

The Valley Scribe



VOLUME 15 ISSUE 11

Newsletter of the San Fernando Valley Branch
of the California Writers Club

of the California Writers Club



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CWC-SFV BOARD MEMBERS UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED



By CWC-SFV Member-At-Large Gary Wosk



PRESIDENT



KAREN GORBACK

VICE-PRESIDENT



ANDREA POLK

TREASURER



PAT AVERY

SECRETARY



ELAINE MURA

xecutive officers of the CWC-SFV Board of Directors have been elected to serve during fiscal year 2024/2025. They include Dr. Karen Gorback, President; Andrea Polk, Vice-President; Patricia Avery, Treasurer; and Dr. Elaine Mura, Secretary.

Nearly 64% of the membership cast their votes from Saturday, June 1 through Friday, June 7. The ballots, which included an opportunity for write-in candidates, were distributed in-person at the June 1 meeting and emailed to those who did not attend.

Gorback, now beginning her fifth term at the helm, is grateful for the members who took the time to review the ballot and vote.

"I've been a member of this club since 2008. This organization provides me with remarkable learning and networking opportunities that continue to motivate me on my journey as a writer. Volunteering is an opportunity to give back."

The indefatigable former President Polk, elected as the new vice-president, joined the branch in 2010 and continues to wear many hats. "We've come a long way since the pandemic and I am confident our branch will continue to grow in the coming years," She said. "It takes a lot of hard work and the Board has always been willing to roll up their sleeves."

Asked why she volunteers, newly re-elected treasurer Avery says, "It's an opportunity to give back to an organization that has given me so much. I am greatly enriched by the critique groups I belong to and the monthly meetings I attend."

Newly re-elected secretary Mura adds, "Volunteering is enlightening, exciting, thought-provoking, fun—and I get to be surrounded by other writers."

For more information about other volunteer opportunities, contact Karen at karen.gorback@gmail.com.







Simple, Summer Joys

By CWC-SFV President Karen Gorback, Ph.D.

Summer is my favorite time of year. I love the longer days and savor childhood memories of sailing around the neighborhood on my beloved pink Schwinn long after dinner, returning home only "when the streetlights came on," per directions from my folks. Without homework, summer evenings concluded catching Vinny and the last innings of the Dodgers on my transistor radio tucked under my pillow. Simple, summer joys.

These days, I spend the long evenings lolling on my patio sofa, reading a book or perusing the stack of magazines I've been collecting all year. The Dodgers broadcast remains my summer song, but now it's via the internet on my laptop computer. Still, simple, summer joys.

One magazine at the top of the stack is the Writers Digest. I've written before about this excellent publication; and this month, I'd like to highlight an annual feature from the May/June 2024 issue titled "101 Best Websites for Writers" (pages 26-38). Here are a few of my favorites:

#31 WriterBeware.com I've often used this site to learn more about hybrid and small press publishing. Check it out.

#38 <u>DiverseBooks.org</u> This site is sponsored by the nonprofit organization, "We Need Diverse Books," dedicated to supporting diversity in the publishing industry, especially regarding books for young people and children. Hooray!

#57 <u>SistersInCrime.org</u> Although this is a new entry this year, the organization has been around since 1986, with chapters throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. I have known members of the Los Angeles Chapter who speak highly of Sisters in Crime, to which men also belong!

#82 https://winningwriters.com/ I'm a sucker for writing contests, so this website is one I always enjoy.

#96 <u>SelfPublishingAdvice.org</u> This site is sponsored by the Alliance of Independent Authors (ALLi). For those of us who choose the "Indie life," you'll want to peruse this one.

Thus, with lots of long, summer nights ahead, I hope you'll enjoy reading a favorite book and working through your own stack of magazines, while the Dodgers head into a successful postseason – I hope!

Simple, summer joys.

