February’s Program: Games, Prizes, Speaker and More — Samantha Berley

February is a reminder to us all that LOVE comes in all shapes and sizes. Whether it’s the love for a child, the love of a good book, or of your spouse, you better believe there’s a card with a witty saying waiting at the local card store.

That is why February’s meeting is chock full of love in its best form. Bring a pencil and paper for “Love of Literature” Trivia and Blind “Love” Captioning. And of course, we will have “Open Mic” for your best passionate poetry and the raffle, as always.

Alongside some lovely games, we’re pleased to announce Alana Saltz as our guest speaker:

Alana Saltz is a writer and freelance editor living in Los Angeles. Her essays have been published in Role/Reboot, Writing Forward, HelloGiggles, and more. She has an MFA in Writing from Antioch University Los Angeles and recently completed a memoir. You can visit her website at alanasaltz.com and follow her on Twitter @alanasaltz.

Welcome to the Season of the Heart.

St. Valentine — the American Heart Association (There’s a thought — a whole bunch of bleeding hearts gathering in a ballroom to party — having left their host bodies behind. There is a reason I don’t write Science Fiction and I think you just helped me discover it).

February is all about hearts: taking care of them physically and, more importantly, emotionally. It’s no surprise to anyone who has been around long enough to be able to observe the world turning that it is emotional health which rules the physical health of the heart.

Having discovered early on that the pulse was directly related to the heart, the Egyptians believed that the heart held both the mind and the soul. It was the heart that was weighed in balance against a feather, to determine divine judgment: a blameless heart would balance with the feather and the owner would enjoy the eternal afterlife. We won’t go into what happened to the not-blameless life but, for all the fancy preservatives they plastered on a deceased person, including pulling the brain, liver, kidneys, etc., etc., and tucking them in separate jars, they never removed the heart.

Hearts sing. They laugh. They pinch. They show up on really silly cartooned cards with goopy sentiments right around this time of the year. They also have been known to contain several pounds of chocolate which doesn’t last very long.

My heart is pinching and singing, right now. After having to postpone finishing my current project because of the demands of the holiday season, I am within a day or two of sending the manuscript off, for a proof copy. I hope your latest project is close to the same goal.

The heart of a writer. Loving the world because there is so much out there to discover, to share.

The Egyptians respected the heart. They had no respect, at all, for the brain. They weren’t really certain what the brain did. They removed it from the body with a long hook, through the nose. The consensus was that it existed only to create snot.

That is definitely a different column.

See you on the 7th!
January Review
Third Time’s The Charmer
Ray Malus

Actually, when you talk of Kendall Jones, every time’s the charmer.

At our January meeting, Jones made an unprecedented third appearance as our featured speaker. She did not disappoint.

Kendall Jones brings a unique combination of skills and experience with her. An attorney; an actress (NOT the same thing, and shut up, you!!); a member of the renowned improvisational group, The Groundlings; and an investigative reporter; she is absolutely knowledgeable and comfortable with her information — and her audience. She somehow manages to be authoritative without being intimidating, seemingly ‘sharing’ rather than ‘orating’.

As adjuncts, Jones used a microphone, a podium, and a computer PowerPoint presentation. All these were minor assets. One gets the feeling that you could simply stand her up and ask questions. The result would be the same. Simply put, she just knows her stuff.

Her presentation was framed as, “2014: A Writer’s Year in Review.” (What the hell. Ya gotta call it something!) Jones used several recent news stories as props to tie together a raft of information about the legalities of writing, copyright, and liability. Into the mix, she threw some really interesting, often funny, side stories (in particular, one about a woman’s taking revenge, in print, on her boyfriend).

There is not enough space to include all she presented, but some of the highlights were:

• The definitions of COPYRIGHT (“The exclusive right to use, distribute, benefit from a creation that is in tangible form.”) and COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT (“The use of a copyrighted work without permission.”)
• EXCEPTIONS TO COPYRIGHT (“Long-standing themes/ tropes/ scènes à faire; broad, general, nonspecific, non-unique content; ‘IDEAS’”)
• THE SEVEN STORIES IN FICTION (“Overcoming the Monster,” “Rags to Riches,” “The Quest,” “Voyage and Return,” “Comedy,” “Tragedy,” and “Rebirth.”)
• WRITING A MEMOIR WITHOUT GETTING SUED.

She also cited a marvelous Blog, ‘Writer Beware’ (http://accrispin.blogspot.com/).

As a tribute to her ability, the program ran long… and everyone was delighted it did.

When asked how she came to have all this information collected for the presentation, she responded that she’d simply, “…done research for this particular event.”

