



# The Valley Scribe



Newsletter of the San Fernando Branch of the California Writers Club

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Attendees at the October meeting will learn about the science fiction genre and the writing process from author Mark J. Rose. Our meeting will be held on Saturday, October 5, at 1 p.m. in the Saban Community Room.



Mark J. Rose

Rose is a scientist and screenwriter, who has written and published the *Matt Miller in the Colonies* series, which includes three novels, *Journeyman*, *Prophet* and *Virginian*. The latter, released in May 2019, continues to explore the adventures of the series' protagonist, Matt Miller, a contemporary scientist who travels to 18<sup>th</sup> Century England to uncover the disappearance of a prominent British politician,

At our October meeting, Rose will reveal some of his favorite science

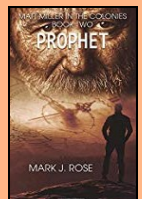
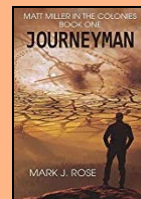
fiction books and movies, then discuss how he wrote the *Matt Miller in the Colonies* series. Working primarily in the science fiction and thriller genres, all his writing deals with some aspect of the interaction of technology, science and society. Along with publishing three novels, he also narrated them. The series is available on Amazon and Audible.

“For many years, I’ve been fascinated with exploring the intersection of man’s basic humanity with the challenges of a rapidly changing technological world,” Rose said. He holds a doctorate in pharmaceutical chemistry from The University of Kansas and is director of research and development at a major biotech company in the Greater Los Angeles area.

At our October meeting, Rose will reveal some of his favorite science fiction books and movies, then discuss how he wrote the *Matt Miller in the Colonies* series. Working primarily in the science fiction and thriller genres, all his writing deals with some aspect of the interaction of technology, science and society. Along with publishing three novels, he also narrated them. The series is available on Amazon and Audible.

**-Stephanie Barbara Dufner**

The *Matt Miller in the Colonies* book series is a time-travel adventure. Fans of historical fiction, science fiction, and those interested in life in Colonial America, will enjoy Miller’s journey.



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# October **COLORS**



Back East, it's easier to tell when October has arrived. The leaves start to change colors, the air is crisp and the warmth of summer is mostly gone.

It's a beautiful time to visit Vermont which has a larger variety of trees to tantalize the eyes with their bright colors. The sugar maples turn red and yellow and gold. The leaves on birch trees turn yellow and after they fall off, the white bark brighten the fall and winter forest. The pitch pine turns to a light golden color. The evergreens, true to their name, are ever green.

Vermonters have a long tradition of putting potted mums on their front steps to welcome autumn visitors. Every September and October native Vermonters pick apples for canning and making apple pies and applesauce.

I visit my sister and her family in the Burlington area in the Fall. I enjoy the natural scenery and the relaxed pace of life. .

When my kids were young, we visited Burlington for Christmas. It was beautiful and cold. I remember when the day we left to go to New York City where my parents lived. Brr. It was

thirty degrees below zero with the wind chill factor. I had to get boiling water to de-freeze the keyhole on the car so I could open the doors. Yikes.

Fall weather here, in Los Angeles, is mild, often summerlike. But Halloween, our country's



Fall colors in Southern California: soft greens, mellow yellows and neon-orange gourds in a Pumpkin Patch.

traditional autumn holiday, always reminds me that winter is coming no matter where you reside.

Of course, writing in the CWC-SFV is an all year round activity, Lori Hamilton is preparing an amazing list of speakers for our club.

In September, the first meeting of our year, Anne Perry gave an excellent talk on working from an outline.

Let's continue to **Write On!** in the coming autumn months!

