any event, the following rules still apply when you put a title on your manuscript.

### Manuscript Titles

The first page of your manuscript should be blank except for the title, which is centered in the middle of the page.

Do not capitalize all the words in your title.

Do not put quotation marks around your title.

Do not underline your title.

Do not do a combination of or all of the above.

Do capitalize the first letter of each word in a title except the following:

the articles *a, an, and the*

short prepositions like *in, on, for, and by*

coordinate conjunctions *and, but, or, for, nor, so, and yet.*

Longer prepositions like *before, around, against etc. may be capitalized.*

Examples:

*A Geography of the Philippine Island*

*A Trip Around the Globe*

*The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*

*The Old Man and the Sea*

When you refer to your title or to someone else's title within the manuscript, put it in italics.

Example:

Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men* continues to be a favorite among high school students ... and ... personally, I find his novel *East of Eden* to be his best.



*Of Mice and Men ...*

**I really like  
that title, Dave.**

— Dave Wetterberg





## MARKET TO MARKET



by Ken Watts

Bard Fiction Prize is open to younger American writers. Prize: \$30,000 and appointment as writer-in-residence

at Bard College for 1 semester. No entry fee. Deadline: July 15. Guidelines available by SASE, fax, phone, e-mail, or website. Entries must be previously published. Open to U.S. citizens aged 39 and below. They need fiction.

Cover letter should include name, address, e-mail, and name of publisher where book was previously published. Contact: Irene Zedlacher. Address: Bard College, P. O. Box 5000, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY 12504-5000. E-mail: [bfp@bard.edu](mailto:bfp@bard.edu). Website: [www.bard.edu/bfp](http://www.bard.edu/bfp)

Sarabande Books, Inc. publishes for the general literary audience and publishes poetry, short fiction, and creative nonfiction.

Needs: literary, short story collections. They don't consider sci-fi, fantasy, or horror. Word length: 70,000-90,000 words. Charges \$10 handling fee. Accepts simultaneous submissions. Guidelines for #10 SASE or on website. Publishes ms 18 months after acceptance. Pays: \$500-1,000 advance. Contact: Sarah Gorham, editor-in-chief. Address: 2234 Dundee Rd., Suite 200, Louisville, KY 40205. Fax: (502)458-4065. E-mail: [info@sarabandebooks.org](mailto:info@sarabandebooks.org). Website: [www.sarabandebooks.org](http://www.sarabandebooks.org)

\$50,000 Gift Of Freedom is open to female residents of the U.S. Guidelines, deadlines, and application available at

[www.aroomoftherownfoundation.org](http://www.aroomoftherownfoundation.org). The \$50,000 is awarded over 2 years in support of the production of a particular creative project. Application fee: \$35. Looking for works in 4 genres: Creative nonfiction, fiction, playwriting and poetry. The winning finalist will win \$50,000. The 3 remaining genre finalists will each receive a \$5,000 prize. Contact: Tracey Cravens-Gras, associate director. Address: A Room Of Her Own Foundation, P.O. Box 778, Placitas, NM 87043. E-mail: [info@aroomoftherownfoundation.org](mailto:info@aroomoftherownfoundation.org). Website: [www.aroomoftherownfoundation.org](http://www.aroomoftherownfoundation.org)

Akron Poetry Prize offers an annual award of \$1,500 plus publication of a book-length ms. Submissions must be unpublished. Considers simultaneous submissions. See website for guidelines. Entry fee: \$25. Deadline: Entries accepted May 1 – June 15 only. Contact: Mary Biddinger, editor/award director. Address: The University Of Akron Press, 120 E. Mill St., Suite 415, Akron OH 44308. Fax: (330)972-8364. E-mail: [uapress@uakron.edu](mailto:uapress@uakron.edu). Website: [marybid@uakron.edu](mailto:marybid@uakron.edu)

### Something To Ponder

*Confidence is that feeling by which the mind embarks on great and honorable courses with a sure hope and trust in itself. - Cicero*



## New Member

Actor and comedian Robin Williams one day told his dad that he wanted to be an actor. His dad said, "That's fine son. Just don't give up your day job."



DIANE LAUX

With all laughs aside, having to do a day job has been my major dilemma for me as a writer. Oh why did I land as an elementary teacher for my day job!? It doesn't seem to mix with being a writer! It meant embarking upon two full blown professional careers, each requiring more than the nine-to-five, forty-hour work week — in addition to working my way through college. I suppose it was the narrowing of the job market. Happily, both careers involve a wide dissemination of information, ideas and inspiration, not to mention the ninety percent perspiration.