This is significant, and illuminates the relationship between Jones and her audiences. Over several years, Kendall Jones has been exceptionally generous with her time and knowledge on behalf of the San Fernando Valley Branch. I must assume this is her general modus operandi, and although it has nothing to do with this review, I commend her.

Meanwhile, we are all eagerly awaiting her next visit. One can only hope she is currently, “…doing research for that particular event.”

Our Banner: Long May It… Hang!

If you have been to a recent meeting, there can be no doubt you’ve noticed an addition to our décor. CWC-SFV now has a banner to announce its presence at conferences and gatherings. Under the aegis of President, Nance Crawford, Vice President, Andi Polk, and Treasurer Mary Freeman, the banner was custom made for us.

It is impressive. It measures two-and-a-half by six feet — about the size of an adult sleeping bag. The design was adapted by Ray Malus from the masthead we use in the Scribe (also designed by him). It features the California Writers Club and San Fernando Valley Branch seals, flanking the names of our club and branch, along with our web address — all set against a sun-washed blue sky, symbolizing our artistic aspirations.

As you can see from the picture, our new banner is striking — and although not quite visible from the International Space Station, it is, and will remain, an eye-catching statement of our presence.
A Published Author?? Me??

So after ten years of writing pop up memories … my peers convinced me that I’ve got the makings of a book. And with a little help from my friends and my computer tutor Voila!! … this book has been born.

Nine chapters … over five hundred pages telling the twists and turns of an ordinary little girl growing up in Philadelphia and how her journey led to many different paths…manifested only in her imagination … but coming true in so many ways.

Laugh with her or at her and feel the emotional joy and sadness of this first born American girl of Russian Jewish immigrant parents. She speaks the truth about her loves … losses … careers … travels … performances and how she got from then to now. She will take you on your own journey … as you can easily relate to hers. An easy read. Enjoy the trip.

And I’m the AUTHOR
“Forever … Until” (The book)
By Leslie E. Kaplan

Completely ‘today’, yet of another age.

Although set in the twentieth century, Letters to J’ nevertheless evokes the literature of a bygone era.

Passionately romantic, it tells the story of an intense love affair between the writer and his beloved, Jennifer.

In two interwoven sets of letters — one to her, and the other to his friend, John — you will be drawn into the center of a ‘Great Romance’ as it blossoms from curiosity, to love, to overwhelming passion.

Come live it!

Ray Malus is proud to announce the publication of his new book, Letters to J’, An Epistolary Romance.
(Available on Amazon, Kindle, and in better Bookstores.)

CWC WEBMASTER NEEDED
Donna McCrohan Rosenthal, State Publicity Chair

The CWC is looking for our next state webmaster. Duties include: software maintenance of the CWC and CB Forum websites; managing the domain name license(s) and hosting account; changes to site branch links as directed, addition or removal of special notices, and removal of outdated material and links as specified by the PR Director; regular data security, backup, archiving, and recovery; software updates to be completed within six (6) months of availability; and brief quarterly written activity reports submitted to the PR Director. Any needed major redesigns or changes will be separately contracted.

In terms of skills, we need somebody who has the ability to follow directions, to work cooperatively with others as well as independently, the ability to solve technical problems, familiarity and experience with Word Press, general knowledge of ‘Dynamic Webpage’ architecture, and familiarity with web technology (HTML, FTP). Experience and familiarity with CSS, mySql, and PHP is a plus.

Contracted monthly compensation will be determined based on experience, skills, and the Club's ability to pay. The estimated workload is 2-4 hours per month barring (separately negotiated) major upgrades.

Interested web masters should contact Ray Malus at CWC-SFV@roadrunner.com. We look forward to hearing from you. Deadline February 15.

Sage Advice from JRK

‘Solitude’ is being by oneself.
‘Loneliness’ is being with no one.

-jrk
Parallel Structure

There’s an old English-teacher joke about how if Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address were handed in as an essay assignment today, it would receive a C minus with “needless repetition” written in the margin. The Sermon on the Mount would have received the same grade with all its blessed are the poors, and blessed are the meeks, much less God’s Ten Commandments with all the Thou shalt and Thou shalt nots. (Okay, that’s stretching it a bit.) The joke is of course that the imaginary teacher’s grammatical nearsightedness completely misses the power of repetition and parallel structure.

Parallel lines, Parallel words

In a series of words or word groups, each word or word group should be parallel; that is, on the same grammatical level as the others in the group. My girlfriend likes to swim, to hike, and cuddling lacks parallelism. It should be: My girlfriend likes swimming, hiking, and cuddling where the enjoyments all end in –ing.

