



The Valley Scribe



Newsletter of the San Fernando Branch of the California Writers Club

CONTENTS

President's
Message/2

Introduction to
the SFV Zoom
Room/3, 4, 5

Share Your Art /6

Market Your
Writing / 7, 8

Norman's New
Honor / 8

*Comparison of
Three Plagues /9*

*I'm Not Climbing
Maslow's
Ladder /10*

*Pandemic
Rebirth / 11
Don't Come Near*

*Pandemic
Polemic / 12*

Meeting and
CWC-SFV
Info /13



Hello, CWC-SFV Members:

We miss you and hope you and your family are well! While we can't meet for our traditional August Potluck this year, please grab a cool beverage and join us for a Zoom Get-Together on August 1 at 1:00 pm.

Agenda: We'll invite each participant to either share what you've been doing this summer or read a selection from your own work. **(2 minutes limit; practice and time your presentation.)**

Register in advance by clicking on a link that will be sent by the meeting Host.

After this action, you'll receive an email from Zoom that highlights another link to enter the meeting. Save this email where you can easily locate it when it's time for the meeting.

If you have problems entering the Zoom Room, contact one of the board members for help:

Andi Polk andipolk4@gmail.com

Karen Gorback karen.gorback@gmail.com

Pat Avery rpavery@mac.com

Anat Golan tarzana111@gmail.com

Karen Gorback. Program Chair



The CWC-SFV Board Zo-o-ms Ahead!

Usually, at this time, our CWC-SFV branch would hold the August Social— an informal greet and meet gathering. And we'd be having FUN! Covid-19 has forced us to put those plans aside. Instead, we're having a Zoom room meeting. We'll still be informal and fun. In our first virtual August Social, every member of the Gallery has 2 minutes to tell us how they're doing, read something to us they've written and finally, share some good news with their SFV pals. We expect to have about thirty people in attendance, so every speaker must keep it short!



President Bob Oskowitz

I can share some good news: this fall we'll have two new Board Members! Karen Gorback will fill the position of Program Director. She has had many years of experience at the Ventura Writers and at the Community College in Ventura.

Anat Golan will be our new Board Secretary and Zoom Coordinator. Anat has a day job as a freelance script screener and in July, she gave us a talk on Screenwriting.

Monte Swan has agreed to be our Vice President and so he'll make sure I'm taking my vitamins every day. Seriously folks, Monte most important duties will be helping to set up the electronic equipment when we're back to the MPTF Saban Room.

It's time to thank the people who've been helping

our branch for the past few years. Rita Brown coordinated our Anthology a few years ago, has helped out with the Critique Groups, led us in prompt exercises and has always been just delightful. Nance Crawford served as Vice-President during the past two years, and held other positions—like Prez! And Program Chair. Jenny Jordan managed our Critique Groups last year but was forced to quit when she returned to school. During the past two years, Lori Hamilton served as our Program Chair. Unfortunately, she developed health issues last year but continued to find speakers for us.

Finally, I send my thanks to those who'll serve this year on the Board. Pat Avery is our Treasurer, not an easy job, Kathy Highcove is the Scribe Editor, and gets out a great paper, month after month. Andi Polk is our Membership Chair and CWC Historian. If you have questions about our history, ask Andi. She's also our MRMS Coordinator, the CWC state-wide Information System built by the late Ray Malus.

As you can see, it takes a village of volunteers to take care of all our club business. I appreciate all the dedicated people who contribute their time and effort to support our branch.

Write on! Or, more appropriately, Zoom along!

Bob Okowitz



It's Time To Renew Your CWC-SFV Membership!

Write a \$45 Check or Money Order Due Now through September 28th

Make check payable to: CWC-SFV

**Mail to: Pat Avery, Treasure
P.O. Box 9023
Calabasas, CA 91372**

DO NOT SEND CASH through the mail. We are unable to have face-to-face meetings so payments must be made by mail.

IF you miss the September deadline, on October 1st you will be dropped from the membership rolls.

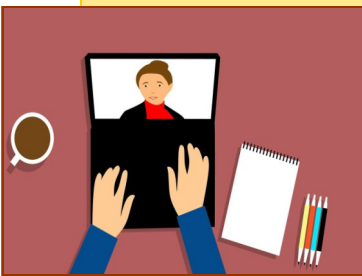
Reinstatement is \$65. Do not miss the deadline!