However, between classes I managed to crank out a few magazine articles and short newspaper pieces, mainly in education. In my files are rough drafts waiting to be typed and to find a home in a book. There are a few stops along the way — such as finding an agent, and publisher, or shall I say, being discovered by an editor? Some of you know all too well about that.

My pending projects cover a gamut of genres: biographies, spiritual fiction, and nonfiction books, children's books, and a little poetry in the mix.

With a declining economy and scarcity of jobs for better or worse I recently got the bright idea to take an early teacher retirement in order to have more time to write. Now writing involves more sedentary work than teaching. Can some brilliant writer out there please tell me how writers keep their weight down?

My passion for writing began when I was in the eighth grade, and we had to write down what we wanted to do before entering high school. I was encouraged by a few teachers and my sister to choose writing.

All along I felt, and still feel today, that writing is my way of giving back to the world. It's something I cannot *not do*. As President John F. Kennedy once said, "The dream still lives, and the hope shall never die."

And so that's my story in a nutshell.



## WRITING FOR THE EDUCATIONAL MARKET

by Judy Presnall

I attended a workshop put on by the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI) in Bakersfield last month. The three-hour workshop was put on by a representative of Capstone Press.

The educational market includes classroom curriculum, libraries' needs, and popular trends.

Capstone publishes about 1,000 titles a year. Ideas are created in-house and assignments are made based on the writer's interest and expertise. The workshop focused on building a submission packet for children's nonfiction. The packet should include a letter, a resume, and up to three writing samples (1-3 pages) of unpublished work.

Assignments are work-for-hire, paid a flat fee with no royalties or rights. Time allotment for project is 3-6 months; pay range is approximately \$350 to \$3,000 per book, depending on length of a manuscript. Capstone provides photographs and marketing. We all left the workshop with a free Capstone book, many ideas floating in our heads, and hopefulness in obtaining an assignment from Capstone Press.

*\*Judy Presnall is the author of 23 nonfiction children's books by Franklin Watts, Lucent Books, and KidHaven Press. She has a new book coming out in 2013. For info:*

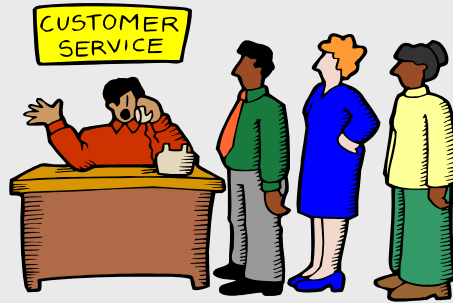
*[www.judithjandapresnall.com](http://www.judithjandapresnall.com)*



### The Ultimate Snail Mail

Here's an example of Never Give Up. An article by Erica Stux appeared in the January issue of the children's magazine *Nature Friend*. The publication hung on to her submission for seven years. The title: *Geysers - Nature's Fountains*.

## KEN'S PET PEEVES



by Ken Wilkins

LINES

**We stand in line among the smileless ranks  
Sometimes in markets and always in banks.**

**We choose the shortest, but only to learn**

**The guy ahead of us has time to burn.**

**A thousand questions from the talking fool**

**We could wring his neck, but we keep our cool.**

**Adding to the babble is the thoughtless clerk**

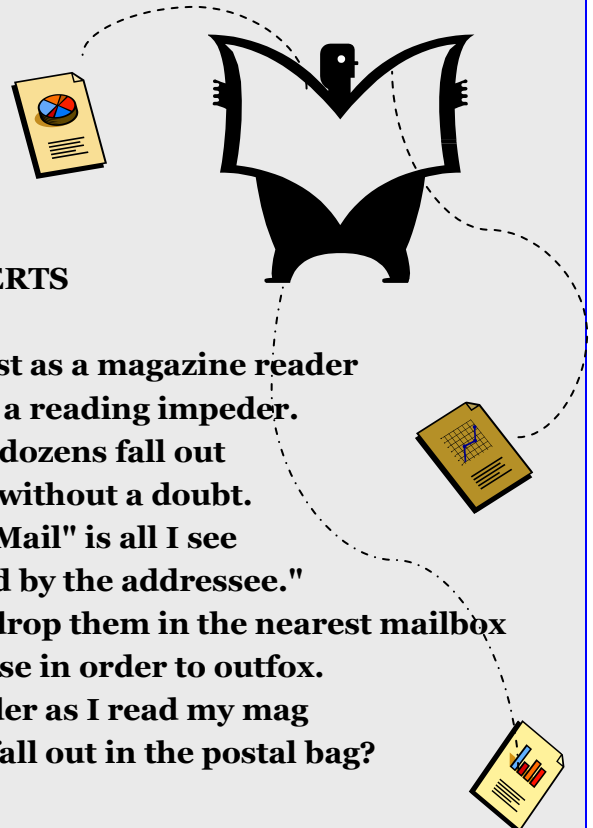
**We wish her another, a new line of work.**