CWC-SFV 2 JULY 2024

Woody Woodburn - "Coach Wooden and Me"

A Review By Elaine L. Mura, Ph.D.

t our May meeting, CWC-SFV hosted Woody Woodburn, author and noted newspaper

columnist who has written

for the Ventura County Star for three decades. Woodburn discussed his long friendship with Coach Wooden of UCLA fame. He laughingly remarked that he had to explain who Coach Wooden was to younger readers. He summarized the Coach as "a teacher and humanitarian who is in the Hall of Fame...he retired in 1975 and died 14 years ago... I felt that I needed to share his life lessons." Woodburn went on to say that the Coach used to hand out business cards with his seven-point creed, adding that he has carried the Coach's card in his wallet for 37 years: "It's a blueprint on how to be a better person."

Woodburn has written essays in a collection called "Strawberries in Wintertime" which are filled with the Coach's sayings; he dedicated the book to the Coach, sometimes called "the Wizard of Westwood." He termed the Coach's sayings as "Wooden-isms" and gave us several examples:

- 1. Look at intent rather than focusing on actions.
- 2. Be quick but don't hurry.
- 3. There is no perfect day without doing something good for someone else.
- 4. The definition of success is feeling peace of mind because you know that you did your best.
- 5. Good things take time lots of time.
- 6. Team spirit is the willingness to sacrifice personal interest for the good of all.
- 7. Don't whine, complain, or make excuses.

Woodburn recalled meeting the Coach in 1987 in San Luis Obispo – and how their friendship matured from that time on.

He described how the Coach used a talking stuffed ape programmed with multiple positive statements when he visited with his five-year-old daughter and how it could become a teaching tool for building self-esteem. His idol was Abraham Lincoln.

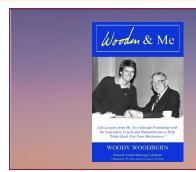
Woodburn's latest novel, The Butterfly Tree, came out in March 2024, apparently a series of short vignettes about a tree which was cut in two by a lightning bolt. It eventually became a door that separated people who wanted entry from insiders. It then it motphed into a table which brought everyone together—for seven generations! Each person inhis stories had a story to tell.

Woodburn pointed out that each chapter in his novel consisted of 699 words (no more, no less): "It's like 108 short stories...it's literary fiction." He added that Hemingway felt that 7/8 of one's writing never went onto the page.

During a Q&A, Woodburn noted that an agent was mandatory to get published by a big publisher (one of the Big Five) – as well as millions of followers on social media. When asked if he preferred big publishers or small publishers, he indicated that he preferred getting an agent and then approaching small publishers, since small publishers are more responsive to the writer. He also suggested that the author can always put something aside and go back to it later: "Dive right in...later you can go into the back story...you really have one sentence to hook the reader...you can abandon the story if you want to and then come back much later."

Woody Woodburn's personal and positive presentation was very well received by all in attendance. His insights (and those of Coach Wooden) were a welcome respite from the negativity which often surrounds us on a day-today basis. At the end of his talk, Woody's gave this advice to our CWC-SFV audience: "Write first to please yourself!"

Woody Woodburn's Published Books







https://www.thriftbooks.com/w/the-butterfly-tree-an-extraordinary-saga-of-seven-generations/52490161/item/63736993/?mkwid=%7cdcfloordinary-saga-of-seven-generations/52490161/item/63736993/?mkwid=%7cdcfloordinary-saga-of-seven-generations/52490161/item/63736993/?mkwid=%7cdcfloordinary-saga-of-seven-generations/52490161/item/63736993/?mkwid=%7cdcfloordinary-saga-of-seven-generations/52490161/item/63736993/?mkwid=%7cdcfloordinary-saga-of-seven-generations/52490161/item/63736993/?mkwid=%7cdcfloordinary-saga-of-seven-generations/52490161/item/63736993/?mkwid=%7cdcfloordinary-saga-of-seven-generations/52490161/item/63736993/?mkwid=%7cdcfloordinary-saga-of-seven-generations/52490161/item/63736993/?mkwid=%7cdcfloordinary-saga-of-seven-generations/52490161/item/63736993/?mkwid=%7cdcfloordinary-saga-of-seven-generations/52490161/item/63736993/?mkwid=%7cdcfloordinary-saga-of-seven-generations/52490161/item-floordinary-saga-of-seven-generations/52490

DID YOU FORGET SOMETHING?

ummer has arrived with all its many distractions— anticipated vacations, family outings, out-of-town visitors and perhaps, day trips to local beaches, amusement parks or art museums.



