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The pleasures and pitfalls of publishing will be widely discussed by a variety of successful Antelope Valley writers taking part in this year's Meet the Local Authors program set for Saturday, Oct. 20, from 2 to 4 p.m., at the Lancaster Library.

Literary enthusiasts of all kinds – aspiring writers and fanatic readers – are invited to the annual event to chat with a panel of nearly a dozen local authors about how books are published and how to get started in the trade, what inspires successful authors to write one book after another, while also picking up a few legal and marketing tips. There is no admission fee to attend the program.

“Talking with readers reminds me of why stories and story-telling are so important to all of us,” said Diana Brown, who writes mysteries under the name of Diana Killian and is one of the program panelists. “I love the idea that someone comes home from a grueling day and picks up my book...and starts to feel better, relaxed...maybe even happier. No, I'm not curing cancer, but if I'm making life more bearable for a cancer patient somewhere, that's more than enough for me.”

Author Bonnie Stone, the event host and coordinator, says the program will include discussions about the costs, the pros and cons, and lessons-learned associated with self-publishing, a growing trend among many news writers trying to take advantage of new desk-top publishing technology.

Writers taking part in the Meet the Local Authors session this year represent a wide range of styles and their works include mysteries, screen plays, fantasy, journalism, child health and family relationships, history, business leadership, and books for children. They are, in alphabetical order:

Dennis Anderson, editor of the Antelope Valley Press and author of three published novels – Target Stealth and Blackbird, written under the pen name of Jack Merek, and Arthur, King, written under his own name. As a newsman, Anderson has received several awards for his on-the-spot coverage of Antelope Valley troops during their combat operations in Iraq.

Pat Arnold, writing as Cherokee Wyatt, has self-published The Adventures of Margaret Mouse, a series of moral books for children. The first three books of the series, eventually to number 10, is now available for school districts and two more are due out late in 2008.

Diana Brown, writing under the pen name of Diana Killian, created the Poetic Death mystery series as well as a new yoga mystery series, A Mantra for Murder. The publisher is Berkeley Prime Crime, and the first book of the new series, Corpse Pose, will

be out next spring. Brown coordinates the monthly Partners in Crime writing workshop at the Barnes and Nobles book store in Palmdale.

Marilyn Dalrymple has been a free-lance writer for more than 25 years and her short stories and poems have appeared in numerous publications including newspapers, newsletters, and magazines. Her latest children's book is Bartholomew's Buttons. Dalrymple is the facilitator of the Society of Children's Books, Writers, and Illustrators at the Palmdale Barnes and Nobles store.

Lynn Gardner, who wrote a high-adventure series of nine gem-based suspense novels, including *Topaz and Treachery*, is out now with the first of a new romantic mystery series, "Vanished: A Maggie McKenzie Mystery." All of Gardner's books are written from careful research, with authentic locations and historical facts.

Dorothy Howell, whose books have sold worldwide, is the author of *Handbags and Homicide*, the first of a three-book series that will debut in hardcover next July. Howell, who also writes under the pen name of Judith Stacy, has published 22 historical romance novels, with sales topping two million copies and earning her top honors in the trade.

Edward Mooney Jr. is the author of *Pearls of the Stone Man* and *The Journey of the Stone Man*. He recently completed a third book, *The Hope of the Stone Man*, to be published next year. *Pearls of the Stone Man* earned Mooney a nomination for the Pulitzer Prize in literature in 2002, and he subsequently wrote a screenplay based on the book and the movie is now in the pre-production stage. Mooney, a Quartz Hill High School teacher, also writes a weekly column in the *Antelope Valley Press*.

Elaine Fogel Schneider, PhD, is a widely-published expert in the field of infant massage and relationship-based practices. Her latest book is *Massaging Your Baby: Effective Techniques for a Healthier, Happier, More Relaxed Child and Parent – The Joy of TouchTime*. Schneider, who co-authored *Pictures Please*, released by Harcourt Brace, has appeared on several national television shows featuring child and family issues. Her magazine articles have been printed in *Parents Magazine*, *Massage Magazine*, and *Let's Live*.

Bonnie Stone is an award-winning journalist and author of six books. Her latest is *San Andreas Ain't No Fault of Mine*, a fun-and-fact filled guide to the greater Antelope Valley that is due for its sixth printing soon. The founder of the Antelope Valley Writers group, Stone is also the coordinator and host of the annual Meet the Local Authors programs. Her other books include two on military family lifestyles, *Campfollowing* and *Uncle Sam's Brides*, which landed her on *Good Morning America*, and the children's book, *Civil War in Paradise*.

Cynda Thomas wrote her first novel, *He Came from the Sky*, based on life experiences as the wife of an Air Force fighter pilot and experimental test pilot. The book is filled with feelings of intrigue, passion, fear, and hope. Her husband, the late Dick

Thomas, gained national recognition in the aviation world as the chief project pilot for the Northrop Grumman stealth test bed project that led to development of the today's B-2 flying wing stealth bomber. He Came from the Sky is published by I Universe

Ann Vanino is a writer who specializes in helping people find fulfillment in their daily work. Her latest publication is an e-book, Power Stories: Mythical Tales of Personal Power at Work. Another book, Leadership on Trial: Lessons from The Apprentice, offers readers seven leadership lessons from the noted reality television show. Vanino also works with organizations to help them prepare for and manage growth, develop leadership within the organization, and create an environment of teamwork and employee satisfaction.

As an author, Mooney says he finds encouragement in public sessions like the upcoming Meet the Local Authors gathering.

“I suppose all of us, published or not, are afraid that no one would want to read our work...it's the yawning chasm in the heart of every writer. Encouragement from others is always welcome.”

Mooney stresses that aspiring writers should never quit.

“Before you start writing, discover your inner muse...what it is you are hoping to say,” he offers. “Never be afraid of your imagination or your passion. The power from letting that beast run free will propel you through many dry periods.”