



The Newsletter of The San Fernando Valley Branch

The Valley Scribe

"Our Members' Voices"



Vol. 8

January, 2015

No. 6

Next Meeting: January 3rd, 1:00!



President's Message Nance Crawford

There isn't a writer, male or female, who doesn't need a wife.

That startling bit of insight, followed by laughter and agreement, is one of the delightful

memories of my trip to visit the High Desert chapter of CWC in December, a jaunt that, despite my not having to do the driving, was so pleasantly exhausting that I missed the deadline for this column last month.

If you weren't at our December meeting, the reason I went northeast is because the group was celebrating the launch of their joint effort, "Jack London in Boyhood Adventures," which the High Desert Branch published for one of their members, granddaughter of Frank Irving Atherton, the close boyhood friend of Jack London. Atherton wrote the memoir in the 1930s but never found a publisher. The book is now available at Amazon.

Together, the members of High Desert shared the responsibilities of editing and design, and they have done a terrific job. The book is well worth the time – not only for the vivid tales of "daring do," shared by two generally unsupervised young boys in the then-almost-still-wilds of Oakland, California, at the turn of the nineteenth century, but for the always-relevant history of a writer whose beginnings and difficult personal journey proved to be the genesis of his literary immortality.

The visit to High Desert and that joking reference to writers needing a day lady came to mind again, last night, when I attended a writer workshop and we were asked how serious we were about making time to actually write.

A roomful of the usual answers later, we were told of the regimen of playwright Garson Kanin ("Born Yesterday" — and also a wonderful biography of the Tracy-Hepburn relationship). Rising at 5 a.m., he showered, dressed in a suit and tie for the day, went into his home office and did not emerge until 10 a.m., during which time he wrote. If he could not think of anything productive to write, he wrote his name again and again. His business hours were sacrosanct. He stopped at ten o'clock because that is the time when he knew that the world was completely awake and ready to intrude.

What a guy. Really knew how to take advantage of what he placed in front of himself: time to write.

Happy New Year! □

January's Speaker: Kendall Jones

Kendall Jones, an entertainment lawyer and former magazine/newspaper editor, will make her third appearance as a Speaker for CWC-SFV.

Kendall has been an attorney for more than 18 years and she is licensed in California, Florida, and Georgia. She attended undergrad at the University of Virginia, where she got a degree in Rhetoric, and she graduated from Vanderbilt Law School. Kendall has been working in entertainment law for most of her career and has appeared on Court TV and numerous radio shows to discuss legal issues.

From 2002-2007, Kendall was also an award-winning investigative journalist and editor. She launched, developed, and subsequently sold two publications.

In her private life, Kendall is a member of SAG-AFTRA and an intermediate student in renowned Groundlings Improv School.

Her presentations always set attendance records. Plan to be early! □



December Review

“Don’t Call It Voice-over!”

by Douglas William Douglas

“It’s NARRATOR, got that?” That’s what our speaker, the professional audiobook narrator/producer David Stifel clarified while enlightening us on the very interesting and previously somewhat obscure world of audiobook production.

For example, did you know that the number of audiobook titles produced has skyrocketed to over 30,000 per year, fueled largely by digital downloading? Or that an American Federation for the Blind’s audiobook pays no royalties? How about that for every hour of audiobook, it may take a narrator/producer anywhere from six to sixteen hours due to pre-read with word research, electronic and verbal edits, re-recording, and post-production? Or that an Audible Approved Producer gets a well-earned \$200 to \$400 Per Finished Hour (PFH)? Using Mr. Stifel’s numbers, for a typical 350 page, 70,000 word novel that would be approximately \$2,000—not much more than a couple of LADWP bills unless you use an outhouse, take sponge baths and light your home with candles.

The on-line powerhouses are Amazon’s Audible.com for buying, and ACX.com (Audiobook Creation Exchange) for author do-it-yourself producer search and auditioning, which includes filtering by PFH charge, experience and alternative payment methods (PFH vs. share of royalties).

Mr. Stifel provided far more information (including an illustrative handout) than can be related here, and he did it in a lively and engaging style, unlike this review. Further enlightenment at dstifel.com and audible.com. □

Sage Advice from JRK

*A ‘careful’ writer is not
one who will not take
chances;
it is one who knows when
it’s worth the risk.*

~jrk

Reflecting on “Reflections” — Karen Gorback

I began my career in education teaching English in 1975 at a small high school in the San Joaquin Valley. I taught all types of classes, including reading, Shakespeare, and Advanced Composition. The latter was my favorite. Those were the pre-technology days, when I would bring home mile-high stacks of hand written essays and creative writing assignments to grade each week. Rather than using the time-honored red pen, I always corrected papers with a sharp pencil, as instructed by Dr. Helen Lodge, my wise and wonderful education professor at CSUN. She taught us that the purpose of corrections was to instruct, not intimidate. Many years later, when I taught graduate school at the same university, I continued using a pencil on my students’ computer-generated assignments, thanks to Dr. Lodge.

