



The Valley Scribe



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

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JUNE SPEAKER WOODY WOODBURN PRESENTS: “COACH WOODEN AND ME.”

By CWC-SFV Program Chair Heather Bradshaw

The San Fernando Valley Branch of the California Writers Club is pleased to welcome speaker, author and columnist, **WOODY WOODBURN**, as our dynamic and entertaining keynote presenter on Saturday, June 1 at 1:00 pm, Woody will appear IN PERSON, with a presentation entitled, “Coach Wooden and Me.”

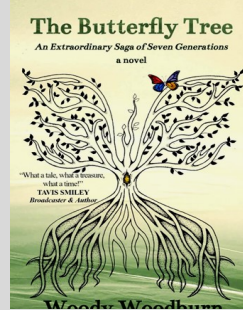
Woody Woodburn has been a newspaper columnist—first in Sports, now General Interest—for forty years, including the last three decades in Southern California for *The Ventura County Star* and . His work has also *The South Bay Daily Breeze* appeared in numerous magazines and anthologies, including *The Best American Sports Writing*.

Woody’s debut novel, *The Butterfly Table: An Extraordinary Journey of Seven Generations* was published in March 2024

by Barking Boxer Press and is available on Amazon. He is also the author of two nonfiction books—a memoir, *WOODEN & ME: Life Lessons from My Two-Decade Friendship with the Legendary Coach and Humanitarian* and *STRAWBERRIES IN WINTERTIME: Essays on Life, Love, and Laughter*

His national honors include first place for Column Writing by the Associated Press News Executive Council, Copley News Service’s “Columnist of the Year” and its most-esteemed James S. Copley “Ring of Truth” Award, as well as being inducted into The Jim Murray Memorial Foundation’s Journalists Hall of Fame. Our guest speaker is also an inductee in the Ventura County Sports Hall of Fame as a journalist.

You might also be impressed to hear that Woody is a “Streaker”, that is, someone has run a minimum 3.1miles (and averaged 11.4 miles daily) every single day since July 6, 2003 (now 7,300-plus consecutive



days and counting) for one of the longest officially recognized running streaks in the world!

On a philanthropic note, over the past two decades, the “Woody’s Annual Holiday Ball Drive” has collected more than \$800,000 worth of new sports balls for underprivileged youth in Southern California. As his friend, Jim Cowan, once said to him, “It feels golden to help others.”

Woody lives in Ventura with his wife of 41 years, Lisa. The couple has two grown children, daughter Dallas (a successful novelist and writing coach) and son Greg, and three young grandchildren. For more information on Woody, please visit www.woodywoodburn.com.

Woody will be presenting in-person at the MPTF. We encourage you to attend so you can meet the speaker and talk about your work with other members over snacks and drinks. Looking forward to seeing you there!

All members of the CWC-SFV will receive a Zoom invitation to this presentation. Members of other CWC branches should contact Zoom host, Anat Wenick, by noon on May 31 at SFV.CWC@gmail.com for an invitation to register. Guests may purchase admission at www.cwc-sfv.org by noon on May 31. After purchasing admission, guests will receive a Zoom invitation. We regret we cannot accommodate late requests.

In-person attendees do not have to register in advance. Please arrive a few minutes early at the Saban Center at Motion Picture Television Fund, 23388 Mulholland Drive, Woodland Hills, CA 91364. Guests pay \$10 at the door; a first visit is free.

CWC-SFV CLUB SPEAKER SUMMARY:

Luis Rodriguez – “Writing Transformed My Life”

By CWC-SFV Vice President/Secretary Elaine L. Mura, Ph.D.



“Monster Slayer” Navaho rug weaving*



Astec Cloud Serpent **

At our May 4th meeting, our club hosted noted poet, memoirist, Los Angeles Poet Laureate Luis Rodriguez, who spoke on how writing transformed his life. Luis has written two memoirs and 17 books, including bilingual children’s books, the best-selling “Always Running,” and several books of poetry. He has self-published, published with small publishing houses, published in his own company, and finally published four books with Simon-Schuster and Harper Collins. Currently, he has been managing the Tia Chucha Cultural Center and Bookstore which he founded years ago

to honor a creative and independent aunt who dabbled in ballet, painting, playing the violin, and writing in the 1950s and 1960s.

Luis began his presentation by giving a brief biography of his life’s journey. Luis was born in the San Gabriel Valley just east of Los Angeles, an area which in his time was marked by poverty and settlements of immigrant new to the U.S. (but currently gentrified). His family moved to Watts when he was two years old, and he was raised in another poverty- and gang-ridden area - until he was eight years old. He became involved in gangs at the age of 11 and drugs at the age of 12. By age 13, he had been arrested and spent time in juvenile halls and jails. When he was 15, his parents kicked him out of the family home, and he lived on the streets for three years.

