



The Valley Scribe

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

How To Adapt Your Writing Into A Screenplay

The San Fernando Valley Branch of the California Writers Club is excited to feature our own board member and treasurer, Anat Golan-Wenick, as the featured speaker on May 7, at 1:00 pm, via Zoom with a presentation titled, “Turn Your Novel Into a Screen Play.”

Wenick notes, "The diversified writer is the more sought-after writer. The diversified writer also has more money generating venues. Join us to find out what you need to know when adapting the written word to the screen.

“With the wealth of streaming services and TV channels, the rise of podcasts, and online sites dedicated to specific film genres, there is an increased demand for material. There is no reason why that next blockbuster, or the next best adapted screenplay Oscar or Emmy can’t come from something you have written. And while you may not wish to engage in turning your own narrative into a screenplay, you may want to know a thing or two about what will happen if someone else is hired to do so.

“In this upcoming presentation, we will touch on basic rules one should follow when adapting a piece to the screen, including the do's and don'ts. The presentation will also touch on how you can make your own narrative writing more appealing



Anat Golan-Wenick

to producers.”

Anat.Golan-Wenick is an optioned screenwriter and a freelance Script Analyst who provides development notes to production companies seeking to adapt material to the screen.

Anat provided notes to companies like Amazon studios, Crispy Twig Productions, Stage32, and various screenplay contests. She evaluated screenplays, stage plays, fiction and non-fiction books, TV pilots and articles.

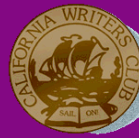
Some of the projects Anat provided notes on include movies like Ex-Machina, Love and Mercy and Beautiful Disaster, which is currently in production. Prior to a career as a Script Analyst, Anat worked as a production assistant and researcher for an educational television channel.

For additional information: www.thewritescript.com

Note: All CWC-SFV members will receive a Zoom invitation to this presentation. Members of other CWC branches should contact Monte Swann at cwcsfvhost@gmail.com by noon on May 6 for an invitation. Guests need the Zoom link to join the meeting. Guests may purchase admission to this presentation at www.cwc-sfv.org. by noon on May 6. We apologize for not being able to accommodate late requests.

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We're Writers. We Can Do This.

Like many of you, I don't remember a time in the last 25 years that I was not a member of a writers club. The first club I ever joined was the CenCal Chapter of the Society for Children's Book Writers and Illustrators. Attending their annual Writers Day at California Lutheran University was an event to which I looked forward each year. I still belong and attend their events.

In 2000, I joined the Ventura County Writers Club when I entered my first short story contest, because it was cheaper to enter the contest as a member. I held several VCWC board positions over the years, including president. I will be forever grateful for the education in the craft and business of writing which I enjoyed at monthly meetings and the support of a critique group, as I became serious writer. I still belong to this club.

I joined the CWC-SFV in 2008, when I was looking for a group that met on weekends, as I was still working full time in college administration. Happily, I found this organization through its MeetUp page. When Dave Wetterberg, may he rest in peace, was president of the newly formed West Valley Branch, he invited me to join the board as a "member at large." Subsequently, he asked me to attend the CWC SoCal meetings, while I also volunteered to do the club's publicity. Dave was the first person I trusted to read the full manuscript to my novel.

Later, I was fortunate enough to join Rita Brown in assisting with the club's programs. The time working with Rita was life-changing, as she also read the manuscript to my novel and encouraged me to publish.

I cannot thank this organization enough for allowing me to be a part of its leadership team. I know that many of you have been club leaders also and can relate to my sentiments.

On April 27, 2015, I wrote a guest blog titled "Let's Go Clubbing" for *Live, Write, Thrive*, about why writers and would-be writers need to join writers clubs. If you'd like to read it, here is the link: <https://www.livewritethrive.com/tag/karen-gorback/>

As our club begins its Spring Membership Drive, we

need your help to reach out to other writers and individuals who have "always wanted to write" to introduce them to this organization. Tell potential members that joining any chapter of the California Writers Club entitles them to attend the monthly meetings of the other 21 CWC branches for the same price a member pays at the host club, which is often nothing.

To repeat: A new CWC-SFV membership for \$65.00 is a year's worth of education in the craft and business and writing at all the CWC branches! If someone wants to join a second CWC club to access its full amenities, the cost is only \$25.00. I've always said that the price of membership in a writers club is the best deal around.