And the sentence When I relax, I like an interesting book, a good hammock, and I like some soft music too. lacks parallelism. It should be When I relax, I like reading an interesting book, lying in a nice hammock, and listening to some soft music.

Words in one part of a series should be included in all parts of the series:
Everyone thought that Jason was the witty one, that Georgia was the wise one, and that Howard was the crazy one.

In the same way, if a word or words are missing from one part, they should be missing from the other parts:
Everyone thought Jason witty, Georgia wise, and Howard crazy.

The articles a, an, and the should appear either before the first word in the series only:
He liked the French, Italians, and Portuguese best.

or before every word in the series:
He liked the French, the Italians, and the Portuguese best.

The same applies to prepositional phrases – one or all, no mister-in-between:
Mike looked in the encyclopedia, in the card catalog, and in the Sears catalog.

It’s not necessary to use the same preposition each time, however.
... of the people, by the people, and for the people.

Correlatives

A correlative is two or several words used in a rhetorical partnership:
both, and
not only, but also
either, or
first, second, third

Correlatives are always followed by parallel forms.
Both typing well and writing shorthand are necessary for this job.
She was not only pretty, but also fluent in five languages.
He had to either control his temper or suffer a divorce.
My objections to the proposal are first, the ambiguous language, and second, the impossible requirements.
TO MARKET — TO MARKET

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!

SENeca REVIEW
Phone: (315) 781-3392. E-mail: senecareview@hws.edu. Website: www.hws.edu/academics/senecareview/index.aspx.

The editors have special interest in translations of contemporary poetry from around the world. Publisher of numerous laureates and award-winning poets, Seneca Review also publishes emerging writers and is always open to new, innovative work. Poems from SR are regularly honored by inclusion in The Best American Poetry and Pushcart Prize anthologies. Distributed internationally.

Semiannual magazine publishing mss of poetry, translations, essays on contemporary poetry, and lyric essays (creative nonfiction that borders on poetry).

Reading period is September 1-May 1.
Simultaneous Submissions: No. Guidelines available online. E-mail questions to senecareview@hws.edu. No kill fee. Responds in 3 months. Accepts queries by mail or via Submittable.


ESSAYS & FICTIONS
Phone: (914) 572-7351. E-mail: essaysandfictions@gmail.com. Website: essaysandfictions.com.
Contact: David Pollock and Danielle Winterton, co-founding editors.

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Also publishes literary essays and literary criticism.
Submissions: Send copy of reviews to David & Danielle.
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Send complete ms with cover letter. Length: up to 10,000 words. Average length: 3,000 words.

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Poetry. Contributors get 1 free copy and 15% off additional copies of the issue in which they are published.

THE LISTENING EYE
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“We look for powerful, unusual imagery, content, and plot in our short stories. In poetry, we look for tight lines that don't sound like prose, unexpected images or juxtapositions, the unusual use of language, noticeable relationships of sounds, a twist in viewpoint, an ordinary idea in extraordinary language, an amazing and complex idea simply stated, play on words and with words, an obvious love of language."

Magazine: 5.5×8.5, 60 pages, photographs. "We publish the occasional very short stories (750 words/3 pages double-spaced) in any subject and any style, but the language must be strong, unusual, free from cliché and vagueness." Reads submissions January 1-April 15 only.

Established: 1970. Acquires first or one-time rights. Circulation: 250. Sample copy: $3, plus $1 postage. Writer's guidelines for SASE. Responds in 4 weeks to queries, 4 months to mss. Publish period after acceptance: Time between acceptance and publication is up to 6 months.

Fiction. “Pretty much anything will be considered except porn.” Recently published work by Simon Perchik, Lyn Lifshin, and John Hart. Publishes short shorts. Also publishes poetry. Sometimes comments on rejected mss. Literary fiction. Send SASE for return of ms or disposable copy of ms with SASE for reply only.

Poetry. Submit up to 4 poems at a time. Accepts previously published poems "occasionally." No simultaneous submissions. No e-mail submissions, "unless from overseas." Cover letter is required. Poems should be typed, single-spaced, with 1 poem/page—name, address, phone number, and e-mail address in upper left corner of each page with SASE for return of work. Poems are circulated to the editor and 2 assistant editors who read and evaluate work separately, then meet for final decisions. Prefers shorter poems (less than 2 pages), but will consider longer if space allows.

Pays 2 contributor's copies.
Also Offers: Awards $30 to the best sports poem in each issue.
"Heart To Heart"

I'm a hugger. I have been for most of my life.
I hug men, women, dogs, cats …
… not trees, though. I only hug things that will respond. (We'll circle around to this at the end.)