Through it all, Luis noted, “My refuge was the library...I love to read...I’ve read tons of books... Bradbury, Chandler, James Baldwin...literature changed me...it gave me an imagination...when you live on the streets, it’s a day-to-day existence...I always had to protect myself.” By age 17, he was charged with attempted murder; at age 18, he was jailed for fighting with a police officer. “And then I found my mentor.” A staff member in the local community center took Luis under his wing and never gave up on him. He introduced Luis to cultural pursuits, painting acrylic murals and writing.

Subsequently, Luis went back to school and completed his high school diploma. When he was 18 or 19, he decided to “get out of the life...I went through heroin withdrawal and stopped going to jail.” When he was 20 years old, his son was born: “That changed my life...I never went back.” He worked in a host of low-level jobs like construction and factories “...but at 25, I became a writer.” When he was 30 years old, he moved to Chicago, where he became active in the poetry scene and began to visit juvenile and adult institutions to read pieces of his poetry and tell his story. When he was 23 years old, he opened his bookstore and cultural center, which is now a non-profit: “Since just before the pandemic, it’s been run by young people.” Regarding his educational background, Luis said that he “...went to East Los Angeles College at night, studying speech and journalism ...but I kept reading on my own...I’m kind of self-taught.”

Luis’s big chance came just after the 1992 LA uprising: “That was one year before the book came out...and became a global bestseller...LA became the gang capital of the U.S., LA and Chicago...I quit my job in 1993 and went on a tour with “Always Running.”

Our guest speaker has four children, five grandchildren, 3 ½ great-grandchildren, and seven great-great grandchildren. Over the years, some family members have become drug addicts and have served time in prison (including his son) – but through it all, Luis kept writing short stories, essays, children’s books, memoirs, and poems. May 20, 2024, will be his eighteenth year of cultural outreach; and he plans to celebrate with festivities marked by poetry, music, theater, outside vendors, and community members.

Toward the end of his presentation, Luis read two of his poems to the group, one called “The Old Women of Merida” about an elderly woman who lost her sailor husband to the sea decades before but still waits for him, The second poem was about his indomitable mother, a tribal woman who came to the big city. In fact, he indicated that he has several “names” bestowed on him by indigenous groups, including Monster Slayer (Navajo - someone who has overcome all obstacles) and Cloudy Serpent (Aztec - a tornado of energy).

After the presentation, during a question and answer period a CWC member asked why Luis’ books were banned. His response was quick: “I believe that people want to remove reality from the classrooms...but I also believe that we can make beauty out of ugly things.” He added that he has a book published in Mexico. In response to another question, he indicated that he was inspired by many writers, including Malcolm X, James Baldwin, Barbara Neruda (in Spanish), and Federico Garcia Lorca.

The presentation was well received by all members of our hybrid meeting.

*Rug Image source: [Teec Nos Pos Monster Slayer Navajo Weaving 1031 - Charley's Navajo Rugs for Sale \(charleysnavajorugs.com\)](https://www.charleysnavajorugs.com/)

** Serpent image : [Venomous Cloud Serpent - Wowpedia - Your wiki guide to the World of Warcraft \(fandom.com\)](https://www.wowpedia.com/wiki/Venomous_Cloud_Serpent)

ITS TIME FOR OUR JUNE MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

HERE ARE THREE WAYS TO HELP US GROW!



**RENEW YOUR OWN MEMBERSHIP
BY JUNE 30
AND YOUR NAME WILL BE
ENTERED IN A DRAWING IN
WHICH A LUCKY MEMBER WILL
WIN A FULL RENEWAL FEE
REFUND!**



**INFORM A FRIEND!
IF YOU REFER A NEW MEMBER
WHO JOINS OUR CLUB
BY JUNE 30, YOU WILL
RECEIVE A \$20 REBATE ON
YOUR DUES!**



**SPREAD THE WORD!
IF YOU PERSUADE A FRIEND TO
JOIN OUR CLUB IN MAY OR JUNE
THEY WILL IMMEDIATELY REAP
CWC-SFV CLUB BENEFITS.
THAT'S 13 MONTHS OF FUN FOR
THE PRICE OF 12!**

★ Vote ★ Vote ★ Vote ★ Vote ★ Vote ★ Vote ★

Dear CWC-SFV members: We will have a June election for the 2024-25 officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Webmaster and Zoom host Anat Golan-Wenick is charged with sending and receiving your votes. Our club ballots will soon be in your email. Carefully read Anat's instructions, vote and then immediately send back your vote.