And don't forget the support of membership in a critique group, as well as the potential for publishing in the *Scribe* and submitting to the statewide anthology -- additional benefits of membership.

Now for the nitty-gritty. No organization can survive without new members. Our organization is adjacent to one of the largest cities in the world, but we're serving only a thimbleful of individuals. This year, we hope to see our membership grow into a larger, more inclusive, diverse group of writers and individuals who have always wanted to write. We need you to be an ambassador for this club and refer someone who will enjoy the benefits of membership, just like you.

Yes, we also have a few perks for you when you refer new members or renew your own membership before June 30. But honestly, the best reason to help grow this organization is because it's the right things to do. It's a way to give back.

Thus, please extend your hand, real or virtual, to another person and share the story of this organization. We're writers. We can do this!

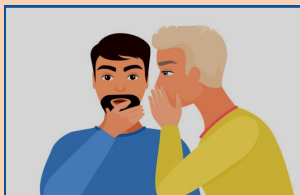
Karen Gorback Ph.D., CWC-SFV President



SPRING MEMBERSHIP DRIVE 2022

How will you participate?

Here are three terrific suggestions:



Renew your membership by June 30

and be entered into a drawing in which 1 lucky member will have his/her/their full renewal fee refunded!

That's a FREE YEAR, so renew and enter the drawing! What have you got to lose?

Refer a new member who joins by June 30 and receive a \$20 dollar rebate on your dues!

Tell your friends that anyone who joins in May or June will immediately receive CWC-SFV club benefits.

That's like getting 14 months of fun for the price of 12!

Karen Gorback Ph.D., CWC-SFV President

Vote★Vote★VOTE★Vote★

Dear Members,

We will soon need your vote to elect the San Fernando Valley Writers Club Board Members for 2022-2023. Board member, Anat Golan-Wenick, is charged with sending and receiving your votes. Our club's ballots will soon be in your email.

When you receive your ballot, carefully read Anat's instructions, VOTE, and then immediately send back your vote. Every vote is needed! According to our charter, we must tally 31 votes before our June 5 Zoom meeting. We've voted by email before and we can certainly do it again! Support your club and promptly send Anat your vote for our 2022-23 Board officers.

CWC-SFV Officers and Directors

Karen Gorback—Candidate for President



Karen Gorback has been a member of CWC-SFV since 2008, serving on the board as a “member at large,” publicity chair, assistant program chair, representative to the SoCal CWC Board, and most recently as the president/program chair. In addition, Karen is the chairperson of the Advisory Council of the Ventura County Area Agency On Aging and represents Ventura County as a Senior Senator in the California Senior Legislature (CSL).

One of her CSL proposals, recommending state scholarships for individuals studying to become home health aides, was authored by Assemblymember Carlos Villapudua and is currently winding its ways through the state legislature as AB 2069. Karen is passionate about supporting writers. She belongs to Ventura County Writers Club, as well as the Society for Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators. A former college dean with a doctorate in education, Karen has four grown children and nine grandchildren “who live too far away.”

Monte Swann—Candidate for Vice-President



Monte Swann was raised in Culver City where sneaking into the backlots of MGM and Desilu studios were part of growing up. Almost every weekend, he and his friends, would climb over the fences and find themselves strolling the cobblestoned streets of Medieval France, prowling the battlements of an Arabian castle or walking the deck of a pirate ship resting quietly on Lake MGM. All while eluding the watchful eye of the security guards

It was inevitable then, or perhaps fitting, that one day, Monte would end up working on the other side of the fence. For more than thirty years, he was involved with some of Hollywood’s biggest feature films recreating futuristic control rooms, space ships and clandestine surveillance centers. He still found himself eluding the security guards but this time he was trying to sneak out of those very same backlots.

Elaine Mura—Candidate for Secretary



Elaine Mura was born in New Jersey, relocated to Manhattan for her advanced degrees, and eventually relocated to live and work in Denmark, Germany, Portugal, and Iran (with quick trips to lots of fascinating (preferably off the beaten path) spots.

Her website calls her The Traveling Psychologist, and she had these comments about her work history: “Obviously, I am a psychologist. Currently, I work full time for the CA Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, where I determine whether or not inmates coming up for parole are too dangerous to be released to the community. Before that, I was a full time professor of graduate psychology for Pepperdine University. I am in the process of writing in several genres (novel, short story, play) and write articles for *Splash Magazine*, particularly reviews for plays, movies, etc. Special interests include photography, travel, and anthropology/archeology.”