**When we have reached the front like long, lost sheep**

**Our thoughts by then you should certainly bleep.**

**If the lesson is patience, all well and fine**

**But, does it have to come from standing in line?**



## MAGAZINE INSERTS

**I view with disgust as a magazine reader**

**An insert card as a reading impedier.**

**Not just one, but dozens fall out**

**A paper blizzard without a doubt.**

**"Business Reply Mail" is all I see**

**"Postage will paid by the addressee."**

**I am tempted to drop them in the nearest mailbox**

**Unsigned of course in order to outfox.**

**I constantly ponder as I read my mag**

**Why didn't they fall out in the postal bag?**

## Tributes to Arthur Yuwiler PhD.



photo provided by Ken Wilkins

Art Yuwiler, when he served as CWC/WV Membership Chair, sorts name tags with Betty Freeman.

In many parts of the world his friends will miss him. Some of those friends represent an unusual hobby that Art and Alice pursued with diligence. They would witness eclipses of the sun wherever in the world they could be seen.

Yes, Art had many loyal good friends. And that loyalty went both ways! Art never shirked his responsibilities, even when fate dealt him some pretty rotten blows. Together with his wife Alice, he accepted life the way it came and made the best of it.

When a man such as Art leaves this earth of ours — we, his friends — can only be thankful that he once existed and attempt to emulate some of the standards he set for us. We can feel proud that he was one of us.

To those most directly affected by Art's long, final illness and death, we extend our profound sympathy. We hope that the memory of Art before that illness will linger in your hearts with pride.

— Claude F. Baxter

### From Dave

A lot can happen in fourteen years. One of the nice things that happened to me was meeting Art Yuwiler. I was serving a term as SFV President when a tall, unassuming man approached me and asked me if I had any relatives in Sweden. I said I probably did, but I had no real contacts with them because several generations had gone by. He said, "I just completed two years in Sweden working with a man with the same last name as yours." This comment led to an email exchange with the Swedish Wetterbergs, but that's another story. What's important is that this conversation led to a friendship with one of the friendliest, most intelligent and talented gentlemen I have ever met.

That year Art and I formed our first critique group. It was great. Whenever the discussion wandered off track, serious-writer Art would point his finger at the 8 1/2 by 11 on the table and remind us, "This is what we are discussing, this piece of paper and the words written on it."

A real Renaissance man, Art was also a willing and active participant in our club, serving on our Board of Directors as Membership Chair. He was a loyal friend and member.

I'll miss him.

— Dave Wetterberg

### From Claude

Most of us knew Arthur Yuwiler as a writer of considerable talent and imagination. In the Writers Club, his writing ability was the skill most visible to us. But that was only a small part of this talented, helpful and friendly man. Art was also an accomplished artist, a sculptor in various media.

One look at the carved totem pole in front of his house, the numerous abstract, three-dimensional carvings inside his home and the many drawings — all his own work — and you knew without a doubt that Art had tapped into a reservoir of considerable artistic talents.

By profession, Art was an accomplished neuro-chemist, one of the originals of this breed. He was a professor of neuro-chemistry at UCLA.

Toward the end of his career he became the head of his own laboratory and a Career Investigator for the Veterans Administration. At heart, Art was also a philosopher. At times he gave vent to this part of himself in his scientific writing.

Finally, and most importantly, Art was a devoted husband, father and family man.



"I have a dream," the man said. His voice rolled over the sky and in its thunder was the "Battle Hymn of the Republic."

"I have a dream," he shouted again, arms raised like the branches of a great tree. Then the heavens split open and gold poured down over the green grass and the blood red flowers of the hill.

From dust we came — the earth and all things on it — traveling endlessly around a yellow star in the immense heavens.