Every vote is needed! According to our bylaws, we must tally 31 votes before our June meeting. We've voted by email in recent years and we can certainly do it again!

Please *promptly* return your vote for our 2024-25 board officers. After all votes are returned, Anat will tally the vote and send the results to the SFV-CNC membership. Thank you for supporting your club.

2023-24 CWC-SFV Board Members

PRESENTING THE CWC-SFV CANDIDATES FOR 2024-25

PRESIDENT



**KAREN
GORBACK**

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, program chair, representative to the SoCal CWC Board, and most recently as president. Karen is president and Zoom host for the CWC Presidents' Group and is a recipient of the 2023 CWC Jack London Award for service.

In addition, Karen represents Ventura County as a Senior Senator in the California Senior Legislature, where her job is to research and write legislative proposals to better the lives of older adults and people with disabilities throughout California. Karen is also a member of the Society for Children's Book Writers and Illustrators and hopes to publish a picture book later this year titled "Mazel's Mishpacha." A former college dean with a doctorate in education, Karen has four grown children and nine grandchildren “who live too far away.”

VICE PRESIDENT

Andrea “Andi” Polk, current membership chair, joined CWC-SFV in September 2011. Actively writing a novel, memoir and poetry. Retired HR administrator at CSUN, experience in CSU internal publications as a proofreader and HR database management. Became Membership Chair with new CWC database (MRMS) in 2011.

Subsequently, she has served as president, secretary, central board representative, temporary editor, temporary program chair and critique group coordinator. I was honored with the Jack London Service Award in 2013.



**ANDREA
POLK**

SECRETARY

Elaine Mura was born in New Jersey, relocated to Manhattan for her advanced degrees, and eventually re-located-ed 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.”

Also, Elaine reviews several plays and performances in the L.A. area for *Splash Magazine* and shares her reviews in the our newsletter, *The Valley Scribe*.



ELAINE MURA

TREASURER

Upon joining CWC-SFV, Andi Polk, who was President at the time, asked me to be Hospitality Chair and I accepted the challenge. In subsequent years I took on the roles of Secretary, Treasurer and Critique Group Coordinator. I would be happy to serve as your Treasurer. By agreeing to participate on the Board, I feel I pay back some of the gifts I have enjoyed as a CWC-SFV member.

When I retired, one of my goals was to focus on writing. As a clinical social worker, I provided treatment to numerous families, individuals and children. At the agency I was working for, I advanced from therapist to program director and finally Chief of Clinical Service. I retired in 2014 after thirty-five years at the agency. As head of services, I was instrumental in writing many successful proposals that funded new and continuing social service programs. I enjoyed proposal writing, figuring out how to provide new services. Now, as a retiree, I enjoy the freedom to write for the joy of playing with words and telling a tale (usually a mystery).



PAT AVERY

FOREVER ERMA

A Report On the University of Dayton's Erma Bomback Workshop

By MPTF Outreach Chair Phyllis Butcher

ERMA-ISMS: OBSERVATIONS ON DAILY LIFE

- Did you ever notice that the first piece of luggage on the carousel never belongs to anyone?
- Never go to a doctor whose office plants have died.
- If you can't make it better, you can laugh at it.
- Guilt: the gift that keeps on giving.
- I do not practice in any sport with an ambulance at the bottom of a hill.
- The odds of going to the store for a loaf of bread and coming out with only a loaf of bread are three billion to one.
- ♦ I come from a family where gravy is considered a beverage.
- Don't confuse fame with success. Madonna is one; Helen Keller is the other.

SOURCE: SATURDAY EVENING POST MARCH/APRIL 2024

If you were nodding knowingly as you read the foregoing "isms", welcome to the wonderful world of Erma Bombeck, one of the 20th century's most eminent and beloved American humorists. From humble beginnings—writing columns for her junior high school newspaper, then to the local newspapers (she claimed the weather forecast in the Dayton Herald was her first attempt at fiction writing)—until her untimely passing at the age of 69 in 1996, this amazing woman kept us laughing by writing more than 4,500 columns for national newspapers and 13 books, 10 of which appeared on the New York Times best-seller list. The extensive body of work that defined her legacy was preserved by her husband and children—articles, manuscripts, photographs, speeches and memorabilia. In 2020, the family graciously donated the massive assemblage of her work to her alma mater, the University of Dayton. The entire collection occupies 127 linear feet in the University's archives and is available to the public by appointment.

