



The Newsletter of The San Fernando Valley Branch

# The Valley Scribe

"Our Members' Voices"

January, 2016



Vol. 9

No. 5

Next Meeting: January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1:00!

The year is a blank page.

With what will you fill it?

*President's Connections**Andrea Polk*

This year is drawing to a close and our membership is now 64. I welcome Michael Rains returning to our club with his new young adult book. If you were not at the Book Faire ask these ten members about their books: Nance Crawford, Paula Diggs, Doug Douglas, Lori Hamilton, Sherry Harris, Nan Hunt, Leslie Kaplan, Ray Malus, Ilan Sendowsky, and Michael Rains. Janna Orkney was ill and could not participate, but she too is a recently published author. Congratulations to all.

On December 5<sup>th</sup> our Book Faire at Crown Books went well. Thank you to all of the members who helped set up the area and supported our participating authors. Although I was disappointed there weren't throngs of eager buyers, I learned a lot. For our new members, holding this event outside the Motion Picture Television Fund campus was an effort to expand our access to the reading public.

The above ten recently published authors displayed, pitched and sold their books to our supportive members and nearby public. One young child asked if anyone was famous. One parent bent down and whispered, "See, they are real authors. They write books like the ones here in the store." Yes, they write the kind of books that are held in their hands, that their parents read, that reside on their shelves by color, size, subject, or author. The children were

**January's Program****Anne Perry —*****"To Outline or Not to Outline – That is the Question."***

Rita Keeley Brown

We are very fortunate to have Anne Perry as our speaker for our CWC-SFV meeting on Saturday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>. Anne is in demand internationally as an author, teacher, and speaker. She has written three award-winning mystery series, several novels, and a series of Christmas novellas. With over eighty books published none have ever gone out of print. She is continually on the New York Times Bestseller List and was selected by the London Times as one of the twentieth century's Masters of Crime.

The title of her presentation for our group is, "To Outline or Not to Outline – That is the Question." Anne will share 'ways to do it, and some of the advantages, and the fun, offsetting your thoughts in order, on paper, and realizing new possibilities in your story, essay, poem, or whatever you are working on.'

Those of you familiar with her writing are already aware of her masterful weaving of details into scenes, characterizations, societal mores, and plot in such a way that the reader is 'in the shoes' of the characters early on and totally involved throughout the story. She could be the poster child for 'show, don't tell.' You will not find unnecessary words clogging up her writing. A Chicago Sun-Times review stated: "A Triumph...A model of the richness and subtleties of relationships, characters, and story construction." She is also recognized for her expertise on the Victorian era in which most of her stories are set. Born in London, Anne has lived in Australia, Africa, and Scotland and recently moved to the U.S. settling here in Los Angeles.

I'm sure you will be as anxious as I am to hear from this masterful writer just how she develops and accomplishes such superb results. She places great importance on her method of outlining that keeps her writing on track. I think we will all learn a great deal from Anne.

(For more information about Anne Perry, visit <http://anneperry.co.uk>)

**In This Issue****Feature****Page****(Click on title to jump to item)**



## December in Review

### The Gala Book Faire

Ray Malus

The fifth of December, you should have been there!  
Our fabled, biennial, Gala Book Faire.  
This year, the location was just a bit odd:  
A bookstore: Crown Books, Woodland Hills Promenade.

The board got there early to ready the scene:  
Long tables with name-signs all decked out in green.  
A Banner hung proudly for folks who were new.  
We hoped we'd get hundreds. (Well, ...we got a few.)

So, Sylvia, Mary, Ray, Andi, Nance, Bob,  
and Sami festooned all the tables. Great job!  
And while all our officers readied the place,  
exhibitors wrangled and jockeyed for space.

We'd Paula and Leslie and Lori and Ray,  
(Oh, Erica showed up, but she didn't stay.)  
with Nance, Doug, and Ilan, and Sherri, and Nan.  
(And Michael arrived late — just as we began.)

"So what should I charge? How do I calculate?"  
"Crown Books gets two tenths, point-oh-nine to the State."  
"God help me! My algebra skills are a mess?"  
"Hey, you're the 'Retailer'. You'll just have to guess!"

The hours crawled slowly. The traffic was thin.  
It seemed like The Book Faire would never begin.  
With hundreds of flyers spread all over town,  
It's hard to believe so few showed up at Crown.

A handful of members dropped by for a look.  
And one or two actually purchased a book.  
We love that they joined us. They brightened the day.  
It's nice that 'the crowds' didn't scare them away.

So, after a while, when the hordes didn't show,  
we packed up our books and got ready to go.  
We stowed our receipt pads, said "Thank you" to Sue,  
collected our placards, and bid sad adieu.