Introduction to the CWC-SFV Zoom Room

The CWC-SFV Board has had a busy summer. We've "met" several times in the Zoom Room to plan our club's virtual meetings in the coming months. Our new Program Chair, Karen Gorback, has diligently delved into her network of writers, lecturers, authors and creative writing coaches, to find entertaining and informative speakers. She's also offered to host the club's Zoom meetings.

If you're not familiar with the Zoom Room drill, Karen has written a primer which you'll find on pgs. 2 and 3. But first, to lessen any initial confusion, please read and remember the following Zoom Room meeting rules:

Zoom Room Etiquette and Tips



After you've entered the Zoom Room, make sure your microphone is muted. Why? A member's live mic will pick up nearby noises, such as a loud television, any phone ring tones, fretful dog barks, kitchen clatter, clock chimes. etc.

Remember, YOU control your own screen setting. These controls are in the upper right corner. "Gallery View" displays all attendees encased in his/her own screen shot. "Speaker View" allots the largest box to whomever is speaking on their live mic. If you want to be seen, click on the red line on the camera icon. And there you are, a member of the Gallery.

After the speaker's presentation, there'll be a short question and answer session. How? The "chat" button at the base of your screen, when clicked on, signals the speaker that you have a question. But **please refrain using this command to chat with pals during the presentation.** Members of the Gallery might note your remarks and join the conversation, ignoring the speaker's speech.

If you need to leave the meeting early, simply click on the "leave" button in the lower right corner of your screen. Presto, you're home again.

If you know someone who's not a CWC-SFV member, but who wants to enter our meeting, please pass their contact information on to our Membership Chair, Andi Polk, at andipolk4@gmail.com. She will make certain your guest receives an invitation to our Zoom room.

Below are links to a few YouTube videos to help familiarize you further with Zoom meetings. These websites are for informational purposes and are not endorsements.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9isp3qPeQ0E>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIPcDnfnkNuA>

If you have a Zoom account, please check out the video tutorials on your Zoom homepage, or take a moment to peruse the instructions on this *Valley Scribe* issue's next two pages.

Have fun learning to Zoom!

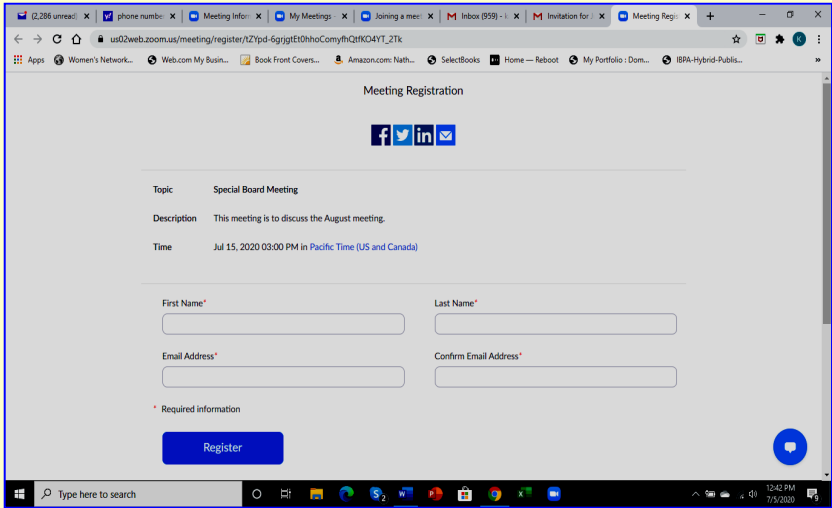
Karen Gorback

How to Join Our Zoom Meetings In Three Easy Steps

Hi there, You are invited to a Zoom meeting.
When: August 1, 2020, 3:00 PM Pacific Time, (US and Canada) .