In 2000, the University established the Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop, an interactive three-day event attended by writers of all skill levels from throughout the nation and Canada. Participants are given the opportunity to sharpen their writing skills and learn more about the business aspects of their careers, such as promotion, publishing and marketing. The workshop sells out the first day of registration, but this year, April 4-6, the conference offered a virtual option via Zoom called "Erma's Home Schooling," providing attendees access to four online workshops and all of the keynote speakers. Although I didn't make it to Dayton, this new alternative was an in

credible bonus and a more than memorable experience.

Since its inception, imposing keynote speakers such as Dave Barry, Phil Donahue, Garrison Keillor and Art Buchwald have highlighted the conferences. The four keynote speakers for the current event included Zibby Owens, Beth Lapidés, Jacquelyn Mitchard and Wade Rouse. They are best profiled by their description in the Workshop's Survey and we have been given permission to reprint it here:

"That is what we do with our words. We reach out our hands and say, 'Come with me; we're just alike.' ... We're the connectors in a world that needs connection," Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and novelist Anna Quindlen told us in her opening night keynote conversation with broadcast journalist Marcia Bonhart.

"I can write like I talk and tell it like it is, and maybe that's enough," said Zibby Owens, author, podcaster, publisher and champion for writers."

"Habit is the house you build for yourself," Beth Lapidés, comedian and creativity coach, said in an inspiring, entertaining keynote talk. "It doesn't happen by magic. It happens one habit at a time.

"Prolific novelist Jacquelyn Mitchard encouraged us to publish our work, not keep it tucked away in journals. "The act is not completed until the reader takes your hand," she said.

And, finally, Wade Rouse gave us the pep talk: "The key inside of you will open up the world if you just lock away your fear and open up your heart to a dream. All the power resides in you. All you have to do, as Erma wrote me nearly 50 years ago, is

(Continued on page 6)



The late humorist
Erma Bombeck

keep writing, laughing and believing."

I cannot allow the last comment from Wade Rouse, the final keynote speaker, to go by without this addendum. Among a plethora of other achievements and honors, he is the internationally bestselling author of 17 books, including five memoirs and ten novels. This would account for his honest, warm, sincere and poignant address. His was not a speech, but rather a story, replete with laughter and empathy.

Even before the Q&A, the Chat was bouncing with emojis of cheers and tears. Wade has generously granted permission to download and share his speech at <https://udayton.edu/blogs/erma/2024/04/wade-rouse-erma-bombeck-writers-workshop-keynote-address.docx>, I strongly urge you to read this compelling dissertation. It is lengthy but worth every moment spent. For your consideration, this excerpt:



Erma at work in her early career.

One Christmas I opened a huge present and found that my grandma and grampa had gotten me an aquamarine Selectric typewriter (you remember typewriters, right?). My grandma told me it would help make my dreams come true. One of the first things I ever wrote on that typewriter was a letter to Erma Bombeck: My grandma found an address, and I penned a letter telling Erma how much my mom and grandma loved her writing and how I dreamed of being just like her. My family gently warned me I might not hear back from her, but I knew better ... I felt just like Ralphie in A Christmas Story. My dream was going to come true.

I waited and waited, and then, one day, my dad brought home a big padded envelope addressed to me. Inside was an autographed picture of Erma Bombeck as well as a handwritten note on a card that read: "Keep writing, laughing and believing, Wade!"

That nine-year old did as he was told, and 50 years later was a keynote speaker at his idol's Writers' Workshop. Dreams can, indeed, come true. Mine is to be at the University of Dayton in 2026. Fingers crossed!

Erma Bombeck quotes and photos were provided by the University of Dayton

TELL US YOUR GOOD NEWS



This newsletter welcomes any kudos, or writing triumphs you'd like to share with your fellow CWC-SFV members.



If you've published a book, story or article, won a contest or if you'd like to recommend a future-oriented event, please tell your good news. Or, if you came close to a win, and received a kind or encouraging rejection, we would also like to hear that sort of good news. Helpful feedback from a respected source is also good news.

If you have something to share, here's my email address:

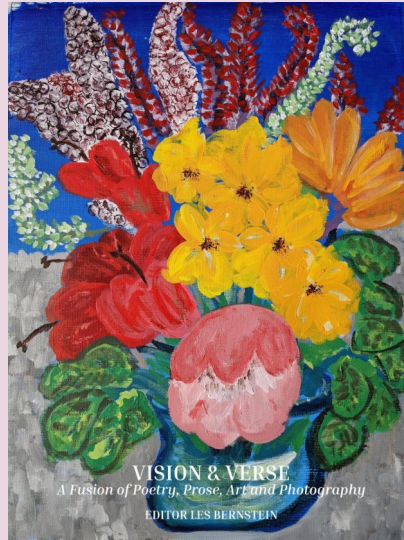
Kathy Highcove, kghighcove@gmail.com

On another topic, this newsletter once featured a monthly column that provided members a list of publications that sought submissions for a contest or a writer's fiction or non-fiction story. Sometimes this *Scribe* column would list publications that wanted material for a special group or readers, such as hobbyists, or travel information such as a review of a resort, cruise company or a hotel or a national park. There are thousands of newsletters, E-zines and magazines that seek submissions from freelance writers.