In the past month, I sharpened a small stack of pencils again, in response to Nance Crawford’s invitation to volunteer as a reader for the essay and poetry entries in the Reflections program at Hale Charter Middle School in Woodland Hills. Reflections is an annual challenge run by each state’s PTA, encouraging students in grades Pre-K through 12 to reflect on a given theme through the creation of original works of art in the categories of dance choreography, film production, music composition, literature, photography, and visual arts. The theme for the 2014-2015 school year is: The world would be a better place if... (<http://bit.ly/1tsazZ1>)

The students’ reflections that I scored were thoughtful, well-written, and brimming with passion. They wrote about helping the poor, respecting veterans, feeding homeless families, and being kind to one another. One student reminded us, “You are never too young or too small to help out the world.”

The entry that stood out from the rest was a narrative about the importance of appreciating diversity. The paper included a paragraph about a family’s adoption of a pit bull terrier puppy with a scarred past who became a loving, family pet. The same essay described the student’s aunts – who happened to be a same-sex couple. “Their marriage is not traditional, but I do not judge them like others would. I see them for who they really are: kind, loving and giving aunts.” I wanted to give this young writer a hug.

I asked the Reflections organizer at Hale Middle School to please include me on the list of next year’s volunteer readers, because you are never too young or too old to help out the world. □

Review and Refresh

Dave Wetterberg

Sentence Openers

Most of the sentences in professional publications – books, magazines, newspapers – begin with the complete subject.

Our new budget is heading for deep trouble.

When a sentence has an “opener” — something in front of the complete subject, that is — it is rarely a long one, usually a short one, and often one word.

Because of this, they re-thought the whole process.

Confident, the astronaut told them to check the star-map themselves.

Most Popular

The most preferred sentence openers among the professional writers today are *and* and *but*. Our old English teachers might roll over in their graves to hear this, but the following are taken from The Los Angeles Times:

And be sure you contact Medicare.

But there aren't enough companies in Japan.

Other examples abound in books and magazines, old and new, fiction and nonfiction.

Clusters

Noun cluster: *Knife in hand, Tarzan stood at the cliff's edge.*

Verb cluster: *Bent by the wind, the birch trees seemed defeated.*

Adjective cluster: *Happy again, Mindy danced all night long.*

Adverb: *Silently, Alonzo walked to the window and looked below.*

Prepositional phrase: *For a minute the UFO hung motionless above the tree line.*

Infinitive cluster: *To keep peace in the family, Raphael apologized to his brother Henry.*

Absolute (sentence with *was* left out) : *His last arrow gone, Geronimo waited.*

Commas and Sentence Openers

If the opener consists of fewer than four syllables, the comma is optional.

At midnight Mr. Newman was worried. By one he was frantic.

More than five syllables, always plug in the comma.

When the clock struck eleven, Sally didn't even notice.

Lessons from Observing the Pros

Open most of your sentences with the subject.

Avoid long openers.

Stick to short openers.

Use *and* and *but* freely as openers.



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

THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION

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Phone: (201) 876-2551. E-mail: fandsf@aol.com. Website: www.fandsf.com.

Contact: Gordon Van Gelder, Editor.

"The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction publishes various types of science fiction and fantasy short stories and novellas, making up about 80% of each issue.

The balance of each issue is devoted to articles about science fiction, a science column, book and film reviews, cartoons, and competitions." Bimonthly.

Freelance Facts: Established: 1949. Guidelines for SASE, by e-mail or website. Buys first North American serial rights, buys foreign serial rights. Circulation: 40,000. Byline given. Pays on acceptance. No kill fee.

Sample copy for \$6. Responds in 2 months to queries. Publish period after acceptance: 9-12 months after acceptance. 100% freelance written. Submit seasonal material 8 months in advance.

Columns/Departments:

Curiosities (reviews of odd and obscure books), 270 words max. Accepts 6 mss/year. Pays \$5-\$50.

Fiction

Contact: Gordon Van Gelder, Editor. "Prefer character-oriented stories. We receive a lot of fantasy fiction, but never enough science fiction."