The fifth of December, you should have been there!  
Well, SOMEBODY should have!  
The Gala Book Faire. □

### -30- Ray Malus

On November 1, 2015 the  
Writing/Publishing world lost  
one of its giants. Dan Poynter,  
author of over 130 books, and  
the acknowledged Guru of  
Self-Publishing, passed away at  
the age of 77.



I needed to get my calculator  
out to check his age; on the  
two occasions I met him he seemed decades  
younger.

Dan was a magnetic, buoyant, and expert  
speaker.

San Fernando Valley Branch was fortunate



to have him  
appear twice  
(January,  
2010 and  
June 2013).  
On those two  
occasions, I  
ran 'tech' for  
him. He was

as charming off stage as he was on — full of  
knowledge and ebullience. Dan was a joy to  
listen to and to interact with. He was hugely  
generous with both his knowledge and his time.

We had tried to book him for another  
appearance, this year, but he'd injured himself,  
and was not available.

He leaves a priceless legacy at his website:  
<http://www.parapublishing.com/sites/para/>.

Many eulogies will be written about Dan. I  
am not qualified to write one. I simply know he  
changed the course of many of our members'  
careers — mine included.

Dan Poynter will be greatly missed and  
fondly remembered.

( "-30-" is traditional journalistic shorthand for "end of  
story." I think Dan would have approved.)

(From his website) "Dan's Celebration of Life will be  
held on January 15th 2016, at 2:00 PM, at 199 Winchester  
Canyon Road, Goleta, California 93117"

**Dan Pointer 1938 - 2015**

[President cont'd from page 2](#)

awed. And I saw the future, sparse but eager. That afternoon we also met a few people who were interested in joining our club, and our authors met an agent.

We learned about what each other wrote and met Sue Beil, the assistant manager of Crown Books. With Sue's leadership Crown Books supports local authors and provides opportunities for our book promotions. She heard ideas for new books, gave advice about what sells, encouraged authors and helped every way she could. Thank you Sue. Our board will debrief on December 14<sup>th</sup> and pass on our experience and ideas to the next president for a successful 2017 Book Faire.

Looking to the future, I wish you all a growing, learning, loving, caring, and yes a writing new year. Maybe it will start with a glorious rainy day. The calendar of speakers for 2016 will be posted on our website and announced as soon I complete the selection. It will feature speakers on the art and craft of writing and editing. In the meantime I wish everyone Happy Holidays. I hope to see you on January 2<sup>nd</sup> for our featured speaker, the international best-selling author, Anne Perry.

Your President, *Andi Polk*

## YOU SHOULD KNOW



### SMILE!

California Writers Club, San Fernando Valley Branch, is providing this notice to inform our members, and guests at our events, that Still Photography may be taking place.

These pictures are occasionally posted on our website. If, for some reason, you don't want your likeness used, you must notify us in advance.

**The Window for submissions to The Lit Review  
has been extended till December 31<sup>st</sup>.**

**The CWC Literary Review  
is our (approximately) annual 'slick paper' magazine publication.**

**Maximum number of submissions per member is two.**

**Fee for submissions is \$10, (regardless of number).**

**For guidelines, go to:**

**<http://calwriters.org/submissions-welcome-for-2016-literary-review/>**

## GUEST POLICY

**In general, guests at our meetings are asked to pay a small (\$5), tax-deductible donation. However, each member of the branch is permitted to sponsor TWO FREE GUESTS during the year.**

**(Unfortunately, these do not 'roll-over')**

**If you are sponsoring a guest, please assist in their checking in, and notify our Membership Chair.**





*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 PEDESTAL MAGAZINE

6815 Honors Court, Charlotte, NC 28210

E-mail: [pedmagazine@carolina.rr.com](mailto:pedmagazine@carolina.rr.com). Website: [www.thepedestalmagazine.com](http://www.thepedestalmagazine.com).

Contact: John Amen, Editor-in-chief.

About:

Committed to promoting diversity and celebrating the voice of the individual.

Editor's Note: See website for reading periods for different forms. Member: CLMP.

Established: 2000. Simultaneous Submissions: Yes. Guidelines available online.

Buys first rights. All rights revert back to the author/artist upon publication. Retains the right to publish the piece in any subsequent issue or anthology without additional payment.

No kill fee. Queries accepted by e-mail. Responds in 1-2 months to mss. Publishes ms 2-4 weeks after acceptance.