And if you're a writer who is also trying to finish preparing a publication or keep up with critique group responsibilities, your daily life must be doubly complicated.

But right now, you <u>must</u> make time to pay your dues to your CWC-SFV writers club. Every CWC branch needs to finance club activities—such as honoraria for guest speakers, dues to the California Writers Club, marketing, bank fees, the club's PO Box, website hosting, and other miscellaneous expenses as they arise to support the club.

If you need to be reminded about how to pay your dues by check, PayPal account or debit/credit card, please read the Pay Options column on this page.

Don't delay! Pause in your summer activities and re-up as a CWC-SFV member.

We need your financial support!

The success of any club is always a team effort.

Kathy Highcove, Editor

IF YOU'VE NOT YET PAID YOUR DUES, HERE'S THE INFORMATION THAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

Payment Options

Payment by check made payable to: CWC-SFV

Mail to:

CWC-SFV

Woodland Hills PO Box 564, Woodland Hills, CA 91367

OR

Pay your dues with an easy online payment:

Go to www.cwc-sfv.org

Click on "Membership Information."

At the bottom of the left-hand column, click on "Membership Renewals."

Pay with either a PayPal Account or your debit/credit card.

Your CWC-SFV board members have not forgotten to post results of the promised raffle. The names of all club members who re-upped by June 30 are currently being compiled and counted.

The winner will be announced in the August *The Valley Scribe* issue. Stay tuned ...

NEW CWC-SFV MEMBER PETER R. WEST PLANS TO INTERACT WITH OUR CWC-SFV WRITERS

learned about the California Writers Club from my cousin, David Harris, who is a member of the CWC San Francisco Peninsula Club.

I write mainly fiction that combines the commercial elements of thrillers, actionadventure, suspense with socially relevant topics that are mainly focused on the state of California.

My first short story, *The Unhoused Gift*, was published in an online magazine: <u>The Unhoused Gift" – New Pop Lit</u>. My first full length novel, *The Emancipation of My First A.I. Love Doll*, is currently going through a final edit and I intend to push it on to publishers this fall.

I have also started to map out my next writing endeavors: a short story and a second full-length novel.

I know that I will greatly benefit from my interactions with other California writers in the CWC-SFV brand. I also feel that my varied experiences as film purveyor at the Cannes and Milan festivals and finance expert at HSBC Bank and finance — and my inquisitive societal insights will also benefit the members of this writing group.

In return, I plan to be an active member of the CWC-SFV and actively participate in club discussions and projects.



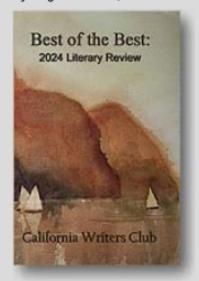




SUMMER 2024

Two New Releases from CWC Press

by Roger Lubeck, CWC President



CWC Press announces two releases for the summer of 2024: Best of the Best: 2024 Literary Review and Vision & Verse, A Fusion of Art, Photography, Prose and Poetry. Both books feature CWC members' literary and visual art and will be offered in electronic format as a member benefit.

Mike Apodaca (High Desert), Jenny Margotta (High Desert), Elisabeth Tuck (Mt. Diablo), Joyce Krieg (Central Coast), Roger Lubeck (Redwood), and the High Desert team have been working hard to bring you the Best of the Best: 2024 Literary Review by the California Writers Club. The Best of the Best is 383 pages with 68 pieces (half prose and half poetry). These works are from members in 17 branches. Each branch was able to choose the best prose and poetry from its members. The number accepted for each branch was based on the number of members; one prose and one poem per each 50 members in a branch. Some branches relied on their anthology editors, some held contests with judges, and others relied on their board to select poems and stories. In the

2024 Literary Review, you will find stories and poems that will challenge and inspire. Writing that will ignite your imagination and, we hope, encourage you to explore all of our branch and members' publications.

It is anticipated the Best of the Best will be available on Amazon in July. The retail price for hard copy will

be \$15.00. After the first month on Amazon, branches will be able to sell the book at branch meetings with a member discount price. Details will be announced in July as to how members may access a free electronic version.