Now, there are variations in hugging: the joyful hug, the bear hug, the full-frontal hug, the upper-chest hug (with our posteriors sticking out, so there's no belly-contact), the grasp-the-upper-arm 'gladiator' hug (favored among he-men), the Hollywood 'air-hug' (favored among club women), the continuous-patting-on-the-back hug (favored among "just-friends"), et. al.

But almost without exception, we all hug over our partner's right shoulder — our right cheeks adjacent.

The other day, I was out for my morning walk (atonement for fifty years of smoking), and I ran into one of my neighbors — a kind of 'free spirit'. Naturally, I gave her a big hug. As I was doing that, she said, "You know, you do this wrong."

"I do?"

"Here, let me show you." She pushed me back, and nudged me about eight inches to my right. Then she hugged me again — this time with our left cheeks adjacent.

"Heart to heart," she said.

Indeed, she was right. Our hearts were now juxtaposed. What a lovely sentiment!! And what a beautiful metaphor for all we've been discussing: "Heart to heart."

There is an enormous, broad spectrum in writing. In these columns I have focused on a very narrow band, because, for me, it contains the brightest colors.

It is laudable to reveal — to enlighten, and broaden people's horizon with your acquired knowledge and experience.

It is admirable to persuade — to change opinion and perspective with your words and logic.

It is commendable to instruct — to pass on skills and techniques you have learned.

All this and more are the writer's domain.

But it is sacred and mysterious (in the religious sense) to somehow have your heart directly touch another's.

Even reading that last sentence, I am aware of the utter impossibility of it.

But that's the whole point of this series of columns! Expressed as words, it is impossible. Words belie the whole concept. And yet it happens, and has been happening since man learned to communicate.

"Heart to heart."

You feel it in Van Gogh's 'Starry Night', in Rodin's 'The Thinker', in Chopin's 'Etude in E', in the towers of Chartres, in the swirling dances of 'Swan Lake'.

These works are so much more than the sum of their parts. Complete, they are universal statements about our nature. But, just like the Golden Goose, if we dissect them, they die.

And so it is with writing. There is much language — many words — in common between the poetry of Dickinson, the prose of Steinbeck, and a letter from the DWP. But the nature of the first two is vastly different from that of the third, and so is the result. The words are simply 'material'. The truth is in the experience.

Here is one of my favorite examples.

The legend lives on from the Chippewa on down Of the big lake they call 'Gitche Gumee'.

The lake, it is said, never gives up her dead
When the skies of November turn gloomy.

Most of you will recognize that as part of the opening of Gordon Lightfoot's Wreck Of The Edmund Fitzgerald.

If you recall the song (or just read the lines aloud), you will feel the dreadful storm surge of the lake relentlessly crashing over the doomed ship. It's there in the slow, insistent, triple rhythm of the verse, that terrible boom... boom... boom...

It's built into the very name, 'Gitche Gumee'.

Or is it?

Here's what Henry Wadsworth Longfellow says:

By the shores of Gitche Gumee,
By the shining Big-Sea-Water,
Stood the wigwam of Nokomis,
Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis.

That's from his poem, The Song Of Hiawatha. If you read this aloud, you discover that 'Gitche Gumee' is actually a drum beat, "TUM-tum, TUM-tum, TUM-tum, TUM-tum…," an insistent double rhythm.

How can that be?

As I have said, the words are simply 'material'. It is the way they are combined — in this case the rhythm, the sound, the 'music' of them — that conveys real meaning.

The fact is that an editor might criticize the use of, "Gitche Gumee." ("[Cigar butt clenched in teeth.] ’Dammit. The name is Lake Superior.' Use it!") What a travesty that would be!

Lightfoot and Longfellow know better. They do not want to communicate with the Left Brain, and discuss geography and etymology. They want to get directly inside their reader and weave their incantations — uncensored.

This is writing to the Right Brain. This is art. This is sacred.

I laud any kind of competent, effective writing. I embrace all who sculpt words, as colleagues.

But to the ones who touch us, who move us, who reach the humanity within us, I give homage and celebration.

I said at the beginning of this column, "I only hug things that will respond." That is true.

How do you respond?

Easy. Simply tell me, “You made me think.” or, “You made me feel.” or “You made me cry.” or “You made me laugh.” or “You touched me” … heart to heart.
Tenacity
Lillian Rodich

parched land
denuded of greenery
dead and charred
leaves and branches

ancient winds
sweep yellow plains
and disturb ashes
silence frames burned bushes
screaming at lifeless twigs

sky meets land
in lonely blending
relentless heat sparks
yet another blaze

where once water nourished them
new roots do not survive
and there amidst blackened corpses
Kookaburra still squawks in protest

"El Nino causes heavy rains
in California and a drought in Australia."