There are many stars. Are there many earths? Our round space ship endlessly circles, spiraling slowly towards a constellation that will be gone when we arrive. And yet we spiral still.

Was not the hate at Birmingham also at Calvary, Wounded Knee, Dachau, the killing fields of Cambodia, the fresh graves in Yugoslavia, Rwanda, New York?

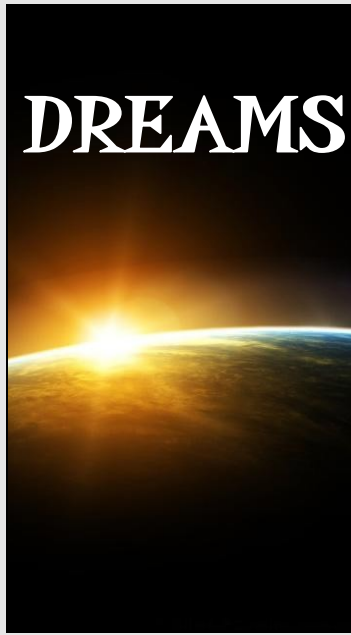
But grass grows on the arches of the Coliseum, it covers Wounded Knee, it springs between the furnaces at Dachau, it blankets the graves of haters and hated alike. And the small rains still fall and waves still endlessly pound the shore.

Before the great oceans were born, before the first creature struggled on land, waves surged across the sands of the shallow sea of a single continent. Now that sand is a two hundred and fifty million year old rock seven thousand feet high at the top of the Canyon. Below, it is older still.

It is a time of trouble, a time of danger. The emperor's men are at the gate, the Cossacks ride, the barbarians come, the Vandals, the Huns, the terrorists. It is them and we are us. But which us? Three great waves of our ancestors came from Africa. Our seed is spread as the rains on earth. Cousins of the chimpanzees, we are blood brothers to all men, of all colors, of all eye folds.

Which ancestor defines us? What man selects his own parents, his time of birth, where to be born? What man wires his own brain, selects his own body parts?

# DREAMS



They thundered over the earth for a hundred million years, but they are now gone. The great jaws are locked in stone, the forests, rock and oil. Silent now are their shrieks of angry death on earth, seas, and sky.

Louder still than their bellows, roared the mountain from space, spraying the dust of Yucatan and the water of the Gulf into the heaven, blotting out the sun, blanketing the earth in darkness. The great beasts are no more.

Hairy, almost-men, thirty thousand years ago hurried, heads bent

low, rock tipped branches in hand. If the bison turned and charged, if the dire wolves came, each man's life was in his companion's hand.

Who can one trust if not a brother, an uncle, a son? And the weak have been left behind, and the crippled, and the old, and the strange of mind. They only consume. They are dangerous, untrustworthy. We are alone and we are us.

For a moment, the moon blots out the sun. For a moment the corona glows pearl against velvet. Flecks of red — flames a hundred earth diameters long — dot a black sun. Darkness. Sudden cold.

The sunset hangs like a dirty skirt all around the ebony hips of the sky. Points of light, hard, cold, pitiless, enduring, stare down — the terrible, cold, jet vastness of space!

On this tiny dust mote, on this tiny spacecraft, can there be a *them*? Are we not all *us*?

"I have a dream," the man said.

"Only love dispels evil," said Buddha.

"Do not do unto others that which is hateful to thyself," said Hillel.

"Treat others as you would like to be treated," said Christ.

"All people are a single nation," said Mohammed.

"I have a dream," the man said.

— Arthur Yuwiler © 2002

## STORY OF BORAX, SWECO AND MAX SCHWARTZ

*Intro: A high point in SFV member Max Schwartz' engineering career came in 1962 when U.S. Borax commissioned his new engineering company to design a housing development for the Boron plant personnel in the Mohave Desert. Max was a logical choice; he'd been the Supervisor of the Civil Engineering Division at Southwestern Engineering Company (SWECO), the builders of the Borax plant. Here's an excerpt from Max's Borax story, written by Max Schwartz in third person :*

When Borax became SWECO's client, Max was part of the engineering team that consisted of mining, mechanical and civil engineers. The group frequently drove from Los Angeles to the plant near the small town of Boron in the Mojave Desert to meet with the Borax's supervising staff. As part of their orientation of the mining operation, they descended the mine shaft to inspect the underground chambers where borate ore was mined. They found the underground environment to be clean, white and usually a cool 72 degrees. The team began to learn the history of the mine.