If you are interested in being a columnist for *The Valley Scribe*, please send me an email at the above email address. That information would certainly be good news for me!

Write on, everybody! Kathy Highcove, *The Valley Scribe* editor

CWC 2024 Ekphrastic Book



The CWC 2024 Ekphrastic Book, *Vision and Verse, A Fusion of Art, Photography, Prose and Poetry* is in the final stage of copy proofing. Here is a copy of the front cover. The art is "Welcome" by Briahn Kelly-Brennan. The cover was designed by Crissi Langwell.

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 final published book will be a high-quality softback, 200-page, book with color covers and 20 pages of art in full-color.

It is likely the book will sell on Amazon for @ \$35.00. We expect the book will be available for purchase on Amazon on August 15, 2024. Books may also be sold at branch meetings, with a member discount, however that has yet to be determined. Once published and on sale, the book will also be available as a PDF.

The club is very excited about this new publication, and pleased to announce that Les Berstein has agreed to serve as editor on a new ekphrastic book that the CWC board approved for 2025.

The CWC is actively seeking traditional and new ways to promote writing, publishing, marketing and selling. *Vision and Verse* was an experiment. So far, it appears a successful idea. We look forward to your feedback when the book becomes available on Amazon.

Roger C. Lubeck, CWC President

SUMMER IS WORTH IT



June Renga 2024

By CWC-SFV Member Michael Edelstein \

It's almost summer
Watching clouds isn't enough
I can't stand waiting
Spring's all right when the birds hatch
As buds break into blossoms
I require lots more sunshine
Needing my vitamin D
Wanting a lot more action
I like summer so much more
With longer days for funning
I'm hungry for picnic lunch
Also to hike on the trails
I'd kill to play pickleball
Even a game of tennis
And to dive into the pool
To do a few breaststroke laps
After I towel and dry
There's Deet spray for mosquitoes
Also Coppertone lotion
My skin burns too easily
Nothing good comes by itself
There are always some problems
When Ma Nature's gifting you
She wants something in return
But you know summer's worth it



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 all CWC members.

September 9, 2023



Join poet, photographer, author Hiram Sims as we explore the power, history and significance of the Ekphrastic poetry. We will identify homemade images and artwork that will be the basis of writing new poems. (Zoom)

February 3, 2024

BLACK AND IN LOVE



Romance author, Synithia Williams, will talk about why she started writing romance novels and why she likes to focus on black love in her award-nominated stories. (Zoom)

October 7, 2023

A LONG STRANGE TRIP - A WRITER'S JOURNEY



NY Times bestselling author, Jonathan Maberry, will discuss how writing horror got him started in his writing career, share insider tips, fresh perspectives on the changes in the publishing trade, and strategies for getting in gear and getting in print. (Zoom)

March 2, 2024

THE HERO'S JOURNEY



Inspired by mythologist. Joseph Campbell, screenwriter, author and educator Christopher Vogler, will show us how to use the hero's journey to improve our creative writing.

November 4, 2023

Best-selling author Vanessa Fox O'Loughlin, (aka crime writer Sam Blake), will discuss exactly what the industry is looking for and how best to submit your work. She will show you how to improve your pitch and build your author platform. (Zoom)



April 6, 2024

Kirsten Casey is a California Poet in the Schools, creative writing teacher, and the current Nevada County Poet Laureate. She wants you to enjoy writing, even if you feel undisciplined and blocked. (Zoom)



December 2, 2023

BEATING REJECTION



Best-selling author Vanessa Fox O'Loughlin, (aka crime writer Sam Blake), will discuss exactly what the industry is looking for and how best to submit your work. She will show you how to improve your pitch and build your author platform. (Zoom)

May 4, 2024

WRITING TRANSFORMED MY LIFE



Poet, writer, and activist, Luis Rodriguez, will share his poetry and discuss the transformative experience of writing his memoir: *Always Running, La Vida Loca, Gang Days in L.A.* (Zoom)

January 6, 2024

A COMPLICATED LIFE



Author, lecturer and BBC presenter, Paul Lewis, will talk to us about prolific Victorian author Wilkie Collins's incredible work ethic and his colorful private life. (Zoom)



June 1, 2024

COACH WOODEN AND ME

Author and award-winning columnist, Woody Woodburn, will discuss what we can learn from his memoir, *WOODEN & ME: Life Lessons from My Two-Decade Friendship with the Legendary Coach and Humanitarian.* (In-person)

The Hope Theory Review – Can You Believe Your Eyes?