Needs: adventure, fantasy, horror, space fantasy, sword & sorcery, dark fantasy, futuristic, psychological, supernatural, science fiction, hard science/technological, soft/sociological. Accepts 60-90. mss/year. No electronic submissions. Send complete ms. Length: up to 25,000 words. Pays 7-10¢/word.

Poetry

Wants only poetry that deals with the fantastic or the science fictional. "I buy poems very infrequently—just when one hits me right." Pays \$50/poem and 2 contributor's copies.

METAL SCRATCHES

P.O. Box 685, Forest Lake, MN 55025

E-mail: metalscratches@metalscratches.com. Website: www.metalscratches.com.

Contact: Kim Mark, Editor.

"Metal Scratches focuses on literary fiction that examines the dark side of humanity. We are not looking for anything that is 'cute' or 'sweet.'" Semiannual.

Editor's Note: Magazine: 35 pages, heavy cover-stock. Receives 20 unsolicited mss/month. Accepts 5-6 mss/issue, 20 mss/year. Publishes 3 new writers per year.

Freelance Facts: Established: 2003. Simultaneous Submissions. Guidelines by e-mail. Buys one-time rights. Not copyrighted. Circulation: 200. Byline given. Pays on publication. No kill fee. Queries accepted by mail, e-mail. Sample copy for \$5 (make checks payable to Kim Mark). Responds in 1 month to mss. Sometimes comments on rejected mss. Publish period after acceptance: Publishes ms an average of 6-12 months after acceptance. 100% freelance written.

Fiction: Experimental, horror, literary. Does not want horror as in "gore," science fiction, children's, religion, or poetry. Buys 12 mss/year. Send complete ms. Accepts submissions by e-mail (no attachments). Send disposable copy of ms and #10 SASE for reply only. Accepts simultaneous, multiple submissions. Length: 3,500 words, average length: 3,000 words. Pays 2 contributor's copies and 1 year subscription, additional copies for \$3.

MID-AMERICAN REVIEW

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Contact: Abigail Cloud, Editor in Chief; Laura Walter, Fiction Editor.

"We aim to put the best possible work in front of the biggest possible audience. We publish contemporary fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, translations, and book reviews."

Covers: Semiannual magazine of the highest-quality fiction, poetry, and translations of contemporary poetry and fiction. Also publishes creative nonfiction and book reviews of contemporary literature. Reads mss year round. Publishes new and established writers.

Freelance Facts: Established: 1981. Simultaneous Submissions: No Answer. Guidelines available online. Buys first North American serial rights. Circulation: 1,500. Byline given. No kill fee. Queries accepted by online submission form. Sample copy: \$9 (current issue), \$5 (back issue), \$10 (rare back issues). Responds in 5 months to mss. Publishes mss an average of 6 months after acceptance.

Nonfiction: Creative nonfiction, leaning toward lyrical essays, short book reviews (400-500 words). Submit ms by post with SASE or with online submission manager.

Fiction: Publishes traditional, character-oriented, literary, experimental, prose poem, and short-short stories. **No genre fiction.**

Submit ms by post with SASE or with on-line submission manager. Agented fiction 5%. Length: 6,000 words maximum.

Poetry: Submit by mail with SASE or with online submission manager. Publishes poems with "textured, evocative images, an awareness of how words sound and mean, and a definite sense of voice. Each line should help carry the poem, and an individual vision must be evident."

Max Number of Poems: 6. □

Writing to the Right Brain

Ray Malus

"It's A Pistol, Larry!"

I'm going to use this month's column to discuss a glaring exception to all the things I've been telling you about the relationship between the author and the reader — a genre where there is absolutely *no* relationship between them: the *epistolary*. (Note the execrable pun in the title.)

The word 'epistolary' means, "...having to do with letters..." It is usually used in conjunction with a genre: "epistolary poem," "epistolary novel."

Probably the most well-known of these are the letters of Saul of Tarsus, collected in the *New Testament of The Bible*, and usually called *The Epistles of Saint Paul*.

There are several more-modern epistolary novels, as well.

Brahm Stoker's *Dracula* is a variation on the form (only three of its twenty-seven chapters are actual letters, but the rest are journal and diary entries). There is the brilliantly funny, *Dear Popsy: Collected Postcards of a Private Schoolboy to His Father*, by Eric Bishop-Potter; and my soon-to-be released, *Letters to 'J'*.

In all of these, the relation between the writer and the reader is bizarre because the writer ostensibly doesn't know the reader even exists. He is not the intended recipient of the 'letters'. He is a voyeur. He is, literally *reading someone else's mail!*

(For this discussion, we will use *recipient* to designate the targeted reader within reality of the story, and *reader* to designate the actual person reading the book or story.)