Elaine reviews several plays and performances in the L.A. area for *Splash Magazine* and shares her reviews in the our club’s

Amat Golan-Wenick—Candidate for Treasurer



Anat Golan-Wenick, upon hearing horror stories of how Hollywood bosses chew and spit out writers like used gum, did the only reasonable thing—she moved to Los Angeles. If there’s one thing she learned while serving in the Israeli army, it’s to **fight** for what she wants (and BTW, used gum makes a great adhesive to fix a shoe during an army’s “Long Walk”.) She was a prize-winning script writer and knew she had the smarts!

Currently, Anat serves as a double agent: A Script Analyst by day and a crime fighter... ooops ... a screenwriter by night. In her non-existing spare time, Anat masters the delicate domestic balancing act of catering to the needs of a mentally challenged kid on the one hand and a certified genius on the other, as well as serving as Secretary for the SFV Board.



CWC was honored to have Lynne Thompson as our guest speaker on April 2, 2022. The Los Angeles-born child of Caribbean

parents, Lynne shared some of her poetry with CWC members. It was hard to pin down Lynne's interests, since her poetry encompassed so many topics which make our lives meaningful, exciting, and fun, themes like family, culture, politics, and – let's not forget this important focus - love. To quote CWC member Karen Gorback, "The poems were like a symphony...lyrical and relatable."

Lynne began her readings with a collection of poems about her own family and its colorful Caribbean background. How could these words be otherwise with a mother who hailed from St. Vincent's in the Grenadines—with today's population barely reaching 6,000? Soon CWC was showered with terms like calypso, cassava, mango, and frangipani as the poet wove a tapestry of life in the Caribbean.

Meanwhile, her father sailed into Ellis Island on the Van Dyke, a ship first launched in 1931 with superb services for the hoi-polio—which eventually became a transport for Allied forces and Jews escaping the Nazis – and then morphed into a crippled grand old dame carrying immigrants to our shores.

Both grandmas were memorialized, one black and smelling of coconut and All Spice, and the other a mythic Cheyenne "with a braid as wide as Dakota." She even related the tale of Tantie, her great aunt in

America, who was Miss Bea's maid—a cranky first class bitch whom Lynne finally met on late night TV—while Tantie fed the kids sugar cubes.

It was at this point that Lynne shared her bombshell: "I'm adopted!" Her search for – and eventual meeting with—her birth mother is clearly the stuff from which verses are made. What better way to describe Lynne's birth as "the aftermath of an urgent virgin and a married man in the back seat of a Studebaker" ? And then finding out that her adoptive parents first considered another little girl—and Lynne's inevitable question: "Which of us got lucky?...did God say oops?... I was in and she was out?" Yet Lynne has consistently worked at bringing together her adoptive and birth families through her poetry.

LA's poet laureate had a few suggestions for CWC authors to get their creative juices flowing. How about looking at those ancient yellowed photos we all have around the house—pictures of people we don't recognize enjoying the moments we never knew? Maybe it's time to let the imagination go wild.

A stimulating Q&A session following her readings tapped into some of Lynne's views about our current political situation in Washington, Kenya's post-election violence insurance, climate change, racial issues, and banning books in school. She cautioned that she wasn't yet ready to turn the happenings in the Ukraine into beautiful phrases.

All in all, this was a very memorable meeting for the authors of CWC.

Every day that summer, Mother zigzagged &
lock-stitched in the room she kept for sewing.

Six *Seventeen* magazines atop a side table
and the *Singer* humming with the harmonics

of treble, footpad, bobbin; the indigo, yellow,
and scarlet threads threading it all; her scissors

in constant motion. I was off to college and
Mother made sure I would show up dressed

for the part. I'd never have to sacrifice the lucky
life she'd wanted. It's all there in Lindbloom's

Eagle, her high school yearbook, 1928: Spanish
Club & Honor Society & "have a fabulous time

at the University of Chicago" but Mother married
just after her graduation so her daughter wasn't

going to come up short. In the end, doesn't every-
thing come down to vanity, time? That summer,

Mother tacked and tatted skirts, shirts, slacks.
She stitched dozens of spools of fibers through

wools, corduroys, cottons, velvets for cool fall
evenings, until late in August, I was gone, heavy

luggage in tow. When I came home two months
later (torn jeans, no bra, hair wild as a funeral's

second line, unrecognizable) saying, *I haven't worn
any of it*, Mother wept, then sold her trusted *Singer*.