By CWC-SFV Member Elaine L. Mura Ph.D.,



Helder Guimaraes in THE HOPE THEORY – Photo by Justin Bettman



The Hope Theory Poster - Photo by Justin Bettman

Written and performed by master illusionist and storyteller Helder Guimaraes and directed/produced by award-winning Frank Marshall – co-creators of “Invisible Tango,” “The Present,” and “The Future” – THE HOPE THEORY makes its world premiere in 2024. Major support for this production was provided by the Edgerton Foundation New Play Production Fund. The *New York Times* has deemed Guimaraes as “a master of illusions.” He has earned titles like the World Championship of Magic, Parlor Magician of the Year, Allan Slaight’s Sharing Wonder recipient, and Ascanio Prize winner. He is also a regular consultant for NBC, Disney, and Warner, where he uses his knowledge of deception to foster entertainment and enlightenment. To quote *The Washington Post*, “I’m committed now to the belief that Guimaraes is an extraterrestrial landed among us to share his superpower to boggle the human mind. And because in an era of rampant transparency, a bit of theatrical mystery restores one’s faith in the essential art of exuberant deception.”

As a Portuguese immigrant, storyteller, and sleight-of-hand magician, Helder Guimaraes and his girlfriend arrived in America when he was 29, wide-eyed and full of ideas. A fascinating mix of cultural and professional challenges awaited him – daunting issues which Guimaraes soon found that he must understand and deal with, all the while trying to build a home in a new country. This play offers a unique perspective on America through the eyes of an optimistic outsider. It soon becomes clear why *The Washington Post* dubbed this “alien” an extraterrestrial!

Tucked within Guimaraes’ fascinating immigrant story are mind-boggling little “tricks” which will keep the audience guessing long after the show is over. Maybe the hand is really faster than the eye. Murmurs of “How did he do that?” ran through the audience throughout the show. You will come away impressed by Guimaraes’ skill, persistence, optimism, and – yes – good old-fashioned luck. By the way, if you notice someone climbing shoeless onto a chair on New Year’s Eve as the clock strikes twelve, just assume that he’s Portuguese.

THE HOPE THEORY runs through June 30, 2024, with performances at 8 p.m. on Wednesdays through Fridays, at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. on Saturdays, and at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Sundays. Spanish language performances are scheduled at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, May 8; at 2 p.m. Sunday May 19; and at 8 p.m. on Friday June 7, 2024. The Geffen Playhouse is located at 10886 Le Conte Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024. Tickets range from \$30 to \$129. For information and reservations, call 310-208-2028 or go [online](#)



Helder Guimaraes after the show – Photo by Elaine L. Mura



Frank Marshall – Photo by Justin Bettman

Republished with the permission of *Splash Magazine*

PATERNAL REASSURANCE

By the late CWC-SFV Member Max Schwartz

Ten years ago, while putting together the 2013 June issue of *The Valley Scribe*, I asked club member Max Schwartz write me a story about his father. Max was an acclaimed historian, editor, WWII journalist, inventor, artist, engineer and one of the first self-publishers. He answered my question with this story. It's an appropriate story to share with you as we near the national holiday of Father's Day.

Kathy Highcove, Editor

Dear Kathy, My first reaction to your request was how can I remember anything about my father since the last time I saw him alive was when I was six years old? I was crying as he left to return to the hospital, now called City of Hope. I learned later he died from tuberculosis.

My mother made sure I always remembered and respected his memory. Every year we went to the cemetery, where I listened to her wailing, "Why did you leave me, Sam? Why did you leave me?" Then an elderly man in a black hat would come to the grave site and pray in Hebrew to my dad. This was repeated on every anniversary of his death, or Yahrzeit, until I left for the army in 1943.

When our regiment lined up to board an old English merchant ship bound for England, our chaplain's aid passed out Bibles at the gang-plank. I got the Jewish version. That's an ominous sign, I thought, as I pocketed the small book. Two days later while on the rough Atlantic swaying in our canvas hammocks in the ship's hold and as waves pounded the hull, I saw my father again. He told me not to worry.

Most of my comrades were intensely reading their Bibles, but I was being reassured by my father's spirit as I was certain a German torpedo would tear through the thin steel hull and explode in our midst. He was my Bible for the entire voyage and throughout the War in Europe and Pacific. He safely returned me home to raise a family, become a grandfather, and write this story about our fathers.