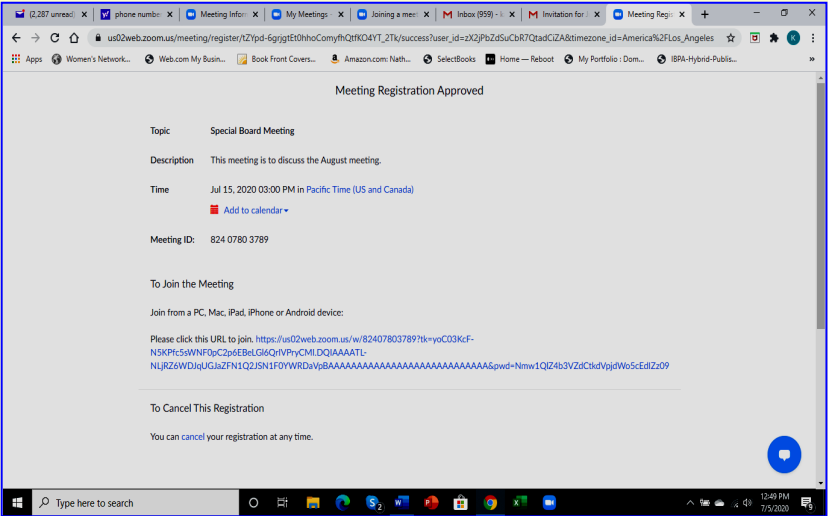
SFV members **MUST** register in advance for this meeting. Please check your inbox for the invitation mailed to you within the last two weeks.. It will be sent from Program Chair Karen Gorback. Fill it out with your name and email address.

All CWC-SFV members in good standing will receive a Zoom invitation that will look like this sample:



The CWC-SFV host will receive a list of all attendees. After registering, you'll receive a confirmation email that will contain information about how to join the meeting.

When you receive the page below, simply click on a long link to join the meeting. You may be prompted to install the Zoom app on your computer. Do it. Don't worry. It's free. You don't need a Zoom Account to use the Zoom app.



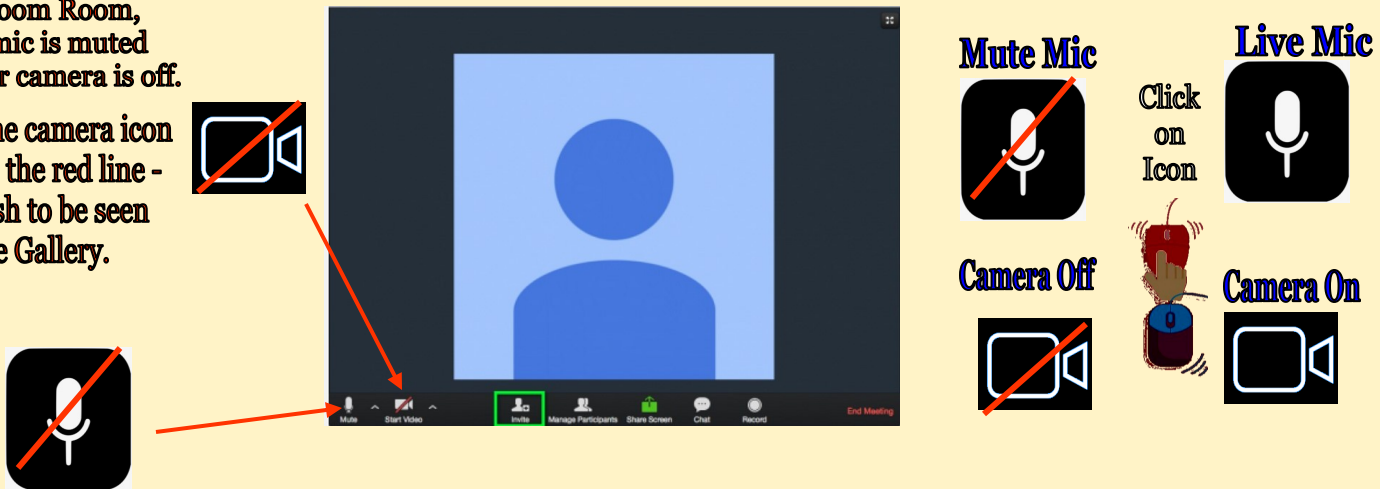
Once you join the meeting, you'll be in a virtual "waiting room," where you'll wait for the host to invite you in. The invitation ritual provides another layer of security.

