



The Valley Scribe

Volume 10

Next Meeting Saturday, December 3, 2016

Issue 4

President's Connections



Andi Polk

First, let me welcome and introduce three new members: Alan Wills, author of several books and an on-line publishing website, Stacie Hammes writer in several genres, and Victoria Andre King who just released her first novel, *The Führer Must Die*. Welcome!

Thanksgiving is just around the corner and for many it is the time we reflect on the value of belonging to a community of family and friends.

We are a community of creative individuals with different backgrounds and experiences. We come together to support our passion to express our creative ideas in words. Some of us pursue our expression in poetic forms, others write prose, lyrics, or scripts. Often we experiment and climb out of our comfortable genre or try different styles.

We discover writing words is easy. Writing well is not easy. We keep at it because we must. It is a passion. Our community supports our passion for expression. This is the over-riding mission of the California Writers Club of San Fernando Valley.

While November may be the beginning of the season to reflect on what we have accomplished, we write moment-by-moment, day-by-day. Only after this diligent effort do we inch closer to a better word, sentence, a more interesting character, or more realistic tension.

Throughout the year we must honor this passion and the efforts of others to achieve their dream. I give thanks to this community for supporting my inch-by-inch literary progress.

The election is over and regardless whether the results were to our liking or not, our expression is through words—because we believe words matter.

I wish you and all our nation's people a Happy Thanksgiving!

The Acorn Idea: with Victoria Zackheim



How do you take an idea and grow it? Plant one simple word, idea, memory and let imagination take over? Is it a poem or a play, a novel, short story, or memoir? Is it possible to segue from something you read in the newspaper to writing a gripping documentary? We'll explore all of this...and more.

Victoria will lead us through a maze of possibilities and explore with you the many options for developing your *acorn* idea within a genre you may never have thought possible.

Here are some of the genres Victoria has explored with success: author of the novel, *The Bone Weaver*, editor of six anthologies, including *The Other Woman*, *For Keeps*, *The Face in the Mirror*, *He Said What?*, *Exit Laughing*, and *Faith*. Her screenplays, *Maidstone* and *Rozzy* (based on Caroline Leavitt's novel), are feature films under development. Her theater play, *The Other Woman* (based on her anthology), was given simultaneous readings at twenty-one theaters across the country last November, with proceeds going to women's shelters. Another play, *Entangled*, is in development, and she created the program Women's Voices. Victoria writes documentary films, screenplays, and teaches creative nonfiction (personal essay) in the UCLA Extension Writers' Program. She is currently working on a mystery that takes place in Paris, where she lived for many years. She is a 2010 San Francisco Library Laureate.

She lives in the San Francisco Bay Area and will be here December 3rd. Take advantage of her inspiration and explore with her where your ideas might take you.

November 5th Program Review

Andi Polk

Welcoming Barbara Abercrombie and her small black dog, Nelson, was a packed room of members and one guest waiting in anticipation for her mini workshop. Members were prepared and signed up to read his or her offering for feedback and comments from this the award winning UCLA creative writing instructor. Amazing energy and enthusiasm for the experience existed even before she got started. We saw members that have not attended in months.

She set out basic rules for feedback. Comments were to apply to only what was written. The author could not reply until called upon with a direct question from Barbara. She directed members to look for positive writing as well as areas of potential clarification. She called for member feedback before she commented. As instructed, the comments were directed to the work read, yet were powerful and instructive for all work.

While the program planned initially included writing exercises, the audience wanted Barbara to continue hearing more members read and to hear her comments. After a brief huddle she agreed. She was enjoying the event as much as we were, and asked if she could come back. The resounding response was yes, followed by applause. Unfortunately, time did not allow everyone who wanted to read to read.

At the close I learned that she is now offering a workshop on the second Saturday of the month at Vroman's Bookstore on Colorado Blvd in Pasadena. Vroman's is charging a fee. If you wish to attend, contact Vroman's for further information.



Barbara Abercrombie

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Publishing and Marketing Opportunities

By Staff

NEW MARKETS For the month of November, there are a number of new markets opening up: Google these sources for details.

