

The Valley Scribe

The Next Meeting Saturday, February 4, 2017

Volume 10

Issue 6

President's Connections

Andi Polk



Frustrated as I might be at the lack of progress on my novel, twice a month I thank the deadlines my two critique groups impose. Without them I would fail to write. Sometimes ideas come in bunches and I close the gap between where I am and where I need to be. But my jolt of inspiration is unreliable.

A few of our members are my role models. They persevere though more calamities than I do. While they have written and published three or four books, my memoir languishes in a trunk and my novel wades through plot changes, enduring fits and starts with new outlines, backstories and hours of research. I know fiction has to be plausible and when situated in history it has to be accurate. Readers, if it is ever published, will find every historic error, every misused idiom and inconsistent sequence. Research is often the fun part of my writing. As one member cautioned me, an historic factoid can lead us into a marvelous maze of interesting information that does not get us to where we need to be. Indeed.

Those members who are successful in producing a finished, published, well-written novel or collection of poetry I admire. They tell me that their mantra is discipline; setting a time, and a place where writing is priority, all else is deferred. As this article sits next to the announcement of February's speaker, it is obvious we should pay attention to magazine articles. If you are like me, battling your own life-style or personality flaws and are frustrated by slow progress, give contests, anthologies and magazines a try. If they work for me I will let you know.

"Magazine Articles' \$\$\$"

Chris Lynch



Coming to us with high praise from other branches of CWC, Chris Lynch will share a valuable presentation on writing for magazines. The full title is "Finding your passion — and making lots of \$\$\$ — by writing freelance magazine articles". This hints at the important opportunity this topic offers. He will share his personal experience and insights with us.

A South Bay crime fiction author, Lynch is also a short story writer, biographer, interviewer, advocate of writing for at risk youth and prison inmates, and when not writing is a mountain climber.

His crime fiction novel, *One Eyed Jack*, was a 2013 Shamus Award finalist, and a 2014 Writers Digest honorable mention for genre fiction. Slated to become a feature film the adaptation of this book will go into production this year.

Based on his magazine writing experience he will show us:

1. How he broke into magazine article writing.
2. How to discover stories and leverage your passion to develop them.
3. How to best query magazines and newspapers to get, "The Go-Ahead."
4. Angles and slants.
5. Writing articles paying up to 1.5 cents per word. A 700-word article earned him \$1,200!!
6. Using articles to help promote yourself and your other work

You do not want to miss this opportunity to learn from his experience.

January's Speaker, Kendall Jones. "A Legal Update"

More Than a Program Review, Andi Polk

Kendall Jones, our January speaker, did not disappoint. At least one member summed it up, "She's the best. Straight talk, excellent information, dynamic, focused and answered our questions. Spot on." Kind of says it all.

She reminded us that anyone may sue anyone for anything at any time. This always gets my attention.

If you want a copy of my full notes, email me. Her PowerPoint was sent out Monday.

California Bill, AB 1570 is new. It was intended to control sale of artifacts (including books) with inflated prices, based on the signature inside the book. The bookseller can be fined ten times the sale price of the book if the signature is false. We discussed the Certification of Authenticity we should include in our signed copies of books. (See her PowerPoint slide.)

She reviewed defamation and invasion of privacy particularly for memoir authors. A defamation claim (*a false statement of fact made to a third party*) dies with the claimant. Family members cannot claim defamation for the deceased. Get a signed release if you are going use a real name in a memoir. Add a disclaimer. Write the truth, or add "it appeared"... if you cannot get permission. Better yet, change the character.

Four points to the Invasion of Privacy:

1. Intrusion of seclusion (physical intrusion).
2. Appropriation (false suggestion of an endorsement).
3. Public disclosure of private facts (if hurtful, harmful or embarrassing).
4. False Light is similar to defamation (a statement is true however the way it is said or written puts a person in a false light).

Continued next column

She covered recent court cases. In the *Raging Bull* case the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against MGM's claim that the statute of limitations on a copyright infringement claim had expired because the movie was still being shown.