**Nonfiction:** Needs: essays, reviews, interview. Pays \$40.

**Fiction:** "We are receptive to all sorts of high-quality literary fiction. Genre fiction is encouraged as long as it crosses or comments upon its genre and is both character-driven and psychologically acute. We encourage submissions of short fiction, no more than 3 flash fiction pieces at a time. There is no need to query prior to submitting, please submit via online submission manager—no e-mail to the editor."

**Needs:** Adventure, ethnic, experimental, historical, horror, humorous, mainstream, mystery, romance, science fiction, and works that don't fit into a specific category.

Buys 10-25 mss/year.

Length: up to 4,000 words, up to 1,000 words for flash fiction. Pays 3¢/word.

**Poetry:** Open to a wide variety of poetry, ranging from the highly experimental to the traditionally formal. Submit all poems in 1 form. No need to query before submitting.

Max Number of Poems: 5. No length restriction.

## PRAIRIE SCHOONER

The University of Nebraska Press. Prairie Schooner, 123 Andrews Hall, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68588

Phone: (402) 472-0911. Fax: (402) 472-1817 E-mail: [PrairieSchooner@unl.edu](mailto:PrairieSchooner@unl.edu). Website: [prairieschooner.unl.edu](http://prairieschooner.unl.edu).

Contact: Ashley Strosnider, Managing Editor. Prairie Schooner, published quarterly, prints poetry, fiction, personal essays, interviews, and reviews.

Editor's Note: Submissions must be received between September 1 and May 1. Poetry published in Prairie Schooner has been selected for inclusion in The Best American Poetry and The Pushcart Prize.

Established: 1926. Guidelines for #10 SASE. Buys all rights, which are returned to the author upon request after publication. Circulation: 2,500. Byline given. Pays on publication. Queries accepted by mail, email, online submission form

Sample copy: \$6. Responds in 1 week to queries, in 3-4 months to mss.

Publishes ms an average of 1 year after acceptance. 100% freelance written. Editorial lead time 6 months.

**Nonfiction:** Needs: essays, literary/personal. Literary or creative nonfiction, memoir, or essays on literature. No scholarly papers that require footnotes. No pieces written only to express a moral lesson or to inspire. There must be depth and literary quality as well.

Buys mss/year: 6-8. Submission Method: Send complete ms. Length: 250-20,000 words.

Pays 3 copies of the issue in which the writer's work is published.

**Fiction:** "We try to remain open to a variety of styles, themes, and subject matter. We look for high-quality writing, 3-D characters, well-wrought plots, setting, etc. We are open to realistic and/or experimental fiction."

**Needs:** ethnic, experimental, mainstream, novel concepts, literary. Buys 15-25 mss/year.

Send complete ms with SASE and cover letter listing previous publications (where, when).

Pays 3 copies of the issue in which the writer's work is published.

**Poetry:** Wants "poems that fulfill the expectations they set up." No specifications as to form, length, style, subject matter, or purpose. Needs: avant garde, free verse, haiku, light verse, traditional.

Max Number of Poems: 7. Buys 100-120 poems/year

Pays 3 copies of the issue in which the writer's work is published.

# Review and Refresh

Dave Wetterberg

*This is the first installment of Dave Wetterberg's excellent series. We will continue them in our following issues.*

## The Sentence

The sentence is the basic unit of thought. The Victorians liked them long and smoky. Our English teachers taught us to write sentences like them. In today's world, however, the professionals like their sentences simple and clear.

### Simple, not Short

The simple sentence is the most popular sentence among professional writers. But simple doesn't necessarily mean short. It means one subject and one predicate (verb).

The following is a simple sentence: *The explorers moved on.*

But so is this: *Their food and water depleted, hampered by the lack of oxygen in the cave, the explorers, fearless and dedicated to their mission, moved on into the darkness.*

### The Loose Sentence

The last example in the previous section above could be revised into a "loose" sentence, wherein the subject *explorers* and the predicate *moved* lead off:

*The explorers moved off into the darkness, out of food and water, hampered by the lack of oxygen in the cave, but fearless and dedicated nevertheless.*

### The Periodic Sentence

The example above could also be written as a "periodic" sentence, wherein the subject and the predicate end the sentence.

*Fearless and dedicated, out of food and water, and hampered by the lack of oxygen in the cave, the explorers moved off into the darkness.*

### The Cumulative Sentence

Both *explorer* sentences above are "cumulative," that is, they are simple sentences expanded by the use of various word-clusters. Each cluster is separated by a comma. None contain a subject/predicate combination.