**-Bob Okowitz**



## Two Requests from Critique Group Coordinator Jenny Jordan



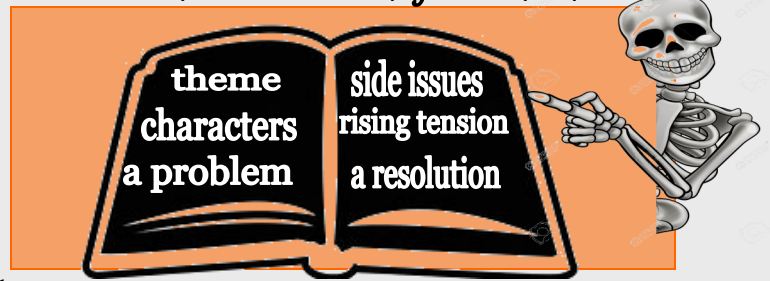
**P**lease contact me if you're interested in forming a new critique group. A sci-fi group has been talked about for several months. I'm also looking for mentors (seasoned writers) to help me work with new critique groups.

All interested parties please contact me at

**Jennyjordan2@gmail.com**



Author Anne Perry named the bones of a plot and showed us how they connected.



You all know a great story when you hear it ... or when you read it. From a very young age, we're soothed, instructed, intrigued and entertained by good stories. Every popular story has an interesting plot, a problem to solve, a build of tension as the plot, as they say, thickens. A solution sometimes ends the plot or hints at more to come in a future read.

With the convenience of cells and ipads, we send emails, articles, essays, stories, songs, news and complete books. If only writing a good story could be as simple as receiving a good story. But if you've ever tried to write a book, you know it's far from easy. Writing takes skill, time and dedication. And, according to our September speaker, Anne Perry, every composition needs an outline. Just as a building needs framing, a story, essay, memoir, play, script or poem must have a basic outline – a skeleton.

In her September address, Perry told us, "Story is how you get across your POV. And whatever your genre, you need an outline. First, name your theme. What do you want to say? What's on your mind? How will your story present your theme?"

She warmed to her topic: "Be real in your situations. Be honest. Introduce a crisis for your characters. Something needs attention, an investigation, a fix. In every good story, an exciting or intriguing event starts the plot's arc. Consequential events and actions flesh out the story, build tension and lead to a climax."

"Your lead characters are part of the plan," Perry said. "They lead the action. Show what do they want and why it matters. Some event commits the lead character to act in a decisive manner. Once committed, there'll be no return to the status quo. The hero or heroine must appear vulnerable, or imperfect in some way. What they find perplexing, challenging, dangerous, ominous, frustrating or mysterious must be transmitted to the reader."

"The plot of a story should be introduced in the very first chapter: the lead character has a problem. He or she needs a very crucial item or piece of information – a dramatic change in the status quo, in other words. When this problem is solved, the status quo will be permanently changed. The character's efforts to attain this change will build tension, provide a climax and a resolution."

With that one paragraph, Perry deftly defined the plot of a good story. After her talk, she took questions from the audience. In the next column are a few plot pointers that she shared with our members.



Always remember: show don't tell!

Never have characters with similar names. Give them modern names that are easy to pronounce. And spell.

Provide a backstory to explain the character's motive for change. The history can be revealed in parts to intrigue the reader.

It's not enough to say someone is attractive. For example, the loved one has beautiful hands. Or he has a charismatic grin when he's wants to win an argument.

Lead character must be vulnerable, have a weakness to overcome.

A plot can be enriched when two POVs narrate individual and contrasting versions of events. A reader must discern: Who's closer to the truth?

Keep the reader oriented as to time and place. Give hints as to your protagonist's income level. Where and how do they live? How is their home furnished? What does the neighborhood look like? Do they travel on a bus or in a pricey sedan?

Always do careful research because even small mistakes or errors will stop a reading eye. Small accurate details will enrich a scene; create a realistic background for the action. Try to limit your description to what is relevant. Don't get carried away and burden your reader with too much tedious information.

Your plot must provide tension: physical danger, emotional conflicts, a ticking clock, startling discoveries or revelations of past disagreements, bad behavior or a crucial miscarriages of justice.

By the end of your book, the propagandist should have resolved his problem, and sees himself in a new light.

-Kathy Highcove



# WORDSMITH PRODUCTIONS RECEIVES GRANT AWARD FROM CALIFORNIA HUMANITIES

HESPERIA, CA — Wordsmith Productions has been awarded \$5,000 for its project titled “Exploring the Literature of the California Desert” in the recent round of Humanities For All Quick Grant awards.