Once "inside," please become familiar with the Zoom environment.

The microphone and camera icons are generally in the lower left corner of the screen of your laptop. Your microphone will automatically be muted when you enter, and your camera will be off.

When you enter the Zoom Room, your mic is muted and your camera is off.

Click on the camera icon to remove the red line - if you wish to be seen in the Gallery.



If you want your microphone on, "unmute" it by clicking on the icon with a red line through it. If you want your camera to be on, you must click on the camera icon with a red line through it.

If you'd rather not have your camera on, that's okay, but we hope you will join us with your video. If you'd rather not, your name will appear in your box. During our meetings, while Board members and our guest speaker is lecturing, your mic is OFF. It stays off unless you are asked to speak during the meeting. If we have Prompt exercises again, some people will be asked to read their compositions, and their mic may be turned ON.

During group time, make sure your mic is muted unless you're asked to speak to the group.

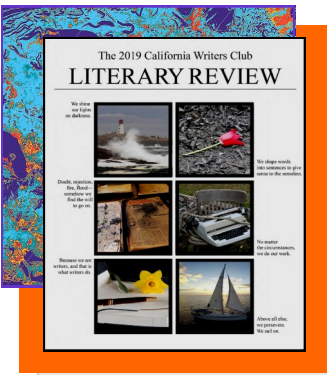
Karen Gorback

[Many Branches Meeting on Zoom](#)

by CWC [webmaster](#) | Jun 2, 2020

Although they've had to drop in-person meetings for the past few months, many California Writers Club branches have migrated their monthly programs to Zoom. In most instances, they invite the general public to join in on their lively offerings. To find listings, go to Branches <https://calwriters.org/news/> on this website and click on what interests you, then go to their individual newsletters for specific details.

Share Your Artwork in the 2020 CWC LITERARY REVIEW



Hello SFV friends; I'm Fred Dodsworth, a member of the Berkeley CWC, and I volunteered to produce this year's *CWC Literary Review*. I don't make the initial editorial selections, but I'll make the publication look

great! So great that you'll want a copy or two to give to your family and friends. To show you that I'm not pulling your leg, I'll share my background info: I'm an award winning art director with decades of experience producing ads, books, newspapers, lit anthologies and more. That's where **you** come in. I need photos and art work from CWC members, which I'll curate and utilize as possible. I don't look for professional photos, just images that speak to me.

If you have anything in your files that's at least 1 megabyte in size, in color or black and white, images

you want to share, please email the work to me.

I purposely don't try to define or list what you should consider the best 'photos and art,' because it's **my job as designer** to make the best decisions for the best places to use an image. **In short, I really don't care what you send me, just so long as you like it and you think others will like it.**

I'll look for images that catch the eye, or look stunning, or speak to the viewer. I aim to quickly get our literary pub on the boards, so time is of the essence! Submit your work promptly and be assured that submissions will be curated and, of course, greatly appreciated. Please send your work to

fdodsworth@comcast.net

Subject title: **CWC ART**

Fred Dodsworth



Brought to you by the laugh track group of MPTF Volunteers

Ray DeTournay Has a New Crew



During the lockdown, I've been quite busy. Our closed circuit Channel 22 has chosen to broadcast LIVE on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10 am to 4:30 pm. That's an awful lot of airtime to cover so I've put together a team to produce a 12/14 minute weekly program titled *WANDERING the WORLD WIDE WEB*. I work with four women who volunteer at MPTF and we assemble, produce and edit the program via Zoom. The program follows a magazine format and features items, stories, video clips, jokes, etc., that we've found on the Internet.

We Zoom each Tuesday, present our findings and sketch together a program for the following week. A script is written the following day and on Thursday we Zoom again and record our individual parts. If additional

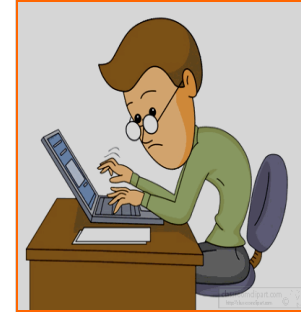
items are needed (music, sound effects, etc.) team members do that and it is all assembled by a volunteer who has editing software at home. By the following Monday we have a program that we send via Dropbox to MPTF Channel 22 for airing.