In the case against Google's book scanning project brought by the Authors' Guild, the federal court ruled the chapter excerpts were "fair use". The U.S. Supreme Court refused the appeal. Therefore, Google has entire books and can make excerpts available online, for free, to anyone.

Harlequin Books settled with their authors for \$4.1 million, after a court ruled against their justification that their European subsidiaries' costs reduced the authors' royalties from 50% to 3%.

Be careful about what you say in online reviews, like on Yelp and Ripoff Report. A swarm of lawsuits have been filed recently claiming defamation in online reviews, and Ripoff Report, for example, won't take the reviews down, even if the author requests it.

Finally, Kendall spoke of plagiarism of eBooks. Authors are vulnerable as eBooks are changed slightly and self-published under a different title on Amazon. Amazon will not be liable for the plagiarism. Self-published authors should register their copyright with the Copyright Office for proof of the true authorship and content.

Wow. A lot of powerful information in one hour.

Opportunities: Publishing, Marketing, Contests, Conferences

Mary Freeman

The Foley Poetry Contest - Deadline March 3, 2017. **No fee** contest from the Jesuit magazine 'America' awards \$1,000 and publication for a poem of 30 lines or less. Please submit **no more than one poem**. (Past winning poems have touched on morally significant issues, but have not been "religious" poetry in the conventional sense.) No simultaneous submissions. Submit online or by mail.

<https://americamedia.submittable.com/submit/75024/foley-poetry-contest-2017>

Sponsored by **Speculative Literature Foundation**. Deadline March 31st (must be received by this date). **No fee** contest awards two grants of \$500 apiece for unpublished writing samples (poetry, drama, fiction, or nonfiction) by writers aged 50+ who are just starting to write professionally. Submit a sample of up to 10 pages of poetry or drama, or 5,000 words of fiction or creative nonfiction. Along with your writing sample, send a 500-word personal statement as well as a 1-page bibliography of any previously published work. If sending a segment of a novel or novella, include a 1-page synopsis. See website for other submission requirements. Enter by email. <http://speculativeliterature.org/grants/slf-older-writers-grant/>

Wergle Flomp Humor Poetry Contest (no fee)
Now in its 16th year, this contest seeks today's best humor poems. No fee to enter. Submit published or unpublished work. \$2,250 in prizes. Please submit one humor poem deadline April 1, 2017. No fee to enter. We will award a first prize of \$1,000 and a second prize of \$250. Ten Honorable Mentions will receive \$100 each. The top 12 entries will be published online. Length limit: 250 lines. No restrictions on age or country. Please go to website <https://winningwriters.com/our-contests/wergle-flomp-humor-poetry-contest-free> and click the Submittable button for full details. The results of our 16th annual contest will be announced on August 15, 2017.

The Write Life compiled a list of 20 publications that accept essay submissions, as well as tips on how to [pitch the editor](#), who to contact and, whenever possible, how much the outlet pays. Visit website:

https://thewritelife.com/19-websites-magazines-want-publish-personal-essays/?utm_source=The+Write+Life&utm_campaign=05e00e36f2-Autoresponder_1_welcome_personal_essays1_28_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ae07a22b59-05e00e36f2-121009061&mc_cid=05e00e36f2&mc_eid=29d56902c3

California Crime Writers Conference

Culver City June 10-11, 2017.

Faculty members for this conference are:

LAPD Detective Paul Bishop; Agent Jill Marr of Sandra Dijkstra Agency; Agent Danielle Egan-Miller, president of Browne & Miller Literary Associates. Keynote Speaker, Halle Ephron, NYT best selling author; and Keynote Speaker, William Kent Krueger Edgar Award winning and best selling author. Registration for June 10 -11, 2017 at the DoubleTree by Hilton—Westside, 6161 West Centinela Avenue, Culver City, CA 90230. CCWC is limited to 200 people. If you plan to attend (and we hope you do) register now at www.ccwconference.org. **EARLY BIRD RATE ENDS JANUARY 31!**

Authors Preview, a free website for feedback for your submission from other authors worldwide. A website offered by Alan Wills who is a member of CWC-SFV (See page 7 for details.)