The Humanities For All Quick Grant is a competitive grant program of California Humanities that supports locally-initiated public humanities projects that respond to the needs and interests of Californians, encourage greater public participation in humanities programming, and promote understanding and empathy among all our state’s peoples in order to cultivate a thriving democracy.

“Exploring the Literature of the California Desert” will be a special additional set of prose and poetry readings at the 2019 High Desert Book Festival, which is co-sponsored by Hesperia Recreation and Park District and the City of Hesperia. It will have a featured presentation and writing workshop by noted desert scholar and poet Professor Ruth Nolan from the College of the Desert. Nolan is the editor of the anthology, *No Place for a Puritan: The Literature of the California Desert*.

“We see this as a unique opportunity to add to the vibrancy of public dialogue on literature that is relevant to life in the desert and stories inspired by the locale,” said Davida James, project director and founder of the High Desert Book Festival.

A second panel will include Madeline Gornell author of *Reticence of Ravens*. Gornell is a High Desert resident whose writing is inspired by Route 66. Gornell will be joined by two other writers whose works are desert-inspired — Aaron Gansky (*The Bargain, The Hand of Adonai* series, and *Firsts in Fiction*) and award-winning screenwriter Mary DeSantis.

The initial events will be held on Friday, October 11<sup>th</sup> at Hesperia Library with readings and a writing workshop led by Prof. Nolan.

Events will continue at the book festival on Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup> at Hesperia Civic Plaza Park. More details will be updated regularly on the book festival website at [www.highdesertbookfest.org](http://www.highdesertbookfest.org).

2019  
High Desert

BOOK  
FESTIVAL

WORDSMITH PRODUCTIONS

[highdesertbookfest.org](http://highdesertbookfest.org) \* [hdbookfest@gmail.com](mailto:hdbookfest@gmail.com)



This is the fourth annual High Desert Book Festival. It is located in the California Mojave High Desert, 90 minutes northeast of L.A., on the way to Las Vegas, and just 45 minutes from Big Bear and Lake Arrowhead. More than 52 authors have registered for this event so far. There will also be a Poetry Tent and a Children’s Pavilion with storytelling, face painting, and talented children’s authors and illustrators.

“We are hoping poets who write about the desert will brush off those poems and get in touch with us if they want to be involved in the festival and perhaps do a reading in our Poetry Corner,” James said.

“We have a really eclectic group of speakers,” continued James. “There are literary agents, a memoirist, a national writers’ organization, and a counselor and motivational speaker named John Saunders (*One in Six*) who is flying in from Australia for this event.”

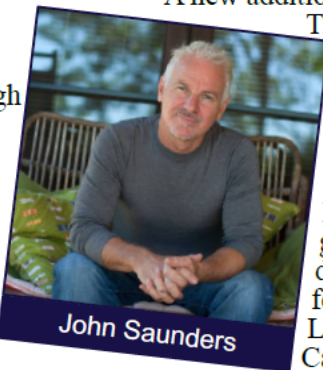
A new addition to the list of speakers is Gina Capaldi of The Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators, the international professional organization for authors and illustrators of books for children and young adults.

Writers have the opportunity to submit a ten-page writing sample to one of four literary agents for a nominal fee. Writers will get personal feedback on their submissions during a one-on-one brief meeting at the book festival. The agents taking part are Paul S. Levine of the Paul S. Levine Literary Agency, Carlie Webber of Fuse Literary, Annie Bomke of the Annie Bomke Literary Agency, and Steven Hutson of Wordwise Media.

Davida Siwisa James, the festival’s director, is an SFV member. Our club has reserved a table at the event for members to market their books.