The remarkable part of this is the volunteers do not have specific backgrounds in the entertainment business, but they are eager to learn how to assemble a program on deadline. Even more remarkable is that we don't meet physically due to restrictions on the MPTF campus and the stringent requirements for averting the COVID-19. If any Scribe reader is interested, I can send you an example of one of our programs. Everyone needs a laugh these days.

Ray DeTournay

How to Freelance and Find Writing Gigs

by Anat Golan



The internet has opened a vast market for writers from magazine to “How to” websites looking for content. Just as with any other type of job hunting, thorough research is key.

Writing gigs can be found on websites like The Write Life (thewritelife.com), Poets & Writers (<https://www.pw.org/>) and Craig’s List ([Craigslist.com](http://craigslist.com))

Websites like *Entertainment Careers* (entertainmentcareers.net) have a writing section for those interested in writing for the entertainment business.

Story and poem writing contests are often free of charge to enter with a winning prize that varies by contest. You don’t have to limit yourself to the USA. There are contests in England, Australia and other countries that allow international entries. Guides to 2020 short stories contests can be found on Reedsy website (<https://blog.reedsy.com/writing-contests/>) and Aerogramme Writers' Studio site (<https://www.aerogrammestudio.com/2020/01/16/short-story-contests-2020/>). Some contests do charge an entry fee, but often they are not high amounts and can fit those who’re on a strict budget. Some contests even allow submitting via your blog, which is a wonderful way to provide a link to a blog on your website.

Screenwriters can enter a screenplay for free on Imagine Impact (<https://www.imagine-impact.com/>), Imagine Impact collaboration with Netflix (<https://www.imagine-impact.com/netflix>), and Coverfly Lab (<https://thescriptlab.com/free->

screenplay-contest/). Make sure to follow their guidelines and deadlines.

In addition, each major studio like Disney, NBC, Universal, HBO and others have a yearly free contest designed to find and staff writers. These contests usually requires submitting writing samples to shows already on the air, though some also allow to submit an original series idea as well. Again, make sure to read the “Frequently Asked Questions” section and follow the strict guidelines, as you can get disqualified jut for not saving your file per their instructions.

One of the best ways to get gigs is networking. Yes, it takes time, but rarely costs a penny, and can be fun. The internet (and now with the help of COVID19), has allowed billions of like-minded people to interact from the comfort of their couch, and it’s a shame not to give this tool a chance. I used to do free script analysis on the writing community, talentville.com. I was fortunate enough to be there when the owner was just starting his site and needed help spreading the word. He so appreciated my help—especially the fact I always provided a full professional analysis—that he recommended me to Amazon Studios. This company was taking their first steps in production, and they became one of my major sources of revenue.

There are, however, rules of engagements:

You must establish a rapport or a line of communication first. Do not contact someone for the first time with a request to read your material or recom-

(Continued on page 8)

Hey, Ari, got a moment? How's about taking a look at my latest memoir revisions?

(Continued from page 7)

mend you for a job, even if you know that person is at a position to do so (if you are contacting someone who advertised they wish to read or are looking for someone, feel free to ignore this rule).

Reach for the moon, but don't ask for it. If someone is nice enough to read your material and comment on it, don't send a set of demands on how long it should be. A TV writer on Twitter had to ask those who send material to him, to leave a release form out of their request. Of course, you are more than welcome to mention if there are areas you think need attention and you'd like to get feedback on like characterizations, plotting, etc. Don't take advantage of those offering to give you their time and perspective. If you want to sweeten the pot, you can offer to swipe works and comment on the other person's material.

Don't be pushy. Don't send a reminder every few days to inquire if the person is done. If it's a referral you seek, don't press the person on whether they did as you asked. Mention what you are looking for and allow the other person the op-



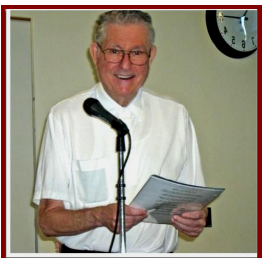
How does he find me?

tion to decide if they feel comfortable going ahead with the request. Most people are generally very willing to help, but they don't like to be pressured to do so.