This becomes especially important when the writer assumes the *recipient* knows people and background about which the *reader* has not been told. Referencing them can halt the flow, jar the *reader*, and even frustrate him. It is very different from the intimate and personal relationship we usually strive for. But it is mostly unavoidable.

If you read Paul's letters, you will find many mentions of people who are not expanded on: Silas, Timothy, Barnabas, et al; and events which are not illuminated. A huge body of commentary has been written to fill in these gaps. The writer (Paul), on the other hand, assumes no responsibility for explaining these people and events because he knows the *recipients already know them*.

Stoker's approach is different. (For those who have not read *Dracula*, the — I'm sure familiar — story is told through a series of diary and journal entries, ship's logs, newspaper articles, and letters.) Stoker puts himself in the role of an anonymous researcher who has collected documents and arranged them in a sequence that reveals the story. In this way, he is able to make sure the *reader* is not *stymied* or

puzzled. The device works. And although the aging prose seems slow and indirect — as Stoker strives to poke luridly sexual material over the transom of Victorian morality — the book holds up, and the plot (in all its permutations) is perennial.

In *Dear Popsy...*, Bishop-Potter takes yet another approach. The book is a series of sly and very funny vignettes, which are written by an English schoolboy to his father ("Popsy"). Because of this, Bishop-Potter has every reason to give the reader all the background necessary, as the boy explains them to the father.

Letters to 'J' takes more the *Pauline* approach. Many things are not immediately explained (and some are not explained at all). The book, a romance, is the chronicle of a love affair, which is told in two interlaced sets of letters — one a series of love letters; the other, correspondence with a friend — to people whose names coincidentally start with the letter 'J'. The writer feels no obligation to elaborate on tangential matters because he knows the intended *recipient* is already familiar with them.

And there are the two salient points:

First: These things are *tangential*, they are parsley on the entrée that is the story. Not knowing them may be a bit frustrating to the *reader*, but it will not affect his understanding of the story itself.

Second: The *reader* is not the intended recipient of the letter. He has been given privileged access into very personal matters. He is a confidant and — being removed from the actual events — must only savor what he receives.

And herein is the answer to the huge question you've probably been asking: "Why write an epistolary novel, anyway?"

Well, one answer is 'exploration', curiosity about other ways to tell a story.

But more important, there are things that can be comfortably expressed between intimates, that are not only hard to express to strangers, but are uncomfortable for the stranger to hear.

Ah, but they can be *overheard* with comfort.

Imagine you are in a doctor's waiting room, and two people are discussing their operations. You may be curious and enticed, and eavesdrop on their conversation. However, if one of them sat next to you and tried to tell you directly, you'd be embarrassed and repulsed.

So the role of the modern epistolary novel is to provide a way for the author to write with extreme intimacy, without violating the *reader's* sense of privacy.

Social letter writing is quickly disappearing as a form of communication. The telephone, email, texting, and the cost of postage have mostly eliminated it. The writing of epistolary novels, already uncommon, will no doubt disappear. Besides, in this age of "BFF," "LOL," and "IMO," an epistolary novel would look more like a bowl of Post Alpha-Bits (or if you prefer ghost stories, Cheerios).

But epistolary novels have a role in the vast spectrum of literature. They can provide an experience for the reader that is uniquely intense. And I can personally attest to the fact that they can be harrowing and penetrating experiences for the writer. --rjm--

THE TORERA LADY — Keyle Birnberg

Every Sunday, in Quito where we live, there is a Bull Fight, an old tradition left by the Spaniards when they conquered The Americas.

"Look, there she goes... The Torera Lady," my brother says — pointing to an old lady dressed like Little Red Riding Hood. She is dressed all in black but covered by a bright red cape with a hood. She is marching at the head of The Parade.

"She is not a Bull Fighter. Why is she walking in front of the college students?" I ask.

"Stupid. That's just a nick-name...everybody knows her as the Torera Lady. The college students pay her to march with their team as their 'Mascot'."

"Do you know what a Mascot is?" Brother asks.

"Yes! Instead of a dog or another animal, The Torera Lady must be their Teddy Bear."

My brother scratches his head giving me a look as if I were stupid or something. We both turn to look at her. The Torera Lady is breathing hard, drying her sweaty hair with the Red Hood. She licks her dry lips as she goes.

The Bull Fight Parade where we are going is near the Middle Of The World. My teacher once said, "The sun rays fall perpendicularly straight into people's heads."