### Underground Mining

Back in 1924, the first mine shaft was dug 210 feet deep to a 70-foot thick bed of Colemanite ore. It was originally known as the Baker Mine. The operation was much like that of coal mines, where miners took a cage, or elevator, to the underground cavern where the ore was extracted from the earth. The operation was known as *Room-and-Pillar* mining. Tunnels were carved into the ore body leaving large pillars to support ore overhead. Blasted chunks of ore were raised to the surface where it was crushed and screened to pebble size for shipment to the Borax Refinery located in Wilmington, California.

The operation underground consisted of air drilling holes in the face of the ore body, which were filled with explosives. Fuses were attached to detonators and ignited. After the explosives detonated, the broken-up ore was loaded into mine cars on steel rails that transported the ore to a hopper near the mine shaft where it was lifted in *skips*, then dumped into another hopper that fed a rock crush, then onto a belt conveyor to be loaded into rail-

road hopper cars headed to the Borax refinery.

### 20-Mule Team

Prior to the building of the railroad, Borax hauled the ore by mule team through Death Valley to a railhead near Mojave.

The distance was 165 miles and the mule train took ten days to make the trip. The team consisted of 18 mules led by two horses. The animals hauled two heavy wagons carrying a total of 30 tons of ore. Each wagon had a 16-foot bed made of one-inch thick iron plate, was six feet deep and weighed 7800 lbs empty. The rear wheels were seven-foot diameter. A third wagon carried



Max painted this picture for Borax.

1,200 gallons of water mainly for the mules and horses and was refilled at a number of springs along the trip. The mules and horses were tied to an 80-foot-long chain attached to the wagons. The team's driver, or *Mule Skinner*, had a whip but controlled the mules by jerking the chain. The entire length of the team and wagons was 180 feet.

The mule team operated for six years: 1883 to 1889.

### Early Borax Headquarters

On their first visit to the mine site, the SWECO Engineering Team met at Borax mine headquarters. The facilities consisted of an old three-story wood office building that had been moved from Death Valley. The personnel section was on the first floor, accounting and timekeeper on the second story and the third floor was for visiting dignitaries. Nearby were three housing areas consisting of two men's dormitories, a dozen bachelor cabins, a company store, a recreation hall, a pool hall, a boarding house and a first aid station. Max remembers that they were filming the movie *The Carpetbaggers* where the star, Alan Ladd, landed an old biplane near the Borax office building.

After watching the filming, Max and group prepared flow diagrams for each part of the plant's process: crushing and grinding of the ore, dissolving and crystallizing the borate, to loading the finished products into railroad hopper cars.

*When all the plans were finished, SWECO met with Borax and learned that the company had just opted for Open Pit mining methods. Back to the drawing board for the SWECO team. Discover how Max streamlined ore production, and designed a new town at [www.maxschwartz.us/The\\_Borax\\_Story.pdf](http://www.maxschwartz.us/The_Borax_Story.pdf)*



## LITERARY REVIEW SUBMISSION GUIDELINES: AUTUMM ISSUE OPEN MAY 1 THRU JUNE 30, 2012

CWC members are invited to submit published or unpublished work following the guidelines below.

Submissions are blind-read by an acquisition board. Work meeting a threshold of quality and interest will be included in the next issue. Rejections will be followed with a note as to reasons. No submission editing will be performed.

While satire and parody are welcome, proselytizing or potentially libelous material as well as pornographic forays, and/or gratuitous vulgarity and obscenity are inappropriate.

The author retains all rights, other than the one-time publication in this *Literary Review*.

Send submissions, for this issue only, as an attachment to [Dave LaRoche, dalaroche@comcast.net](mailto:dalaroche@comcast.net), [subject, "CWC Lit-Review."](#)

### Categories

- ◆ Fiction and nonfiction memoir, essay, and biography of 3000 words or less. Excerpts only if the submission can be judged a complete story on its own.
- ◆ Poetry of 50 lines or fewer
- ◆ Photography and graphics through special arrangement with the managing editor.