Never forget a thank you, even if the response was not what you hoped for. It is never fun to learn someone didn't think your writing was better than perfect, but you can simply ignore it if you do not agree with it. If one's efforts to recommend you were futile, they still spend time and put their reputation on the line for you. A simple thank you e-mail can make a difference later on, because you'll be remembered favorably the next time they are at a position to help you.

If you have a keen eye for grammar and spelling, or know another language well, you can make money as a freelance proofreader or manual instruction translator.

Whether you wish to supplement income or looking to make writing your full-time job, there are plenty of options available out there. So get writing and good luck.



Elder Bard Norman Molesko Has Reaped Another Honor

The literary works of Norman Molesko have been published by *The Art of Montequ*. This online publication supports every form of the arts.



Our multimedia website features a magazine, an art gallery and a review, all designed to give each artisans the exposure they need without having to go through immense amounts of red tape. We feature work from all the arts, including performance, literary, visual and musical. If it's one of the arts, we cover and support it! For example, Introduction to the Artist is where we introduce our audience to each of our featured artisans and their ideas with an emphasis on telling their story as honestly as possible.

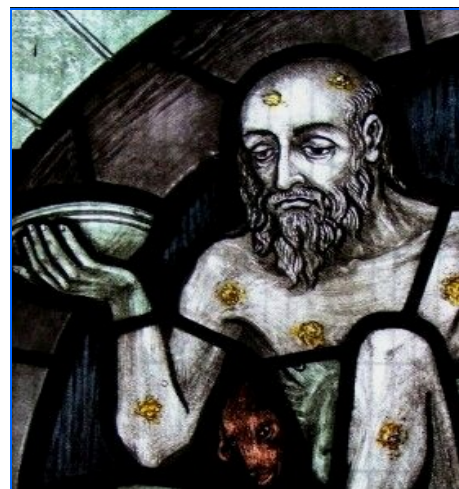
The Art of Montequ editors

The Covid-19 Vs. The Black Plague and The Spanish Flu

by Anne Hansell

My workplace had closed for several months due to the coronavirus pandemic but I started working again via Zoom room, enabling me to continue getting my regular paychecks. To my surprise, my employer was very flexible in scheduling hours I would have been required to “appear” there for work. This gave me more spare time, making it possible for me to work on my various writing projects, reading novels and nonfiction during daytime; and watching shows on streaming services while crocheting my current afghan blanket during evenings.

As an avid student of history for years, I’ve watched documentaries about the Black Plague and the Spanish Flu. Those diseases could be labeled as pandemics of their time, having killed millions of victims. Due to the medieval Europeans’ lack of sophisticated medicine, they had remained defenseless against the Black Plague while the early 20th century people had gotten the Spanish Flu from millions of soldiers, then fighting in the last stage of the World War I. We have gotten the current pandemic from international travelers who visited China and returned home.



Both the Black Plague and the Spanish Flu were far worse than Covid-19. Why? The medieval disease moved very fast, killing victims within fourteen hours after initial infection while the Spanish Flu turned its victims’ flesh blue and then causing blood to bleed out of their noses, eyes and ears before killing them. According to Jim Duffy (“The Blue Death,” the Magazine of Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Fall, 2004”), the disease got a nickname: The Blue Death.

I understand that the Covid-19 basically suffocates its victims to death by doing extensive damage to their lungs. Hence, a higher demand for mechanical respirators and inhalers. But many more patients have survived this disease than the victims of The Blue Death.