I touch my head. My hair feels gooey, tangled, and hot.

Everyone in the Parade holds a bottle of water, drinking a few swallows as they go.

The Torera Lady has none. I look at my brother, but before I even ask for a bottle of water, he gives me his *Dracula* look, meaning: *Don't you dare...*

"I didn't ask you to come," He says. "You followed me as you always do. Now you have to wait until the Parade is over."

"And when would that be?"

He raises his shoulders up to his ears.

The parade must be almost over. I hope.

I feel a big crowd of people pushing me forward until there is no place to move.

"Salem, I'm here! Come and get me pleeeeeease." But it's all a blur.

My brother is gone somewhere without me. There is no Mascot. No parade. No Torera Lady. And, someone is slapping me in the face.

"One of your convenient fainting spells?"

Salem says.

Is he smiling?

I think he is. □

Royal Abdication — Sheila Moss

It's been exactly two years since my "royal" abdication. The local press ignored the news, but word spread to those who needed the information as quickly as buzzing bees.

You see, I had been a notable queen of the Important Holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas, one who took pride in setting a fine table and serving a delectable feast. The eye had to be pleased, from the place settings to the carefully crafted centerpiece (one year a turkey of pine cones made by Aaron), the nose discerning the fragrance of the roasted turkey, mashed yams and cranberries, cumulating in the wondrous rich taste of the exquisite feast.

The table was always preset with eighty-year-old Spode China in a whimsical colorful rose pattern. The cranberry sauce graced a ruby hobnail boat. Then came the light pink Fostoria wine and water goblets. Oh, did I mention, the linen tablecloth with the rich brocade design? The silverware was probably as old as the china. All handed down to me after my mother's death in the late fifties.

My reign lasted almost thirty some years. The year was 2011. I was trying to turn the twenty-five pound bird around when I almost dropped it on my kitchen floor. This was not something I expected, and it was sheer determination and a few prayers that I made a recovery a quarterback would be proud of. Needless to say I saw it as an omen. I no longer could physically do the feast. Putting our respective heads together, Dave, my younger son, suggested going to Gelson's for the next holiday. (Almost like going to Jarred for your diamond engagement ring.) I ordered a pre-cooked turkey with all the trimmings. It was a lot easier, but I still found the bird too heavy. I had to wait for reinforcements.

When the next holiday approached, I flat out abdicated. No longer would Mom do the two major holidays. The mantle was being handed down. My older son Aaron grabbed Christmas and Dave got Thanksgiving, 2014.

Dave knew a few shortcuts, i.e. he went to Honey Baked Ham. He enlisted his children Kay and Colin who designed the place cards (boats Christopher Columbus would be proud of. Each contained a slip of paper for each person to write what he/she was thankful for). They gathered *Pyracantha* boughs and some small pine branches and put them in a glass bowl. Plus they picked some tangelos from their tree to put in a cornucopia. The silverware shimmered and the paper plates were colorful and required no care. Being together made it a feast beyond compare. And the thankful slips? They were linked together in a chain and placed on the fireplace mantle for all to see.

□

Management 101 — J. Raymond Kent*(Dedicated to all the Managers and Directors I've ever known.)*

OK children. I'm going to tell you the story of a little fellow named Rump L. Stiltskin. He worked at the King's palace. His job was to muck out the stables, and he was very good at it. Everyone acknowledged that he was the best mucker at the palace. The fact that he was the *only* mucker at the palace didn't matter at all. Everyone said, "That boy knows his muck. He's goin' places."

Over the years, he had been promoted from 'Mucker', to 'Senior Mucker', to 'Senior Mucker, Supervisor' — notwithstanding the fact that he was still the only mucker at the palace.

It was this last promotion, which started his meteoric advance. As 'Senior Mucker, Supervisor', Rump had a seat on The Board, a big meeting which the King convened each month.

At his first meeting, Rump was sitting, carefully sorting his pencils according to length ("An orderly mind is an effective mind"), when the King blurted, "Folks, we've got a crisis. The country's broke."

Rump seized his opportunity! "Y'know, G.K., there's a lot of straw left over in the stables from last year's hay ride. We could spin that into gold. "It would solve your cash-flow problem."

Everybody was thunderstruck!! First, because only the king's real friends called him "G.K." (Gracious King); second, because — although they had heard the words before — no one knew exactly what a "cash flow problem" was.

Even the king was flummoxed. A person he didn't even recognize had called him "G.K.," so he must be a close friend.