Perspective
Ray Malus

Gazing out I see
the universe gazing in
I see only me.

IN THIS MOMENT
Norman Molesko

I am here with you.
You are here with me.
I sigh.
A private cheer
exists within me.
I dare not disturb
this feeling.
I am here with you.
You are here with me.

Paradox
Ray Malus

Like leaves and snowflakes,
so each of us is unique.
Thus, we are the same.
Memories of Long Ago
Keyle Birnberg

The minutes of life open
Revealing old memories
Pushing me to catch them all
Before
They trip and fall into nothingness-

My memories
Sleep inside boxes holding gloves
Handkerchiefs, buttons and pale old photographs
Crushed dry flowers
Resting between pages of old books-

In one box
A bit of lace from my wedding day
Moist still with bashful tears…
Blushing, I remember dusting rice off my shoulders
Cheating birds of their meal-

Yes, I remember…
Rushing to new beginnings…
A moribund sunset in the dark
The sound of train whistles in the night
Noisy rails
Sparkling yellow-blue lights
Lampposts like steel soldiers
Moving fast-

I remember…
Holding close to my face
A handkerchief in neat folds
Smelling of wild flowers
Mom's scent
Lingering in my space-

A cigarro box…
Keeping Dad's photograph
Wearing a red bow tie
With dots of yellow, blue, and white
He is sitting on a park bench
Reading old news of foreign
Sad Argentinean days

…

Life rushes by
Anxious hours escape without notice
Leaving in a hurry as if to catch the wind
Like a runaway train with no destination-
I am the keeper of family memories
The writer bringing them back
Giving me time to restore it all
Making room for spring, autumn, and fall
Before the storms of winter begin-

MANY KINDS OF LOVE
Words & Music by Nance Crawford

There are many kinds of love:
To hold a fledgling in your hand;
To know of pain and understand
The warmth that happens quite unplanned –
The love my mother sang to me when I was small,
Yet there are people running scared
Who do not let themselves feel any love at all.

There are many ways to love:
To hold a sunrise in your hand;
To give a gift without demand;
To spend a quiet day unplanned –
The love the world sang out to me when I was small;
Yet we are people running scared
Who will not let ourselves feel any love at all.

Two people –
One person living all alone
In a world all wrapped up with people
Grabbing honey from the comb.

Two people –
One person.
Happiness unknown.

And there are many times to love
We may not choose them but they’re there;
They make life easier to bear
And we must take them if we care –
The love we thought someday we’d know when we
were young;
For there are people running scared
Who will not ever know the song that can be sung.
“Go, lovely Rose”
Edmund Waller (1606–1687)

Go, lovely Rose—
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that’s young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired:
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die—that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee;
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair!

I'm So Old...

... my SLEEP NUMBER
bed has Roman Numerals!

-jrk

I'm So Old....

... I have a stamp on my right buttock:
“BEST BEFORE MAR. 1996”

-jrk
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
February 7th, 1 p.m. — Games, Prizes, Speaker and More
Open Mic: 1:00 p.m. (Sign-ups start at 12:30)
Details on our website: CWC-SFY.ORG

SUBMISSIONS
Members are encouraged to submit writing contributions to The Valley Scribe. This is your newsletter, and you should be part of it.
Submit your prose and poetry to cwc-sfy@roadrunner.com
Please type “SUBMISSION” in the subject line.
If submitting a hard copy, please bring it to the meeting and hand it to the Editor, Ray Malus, or to the President, Nance Crawford.

Articles/Essays
- 500 words or fewer
- 800 words or fewer
Short Stories
- Limited to 40 lines
Poetry
- 150 words or fewer
Book Release Notices
Submission deadlines:
Regular Features: TENTH of the previous month.
Submissions: 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.

Do YOU have a website? Be the ‘Member Website of the Month’! Send your URL to cwc-sfy@roadrunner.com

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.

This Month’s BIRTHDAYS!
Michael Edelstein Feb 5
Janna Orkney Feb 14
Dean Stewart Feb 20

Check out our writers on the So-Cal Writers Showcase.
http://www.socalwritersshowcase.com/
San Fernando Valley Branch of California Writers Club meets at:

Motion Picture & Television Fund
Katzenberg Pavilion
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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San Fernando Valley Branch

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LOTS of great information at our
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