Nurturing

my mother loved plants
not just flowers in full bloom
or yards of colorful beds
like brush strokes in her garden
she cherished the very beginnings
birth of each seedling

my mother saved egg cartons
and tufts of cotton from a large roll
and made dampened pillows
individual nests for seeds
she carefully placed in them
then exposed to the friendly sun

my mother tended the seeds
as time went by they germinated
warm and moist in their nursery
soon they cracked open
to reveal fragile green shoots
life had begun

like a good mother
my mother transplanted her babies
to a larger bed and permanent home
rich soil in our backyard
the plants grew strong and tall
and bloomed in brilliance

my mother loved flowers and tended her plants carefully
she watched seed pods form
and crack open in the dust of summer
tenderly she gathered each germ of life
ready to nurture it once more

Lillian Rodich

American Sign Language Poetry Nights Are Gaining In Popularity

By Anne Hansell

When I was nine years old, my parents, the second-generation Japanese Americans, asked my tutor to teach me how to write haiku, a Japanese poetry that consists of three phrases with 5,7,5 syllable pattern. On every Tuesday and Thursday, after school, my mother dropped me off at my tutor's apartment where I spent an hour composing a lot of poems. At first, it was hard but later, I began to grasp the basic structure. When I got older, I learned that, in Japan, elementary school age children practice composing haiku as a part of their education. When I got older, my tutor asked me to read Robert Frost's poems. That was my childhood introduction to poetry.

Some years later, friends took my husband and me to the *American Sign Language Poetry Night* at a Pasadena nightclub. Inside, we were led upstairs to a large room, with a bar, large spotlights lining the ceiling and a raised platform with several chairs and a podium. We saw people, hand-signing and laughing, seated at tables in front of the stage.. Others stood along the bar counter, drinking cocktails or mugs of beer.

We spotted several acquaintances and went to strike up conversations with them. The deaf community is scattered all over the Los Angeles County, but if it gathered together in one place, it would resemble a small town of over several thousand people. Gossip or the latest news about the deaf world would zip through the local deaf community like lightning. Naturally, we would had plenty to talk about with our friends.

When the light dimmed, everyone stopped talking and turned to watch the platform. A man got up and turned around to face us. He started to sign, reciting his latest poem. When done, another person took his place and hand-signed another poem.

In the American Sign Language, some poems could be translated into English, but others couldn't. In the impossible-to-translate type ones, the poet used facial expressions and body language to convey nuances of beauty or emotion.



Peter Cook and Kenny Lerner of the Flying Words project performing ASL poetry (Jessica Munyon)

For example, a famous deaf poet named Ella Mae Lentz recited her "Star Spangled Banner" poem on YouTube. She used hand-signs and gestures to create mental images in her listener's mind. Interpreters could translate this poem into English.

An example of a poem that couldn't be translated easily into English would be in [https://www.youtube.com/](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3jskB4GJJj0)

[watch?v=3jskB4GJJj0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3jskB4GJJj0).

In 1817, Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet established the American School for the Deaf, the first school for the deaf in America, in Hartford, Connecticut. deaf people were finally able to get enough formal education to compose poetry. At first, they wrote poems in English.

Clayton Valli, a deaf scholar, who graduated from Union Institute (Cincinnati, Ohio) with a Ph.D. degree in ASL poetry in 1993, established ASL poetry as a form of literature. Since then, a number of deaf people have been composing their original poems with the medium of American Sign Language, hoping to become a big-time star in the nationwide deaf community.

In pre-covid epidemic era, two large American Sign Language Poetry Night events were held in both New York City and Pasadena. In Pasadena, the organizers would work out an agreement with a nightclub owner for renting some space on one weekend night, once a month. When the lease ended, the event would move to a different place.

However, the Pasadena American Sign Language Poetry event vanished during the epidemic when the owners were forced to close their nightclubs. But the New York City counterpart returned to the usual business. They called it, *The ASL Poetry Slam*, according to the official guide NYC website (www.nycgo.com/events/asl-poetry-slam).