While the king pondered this, Rump launched into a fabulous presentation on the advantages of turning straw into gold: Straw grew wild; gold had to be mined and refined. Gold was lots prettier than straw. Straw was cheap; gold was expensive. Straw tended to rot after a while; gold lasted... longer. On and on... It was all really impressive.

But what really won everybody over was that "cash flow" thing.

Finally, the king decided that Rump was probably a close relative whom he had forgotten, and started listening again — just at the part where, "... Straw was cheap; gold was expensive."

Well, the King was sold!

"Can that be done?" he asked.

"Leave it to me, G.K.!"

Rump collected his pencils and hurried out.

Having solved all their problems, The Board adjourned and went bowling.

Rump hurried back to the stable, stopping off on the way to pick up the latest copy of *Gold Spinner's*

Digest and a six-pack. He popped a can of brewski and tore through the magazine:

"Spinning Silk Into Gold," "Spinning Flax Into Gold," "Spinning Cotton Into Gold," "Spinning Hay Into Gold," "Gilding The Lily,"

...nothing about straw.

Great! An untapped field. Not only that, there was a huge Gold Spinners Convention coming up in Atlantic City in two months, and a Spinning Wheel trade show a month after that!! Terrific!!

Rump spent a week preparing travel requests and vouchers (he used those pencils of his) and another two weeks — while the approvals came through — buying suitable clothes on the expense account he had requisitioned. Then he was off to Atlantic City.

The convention and trade show were a blast!! Lots of good food, plenty of women (gold-spinners attract a *lot* of groupies), and great conversation. Everyone agreed that this 'gold-spinning' thing was a "...hard nut to crack," and they better meet *four* times a year to discuss it.

There *were* some private companies working on it. Rump collected lots of business cards — and gave out even more. His cards simply said, "Rump L. Stiltskin - Straw into Gold," and underneath in slightly smaller letters, "He knows what 'Cash Flow' is!"

Everyone loved them.

But four months later, when Rump got back to the palace, there was hell to pay. The stables were overflowing with muck!

"Well," Rump retorted, "you can't expect me to do *everything*. I've been killing myself on this 'Straw Into Gold' project for the king — and doing a damned fine job, as well. Just look at all these business cards!

"You'll simply have to hire me an assistant to do the mucking."

Well, everyone had to agree that there *were* a lot of business cards, so they hired another mucker, and Rump went off to the next convention, 'Vegas!

Hey, it's almost bedtime, so I'll make this quick. Eventually, Rump actually came up with the solution — well, kind of.

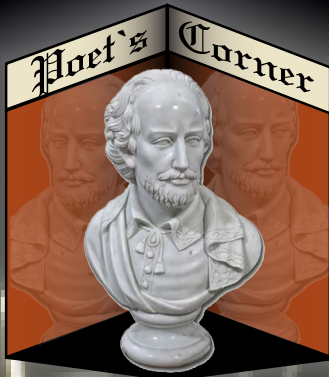
He spent a lunch hour going through his business cards (OK, more like 3 hours), and finally chose a "...really great consultant to do the 'grunt work.'" The consultant has been earning a huge salary for the past 5 years as he works on the problem, and there's every indication that he will solve it next year.

Rump is a little critical of him. "He's incompetent. I'd have had it done, by now."

Everyone agrees that's true.

He's due to be knighted — well, as soon as he returns. See, he ran across an article on 'Thermodynamics', and is now off at a "Perpetual Motion Machine" conference.

He's doing a great job. His new cards say "Rump L. Stiltskin — Perpetual Motion," and underneath in slightly smaller letters, "He knows what 'Entropy' is!" □