**Guidelines** (Non conforming work will not be read by the acquisition editors.)

#### General

- ◆ The author must be a CWC member, and the submission must be his/her exclusive work.
- ◆ A maximum of two submissions per member, separate files, will be accepted per issue. A notice of receipt will be sent to the author.
- ◆ The author must have the right to convey all rights to the CWC *Literary Review* for a one-time use.
- ◆ Work must be submitted during the submission period noted above. Each issue of the magazine will specify the submission period for the next issue.
- ◆ Work must be sent as an email attachment, refer to **Format** below.
- ◆ Submissions WILL NOT BE EDITED. Work selected will be published as is. CAUTION: more than 1500 readers will see your work. The editor may make insignificant changes related to fit and breaks.

### Preparing Your Submission

#### Body of email

- ◆ Author's name, email address, and branch affiliation
- ◆ Title(s), word count and genre: fiction, nonfiction, memoir, non-fiction essay, non-fiction-bio, or poetry.
- ◆ Statement must be included: *I, (name) own and convey the right to publish this/these work(s) (Titles of work ) for this one time publication in the CWC Literary Review.*

### Attachments

- ◆ Pages numbered sequentially in a footer, bottom center. Do not use a cover sheet.
- ◆ Each page will contain the title of the work; once above the body of the work on the front page; again in a header, right side, including the notation, NF-M, NF-B, NF-E, poetry or fiction. No other identifying information, such as author's name shall be included.
- ◆ Work with excessive typos or grammatical errors will not be read by the acquisition editors.

### Format

- ◆ MSWord: doc or rtf format, rtf preferred. **TIP:** if using a recent MS Word release, docx format, do a "save as" (found under the file menu) in doc format before attaching.
- ◆ Left justified, one and one-half line spacing, New Times Roman 12 pt font
- ◆ One-inch margins around preferred. Poetry may be centered. Note: present poetry in the form you expect it to be published. We will do our best to accommodate.
- ◆ Do not use page breaks, spaces to indent for paragraphs, special leading, or any other personalized text manipulation that presents the magazine composer with excessive challenge.





## Those Who Dance

those who dance  
find the earth covered  
in uncertain clouds too illusive  
to support heavy steps  
mold the mist  
into moving shadows  
listen to musical leaves  
hold waving branch arms  
like partners in the wind  
lie on beach sands  
lifted by changing tides  
ripple upon ripple  
gently urging them  
to join the waves  
and float into the center  
of sea circles

those who dance  
twirl in and out of reality  
become lost in games  
and books and deep thoughts  
don costumes  
and drift into a fading sunset  
with the others  
like wisps of clouds

those who dance  
know the seasons  
become part of them  
understand the ripples  
a stone can make  
in a lake of reason  
become reflections  
of chandelier lights on  
night walls  
petals falling from a rose  
violin strings children's  
smiles



those who dance sing  
for how can they not  
when their voices also dance

those who dance  
are not afraid to cry  
their spirits do not drown in tears  
only bend with the wind  
they remain resolute  
and fall asleep in the arms  
of a melody

those who dance are fireflies  
flitting in a warm spring night  
sometimes mistaken for ... STARS



# Familiar Rhythms

Sister Augusta was very accustomed to heat — African heat, Congo heat — but that afternoon she'd endured enough of Rome's summer heat. After all, she and her fellow nuns from Kukala had waited over two hours in St. Peter's Square for the Papal address.

I need fresh air, water, and a croissant, she thought, and wiped the moisture from her forehead.

She turned to Sister Teresa, "I feel faint, my friend," she said. "I'm taking a stroll to clear my head."

"I'll come with you."

"No, no. Don't worry. I'll just return to the cafe where we ate breakfast. I'll meet you there." She quickly turned before Teresa could object again and wended her way back through the throng.

Once free, the nun briskly strode along. She loved to move, see the sights, and observe the different types of people who visited the Eternal City.

Nearing the cafe, she heard drumming ... African drumming. She walked faster. Around the next corner she spotted a band — resplendent in bright yellow and purple patterned shirts. She joined the small group that surrounded the musicians.

As she listened, her knees began to bend, her hips slightly swayed and her arms moved with the beat. The main drummer looked over at her and grinned. He aimed a staccato explosion in her direction. She smiled her thanks.

When did I last hear these rhythms? she asked herself. Ah yes, back when my cousin married. I was dancing with the women of our village. Step, sway, step, sway... Before I left for the convent. My mother cried. What am I doing here in Rome? Why do I want to watch old men in fancy robes bow to an altar and drone prayers over a loudspeaker? The tribal shaman at home gave us better entertainment.

The drummer and his band moved into a drum pattern she recognized as a Congo rhythm. She added a few steps to her sway, then closed her eyes and thought of her mother's face ... and the hills around her village.