I learned recently that deaf poetry fans now host small gatherings for the poetry events in their homes, all over the Los Angeles County.

The American Sign Language poetry is still thriving, it seems, with the help of social media.



Thoughts of Mom

She was born in 1903 and died in 1985 at the age of eighty-two. Her native country was Russia. At that period in history, Jewish people in Russia were treated as lower class non-citizens. They were thought to be those who had the blood of Jesus on their hands. Prostitutes were granted citizenship and papers to travel but not Jewish women. So if my mom wanted to travel from one city to another she would apply as a prostitute in order to receive travel documents. And that's the way it was.

Cossacks would come to small Jewish villages and kill people for sport as in the movie, *Fiddler On The Roof*. She escaped to America, landing at Ellis Island in 1923, along with my dad, his parents and siblings, and a new baby boy who was born while the ship was docked in Constantinople. That was my big brother: Herman, whom I nicknamed the Turk. I was the only one born in the U.S.A., some years later.

Bessie...that' was my mom's name, was very beautiful ... with dark mahogany hair, sloping brown eyes, a small perfectly turned up nose, and a smile that created two deep dimples ... that's how I remember her. My love for singing and dancing, I'm sure, came from my mom. She taught me Russian and Yiddish songs and we would dance to swing music and sing popular songs from the Top Ten on the radio Hit Parade show. And she would giggle a lot, or laugh so hard...she'd wet her pants. I do that too.

Dad died at the age of thirty two. Bessie was a widow with two small children at the age of twenty eight. She went to work in a dress factory sewing by hand.

Not only do I think of her on Mothers Day...but every single day of my life. I love you mom!

Leslie Kaplan



The Parade

For a woman of a certain age
 It's been a bumpy ride
 Like a roller-coaster reaching the sky
 Then suddenly comes the drop
 And your heart falls down
 Breaking into little pieces
 And the thrill is gone
 But life has a way of making amends
 Along comes the healer a friend of a friend
 As if destiny designed it
 The broken heart begins to beat
 As a new thrill emerges
 And life is once again sweet
 And this woman of a certain age
 Has recaptured her youth
 that's what happens when you fall in love
 Ain't it the truth.
 Like marching in the parade
 Where a sad clown wears a smile
 And the happy clown wears a frown
 Reminding me of an old song called ...

I LOVE A PARADE

Leslie Kaplan





Charles Dennis and Stevie-Jean Placek – Photo by Ulrika Vingsbo-Dennis

A world premiere comedy, KING SOLOMON'S TREASURE charms audiences at the Whitefire Theatre. Written by Charles Dennis, who also stars in the production, KING SOLOMON'S TREASURE will lead audiences to comedy gold. But the play is so much more, as it twists and turns through the life of Franz Altman, the proprietor of a shop where curios, collectables, and vintage items are for sale – but a spot where memories and dreams are also available.

It's 1990 in New York City –

midtown Manhattan, to be exact. The shop is the repository of junk which has unexpectedly become valuable over time – items like a 30-year-old unopened bottle of Orange Crush and a baseball signed by legendary Jackie Robinson. First opened by proud owner Solomon (hence, the name), the shop now rests in the able and loving hands of Franz Altman (Charles Dennis) – courtesy of Solomon's widow. But trouble is looming as a major development corporation tries to force him out in order to bring the twenty-first century to his block in the form of a huge steel-and-concrete structure.

Slowly but surely, the conflict is beginning to generate notice. Enough notice, in fact, that Susan Carmichael (Stevie-Jean Placek), a beautiful young reporter for People Magazine, has shown up at the shop to interview Franz Altman, the elderly, but very canny, proprietor. Franz quickly turns out to be a quietly unexpected individual, a man with a history which grabs Susan's attention – and eventually causes her to ally with the "David and Goliath" hero. And what a tale it is, as Franz journeys from Vienna, where he was born (and analyzed by a certain Sigmund Freud), to Germany, Poland, Israel, and finally the U.S. Franz never forgot the words of Alfred Lord Tennyson imparted to him by his quirky, beloved mother Sonia: "To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield." Franz is a man who will never be defeated so long as he can laugh at the world's inconsistencies – and find a willing girlfriend.