PAYING MARKETS:

EVENT a celebrated literary journal for new and established talent

The Iowa Review Series in Fiction [The Iowa Review] Publishes two novels annually

The Parliament House (a new publishing house, looking for all genres)

The Shadows [Library of Shadows] A horror and action publisher, poetry and short fiction up to 10,000 words

Wild Musette Journal of Music, Mystery and Myth [Wild Musette] a literary magazine focused on traditional music and dance, fantasy, imaginative stories, and inspired poetry.

Continued on Page 3

Opportunities continued from page 2

Jerry Jazz Musician New Short Fiction Contest interests in music, social history, literature, politics, art, film and theatre, particularly that of the counter-culture of mid-twentieth century America

Mslexia Submissions are restricted to women

Lackington's looking for stylized prose. Where it shakes out its feathers or tries on outrageous costumes.

NON-PAYING MARKETS:

Belletrist a literary arts magazine publishing out of Bellevue College

Lit.cat an online literary journal that keeps each issue within a single page at a reading length under half an hour.

The Font A Literary Journal for Language Teachers

The Provo Canyon Review is looking for work that is deeply moving without being overly sentimental; tender, in the sense of a mixture of grace and vulnerability and compassion

Thin Air Magazine Web Features a non-profit literary publication of the Northern Arizona University English Department.

StarShipSofa science fiction audio magazine.

FEE-BASED MARKETS (CHARGING A SUBMISSION FEE):

Nicholas Schaffner Award for Music in Literature [Schaffner Press] encourage emerging writers whose lives and writing have been profoundly influenced by music

Writing Magazine Other Worlds Short Story Competition [Writing Magazine] fantasy and SF stories, whether that be mythical worlds and creatures or technology-inspired alternative worlds, past, present or future

Palooka Press Chapbook Contest all types, styles, and genres and aren't looking for a particular aesthetic (fee-based)

Permafrost New Alchemy Contest looking for new and innovative approaches to the creative process. That means anything goes.

Writer's Digest Annual Writing Competition All lengths, genres

The California Writers Club *Literary Review*. The 2017 addition submission deadline is November 30. Limited two submissions per member, \$10.00 submission fee. Calwriters.org for submission details.

CONTEST SOURCES

winningwriters.com offers a source for fee-based submission contests and free contests for all genres, all ages, and from inside and outside the U.S. Current newsletter includes deadlines from mid-November through December 31st published and unpublished entries. Prizes from software support packages to \$10,000. Take a good look. Examples:

Two Sylvias Press. New Advent Calendar

POETRY PROMPTS. Starting December 1 through 31st each day a new prompt.

<http://www.twosylviaspress.com/advent-calendar-prompts.html>. You will be given an access code at the end of November.

Creative Nonfiction, True stories well told, Deadline December 12, seeks essays on "The Dialogue Between Science and Religion". Desires original narratives exploring the relationships between these two forces and the way these forces challenge and strengthen one another. True stories rich in character and scene in a distinctive voice. Submissions 5,000 or fewer words. \$10,000 for best essay; \$5,000 for runner up.

Submittable.com, rich source of contests and publishing opportunities in all fields of creative arts

BUGS, Keyle Birnberg

"Come see the gold treasure," my brother Salem says squeezing behind the wall and Mom's huge armoire. "You look fat today; you wouldn't be able to squeeze by even though Mom says you are anemic."

"No! I'm not fat! I didn't even eat my vegetables for lunch today," I complain.

"That's because you don't like greens." I always wondered how they schlepped that humongous piece of furniture into the house in the first place. I hear his voice muffled and dusty, like holding a sneeze.

"Please help me in. I promise not to tell Mom about the books you took from her shelf the other night."

"What books?" He says. I can tell by his voice that he is worried.

"You know the ones. The books Mom says not to read because they are not proper for children trying to read. Let's see, I think one is titled Ma-da-me Bo-vary and Lucrecia Borgia."

"All right, all right—give me your hand," He pulls my arm. I still can't see him. I suck my stomach in as far as I can to make it fit through the tiny space. There is a small triangle full of dust behind the armoire. I see a small square door with a handle in the center of the floor.

"Move away from the trap door—hurry and don't make any noise. If you do---you won't be allowed to look into my private treasures ever again—and another thing, promise you wouldn't tell about the books or I'll squeeze the s-t out of you."

