



# Valley Byliners Newsletter

Harlingen, TX

March 5, 2011

## NOTES FROM THE February 12 Meeting

Instead of our regular meeting this February, we had the Valley Byliners Annual Creative Writing Workshop conducted by Emma Perez, from UTPANAM. This year's workshop was about poetry, and it seemed to be a big success. I was not at the event, so I cannot report on it first hand, but our president Don Clifford wrote,

“The February Creative Writing Workshop was a fun-filled event superbly guided by Emmy Perez, Assistant Professor of English at UT PANAM and author of a poetry collection titled Solstice. Emmy began with an overview of poetry today and how traditional methods of rhyme and meter are no longer popular as poets are experimenting with various forms of expression.

First, there was iambic pentameter, the most dominant form of traditional poetry, that eventually led to blank verse and free verse. Blank Verse has meter but no rhyme whereas Free Verse has neither rhyme nor meter - it's simply linear prose. One of the most recent types of poetry is the Japanese import called Haiku and a subsequent Philippine offshoot named Haynaku. Haiku is somewhat difficult to write well because of its rigid form - three lines consisting of seventeen syllables, with a five-seven-five syllable count. Haynaku, on the other hand, is much simpler - three lines of six words. The first line consists of one word, the second, two words followed by the third line of three words. The form can be reversed, e.g., three, two, and one. The workshop concluded with everyone attempting to write a Haynaku verse, some of which were funny and some, downright awful.”

It sounded like those who attended enjoyed the meeting. Last month's submissions to Jack King's writing contest were titled **Boxcars** (by Judy Stevens), **It from the Pit** (by Bruce Nelson), **The Broken Lily** (by Hugh Barlow), **The Rose of Your Life** (by Frank Cortazo), **Why Mothers Go Gray** (by Jack King), **Forever Etched** (by Ana Cavazos), **Jumpin Jack** (by Marianna Nelson), **The Race of the Mummies** (by Edna Ratliff), **The Thrill of Victory** (by Bidgie Weber), and **Your Love** (by Rudy Garcia). **Your Love** won the contest.

Don also wrote, “Diana Dominguez is the scheduled speaker for the March 12 meeting. Diana is an Assistant professor of English at UT Brownsville where she teaches ancient to medieval literature and women's literature. Her research resolves into stories and poems about those whom history and literature have made silent or invisible. She has presented both scholarly and creative work at various regional, national and international conferences. Her poetry has appeared in several poetic journals and has won three separate Writer's Digest awards.

According to Diana, her topic for discussion will be how to create an 'authentic' voice for characters written in any form of literary genre, whether it's prose or poem, fiction or non-fiction.”

I am including these notices from our president, Don Clifford:

Two new venues are available to showcase some of your work. The Harlingen Public Library stages an open mic night on the second Monday of the month. Register to read between 6 and 6:30 pm. The program runs until 8:00.

Moonbeans Coffee Shop at 5401 N. 10th Street in McAllen will hold its first open mic night on March 7 from 8:30 to 10:30.

Other venues occur with varying degrees of popularity. They include: the Writers Forum, 7:00 pm, first Tuesday, Narciso Cultural Arts Center, San Benito; Poetry/Short Story Night, 7:00 pm, third Thursday, Savory Perks Coffee Shop, Weslaco; Authors Roundtable, 7:00 pm, fourth Saturday, Paragraphs Book Store, South Padre Island.

-----

Test your writing skills by entering one of the many competitions offered by Writer's Digest. For more information go on line to <http://www.writersdigest.com>.

For WRITINGS YOU MIGHT ENJOY

visit

<http://donclifford.webs.com>

As of my last communication with her, Marianna Nelson is still looking for people who are willing to fill the positions of president and vice-president for programs. PLEASE consider running for one of these positions or nominate someone you know who would do the well. The people nominated for either position should be able to fill the role and have the time to do the job properly.

Thank you,  
Hugh Barlow