If you'd like a sampling of Max's publications, go to: [Books by Max Schwartz \(Author of Machines Buildings Weaponry of Biblical Times\)](#)



This is a photo of a very young Max Schartz and his father watching the 1928 Los Angeles Rose Parade.

A CHILD'S-EYE VIEW OF DAD, THROUGH THE AGES

In honor of Father's Day, here's a humorous saying that I published in the 2013 June Scribe. No one seems to know the author of this piece of folk wisdom, but it's interesting that it still sounds true. Dad/child relationships never seem to change!



Dear Ann Landers: As Father's Day approaches, I thought you might like to reprint an item translated from a Dutch magazine. This nostalgic gem appeared in the Danbury (Conn.) News-Times. I have cherished it for many years and hope you will share it with your readers. Donna W., Washington, D.C.

Dear Donna: Love it! I saw myself in every line and am certain others will, too. Bless you for sending it on in time for his day.

FATHER

4 Years: My daddy can do anything.

7 Years: My dad knows a lot, a whole lot.

8 Years: My father doesn't know quite everything.

12 Years: Oh, well, naturally Dad doesn't know that, either.

14 Years: Father? Hopelessly old-fashioned.

21 Years: Oh, that man is out-of-date. What did you expect?

25 Years: He knows a little bit about it, but not much.

30 Years: Maybe we ought to find out what Dad thinks.

35 Years: A little patience. Let's get Dad's assessment before we do anything.

50 Years: I wonder what Dad would have thought about that. He was pretty smart.

60 Years: My dad knew absolutely everything!

65 Years: I'd give anything if Dad were here so I could talk this over with him. I really miss that man.

Anonymous

How swiftly the months have gone by since our first hybrid meeting in September. After months of COVID isolation from our fellow SFV members and friends, we were finally able to reconnect, thanks to the joint efforts of SFV board members and with the guidance of MPTF personnel. This major change had an occasional glitch which had to be immediately corrected—while our speaker and our hybrid audiences waited—but we prevailed!

The world has changed since we all met in person, in the Saban Room. Zoom meetings are held by many groups and many types of gatherings. President Karen Gorback heard the pleas of members who feared that their inability to attend in person would limit their connection to our club. She promised these individuals that we would hold hybrid meetings. We would find a way to have both Zoom and Saban Room meetings. And the promise was kept!

But, my friends, our Saban Room meetings have paid a price for enabling hybrid meetings. In person attendance has been very sparse. Sometimes only board members and guests drive in to the Saban room. It's like sending out invites to a party and only a few folks show up. Many of you have never returned to the Saban Room since we enabled hybrid meetings. Yes, it's easier to stay home and watch the meeting in the comfort of your home, but wouldn't you enjoy, once in awhile, to meet old friends, guests and new members, at the MPTF?

In the upcoming year, 2024-2025, there will be 10 meetings at the MPTF. Each meeting will have an intriguing speaker. Some of the ten speakers will make their presentation in-person, in the Saban room; some will be on Zoom. Please resolve to attend one, two or even three of those future meetings. You can depend on your board that promises—interesting speakers, a welcoming atmosphere and opportunities for productive conversations—will be kept. Show us your support and join us in the Saban Meeting Room.

We'd love to see you. again, face to face!



MANY THANKS TO A MPTF FRIEND

For several years, Diana Byrne has held the position of **Assistant Manager Aquatics and Wellness at Motion Picture and Television Fund**. On May 31, 2024 Diana is retiring after many productive years as a dedicated employee of MPTF. That Friday will be her last official day on the campus, and I have no doubt that one of her final duties will be to see that everything is in place for our June meeting the following day.

Diana has been my terrific liaison at MPTF to coordinate our monthly meetings on the campus. She has seen us through our struggles getting our hybrid CWC-SFV meetings working, and while glitches still occur occasionally—certainly through no fault of her own.

The good news: Diana will still be a presence on the campus, as she plans on returning to volunteer and to continue her MPTF Studios fitness show, "Feel the Byrne."

What a bonus for us!

Phyllis Butcher
MPTF Outreach Chair



Joint Custody

By CWC-SFV Member Ken Mazur

a ghost weeping
in a hat,
I held her hand to the gate
she tiny and brave, going home
trailing pieces of my heart
like plumes,
flashing brief her
child's eye
already worlds away.