"Okay, I'm right behind you...but it's so dark...I can't see you." He laughs with his Dracula voice. I want to go back out but I can't move or turn around. The sub floor space is too small and full of dust and small pebbles. I'm frightened

"Salem, where are youuuuu? I can't see...you...please answer me," I beg. I'm now crying out loud; hoping Mom would hear me. I can hear her footsteps on the other side of the armoire. I BEGIN TO ITCH – In the dark I feel something crawling on my arms and all around me

I AM SO SCARED! I feel a chill and something moving with a thousand little feet around my neck.

"Maaaaaaaah." I scream out loud but she doesn't hear me. Little furry things are walking on my arms and legs. I'm sweating, coughing and frozen with fright. A hand grabs my leg and I faint or think I do.

"Shut up...I've been right here next to you all along." My brother lies.

"No-no-no, you-you-you weren't. I would have heard your breathing." My tongue feels big and heavy. My teeth are chattering. "I'm go-go-going to tell DADDY ON YOU, because Mom never spansks you.

"Stupid! Why do you always follow me everywhere I go? Never let me have any fun with my friends, maybe next time you wouldn't bug me."

"Don't – don't talk about bugs ever again; just help me out of here. I'm SCARED. There is no room to turn around.

"We have to crawl backwards," he says. I can't see him, but I hear him moving.

"Hold my hand pleaaasse". I beg, but he doesn't. Now I see a small square, it must be the trap door, but it's dark. The big armoire is probably blocking the light. Maybe we have to be trapped here hours and hours.

"Wait up." I scream. I'm afraid he is going to close the small trap door before I get out. He helps me out. We are now in the small square right behind the big armoire.

“Wait up.” I scream. I’m afraid he is going to close the small trap door before I get out. He helps me out. We are now in the small square right behind the big armoire.

“Shhhhhh,” he motions me to be quiet. We hear Mom on the other side hanging her clothes in her big armoire, re-arranging the wooden hangers and singing a stupid old song—unaware of the bugs, meaning Salem and me. We were probably been missing what seemed for hours and hours and she didn’t even care. We have to stay quietly until it is safe to come out without her noticing,

I wish we had those forbidden books with us, and the flashlight we forgot to take. I pull my hair every which way to shake the cobwebs like thin-dusty cloth out my bangs. I shiver with fright trying to spit the nasty ‘arantias’. Ach! That’s terrible. G-d, but I hate bugs.

Anyway, I will read those books someday—but I’ll always be frightened of bugs. All of a sudden I hear Mom say, “Oh, there you are, just on time to enjoy ‘el almuerzo’ lunch. Both of you, on the run, take a shower before joining us at the table.”

~ The End ~

Poetry Begins

Holiday Carousel

the carousel turns
while Holiday lights decorate
night’s charcoal skies

painted wooden ponies prance to nowhere
on enchanted silver poles
and magical tinsel of children’s laughter
fills midnight’s hour with their innocence

now it is time
to reach for the golden ring
sharing its bounty with those whose tears
wash over their smiles
their souls starved
and immune to joy

it is time to share
our treasures and our hope
before gears grind into silence
and glitter of laughter is covered with dust

before prancing ponies cease to gallop
and magical music stops

Lillian Rodich



Our First Thanksgiving Day: A Thanksgiving Medley
(To tune of "Over the River and Through the Woods")

Across the Atlantic Ocean, a long time ago
Came pilgrims in the Mayflower, a new world to know.
Freedom of religion was what they sought;
Starvation and illness were problems they fought.

But the people worked together,
And some friendly Indians taught
These pilgrims how to better use the new land they got.
So it wasn't long before they could say:

*"We've made it through this first hard year;
Let's have a feast and thank the Lord —
Let's have a Thanksgiving Day!"*

Tag: So they had a feast to celebrate;
It was our first Thanksgiving Day!

*(Note: Follow up with the traditional song:
"Over the River and Through the Woods.")*

(By Stephany Spencer, 1990)
(Photo courtesy of Google Plus)



In Mexico, Down Past the Rio Grande

In Mexico, down past the Rio Grande,
I buried my poetry in the desert sand;
Now it lies lost in a foreign land --
Lost like one loses a part of one's hand.

Lost my diaries in the desert's brew, too.
They're now covered by sandstorms that blew.
With each new wind, more sands did accrue,
So adios, muse babies — *adios* and *adieu*!