Charles Dennis and Stevie-Jean Placek – Photo by Ulrika Vingsbo-

Skillfully helmed by director Ron Orbach, KING SOLOMON'S TREASURE is a fascinating, funny, and sometimes poignant story of one man's fight to survive and conquer. Kudos to Charles Dennis, who projects every single, emotional nuance of the play – and, at the same time, lets the audience in on the humor inherent in life's struggles. Stevie-Jean Placek, his colleague and foil, does a yeoman's job of holding up her end of the bargain with grace and competence. Kudos too to the production team, which assembled the contents of everyone's attics, basements, and closets to make the set enticing and perfect for the story. This is a must-see production which cannot fail to entertain and enchant – even as chuckles and tears threaten to combine.

KING SOLOMON'S TREASURE runs through May 12, 2022, with performances at 8 p.m. on Thursdays only. The Whitefire Theatre is located at 13500 Ventura Blvd, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423. Tickets are \$25. For information and reservations, go [online](#).



Charles Dennis and Stevie-Jean Placek – Photo by Ulrika Vingsbo-Dennis

WRITERS WITH MAY BIRTHDAYS

By Heather Bradshaw

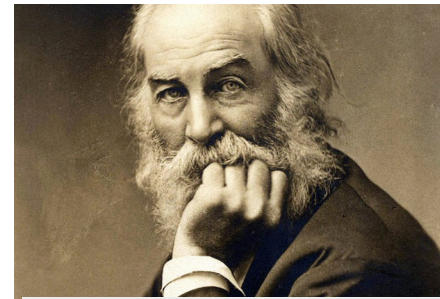
May seems to be a popular, joyful month. There is a song, The Merry, Merry Month of May .and also this 16th century poem, The Merry Month of May, by Thomas Dekker:

O the month of May, the merry month of May,
So frolic, so gay, and so green, so green, so green!

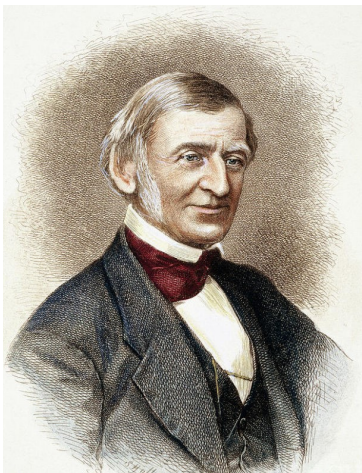
In the not too distant future, you'll be digging out your white shoes from the back of the closet and merrily cantering through the lush, green grasses of the Santa Monica Mountains, without being scoffed at, too much.

Aside from respecting Memorial Day, you'd better be lighting candles in honor of Lost Sock Memorial Day, celebrating Cinco de Maya, Star Wars Day (May the fourth be with you), Mothers' Day and Crouton Day. You're going to be exhausted. Maybe we should just stick to writers' birthdays.

American poet Walt Whitman's birthday is this month. The 'father of free verse' spent a lifetime writing and rewriting his poetry collection Leaves of Grass - there were six to nine editions produced, depending on which expert is counting.



Walt Whitman



Ralph Waldo Emerson

Interestingly, Whitman was inspired to write his poems by another May birthday celebrator, Ralph Waldo Emerson, who in his essay, The Poet, wrote, "We have yet had no genius in America, with tyrannous eyes, which knew the value of our incomparable materials." Whitman answered the call, later stating, "I was simmering, simmering, simmering; Emerson brought me to a boil." Whitman self-published his collection and sent a copy to Emerson who wrote him a favorable reply, which Whitman quoted and used as blurb (without Emerson's permission) for the second edition.

On the subject of writers inspiring other writers, the title of Lorraine Hansberry's play, A Raisin in the Sun, came from Harlem, a poem by Langston Hughes, "What happens to a dream deferred? Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun?" On top of being the first female African-American to have a Broadway play, Hansberry was also the first African-American dramatist and youngest playwright to win the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award. Furthermore, Nina Simone's song, To be Young, Gifted and Black, was inspired by Hansberry's autobiographical play of the same name. Tragically, Hansberry passed away aged thirty-four from cancer, but what incredible heights she achieved in such a short life.

Other writers who were born in the month May include: Jerome K Jerome, who penned the comic travelogue, Three Men in a Boat. Bobbie Ann Mason whose first book of short stories, Shiloh, won the PEN/

Hemingway Award. Perhaps some of us can relate to a quote of hers: "I'm not very articulate. The reason I write is because I don't talk."