I'm going home, she decided.

One month later: Walking through the crowded streets from the bus station, Augusta noted new stores, restaurants, motorcycle shops, and even a computer store. Many unfamiliar faces. She felt like a stranger in her own home town.

After she called her mother, she waited in a cafe for her

brother's red taxi. She sipped an iced tea and tried to ignore the rowdy truck drivers at a nearby table.

Then she heard, "Augusta? Sister Augusta?"

She turned around and saw an old friend.

"Alain! DOCTOR Alain? Haven't seen you since our graduation from the Institute! Please join me!"

They shook hands and he pulled up a chair.

"Where's your habit? Are you a 'civilian' now?" he asked with a smile.

"I ... left the Order."

"Really? Weren't you sent to a convent in Italy? I thought you would never come back here. 'So many bad memories I want to forget,' you told me."

"Well, one day, while walking in Rome, I heard African drums. I went round a corner and there they were: a drum circle entertaining the tourists. I stopped to listen and even did a few dance steps."

"A dancing nun! That's rather humorous."

"Their rhythms made me feel so happy. I thought of my mother and my village. And, Alain ... I suddenly felt that God wanted me home to be with my people again. Luckily, the Sisters understood and put me on a plane back here ... to my own beautiful country... where I really belong."

"Now what? You're a trained nurse."

"Not sure. Maybe I'll help in a clinic. Do you have any career suggestions for a retired dancing nun?"

They laughed together. Augusta remembered the times she and Alain shared their snacks and laughs between classes at the university.

"Yes, I have a good idea," he told her. "Heard of the Gates Foundation? Good. I work with their doctors."

"What kind of work? Free medical care?"

"Yes, but mainly we give polio shots to the children. The Foundation wants to stamp out that disease in Africa. We need your help. I'll talk to the director."

Augusta noticed that her brother's dusty taxi waited in front of the cafe. He waved his cabbie cap at her.

"Oh, there's Jacques! Give me your cell phone number. I'm interested. Here's my number. Please call me soon."

Alain and the truck drivers watched her walk out the door and get in the cab.

He carefully typed her number into his cell. A second chance, he thought. Thank you, God. I won't let her slip away again.

— Kathy Highcove



## *April in the Valley*

*Open doors and windows*

*April is here.*

*Inscribed in shimmering silk*

*Like a new flower*

*Coloring a bouquet of seasons.*

*Spring enters without knocking*

*Spraying my skin*

*With fragrant new life.*

*Left behind*

*Are my squeaky winter shoes*

*Blinking in the glow of street lights*

*Begging to come inside,*

*Like stitches of paralyzed time*

*Swollen limbs in old tree branches*

*Lick their winter wounds at dawn.*

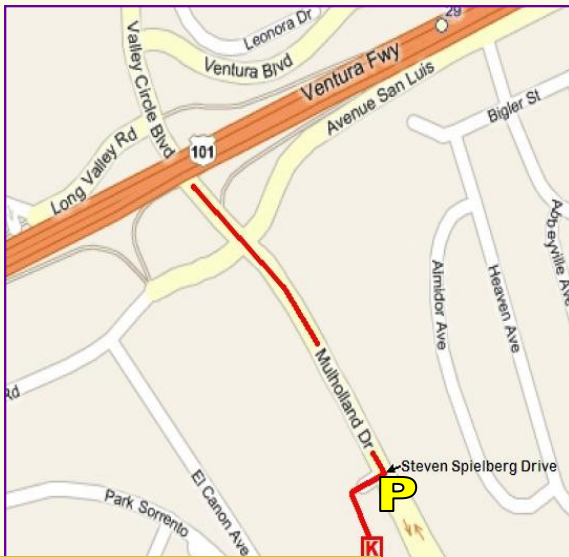
*A yawn of spring fever*

*Waiting for April's fingerprints*

*Lingers in my Valley soul*

*To rejuvenate my spirit.*

***Keyle Birnberg-Goldstein***



**Free parking** is available in a large lot behind the Katzberg Room. Look for the trombone statue — that's our SFV parking lot.



## MEETINGS

The California Writers Club meets the first Saturday of the month except July and August at the Motion Picture and Television Fund complex:

Villa Katzenberg  
23388 Mulholland  
Woodland Hills, CA 91364-2733

## NEXT MEETING

Saturday April 7th, at 1:00 p.m.

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