You lie in the land where I birthed and grew --
There in LeBaron, the home I once knew.
I couldn't find you when from there I flew.
So part of me's left now buried in you.

It's buried where my past lies buried and dead,
Hidden with my heart that broke when I fled,
'Cause all I'd believed and held dear, instead,
Suddenly collapsed and had to be shed.

Still, I long for my family and old friends too,
Who could not see things the way that I do,
Nor would they allow me to use my own voice —
They didn't respect my freedom of choice.

Now in deep abyss, I traverse this earth,
Looking for meaning to renew life's worth;
Looking for Mother's long-gone mirth,
Though now she sleeps in Mexican Earth.

But part of me's buried too, in Mexico,
The part that died when I escaped years ago —
Back where my heart lies half-buried alive —
Back where my past took a nose dive.

Perhaps that other half's in my hometown,
Buried in Chihuahua, Mexico's ground,
But I can't go back — can't traverse the Rio Grande,
The river's too wide so I stay on dry land.

And remain in my new world on this other side.
Still, so many lonely rivers have I cried,
And though many tears have finally dried,
Many old rivers are still left inside.

Too many rivers between me 'n' those I know,
Gulfs too wide since I let them go.
But part of me lies there in Old Mexico,
Down past the Rio Grande I love so.

Divided and torn by the Rio Grande
Flowing between me and LeBaron land,
I wonder: *Is half my heart buried there,*
In Mexico, down past the Rio Grande?

(By Stephany Spencer, 4/2008)

CONNECTING

When I encounter some people,
I look at the soul each one shows.
I usually find positiveness in many.
This is a welcoming quality for me.

Norman Molesko, 2016

Announcements	Directions and Meeting Information										
<p>CALENDAR through January 2017 November 30 Deadline for 2017 CWC Literary Review Submissions. calwriters.org for details. \$10 fee.</p> <p>Saturday, December 5, “The Many Ways Creative Ideas May Be Expressed,” Victoria Zackheim, anthologist, playwright, author, teacher.</p> <p>Wednesday, December 7, Board Meeting MPTF Hospital Admin Conf. Rm. 10 AM.</p> <p>Wednesday, January 4, 2017 Board Meeting MPTF Hospital Admin. Conf. Rm. 10 AM.</p> <p>Saturday, January 7, 2017 “Legal Update” Literary Attorney, Kendall Jones.</p>	<p>Location Motion Picture, Television Fund campus. 23388 Mulholland Dr. Woodland Hills, CA We meet in the Katzenberg Pavilion</p> <p>Freeway Directions Take 101 Freeway to the west end of the San Fernando Valley. Exit Valley Circle/Mulholland Dr. Go south over the 101 Freeway. Pass Calabasas Rd., on your right enter Spielberg Dr. the second entrance. Parking is free. Ask the kiosk attendant for directions to the parking lot with the trombone player statue.</p>										
<p>Thanksgiving Thursday, November 24th</p> <p>Chanukah begins Sunset Saturday, December 24th</p> <p>Christmas Day Sunday, December 25th</p> <p>Kwanzaa Begins Monday, December 26th</p>	<p>The Katzenberg Pavilion room is beyond the Dog Park. Take the winding path to the courtyard. We will set up for sign-in outside our room at 12:30 PM</p> <p>Guests are asked to contribute a \$5 tax deductible donation.</p>										
<p style="text-align: center;">Program Schedule Saturday, December 3, 2016 Schedule</p> <table> <tr> <td>Registration: 12:30</td><td>Break, Meet, Mingle, Refreshments: 1:40 – 2:00 PM</td></tr> <tr> <td>Guests: Suggested donation \$5.00</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Open Mic 1:00 PM</td><td>Featured Speaker: 1:10 – 2:00 PM</td></tr> <tr> <td>Announcements 1:30 PM</td><td>Speaker Book Sales and Signing: 3:00 PM</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>Clean up and Close Doors: 3:30 PM</td></tr> </table>		Registration: 12:30	Break, Meet, Mingle, Refreshments: 1:40 – 2:00 PM	Guests: Suggested donation \$5.00		Open Mic 1:00 PM	Featured Speaker: 1:10 – 2:00 PM	Announcements 1:30 PM	Speaker Book Sales and Signing: 3:00 PM		Clean up and Close Doors: 3:30 PM
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