Next we have; Joseph Heller, *Catch 22*, Jeffrey Deaver, *The Bone Collector*, who, by the way, spends eight months outlining and researching a novel before writing a word of prose! Then Barbara Taylor Bradford, *A Woman of Substance* - one of the best-selling novels of all time, followed by one of the best-selling writers of all times, Harold Robbins, *The Carpetbaggers*, Jon Ronson, *The Men Who Stare at Goats*, Pulitzer Prize winning playwright, Suzan-Lori



Lorraine Hansberry

Parks, *Top Dog/Underdog*, poet, Joy Harjo, *She had Some Horses*, and Roddy Doyle, Paddy Clark ha ha ha.

Children's authors include; Margaret Wise Brown, *Goodnight Moon*. Mary Pope Osborne, the *Magic Tree House* series, L. Frank Baum, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Dodie Smith, *The Hundred and One Dalmatians*, Christopher Paul Curtis, *Bud, not Buddy*, J.M. Barrie, *Peter Pan*, and Richard Adams, *Watership Down*.

Not surprisingly, the birthday of Edward Lear, who wrote, *A Book of Nonsense*, is also National Limerick Day. (There is no word for someone who writes Limericks. I tried limerist but it doesn't exist.)

Two Edward Lear limericks for you:

There was an old man with a beard
Who said: 'It is just as I feared!
Two owls and a hen,
Four larks and a wren
Have all built their nests in my beard.

They dined on mince, and slices of quince,
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;
And hand in hand,
On the edge of the sand,
They danced by the light of the moon.

We're not done yet: Ian Fleming, known for his James Bond spy series and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*,



Joan Didion

G.K. Chesterton, *Father Brown*, Robert Ludlum, *The Bourne Identity*, novelist and screenwriter, John Gregory Dunne, husband of Joan Didion and collaborator on *A Star Is Born*, screenwriter Nora Ephron, *Sleepless in Seattle*, Mitch Albom, *Tuesdays with Morrie*, Arthur Conan Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes* mysteries, beginning with *A Study in Scarlet*, and another physician and novelist, Robin Cook, *Coma*.

The list just keeps going and going but I can't omit these; Daphne Du Maurier, *Rebecca*, *Jamaica Inn*, *The Birds*, *Don't Look Now*, Gaston Leroux, *The Phantom of the Opera* (the novel), and Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*. We'll

finish with a quote from Orson Welles, co-writer of *Citizen Kane*: "If you want a happy ending, that depends, of course, on where you stop your story."

Happy Birthday to our members with May birthdays!

A Win/Win Situation For The CWC

Most CWC branches have a club newsletter. Each month, I receive CWC newsletters from several of our sister branches. I enjoy reading their news, poems and stories and reviews of their Zoom speakers. In return, I send *The Valley Scribe* to all CWC branches and share with them our CWC-SFV news, creative work and introductions to our own monthly speakers. You too can view other CWC newsletters.

Sometimes, I will reprint in *The Valley Scribe* an article or interesting news item that was first published in another CWC newsletter. Below, you'll note two informative articles "borrowed" from *Scribbles*, the May newsletter of the Central Coast Writers Branch. Please read on ... Kathy Highcove, *The Valley Scribe*

Where Your Annual Dues Go

Part of your annual dues pays for speakers and other expenses at our monthly meetings. The \$20 of your dues that we send to our parent organization, California Writers Club, pays for liability insurance for special event, the CWC *Bulletin* and the annual *Literary Review*. You are also allowed to have a dual membership with other branches by paying an extra \$25. So for the \$65 you pay to join CCW and the \$45 you pay to renew your membership, you are getting quite a good deal!

The New Revised, Revamped, and Repurposed CWC Bulletin

The latest issue of CWC Bulletin was emailed as a PDF attachment to each and every CWC member on March 15, but many members never saw it, usually because their email provider sent it to their spam, junk, or top navigation bar, click on "Publications." Choose "Bulletin" from the pulldown menu. Click on the cover of the latest issue and it will open or download. The direct link is <https://calwriters.org/bulletin/#current>.