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CWC-SFV Disclaimer This column is neither exhaustive nor have the opportunities listed been vetted by our board. Please conduct your own research and choose the opportunities that best suit your needs.

Member Submissions: Short Stories, Poetry & Reviews

Girl Reading a Book, Keyle Birnberg

From her window Klara sees the old carved furniture dragged without finesse into the waiting van. Faded velvet curtains are folded with old dust covering the piano, and the massive family credenza carved in dark wood with its dangling heavy metal Spanish large pulls is still leaning against the wall.

She runs to her mother's room and sees her reshaping her lips with outlines of red, leaving the imprint of her mouth on a crumpled linen napkin. Her empty china dishes rest on the carved silver tray lined with a delicate lacey ecru doily.

Everything in the house is carved, dark, and old... but Klara likes it all, especially the paintings, and the books lining the walls of the library. She reads on the sneak ... forbidden-to-read-mother's-books when nobody is looking.

This is no time to ask questions. Her mother seems preoccupied with her appearance. Things must be normal, running smoothly and probably they will move again in another year or two. Without being noticed, she flattens her body against the wall, steps out of her mother's room backwards and slides down the banister to the lower floor.

She sees the furniture movers, house cleaners, or whoever they are, EATING... Leaving white crumbs on the floor of the family gallery where the paintings used to be. The walls are now empty showing marks of empty spaces with frames of old golden dust.

Her brother once said, "They were painted in the style of the old masters, like Renoir, Rodman, Modigliani, Fragonard, Mary Cassatt and others."

Klara is not interested in remembering names. Her favorite, *Girl Reading a Book* is missing!!! She feels her skin creep, her eyes swell with tears. She is not allowed to ask questions... nobody seems to care. Her family did not talk about things, especially to children. Voices and things always pushed into the background into closets that slowly turned into fossilized skeletons behind closed doors.

Klara flattens her body against the wall and moves cautiously one-step at a time into the patio trying to hear what the men are saying. She hears steps approaching and quickly hides behind the tall plants aligned like soldiers inside the massive clay pots. Her heart is pounding hard and fast. Her father's soothing voice makes her fear of moving again disappear. She loves this house with dotted windows all around.... pouring sunshine everywhere.

"There you are my little princess, we must learn to count our blessings one by one. Today, I bought this house! No more moving ever again. Your mother ordered to send everything into storage until all walls are fresh, repairs done and old paintings restored."

But where have they moved hundreds of old precious books going way up to the end of the tall wall almost bending the ceilings? All the books she had put aside to read when she gets older are GONE. Her small fingers gently move some titled old books, still not discovering Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, Plutarch's *Lives*, and many others with funny shivering names. She plans to read those books someday but not now when other important things are clouding her brain. Klara is sure all the treasures respected by all in the family were sent-out to be fixed by expert heirloom restorers. The books with leather covers are probably in the basement waiting a turn to be dusted.

Klara is asleep; her small arms hang lovingly around her father's neck. Perhaps tomorrow when she wakes up, everything will be back in place. Her father gently eases his daughter to her bed, covers her gently and fluffs the white feather eiderdown pillow he brought over from Europe.

Klara wakes up startled. With moist eyes sees her favorite painting Fragonard's *Girl Reading a Book* is hanging on the wall. It's the portrait of a beautiful young girl concentrating on every word of the mysterious book she is reading. Her deep yellow dress is impeccably fresh as if centuries have not passed respecting her beauty. The white ruffled collar looks stiff like starched only seconds before; her hair is

up in a high bun gathered-up with tormented copper color ribbons. Her eyes cast down to the open pages devouring every word. Her arm languidly rests on the brown wooden arm of her chair showing the lacey white cuff near her hand, her back pressing softly against a fluffy thick satin pillow.

As she does every night, Klara pretends getting inside the painting.