*Tarzan stood on the cliff. (no clusters)*

*Tarzan stood on the cliff, dagger in his hand. (simple sentence, one cluster)*

*Tarzan stood on the cliff, dagger in his hand, steely-eyed and defiant. (two clusters)*

*Tarzan stood on the cliff, dagger in his hand, steely-eyed and defiant, his faithful chimp Cheeta at his side. (etc.)*

*Tarzan stood on the cliff, dagger in his hand, steely-eyed and defiant, his faithful chimp Cheeta at his side, his loin-skin flapping in the morning breeze.*

### The Wasted Sentence

Good writers try not to waste sentences. That is, they combine smaller elements into longer ones.

In the combination *The chairman congratulated us upon hearing the good news. His name was Theo Wallington*, the second sentence is wasted. It would be better combined with the previous one: *Theo Wallington, the chairman, congratulated us upon hearing the good news.*

A sentence beginning with "It is" can usually be better combined with another.

*His home rests in the Loire Valley. It is on a beautiful fifteen acre wine orchard.*

*(combined) His home rests on a beautiful, fifteen acre wine orchard in the Loire Valley. □*

## A Heart-felt Thank You.

After many years as a proof-reader for this publication, Ethel Ann Shaffer has decided to retire.

Ethel Ann has been an invaluable asset to *The Scribe*. Her dedication, accuracy, and personality leave a vacancy that can never be completely filled. On behalf of all our members, and the staff of *The Valley Scribe*, I offer her our deep thanks for her years of service.

Ethel Ann's retirement creates an opening on our staff, that of proofreader.

The requirements for this job are speed, accuracy, and — most of all — tolerance.

I have written several times: "As editor, I feel it is our job to insure that published pieces are within certain guidelines of punctuation, grammar, spelling, formatting, layout, and... — well that's about it. Content is mostly your affair. Your name is on the piece. We assume you carefully think out the ideas you express, the words and phrases you choose. We will try never to change these."

I have also said many times, I do not always agree with, or even like, everything we print. That is not a valid concern. You each have your own voice, and we will not change it. We want to print what you write, not what we think you should write.

So, if you feel you would like to help, can respond quickly, have a good 'eye' a sound grounding in ordinary English spelling, and usage, and can adopt these guidelines, we would love to have you on staff.

Please contact me. -r=-



### Life's Changing Journey

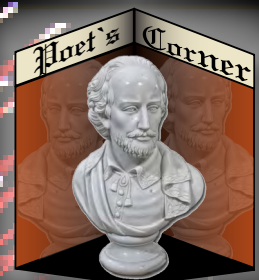
Lillian Rodich

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 figures come into focus  
and smile 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

a New Year begins

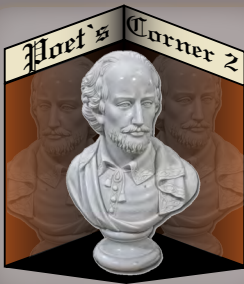


### Wonders In Our Lives

Norman Molesko

Every footstep that we take,  
every leg movement that we make,  
represent many complex reflexes  
from a neuromuscular standpoint.  
What goes on with our body parts  
is taken for granted by most.  
Other examples can include:  
nodding one's head,  
wiggling one ear,  
raising either arm,  
lowering one's butt,  
lifting one's big toe.  
All of these are truly wonders  
to appreciate and to behold  
and not to be taken for granted.





### Hunter College Girls in Nineteen-Sixty

Ray Malus

Hunter College Girls in Nineteen-Sixty  
Distant wraiths that haunt the morning subway,  
loose leaf books, pressed hard and tight against their  
lush and unfamiliar ripened breasts, are  
gripped like stiffened lovers they desire.

Hunter College Girls in Nineteen-Sixty  
Banished girdles stuffed in canvas book bags.  
Tickling whiffs of latex, musk and talcum.  
Luscious aspic haunches free to taunt and  
chuckle in felt skirts — stretched taut on softly  
rounded bellies — creased with tension, draped like  
theater curtains poised for a performance.

Hunter College Girls in Nineteen-Sixty  
Bra-strap-hanging, seat awaiting, standing  
swaying, with enticing legs akimbo  
flexed for balance, intimating passion.  
Muscle calves in sheer black leotards that  
hint of willing whipped-cream thighs imprisoned,  
smothering in cruel restraining fabric.

Hunter College Girls in Nineteen-Sixty  
Black ironed hair and long pale equine faces.  
Tragic eyes sunk deep in inky shadow  
hopeless, gaze with gravitas and sorrow  
search for meaning through the grimy windows,  
seek eternal truths beneath their slippers.

Hunter College Girls in Nineteen-Sixty  
Dark Medeas steeped in lamentation.  
Draped in velvet adolescent heartache.  
Clothed in coffee-house-bleak devastation.  
Reach to you, with husky hungry voices,  
offer dreams in stiff and hard-bound cardboard,  
eager, pleading, "Will you read my poems?"