Ruth Nolan



John Saunders

# What's it all about, Alfie?

## Don't know what to expect in joining a critique group?

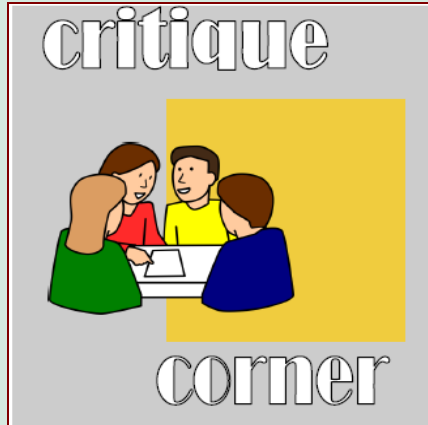
Picture the times you've met someone with the same interests as yourself. You could talk for hours sharing what works for you and hear from them how they work with similar things.

Good tips, great ideas and those 'Ah ha – I never thought about that' moments abound. Not only do you acquire new perspectives to writing, you discover what you do well and can share in the discussions. That's what it's all about, Alfie!

**Are you worried about 'is my writing good enough to share?'** So is everyone else in the group. The group experience is based on trust, encouragement, and support to help each other become better writers. Writing is endless learning. Nobody does everything well the first time around. It is assumed that what you've sent to the group is a draft, not a 'ready for publishing' work.

Ernest Hemingway's advice is: *As a writer you should not judge. You should understand.* T.S. Eliot says, *Don't write at first for anyone but yourself.*

In an excellent article in the 9/10/19 online issue of *Writer Unboxed* titled "How to Give Useful Criticism," Jim Dempsey stresses the importance of ...*critiquing the work, not the author. You don't have to like a story...to cri-*



*tique it.* He also emphasizes the comments are most helpful if they offer a *constructive solution* that would improve the work.

I highly recommend *Writer Unboxed* as a valuable resource for all aspects, styles, and genre of

writing. It is a FREE daily online. Go to [writerunboxed.com](http://writerunboxed.com) for information. Excellent reads from great authors!

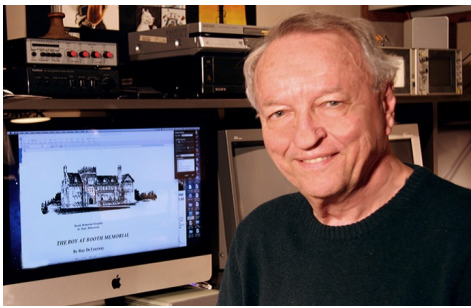
Each *Critique Corner* column will include other recommendations of resources. If you have writing resources valuable for you we would like to know about them.



We hope to have a tab set up for critiquers to communicate with Jenny & me on our CWC-SFV website. We are working on that and will keep you posted!

**-Rita Keeley Brown**

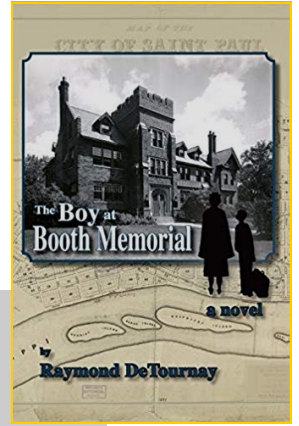
**-Jenny Morgan**



## Ray DeTournay Has Upped His Marketing Game With A New Video About His Book:

### *The Boy At Booth Memorial*

<https://theboyatboothmemorial.com/2019/09/08/mptf-booking-reading-with-qa/>



## Meet the Author

Raymond DeTournay is a Los Angeles-based writer with a career as a Producer/Director/Editor in television broadcasting and his own video production company. His client list included major corporations plus the Reagan Presidential Library and The Carter Center in Atlanta. He studied novel writing at UCLA and is a member of the Director's Guild of America. His articles have appeared in Road & Track magazine, the Los Angeles Times, and the Los Angeles Daily News.

## He Could Never Have Imagined...

When fourteen-year-old Rene stepped off the streetcar in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1949, he was wholly unprepared for the situation he would find himself in. His mother had taken a position as head nurse at the Salvation Army's Booth Memorial Home and Hospital where they would also live. For the next year, he would be surrounded by ten women who had dedicated their lives to God, and fifty young girls, all pregnant, all unmarried.