The new 2024 ekphrastic book, Vision & Verse, A Fusion of Art, Photography, Prose and Poetry is in the final stage of copy proofing. The cover art is titled "Welcome" by Briahn Kelly-Brennan (Redwood). The cover was designed by Crissi Langwell, also of the Redwood branch.

In the book, there are 15 pieces of contest winning member art and photographs with 130 member poems and prose prompted by the art. In addition, we have included images of member art that received honorable mention in the contest that preceded the book. The published book will be a high-quality softback, 224 pages, with color covers (front and back) and 20 pages of art in full color.





VALLEY WRITERS



A BRANCH OF THE CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB

Whether you're a published author or "have always wanted to write," please join the CWC-SFV for monthly meetings at the Motion Picture and Television Fund Wasserman Campus in Woodland Hills. Meetings begin at 1 pm. Presenters will join us either in person or via Zoom on the huge screen in The Saban Center for Health and Wellness. You'll enjoy networking with other writers while learning more about the craft and business of writing. For more information and single lecture prices, visit https://www.cwc-sfv.org. Presentations are free for CWC members.

Speaker Chart Provided By CWC-SFV Program Chair Heather Bradshaw



September 7, 2024
Holly Watson
Book Publicity: The Basics and Beyond
https://www.hollywatsonpr.com/
(In-Person)



February 1, 2025
Lisa Teasley
The Art of the Short Story
https://www.lisateasley.com/
(In-Person)



October 5, 2024
CLAY STAFFORD
Incorporate Mystery, Thriller, Suspense,
Romance and Action into Any Work
https://claystafford.com/
(Zoom)



March 1, 2025
MANDY JACKSON-BEVERLY
Self Publishing and the Independent
Bookstore
https://mandyjacksonbeverly.com/
(In-Person)



November 2, 2024
LEE BARNATHAN
All About Ghost Writing
https://leebarnathan.com/
(In-Person)



April 5, 2025

MARCIE RENDON

Native American Poetry

https://www.marcierendon.com/home
(Zoom)



December 7, 2024
SHAWNA KEENEY
How to Write a Winning Book Hook,
Query an Agent, and Find Your Place in
the Publishing World
https://www.shawnakenney.com/
(Zoom)



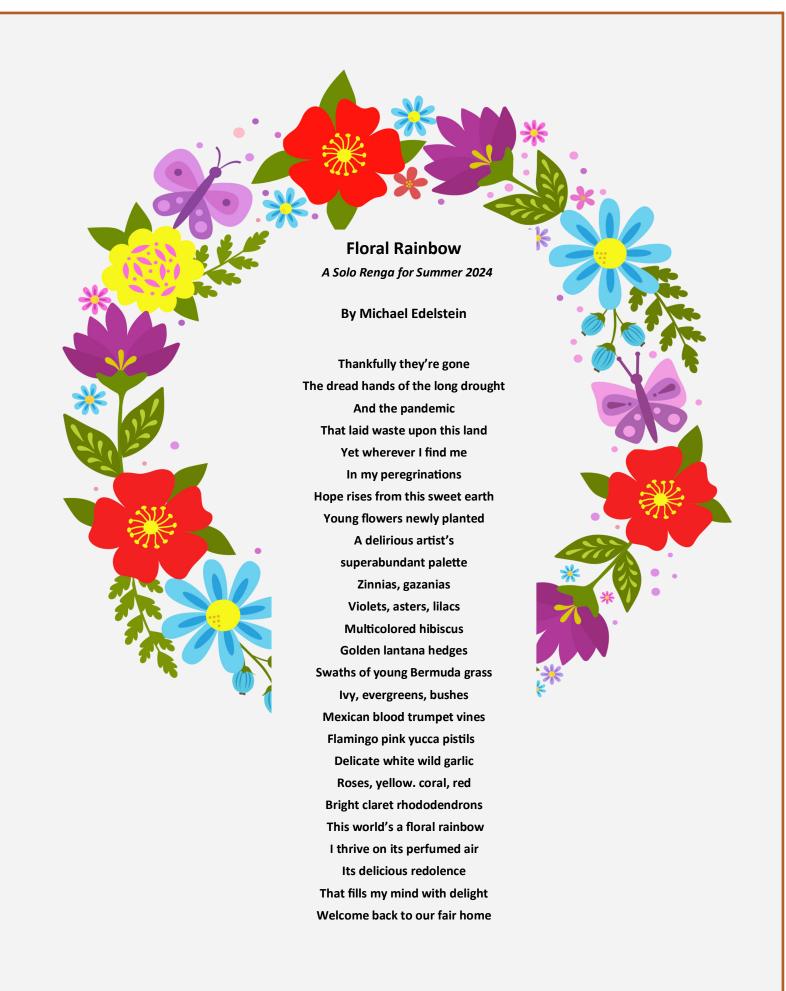
May 3, 2025
MATTHEW FELIX
Getting Your Manuscript Ready for
Publication and Beyond
https://www.matthewfelix.com/
(Zoom)