There are two ways you can directly participate in The Bulletin:

1. If you've recently published a book, short story, poem, or article, or won a literary contest, share the good news! In addition to alerting the *Scribbles* Editor (csleeter@gmail.com), send a notice of 50 words or less, plus book cover in JPEG format, to editor@calwriters.org.
2. CWC is always looking for articles on writing craft, publication, and marketing. If you have expertise in these areas and would like to contribute an article, contact editor Joyce Krieg with a brief proposal at [edi-tor@calwriters.org](mailto:editor@calwriters.org)

The next issue will come out on June 15, Deadline is June 1.

Both articles were written by Joyce Krieg, editor of the CWC Bulletin.

CWC-SFV Member Ester Benjamin Shifren Loves to Share Her Talents



I've been happy and blessed to secure several regular piano gigs this year, playing for a varied range of listeners. But when my audience suffers from degrees of dementia and Alzheimer's their appreciation of music moves me to tears! They remember, and sing all the old favorite standards, as well as some newer songs! My two-plus years, since March 2020, of writing daily rhymes, and playing music have been my most rewarding activities during the pandemic. I post all my poems in Facebook, and I bless my muse every day!

The verse shown on this page is my latest rhyme that was composed and posted in just one day.

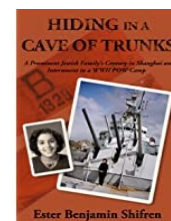
Ester Benjamin Shifren

Daily poem from Ester Benjamin Shifren Author



We understand being alone—there are many of us
Who've experienced it intensely in recent two years plus.
Isolation happens in so many different ways—
I experienced it long before the start of Covid days.
Since I was a child I was always well aware
Of special souls—relatives and friends who really care—
The ones who always take the time to think enough
Of someone who is struggling—whose life is rather tough.
In times of stress is when you find, and very soon will know
The kind, or unkind ones—all their actions clearly show
What they're really made of, and who they truly are.
Some keep distance, don't show up—staying apart and far
From any inconvenience, or slight discomfort they may feel.
That's when their true self they no longer can conceal.
Count your lucky stars if you are blessed with one, or many,
Who love and help you—and think of those who don't have any!

If you'd like to learn more about Ester Benjamin Shifren, look up her book, *Hiding In A Cave of Trunks*, on Amazon at:



[Hiding in a Cave of Trunks: A Prominent Jewish Family's Century in Shanghai and Internment in a WWII POW camp.: Shifren, Ester Benjamin: 9781479165384: Books - Amazon](#)

or go to this website to view Ester as she skillfully plays a lovely piano medley for her audience:

<https://youtu.be/K5Nvosqv6j8>



CHEER UP

A song by Michael Rains

otherwether.bandcamp.com/track/cheer-up

When the shadows tell the time
Do the hours rhyme at all?
Look in bright balloons all day, still
Only you know things to say

Cheer Up!
Don't you know the doggies won't go fly away?
Cheer Up!
Don't you know tonight is just another day!
Look Up!
Don't you hear the bluebirds want to whispering?
Cheer Up!
Don't you know there might be was a better way?

Life is just a big balloon,
Don't shy, it won't eat up the moon
The purple ones at half past eight,
They're pouring popcorn on your plate!

Cheer Up!
Don't you know that pigs and porcupines a song?
Cheer Up!
Don't you know that goldfish never sing it wrong?
Cheer Up!
Don't you know the Mabels bouncing on your hat?
Cheer Up!
Don't you know that somewhere dances on the lawn?

Look Up!
Don't you know the doggies won't just fly away?
Cheer Up!
Don't you know the sidewalk only has cafes!
Look Up!
Don't you hear the bells that all snuck in last night?
Cheer Up!
Don't you know that nothing's ever been this way?

Maybe you'll find miracles
Inside the cereal in your bowl
They'll teach you place you didn't know
Then you remember you forgot

Cheer Up!

FOR YOUR CWC-SFV INFORMATION

CWC-SFV BOARD OFFICERS

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Kathy Highcove

Editor of *The Valley Scribe*

Michael Rains

CWC-SFV Webmaster



Painted by SFV member Sara Coyle

In the coming year, we expect to resume meetings in the Saban Room, located in the Saban Center for Health and Wellness.

In the meantime, please continue to join our Zoom meetings on the first Saturday of every month. Learn more about our club history and current activities on:

<http://cwc-sfv.org/>