The Nest

Douglas William Douglas

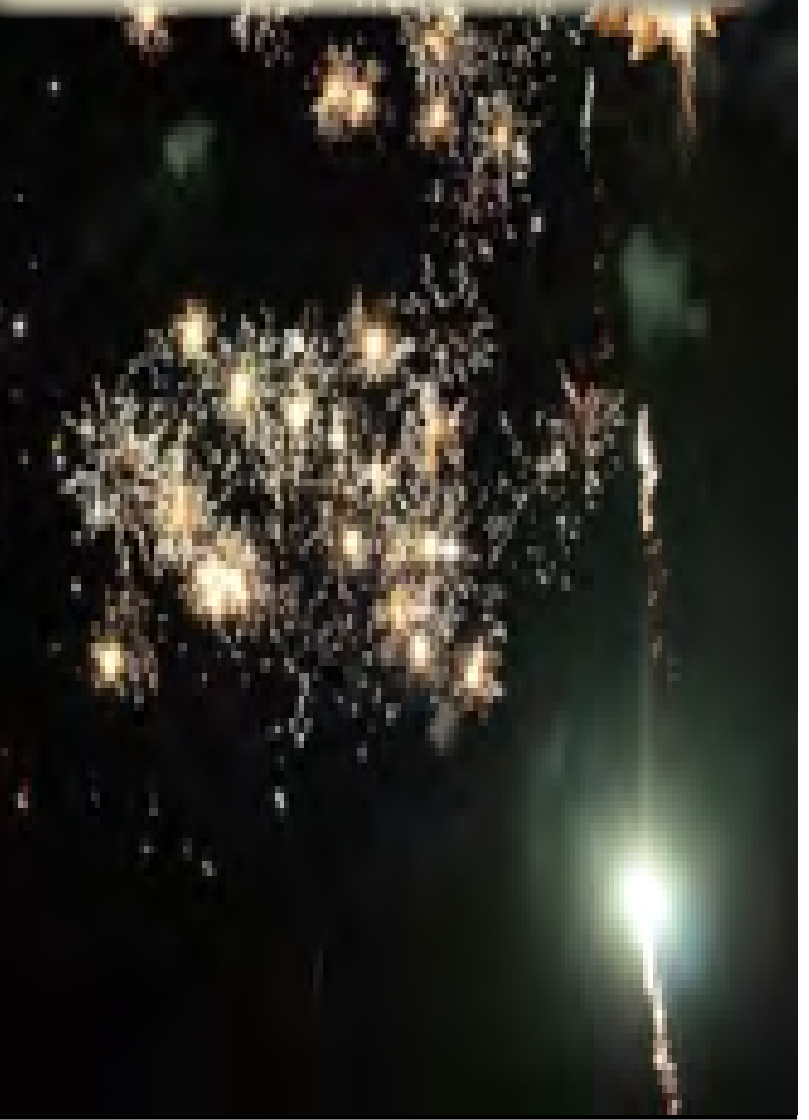
One Spring he ventured out to read in shade
 Of porch and spied a nested dove tucked 'neath
 A cranny's beam on bed of twigs and heath.
 For weeks she warmed the pearls of life she'd laid;
 He shared her hopes, he guarded and he prayed.
 One morning, though, he found her gone, her brood
 Unborn and broken, concrete mustard hue—
 His leaden heart God's scales could not have weighed.

He leaves that perch untouched, awaits the hour
 Her tragic loss forgot and love's rekindled flame
 Returns her home to rest and bear womb's flower—
 Their kindred souls rejoin and joy reclaim.

Through seasons long, blow winds both warm and chill;
 Though decades roll, that nest lies empty still.

Life's Changing Journey Lillian Rodich

life like a carousel
 turns and turns
 the landscape spins by
 blurred in detail
 still music surrounds us
 remains bright and tinsel
 we can hear it in our memories
 lyrics to old songs
 long ago feelings reawakened
 misty pictures coming into focus
 and smiling into our everyday lives
 life's carousel journey continues
 unfamiliar places come into view
 rhythms and melodies change
 new words tumble into old songs
 new friends wave their untold stories
 old friends appear
 brightly and forever
 and the horses gallop on





WE ARE ALL ONE
IN THE FAMILY OF MAN

Norman Molesko

(English)

At my availability
the itinerary in my mind
beauty, wonderment and mystery

(Spanish)

En mi disponibilidad
el itinerario en mi mente
belleza, maravilla y misterio

(French)

À ma disponibilité
l'itinéraire dans mon esprit
beauté, émerveillement et mystère

(Italian)

Alla mia disponibilità
l'itinerario della mia mente
bellezza, meraviglia e mistero

(German)

Bei meiner Verfügbarkeit
Die Reiseroute in meines Geistes
Schönheit, Staunen und Mystery

Nature's Illusive Lover

Andrea Polk

Our Western golden afternoon sun
shimmers the light blue sky.
An array of pastels bounce
over our Valley's dusty floor.

The distant dark Eastern sky
dangles its wet fingers
caressing the pink-lit mountains
awakening canyons and streams.

Thunder groans a desperate desire,
pouring a curtain of rain
behind our lusting pink
ray of hope,
lingering, moaning,
immovable.

Hints of this illusive storm
in its tumbling swirls
entices the soft light
as a mistress
beckons her lover.

As golden beams dance
across dusty trees and
brighten buildings
our dry sky opens wide.

The Western light dims softly,
pricks the Eastern brooding storm
as the swollen clouds tease, roll over
and disappear.

The distant mountains
reveal their sparkling wetness.
We await another chance
as dusk settles over our
rejected
parched
Valley.