## MEMBER FOCUS: Jennifer Packard Aims to Shock and Awe

Jennifer Packard grew up in Baltimore, Maryland, loving the flora and history of the area. She developed an affinity for science fiction and fantasy at a young age especially with the advent of Star Wars Episode 4. She graduated from the University of Baltimore with a Liberal Arts BA in English. She moved to California in 1997 for film school and graduated with an MFA in Film and TV Production. After marriage, she earned an M.A. and taught adult ESL for five years.

She has moved seven times in fifteen years in support of her husband's VFX career. She has traveled to the Bahamas, Europe, Japan and lived in Canada for three years. She is currently serving her community as a volunteer adult literacy tutor, writing free form poetry and various works of fiction.

When asked about her preferred genres, she replies, "I predominantly write sci-fi, weird shorts with twists and some Lovecraft style cosmic horror. I am a Judge Dredd fan ( [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judge\\_Dredd](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judge_Dredd) ) and have written two fan fictions. The longer one needs some re-writing. It's hard to get feedback locally because very few people I've met are familiar with the comic book vs the movies."

On the following page is an example of Packard's fiction, *The Hill*. The story is a haunting piece that hints at a Twilight Zone outcome ... an appropriate piece for this *October Valley Scribe* issue.

-Kathy Highcove



# The Hill

The night sky lay full of stars, but no moon looked down on me. Did I imagine they watched me? Red Mars had almost escaped the horizon. I stood in a clearing at the bottom of the hill. The entire landscape appeared gray with darker shadows under the trees. I could see a few deer enter the outskirts of the glade. Few city folks realize we humans can see well enough in the dark. We grow soft in cities, used to soft things. We hide from discomfort. My younger self would have felt choking fear after five minutes standing there alone, waiting for some imaginary animal, horror or man to attack.

Too many horrors had passed before my eyes since my teens, so that kind of irrational fear didn't bother me anymore. A nameless fear – an ancient thing with a forgotten name – concerned me. It waited for me at the top of the hill. I came to this spot so many times before and managed to leave by dawn without going up that hill, but tonight, or morning...I guess it didn't matter ... I found myself in the glade, again looking up toward it hiding in a circular grove of trees.

What would it do to me? I felt it would devour my soul, but would it consume my flesh as well? What if it took my spirit but left my body? Can you live without a spirit or a soul? Would I cease to exist? Would my friend or brother remember me? Could I break its power? Circular thinking knows no bounds. I don't know how long I stood there.

Too soon, I found my feet moving slowly towards the tree line. I entered the deepest shadows. I want to tell you but I struggle to find the best words. I felt its hand on me, ancient, decrepit and powerful. It showed me things. I saw cities that can't exist and colors humanity cannot define. I saw a cube in what may have been dark pink hovering over the city and me. It opened itself to me and I could remember no more.

I woke on the hill top screaming hysterically as dawn touched me. Exhausted, I lay back on the ground. With eyes closed, I took deep breaths of sweet smelling earth while I dug my fingers into the dirt. I opened my eyes and blinked. Shocked, I looked around. I could no longer see the green of the hills or the blue gold of the sunrise. All the color was gone. I picked myself up and stumbled down the hill in shock wondering if I would ever know what was real.

Jennifer Packard

# Nan Hunt

3/2/1928 - 6/3/2019

**N**ancy Hoot-García died peacefully in her home surrounded by her daughters. Nan was a poetic translator of her soul's experience, dancer with words, lover of nature and authentic expression. Nan was a poet and author, English and Creative Writing instructor and conducted poetry workshops for over 25 years. In 2010, she was commended by the City of Los Angeles for her invaluable contributions founding the Valley Contemporary Poets Reading Series.



**Nan Hunt was one of the first members of the San Fernando Branch of the California Writers club.**

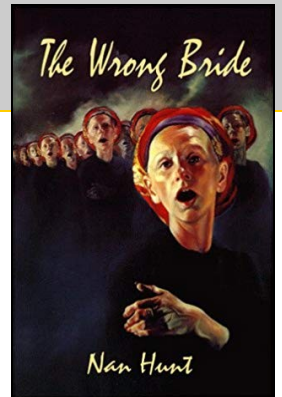
**Over the years, several members of the CWC-SFV have participated in Nan's creative writing and poetry classes.**



Erica, Nan and Dianna

This obituary was written by Nan's daughters: Diana Russell of Memphis, Tennessee and Erica Von Studnitz of Vallejo, California.