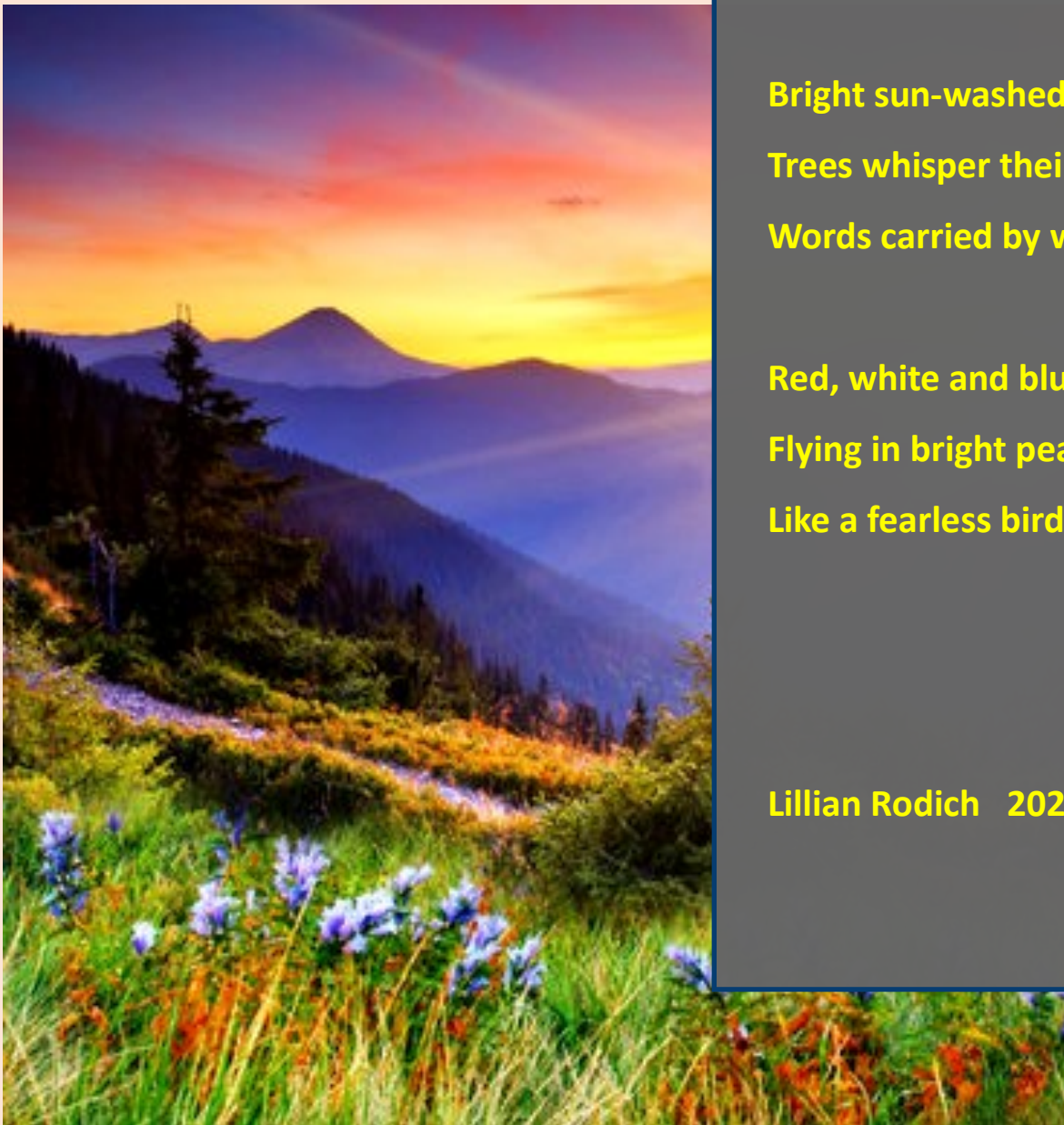
Haiku For June

Robin's sunlit song
Echoes through dawn's first new light
Soon joined by mayhem

Bright sun-washed morning
Trees whisper their poetry
Words carried by wind

Red, white and blue waves
Flying in bright peaceful skies
Like a fearless bird

Lillian Rodich 2024



ESCAPE

By CWC-SFV Member Brian Muldoon

Lately I have become interested in escape
and how to get *there*
From *here*, wherever *there* is.

How will I leave behind my many problems
And a to-do list that towers over me
In the days, weeks, and months ahead?
To be free from constant worries
and thoughts about my mortality.
Which have been my constant companions.

But where do I go to escape?
I've had no answer to that question until
One night the answer came in my sleep.
I heard, "Go see the twins, your grandchildren,
Although they are only eight months old,
They will free you of sadness and despair."

And now every time I see them,
My worries lift as I drink in
The elixir of pure joy
that the twins dispense
With every smile.

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Do 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 22 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 AND SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

The 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) in Woodland Hills 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](#)