January 11, 2025
DARA MARKS
Story Development
http://www.daramarks.com/
(In-Person)



June 7, 2025
THOM HARP
The Craft of Screenwriting
www.thomharp.com
(In-Person)





THE SPIRIT OF THE FLAME

By MPTF Outreach Chair Phyllis Butcher



aris 2024, officially the Games of the XXXIII Olympiad, will take place in France from July 26 to August 11 and Paris will be the main host city. This promises to be a spectacular 16 days for the 2024 Summer Olympics.

On April 11, the Olympic flame was lit and began its pilgrimage from Olympia, Greece, transversing the country for 11 days before it was handed off to France. Hoisted proudly by members of the Olympic Torch Relay, the flame will make its way through the French countryside with visits to its territories as well, before culminating in Paris on July 26. The concept of the lighting ceremony and the idea of a torch relay was initiated at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, and have taken place at every Olympics since.

In 1984, the Summer Games were held in Los Angeles from July 28 to August 11. The flame was flown from Greece to New York City and handed off to the Olympic Torch Relay on May 8. In the next 79 days the Relay would cover 9,375 miles through every state in the nation, with an emotional climax at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. This was the first time in Olympic history that individual runners, other than sponsored teams, were able to participate in the Relay. Los Angeles went a step further by establishing the "Youth Legacy Kilometer" program, where any person would be permitted to run with the torch for one kilometer, provided a donation of \$3,000 was made to selected charities.

That was all I needed to know. So, with a long story not so short, thanks to a couple of miracles and the support of family and an unimaginable number of friends, I would be one of those 3,636 torchbearers. But how to raise the \$3000?

I wrote letters to almost every person I knew on this planet—current and past friends and colleagues, classmates as far back as elementary school (ditto teachers), employers past and present, my doctor and dentist (in those days you usually only had one of each), the mailman and cute UPS guy, the lovely Asian couple at the local 7-Eleven, the pool guy, my veterinarian, the manager of my favorite Gelson's... and the list went on and on. I was shameless. I explained that their donations to the Boys Clubs, Girls Clubs, YMCA, Special Olympics or the Torch Relay Foundation would be tax deductible and would be credited toward my quest to earn a kilometer

Miracle #1: By the March 15 deadline, I had a lock on a kilometer, having received donations ranging from \$5 to \$200. But the unexpected demand to participate in the Relay was such that the kilometers availa-

ble were rapidly disappearing, as well as the choice locations for the runs. I would have to wait patiently to find out where I would be assigned. Some local people were being assigned as far away as Utah and

Oregon.

But now it was time to train!

A little bit of research disclosed that the bronzetinted aluminum torch was approximately 22 inches long and weighed 35 ounces. While a kilometer is less than a mile, the challenge would be to hold the torch upright for that length of time without a break or—God forbid—a stumble. I decided to practice by running at least a mile each morning, holding aloft a

plastic bag containing 3 pounds of oranges.

My neighbors looked at me askance but I didn't miss a step. Children on their way to school cheered me on without giving the spectacle a second thought. Bless them.