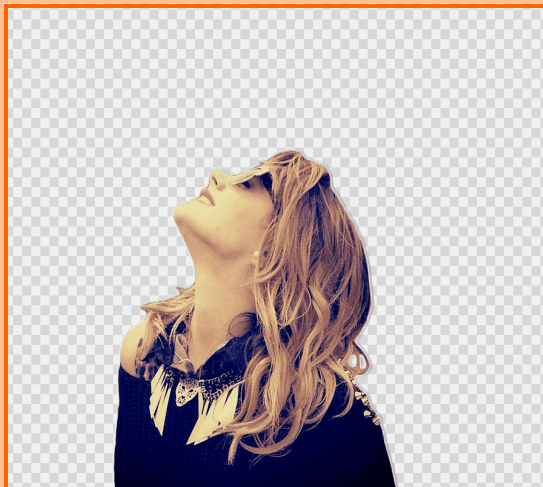
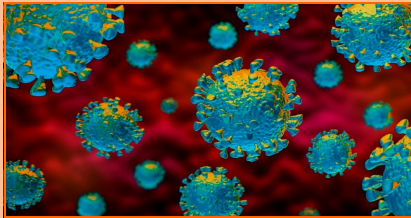
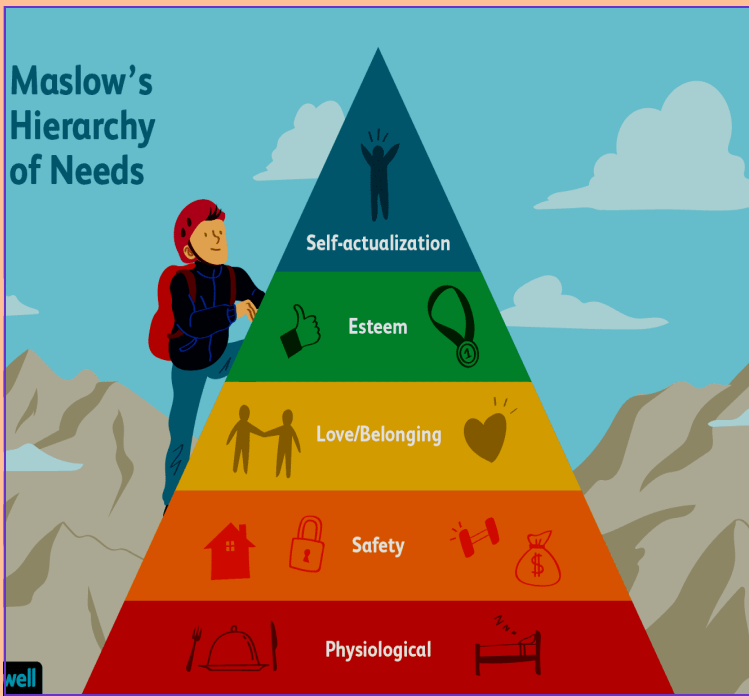
However, there is a hope; history has shown the humankind has survived the world’s deadliest diseases without becoming extinct. We should live through the current pandemic, thanks to our evolving modern medicine.



CWC-SFV



AUGUST 2020



I'M NOT CLIMBING MASLOW'S LADDER

by Sylvia Molesko

Maslow's ladder Level One
 Is not at all a bit of fun
 It's the Physiological Level
 Well my physical level is O.K.
 I've had plenty to eat today
 I've got a home, a place to stay

Level Two is Security
 That is much harder for me
 With that darn Covid19 in play
 I'm not feeling so safe nor secure today

I can't get to Level Three
 Being social has no place for me
 I can't go to group meetings
 Can't say Hi to friends as greetings
 I barely keep up with my family
 That's all I can do for them and for me

Level Four is Self-Esteem
 Can't accomplish enough to get there, it seems
 Instead of self-appreciation
 I suffer from self-depreciation

It's a long way up to Level Five, Self-Actualization
 Actualization of self is put on the shelf somehow
 I'm not able to reach it for now
 To become more of what I can be
 To accomplish with creativity
 Is simply not in the cards for me
 To become self- satisfied and self- fulfilled
 Is something, for now, Covid19 has killed

Pandemic Rebirth

**Pushing the sides of my enclave
Cool walls sooth my hands
I am safe with limits unchallenged
And my senses dulled in this bleak
Space of nothingness**

**Risking a step to a door of light
Vivid flashes of color erupt in my eyes
Smells of damp earth, flowers' perfume
Movement of squirrels, birds and men
So extreme I retreat and guard my face**

**Deprived senses slowly register
My lover's whisper as a shout
A kind wave of hello an assault
And yet I cautiously creep toward
Embracing the world outside.**