The photo on the left was taken on Mother's Day (and Diana's birthday) at the Inn of the Seventh Ray in Topanga Canyon.



**N**an Hunt's book, *The Wrong Bride*, is a collection of poems - exotic outer and inner landscapes. It begins with water and the poet's Czech grandmother, her story of a life-wounding lie. It ends in a watery place of beauty and transformation, "where the soul visits." Celebrating a long rich life, a voice which is sometimes narrative and often lyrical, takes a very sensual body and mind into the wilderness, other people's perceptions, into art, other cultures, and into dreams applied to understanding.

[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

**T**he six or eight-week class I took from Nan many years ago was called "Writing From the Child Within." Our assignments and writing exercises made us delve deep into our memories, enabling us to write startling stories about events we thought we'd long forgotten. One of my stories ended up in a CWC-SFV's anthology.

- Yolanda Fintor

**I** first met Nan when I was recuperating from a serious illness. I took several of her creative writing workshops. Her nurturing teaching style helped me find my writing "voice." I still have the stories and poems I wrote while sitting in her living room. I recall starting to write a family history after my fingers lightly traced the spiral shape of Nan's big white sea shell. I'll miss your infectious laugh, my friend.

-Kathy Highcove



# The Wrong Bride

Women did not swim then.  
They giggled, wading in up to heaven  
bloomers, or with tiny courage  
dipped naked toes.

Frances, secretly at the lake  
strips to her girlish chemise  
slides in amongst the reeds  
with a feathery sound,  
Ducks, barely troubling their  
wings, trail in behind her.

Grounded she is plump.  
In the water's suspension finds  
her own sleekness, arms  
in a sinuous windmill  
arching and cupping.

To swim a whole lake!  
She skims the surface  
with her nostrils, the blend  
of wind and water.  
Dives, following the sun shafts  
deep to springs of green.

A mile from shore a fisherman  
in his dingy gasps to see her floating  
beatifically, long hair rippling.  
Exactly what she want – a cool, clear life.

At Ellis Island Joseph waited  
for the Christie he'd sweated for  
in Chicago steel mills. Their parents  
lied, sent Frances instead –  
the oldest sister to be married first.

His eyes always strangers.  
After the second child she knew why.  
Yet could not stop the babies –  
seven in twelve years – each  
a grief squeezed out.

Sometimes she wandered from the house  
apron on, strudel in the oven.  
She slept under trees, on the rock  
shore of Lake Michigan  
until she was found.

She tried her longest swim  
but water was her other air  
not her oblivion –  
insanity was that.  
And for the children, an orphanage  
where no one, not even they  
could read her letters in Bohemian.

Grandmother's life the storm.  
Her madness its whorls curled in  
toward the center like designs  
on a snail. Her children  
grandchildren on the trail  
of her sticky tears.

My daughters were babies  
when I taught them to swim.  
At five they dived from high boards  
swam distances under water  
vibrant, dolphin bodies.  
They're better than I am.

I have been known to swim  
a whole lake. Two miles  
from shore, sportsmen in speed boats  
are alarmed to see me floating  
my hair like seaweed.

A cool, clear life  
fluidity and ease.  
My own element.

- Nan Hunt



# I Met an Astronaut

It was July 1969 when the American astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin first stepped upon the moon. I remember so vividly the excitement of the moment. Since then I have considered this event in history to be one of the highlights of important happenings of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.



past visits to the festival. Once I reached the road I noticed the shuttle stop marking gone, but as I turned my head to the opposite side looking for another bus marker, a golf cart with three women and a man

Last Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup> (2010) the public was invited to attend the Festival of the Books on the UCLA campus in west Los Angeles. What a perfect day it was to enjoy the wonders of the written word. The weather was a balmy spring temperature, the campus was buzzing with thousands of people eager to stop at the many booths including the California Writers Club booth. There were people lining up to attend lectures and conversations being offered by or listen to guest speakers, such as the appearance of the author Herman Wouk chatting with Los Angeles Times writer Tim Rutten about his new book: *The Language God Talks*. I attended this interview along with about five hundred other listeners who were captivated listening to the 95 year old author.