### Untitled

Sylvia Molesko

Oh me, oh my,  
How time does fly!  
So much to do,  
I'll never get through.  
My head it spins,  
I wish I were twins.

Have you ever felt  
That you're doing too much,  
And never enough gets done?  
Making a list doesn't seem to help,  
And you've not got time for fun?

So you go go go,  
But you know, no no.  
You really should stop,  
Before you drop.

Well don't be stressed,  
It's time for a rest  
And relaxation too.  
You can never do enough,  
You know it's true,  
For you, yourself - for you.

So have some cheer,  
It's a brand New Year.  
Two thousand sixteen  
Can be a year serene.  
It's really up to you!

If you have reservations,  
About how your time goes,  
Make New Year's resolutions  
to write poetry or prose.



## The Bulletin Board

### GUEST DONATIONS

Non-members attending meetings are asked to pay a \$5 (tax deductible) donation. (Members may sponsor 2 free guest visits during the year.) New membership is immediate upon application at door. For details, contact our Membership Chair at the sign-in table or e-mail [andipolk4@gmail.com](mailto:andipolk4@gmail.com).

### MEETINGS

ARE HELD AT 1:00 P.M.  
ON THE 1<sup>st</sup> 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 6<sup>th</sup>, 1 p.m.  
TBA  
Details on our website: [CWC-SFV.ORG](http://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](mailto:cwc-sfv@roadrunner.com)

### December BIRTHDAYS!

Paula Diggs	Jan 1
Sharon Yofan	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](mailto:cwc-sfv@roadrunner.com)

Please type "SUBMISSION" in the subject line.  
(We regret that we cannot accept 'hard copy' submissions.  
We simply do not have the personnel to re-type them.)  
Size limits (with a tiny bit of latitude):

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

Articles/Essays  
Short Stories  
Poetry  
Book Release Notices

Regular Features:  
Submissions:

- 150 words or fewer + front cover  
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.

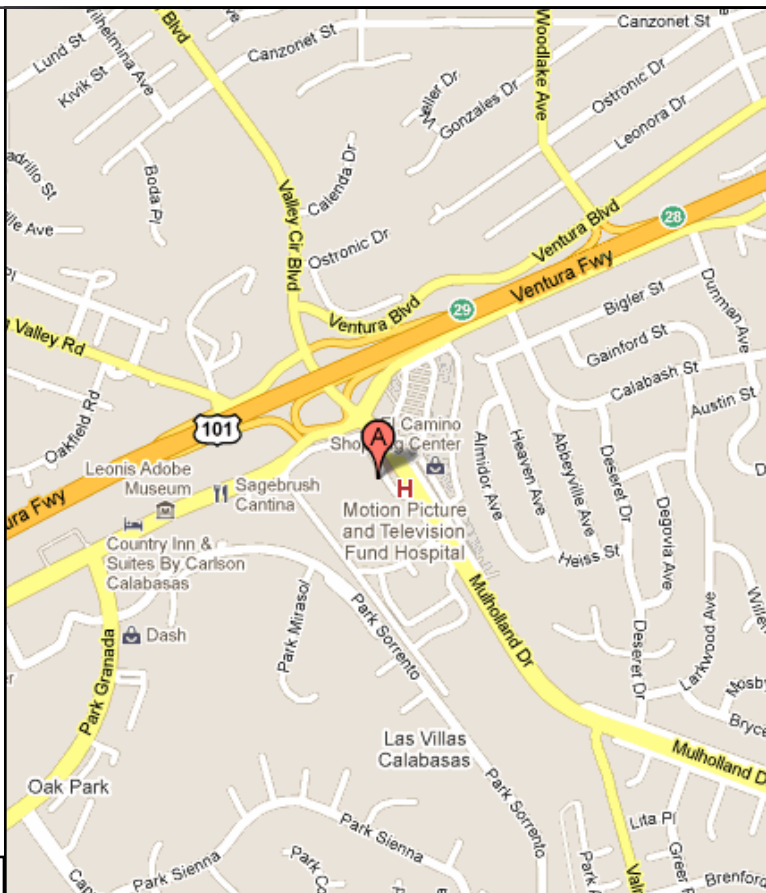
Parking is free in any of the lots.

(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")

Editor

[Ray Malus](#)

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Proofreaders: Doug Douglas, Sharron Malus

Columnists: Andrea Polk, Mary Freeman,  
Dave Wetterberg, Ray Malus

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LOTS of great information at our

Website:

[www.cwc-sfv.org](http://www.cwc-sfv.org)