Finally, the phone call came. I would be running at 7:00 a.m. on July 25 at La Jolla, California, a neighboring city near San Diego. Not as close to home as I had hoped, but the 3-hour, 150-mile trek was certainly doable for me—and, as it turned out, also for my faithful "entourage". I checked into a motel the night before, and at 6:00 a.m. the following morning I reported to my area supervisor for my uniform and instructions.

After changing into the tank top and skivvies emblazoned with the colorful Olympic Torch Relay logo, I was led to my starting position and handed the gorgeous torch that would be mine to keep after my run. Then I heard the cheers and rooting from many familiar voices: my family, a plethora of friends, including members of the CPA firm I worked for, all who had caravanned down Interstate 5 in the dark hours of early morning.

I was then introduced to an AT&T volunteer who would accompany me on my run to assist in the event of any mishap. He was from New York City and his name was Angel. I had a feeling I was in good hands.

Now I could see and hear the lights and sounds of the lead motorcycle and van that preceded the runner approaching. He stopped in front of me, tilted the bowl of his torch to light mine, and we were off, one Angel by my side and, hopefully, the "Guardian type" not far behind. I could not feel anything but air

(Continued on page 11)

beneath the special New Balance Running Shoes my employer had gifted me.

To say that my adrenalin was percolating at full force would be a laughable understatement. I was later told that there was evidently a substantial incline in the street near the end of my run, but I had no recollection of exerting any extra effort. In a Walter Mitty moment, I was thoroughly convinced that, if asked to

serve, without a break in stride I could merge onto the I-5 and continue to the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, emerge from the tunnel, and do a lap inside for good measure.

Memorial Coliseum, emerged from the tunnel and I knew it would soon host a final lap for the torch inside, for good measure. However, that honor was given to Gina Hemphill, granddaughter of the great Jesse Owens, who then handed the torch off to Rafer



Johnson to light the Olympic flame. Back to reality, I was now nearing the next torchbearer waiting for me. I lit her torch and the flame in mine was extinguished, but never, ever would the memory of this day.

Followinng my torch run, I have visited many schools, retirement homes and care facilities, sharing the torch and the stories that went with it. This year, I know

that the Summer Olympics will once more return to Los Angeles in 2028, four years hence. Dare I dream of another Torch Relay? For the record, I was 44 years old the first time around; feel free to do the math. A bit of a reach, perhaps....yet I recall that the second kilometer in 1984 was run by a man who was 91 years old.

Hmmm. Miracle #2? TBD. But maybe I'll pick up some oranges on my next trip to Ralph's.

9 Best-Selling Olympic Games Books

Every four years, winter and summer, teams of athletes compete for a gold medal and glory for their country. Through the decades, the Olympics have been the source of drama, intrigue, the thrill of success and the pain of shattered dreams. The results are always unpredictable, dramatic and the source of best-selling books written by Olympic athletes, officials, journalists and historians. Below, you'll find nine books that were inspired by an international Olympic competition. *K. Highcove Editor*

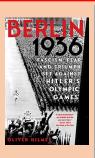
SOURCES - Best Selling Olympic Games Books of All Time - BookAuthority and Best Seller Amazon Olympic Books



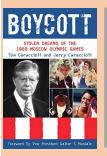
Uses literary, archaeological, and architectural evidence to investigate the nature, format, contests, participants, and politics of the ancient Olympic Games.



The Games of the XXIII Olympiad, Los Angeles 1984, reimagined the Games and reinvigorated a troubled Olympic movement. Hollywood stars joined the arena shows.



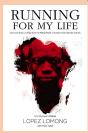
Berlin 1936 takes the reader through 16 days of the German Olympics, describing the events in through the eyes of Nazi leaders and diplomats, sportsmen, journalists, writers, socialites, nightclub owners and jazz musicians.



With a thorough exploration of the political climate of the time, this book describes the long-lasting repercussions of American boycott of the 1980 Olympic Games.



This inspiring story relates how the American, Canadian, South Korean and even North Korean women joined together to form Korea's first Olympic ice hockey team.

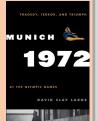


Lopez Lomong chronicles his inspiring ascent from a barefoot lost boy of the Sudanese Civil War to a Nike sponsored athlete on the US Olympic Team.