When the time came to leave the campus I proceeded to use the campus pathway to the main road in order to wait for the bus shuttle service to return to my parking place. It is a walk I am familiar with since I used it in the

was approaching where I stood. I raised my hand to the driver, signaling to stop, which she did.

A quick glance at the passengers revealed to me that the man sitting in the cart was none other than the former astronaut Buzz Aldrin. I recognized him immediately but being polite I proceeded to inquire for directions to the shuttle stop. Although the driver was the one who answered me, I noticed that Aldrin was listening to our conversation. (I realized that he too was a guest speaker at the Festival and was being shuttled to his car).

It took me a moment to get over the feeling that I had these few moments. My thoughts were: What were my chances ever of meeting in real life a man who was on the moon? A respected famous person. And further having him listen to me talk? As I was sitting in the shuttle, being taken to the parking lot, I felt as if I was floating on clouds, perhaps to the moon.

- Marganit Lish



# I WAS THERE ON THE APOLLO PROGRAM

by Norman Molesko

**I** watched both the Apollo 11 and Apollo 12 moon landings in my home. I was excited about these amazing accomplishments for mankind and proud to have been involved in part of the Apollo program.

On the first manned Apollo 11 lunar mission in 1969, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin were the first and the second astronauts to walk upon the lunar surface. Pete Conrad was the third astronaut to walk upon the lunar surface during the second manned Apollo 12 lunar mission in 1969.

In 1963 in Downey, California, six years prior to the first and second Apollo moon landings, I met and worked with astronaut Pete Conrad. Pete was seated inside of a mockup of the Apollo Command Module. I was outside of the mockup, reading switching procedures to Pete for the System Management Control functions of the Command Module. He responded by manually executing these procedures.

After the procedures were completed, I heard Pete over the loud speaker, in a rough and harsh voice, saying, "Who the heck was reading these procedures to me?"

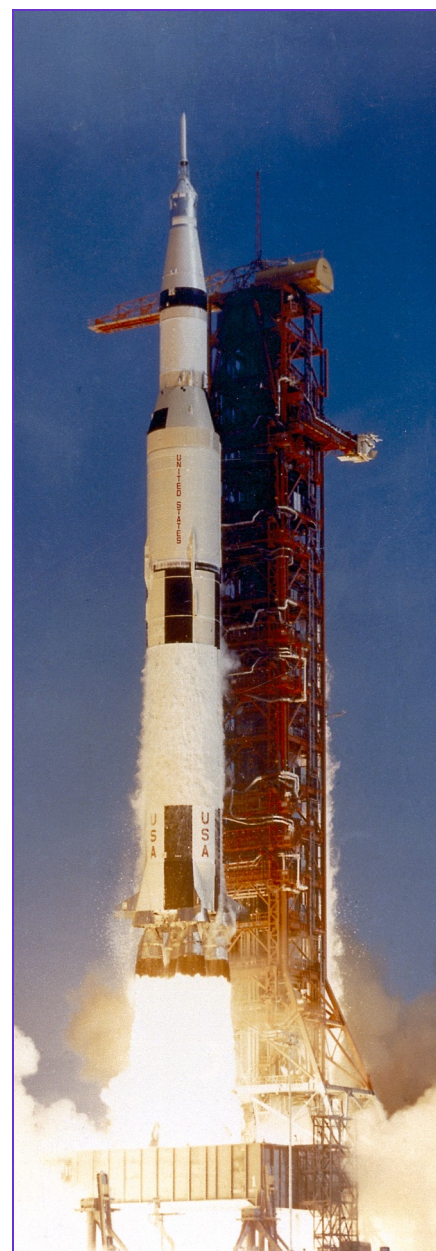


**Astronaut Pete Conrad**

For the next few seconds, I felt I had done something wrong. Then Pete said to me calmly, "Where did you grow up?"