She wiggles her small hips to fit in a sliver of space next to the young girl dressed in bright yellow. With her fingers she carefully touches the frilly centuries old veil-like material. Now, she feels the organza fabric of her dress. She stops as she mischievously wants to undo the brown ribbons to free her hair down to the girl's shoulders.

The book is opened allowing Klara to read the mysterious book the beautiful girl is holding.

Integrity

He wanders till the sky is dark
And clear of every fretful cloud
In melancholy dusk he seeks
With doubtful heart

His eyes are dark and shadowless
Pools so deep reflections sink
Like mirrored frowns into their depths
Where no ripples mark their way

Seeking to understand his fate
Clear voice lost in thunderous clouds
His solitary figure stands apart
And shatters in the frozen night

Lil Rodich

Aftermath, Sharon Yofan

Our election is over
The die is cast
Campaigns are now
A thing of the past

Trump's been elected
To my dismay
I firmly believe
He'll lead us astray

He's a loose cannon
As everyone knows
And day by day
My anxiety grows

Uncertainty reigns
Even pundits are shy
To predict the future
They won't even try

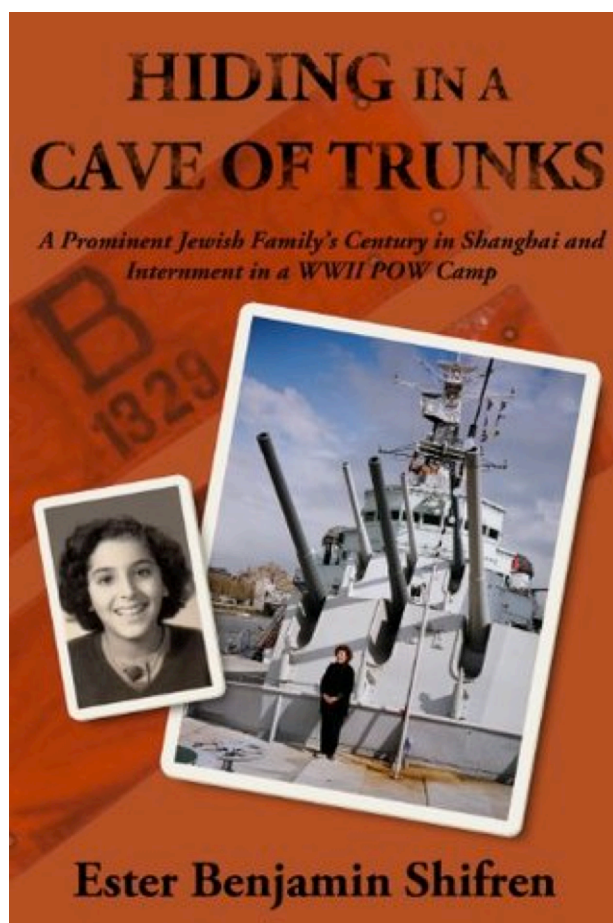
Life will go on
Tho' everything's changed
We're being led
By a man who's deranged!!!

So I'll do what I love
As much as I can
Live in the now
Forget next year's plan

One more thing
To help with the blues
Listen to music
Forget the damn news

Hold tight to your values
Fight for your cause
Continue to believe
In this nation of laws

Tho' the election is over
Don't feed your fear
Feed your strength and well being
Let the rest disappear



Book Review of Ester Shifren's, *Hiding in a Cave of Trunks: A Prominent Jewish Family's Century in Shanghai and Internment in a WWII POW camp*

Ester Shifren, a highly gifted person (author, artist, poet, performer, musician, speaker and more) has been a fellow member of my California Writers Club for many years.

I thought I knew her till I read her wonderfully written memoir and history book combined. I was blown away by her unique writing style and the depth of the material she presented.

Loved learning about her life as a Jew growing up in China during the World War II era. It was very inspiring to read how her family managed to survive almost three years of incarceration in China during that time period.

You have to read the book to know what I'm talking about. Will only say I lost sleep reading this Memoir far into the night. It was so interesting, fascinating, and beautifully written, I couldn't put it down.