Pat Avery



Don't Come Near

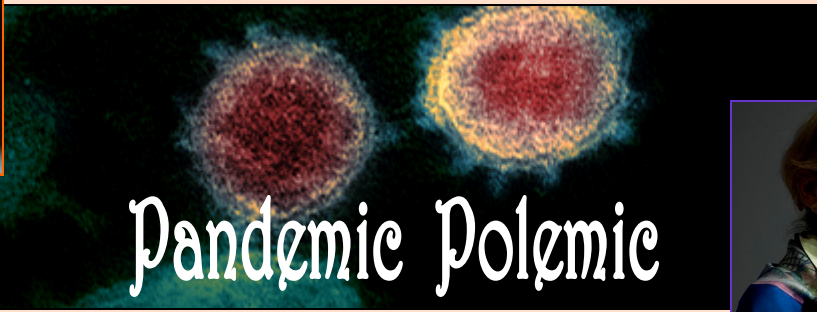
**A catchy phrase became viral
The other day - social distancing
As deadly pathogen erupted
Contact is now taboo.**

**Hugs and handshakes
Are a personal assault
Shouted intimate conversations
Occur across six-foot divides.**

**Speaking through our mask
I cannot determine whether
You are pleased to see me
Or afraid of my breath.**

Pat Avery





Pandemic Polemic



Hello, my dear friend, where have you been,
Hidden away, not to be seen?
I notice that your face has gone pale,
Could you have been detained in jail?

No, I've been at home keeping me safe,
He said. I had to out, began to chafe.
The outdoors is the right place for me,
my skin cried out for Vitamin D.

They ordered us to *Shelter in place!*
I guess you needed air on your face.
Hey, amigo, mind if I ask,
where did you get that gorgeous mask?

I found it on the Internet,
Bought from a gal I never met.
I kept thinking of fomites and vectors,
They kept me awake, horrible specters.

I've kept to myself, in seclusion,
Safer at home from the confusion.
You know recovery's an illusion,
Mortality is the last conclusion.

My answer, buddy, where have I been?
House arrest by Covid nineteen.
I stayed away from the madding scene,
Lonely and alone in quarantine.

Fauci told me to wear a mask.
Brix said, "Sanitize, do it, don't ask."
POTUS harrumphed on social distance,
His supporters voiced loud resistance.

Caught up in the detergent cant,
And hydroxychloroquine's dumb rant.
They can always try Remdesivir,
Or potent plasma from those been there.

I wash my hands and face, go clean,
Remain a hermit 'til the vaccine.
Climb the walls without community,
Waiting for sweet herd immunity.

Reducing risk, I get no hugs,
No kisses and no viral bugs.
Wearing all my PPE,
I sally forth most circumspectly.

If you catch it, it's systemic,
And the end of all things hemic.
Hooked by a microbe so dilemmic,
Nothing's known, it's non-epistemic.
I hope you don't find these words polemic,
But we're being shagged by a pandemic.

Michael Edelstein





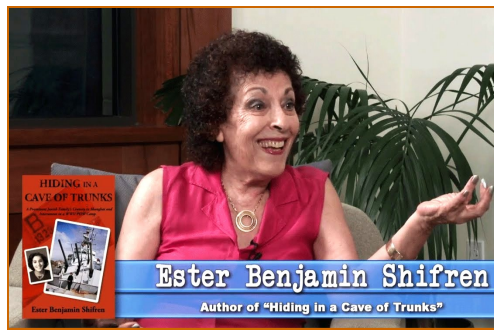
WC-SFV Meeting in the Saban Community Room



**CWC-SFV Meeting Site
MPTF Health and Wellness Center**



**23388 Mulholland Drive
Woodland Hills, CA 91364**



**In September, Ester Benjamin Shifren
will speak on "Self-Publishing."**

When the COVID-19 has been vaccinated out of our lives, the San Fernando Branch of the California Writer's Club will meet again at the MPTF in Woodland Hills.

Some future Saturday in the coming year, our membership and guests will gather again in the Saban Community Room and share our news, listen to a speaker and return home with food for thought.

Yes, someday soon, members will drive once more to the Movie Home, park their cars and walk over to the MPTF Health and Wellness Center for our meeting. Until then, we'll see you online, in the Zoom room.

Our next virtual meeting is on September 12th at 1 p.m. SFV Member Ester Shifren will speak on this topic: *Self-Publishing*.

Stay tuned and Write On!

2019 to 2020 CWC-SFV Board Officers and Coordinators

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