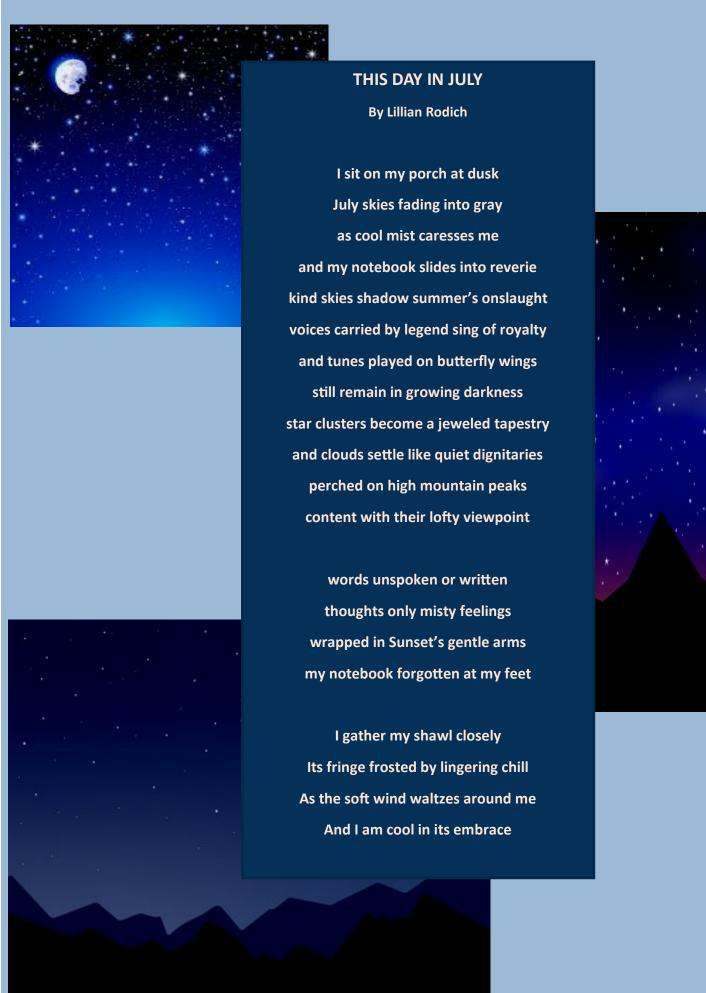




In late summer 2013. Ben Ryan, a young Englishman, must decide if he will coach Fiji's rugby team, without money or sponsors, and help them compete for an Olympic medal. Ryan says yes.



Historian David Clay Large explores the 1972 festival in all its ramifications. He interweaves the political drama surrounding the Games with the athletic spectacle in the arena of play.



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY BRANCH OF THE CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB

o you live to write? Write for a living? Whether you're a published author or "just always wanted to write," there's a place for you in California Writers Club! Our 21 branches range from Mendocino to Orange County and include writers of all levels and interests. Our mission: to educate writers of all abilities in the craft of writing and the marketing of their work.



CWC-SFV CLUB INFORMATION

he California Writers Club has been in existence for over 100 years, and the SFV Branch for over 20 years. Our mission is to encourage excellence in writing, fiction, non-fiction and poetry, as well as to reach out into our community and mentor writers at all stages of their writing journey. We hold meetings at the Saban Health and Wellness Center at the Motion Picture & Television Fund (MPTF), located at 23388 Mulholland Dr. Woodland Hills, CA 91364, on the first Saturday of each month from 1 PM to 3 PM. Meetings are free for all members.

Our meetings feature presentations from published writers, editors and other writing industry experts speaking on topics ranging from how to improve our writing, overcome writer's block, get published, and promote our work. In addition, we host six critique groups which meet monthly or bi-monthly to give CWC-SFV members feedback from their CWC-SFV peers. They meet in person, on Zoom, or in hybrid groups.

For information and reviews on prior monthly speakers, please go to monthly editions of the Scribe at PUBLICATIONS | San Fernando Valley Writers (cwc-sfv.org)

If you are interested in additional information about our San Fernando Valley branch of the California Writers Club, please check out our website at:

CWC-SFV.org

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