2015

The Bulletin Board

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 Andrea Polk, VP-Membership, at the meeting entrance or e-mail andipolk4@gmail.com.

MEETINGS

ARE HELD AT 1:00 P.M.
ON THE 1st SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH

Katzenberg Pavilion, Motion Picture & Television Fund
23388 Mulholland Drive, Woodland Hills, CA 91364
(Directions & Map on last page)

UPCOMING MEETINGS

January 3rd, 1 p.m. — Kendall Jones

Open Mic: 1:00 p.m. (Sign-ups start at 12:30)
Details on our website: CWC-SFV.ORG

Check out our writers on the
So-Cal Writers Showcase.

<http://www.socalwritersshowcase.com/>

Do YOU have a website?
Be the

'Member Website of the Month'!
Send your URL to:

cwc-sfv@roadrunner.com

This Month's BIRTHDAYS!

Sharon Yofan	Jan 1
Paula Diggs	Jan. 1
Lillian Rodich	Jan. 7

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

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, Nance Crawford.

- 500 words or fewer
- 800 words or fewer
- Limited to 40 lines
- 150 words or fewer

Articles/Essays
Short Stories
Poetry
Book Release Notices

Regular Features:
Submissions:

Submission deadlines:
TENTH of the previous month.
FIFTEENTH of the previous month.

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

San Fernando Valley Branch of California Writers Club meets at:

Motion Picture & Television Fund
Katzenberg Pavillion
23388 Mulholland Drive
Woodland Hills, CA 91364

Directions:

From the 101 Freeway exit on Mulholland Drive South. Proceed to Steven Spielberg Drive and turn right into the campus.
(If questioned at the gate, tell the official that you are attending a CWC meeting.) At the 'T', turn left and follow the road to the large parking lot on the left for Villa Katzenberg.

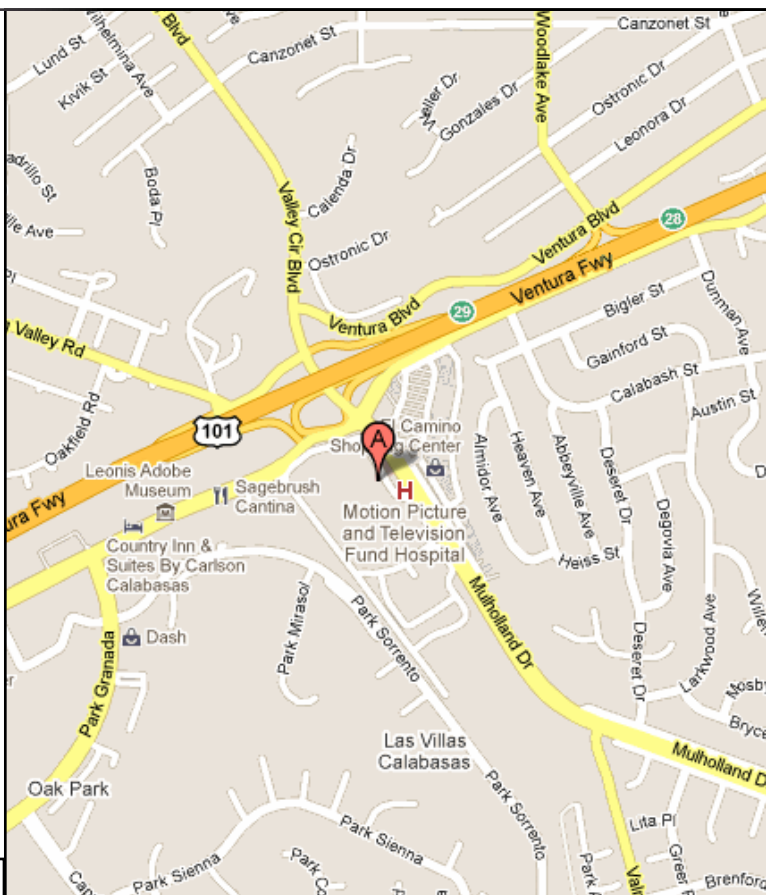
Parking is free in any of the lots.

(Please do NOT park on any of the streets.

You will be ticketed!)

Interactive maps at:

<http://cwc-sfv.org/Meetings/Location.php>



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")

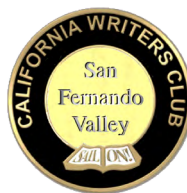
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[Ray Malus](#)

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California Writers Club San Fernando Valley Branch

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LOTS of great information at our

Website:

www.cwc-sfv.org