I answered, "New York."

Pete warmly replied, "I'm from Philly. You're one of those people who I can easily understand. We are both from the East Coast."



**Apollo 11 Liftoff**



**First Spacewalk  
Ed White  
June 3, 1965**

## They Weren't Just Making Chevies

Chrysler entered the 1960s as a car company known for cars designed for the jet age, advanced safety features and the introduction of high-performance vehicles and the powerful hemispheric (HEMI®) engine.

But that Chrysler power, performance and innovation wasn't just confined to the highway, it also was used to propel American astronauts into space and eventually onto the moon.

Chrysler Corporation's Space Division developed and built the first stage of the Saturn 1B rocket that was used in the early Apollo missions, which set the stage for NASA's trip to the moon in July 1969.

**Chrysler Corporation Space Division Archives**



**FRIENDLY GHOSTS**

*Come in bunches  
Leaving behind memories  
Of stale old souls*

*I fold things, hang up clothes  
Rearrange heavy drawers  
Smothering whispering old voices  
Settling inside handkerchiefs and gloves  
Memories come creeping quietly  
Into folds of yellowed shirts and scarves*

*Climbing up old stairs  
I rush up all at once  
After smelling dark-rich-coffee  
Fragrance teasing my nose  
Just like Grandmas did years ago ...*

*Going directly into my past  
Old days left behind many years ago  
I see maroon dark velvet drapes with old dust  
Grandmother Ophelia's brocade-heavy-stuffed sofas  
With gold threads hanging uneven unto the floor*

*The ghosts come all at once  
Frail, paper-thin  
Transparent with yellow skin  
Squeezing through broken clay-roofs  
Allowing gold-light-shreds  
To filter sun patterns down below*

*However, I know  
The ghosts are always there  
Friendly and playful  
Waiting, just waiting ...  
Hiding behind old doors-*

*Keyle Birnberg©1990*

## The Right Prompt Can Plant the Seed of a Story.



**PROMPT:** *They were alone in the small room where the accused was allowed to take visits with his lawyer.*

What's up, Dawg?" Lil Nas asked with a half smirk.

"Not much," replied William S. Pendleton. He was dressed in a sharp double-breasted suit with gold buttons and a shrill yellow tie. "I'm concerned about your situation," he added. "They're thinking about upgrading your charges to Murder One."

"Yeah, I heard that. But right now I'm more concerned about your outfit, Dawg. I haven't seen sh-- like that since the days of Johnny Cochran. That was ages ago homie, just FYI."

Pendleton wasn't amused. "Listen, Nas," he said, "we can discuss fashion all day. I don't care, You're paying me to be here. And I'm not that impressed with your prison blues, either."

"Well pardon me, sir," replied Nas. "Yes, I'm paying you to be here. It's the power of my lyrics, my music that allows me to afford a lawyer like you."

**-Mario Miranda**



**PROMPT:** *All children, except one, grow up.*

Some people never seem to grow up. They may get older, more weathered and wrinkled, more opinionated, but they keep a child's POV of the world around them - in other

words, they think the world revolves around them.

Sometimes a big shock to the "child's" system will push him or her onto a narrower ledge, a more perilous perch from which to scan life around them. And this new perspective can cause sleepless nights, a poor appetite, and bouts of angst and self-analyzing.

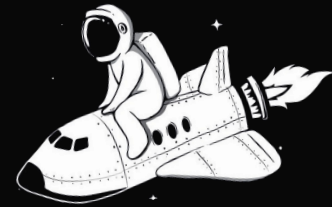
Such was the case when Roberto Fontana, head chef of The Prince's Palace, the most popular bistro in Solano Beach, hired a new pastry chef, Julia Castro O'Sullivan.

**After reading these two prompt responses, would you read further? Why or why not?**

**-Kathy Highcove**



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**Invites you to drop in  
 for our writers club meeting  
 on Saturday, October 5th,  
 at 1p.m. held at the**

**Motion Picture and Television Fund  
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 Woodland Hills, CA 91364**

**in the  
 Saban Community Room**



**It'll be a happy landing!**