I plan to read Ester's historical memoir again at least one more time. Will also use it for ideas and a guide for writing my own memoirs. This book should be on High School and University required reading lists, as well as in every public library.

Ester, you "made history" when you wrote your memoir.

(By Stephany Spencer)

The editor's postscript

I do not know if full book reviews have been published in *The Valley Scribe* before, I included Stephany's contribution as it does two things. It allows our members to learn about each other. And it provides another opportunity to promote and market our books.

As an interim editor I do not have a definitive stance, I will consider genuine reviews of our members' published work that have also been posted on other sites as this has. The review should enlighten us about our member-author and the published work. The limited space and time available will be determinative.

Andi Polk

Opportunities Continued from page 2



Authors Preview

FREE Website for Writers

www.AuthorsPreview.com

Submit your Writings to showcase your:
Short Story, Poem, or Chapter of Your Book
Receive feedback from Readers



To contribute your Writings, logon to the web site and select:
“How-To-Submit”. Include a brief bio, photo if you choose, and one of your writings.

And you can enjoy reading others' writings. Many are personal life stories – serious and funny, full of life problems – often with unique solutions, rich with history from many different cultures, countries, and religions, which come alive with each writer's inner thoughts and feelings.

Contact: AuthorsPreview@gmail.com

Alan Wills

Authors Preview was inspired by the many Writers Forums that charge up to \$100 a year, and do not allow you to submit until you have read and critiqued 10 authors' works.

Authors Preview is FREE! It was created for writers around the world to preview their work, and improve their writing skills by the feedback they receive from readers. Along with your Bio plus picture, you may also give the website where readers may order your book

I hope you take the time to read other authors submissions, plus add a critique, as this is the Power of Authors Preview. Look forward to receiving your submission soon. Enjoy Writing!

Alan Wills, a member of CWC-SFV

Opportunities for CWC-SFV Marketing

As long as I am editor of our newsletter I will post examples of recently published works in magazines, newspapers and other publications that do not require an ISBN. Send your announcement, citing the name of the publisher or blog (e.g. Huffington Post), title of your article, op-ed, or story; the date of publication; and the URL, if available. Send the information to andipolk4@gmail.com by the 10th of the month to be in the next issue. The subject line should read “Scribe Success”.

If your work has been published as a book or a source that requires an ISBN, for example accepted to an anthology we offer a press release. In that case you deserve a press release from our club. Please complete our Press Release Request Form on our website cwc-sfv.org, click on the Members Only tab, enter the members only password. If you forgot the password, contact Kay Henden at CWC@Henden.com.

We wish to support you in your successful writing as a benefit of your membership.

<i>Calendar Feb - Mar 2017</i>	<i>Directions and Meeting Information</i>
<p>February 1, Board meeting, MPTF Hospital ACR 10 A.M. to Noon, presided by Andi Polk</p> <p>February 4, General Meeting, Katzenberg Pavilion MPTF</p> <p>March 1, Board Meeting, MPTF Hospital ACR 10 A.M. to Noon, presided by Andi Polk</p> <p>Saturday, March 4, Speaker, Karen Gorback, "On Writing Dialogue"</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>Holidays</p> <p>Valentine's Day February 14th (AKA Hallmark's day) Lovers do not get an official holiday from work.</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>
<i>February 4th Program Schedule</i>	
<p>12:30 P.M. Registration and sign-in for Open Mic</p> <p>1:00 P.M. Members 5 minutes Open Mic, bring an extra copy for interpreters</p> <p>1:30 P.M. Business Announcements & Introduce Guests</p> <p>1:40 P.M. Refreshments Break, Meet and Mingle</p>	<p>2:00 P.M Featured Speaker – Chris Lynch "Finding your passion – and making lots of \$\$\$ – by writing freelance magazine articles."</p> <p>3:00 P.M. Appreciation of speaker, Raffle Chris' book. Clean up & Book sales and signing if Chris Lynch has his books with him.</p> <p>3:30 P.M Doors closed</p>