



The INKSLINGER

HIGH DESERT BRANCH CWC
Inspiring a Community of Writers

Sail On
February 2022



HDCWC to Showcase On-Topic Speakers at February 12 Meeting

The High Desert Branch of the California Writers Club will showcase four writers who are participants in the On-Topic Speakers for You project at the February 12 meeting. Jim Grayson, Emmalisa Hill, Joan Rudder-Ward and Dwight Norris will each do presentations of different topics available through the speakers' bureau created by HDCWC Programs/Publicity Chair Bob Isbill.

This presentation, coinciding with the publication of its online website, will establish the program's ultimate goal, which is to get our CWC writers "out there" to do public talks and sell their books.

The website www.ontopicspeakers.com, populated by months of work by HDCWC Vice President and On Topic webmaster Mike Apodaca, will be published on February 1, 2022, to debut the first of many efforts to publicize our writers with something to say. Mike's extraordinary contribution of IT expertise is another example of how our High Desert Branch thrives through membership volunteerism of their individual talents.

The four presentations illustrate the variety of over fifty topics available.

WHAT DO YOUR DREAMS MEAN? EMMALISA HILL



HOW TO MAKE AN EFFECTIVE ORAL PRESENTATION THAT YOU CAN BE PROUD OF. DWIGHT NORRIS

CHANGE YOUR LIFE IN A SNAP: USE YOUR CELL PHONE CAMERA TO TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE JOAN RUDDER-WARD



THE SECRETS OF DE-ESCALATION: HOW TO TRANSFORM CONFLICT INTO CALM. A PEACE OFFICER'S JOURNEY. JIM GRAYSON

From Bob Isbill

February 22nd Zoom with Mike Apodaca

Using PowerPoint and Zoom to Get Your Message Out



You're a writer. You seal your ideas and stories in the mental Tupperware of books. But in today's world the writing is only half of what it means to be an author. Today, to be successful, we need to have a platform. We need to become known.

This happens on many fronts. One sure way to become known is to be published. This is why we have speakers, like Tim O'Neal, to guide us through the publishing process. Another way is through marketing, another topic that we have had many speakers on. Finally, we can get our message out by making public appearances—by being guest speakers..

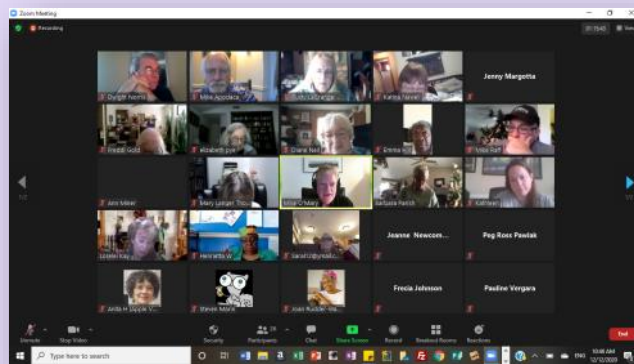
Think of the many speakers HDCWC has had through the years and how they have brought their books to sell on our tables. It is by being known that we find ourselves invited to speak on panels and at conferences.

The best presenters today have the ability to bring a touch of professionalism to their speaking by utilizing the tools of modern technology.

At this time we have 19 speakers in our On-Topic program and over 50 different presentation topics. We all want these presentations to be the very best they can be.

On February 22nd I will share what I have learned about producing PowerPoint presentations and using Zoom. Although each of us is working on our content, we can all add some professionalism by how we communicate our ideas. As Marshall McLuhan said, "The

medium is the message." We do not want people thinking less of us because our presentations are stilted and unprofessional. We are not only judged by what we say but also by how we say it. My goal is to give you the tools to give a presentation that utilizes technology in the most professional way.



High Desert Branch
of the
California Writers
Club
Board of Directors



*The following officers
and appointed positions are current for
the fiscal year ending July 2022.*

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Quote of the Month

By

Michael Raff

In the case of good books, the point is not how many of them you can get through but rather how many can get through to you.

Mortimer J. Adler, philosopher, educator, author.

NOTE: If you have a pen name (or adopt one), please let the *Inkslinger* editor know when you submit materials. Otherwise s/he will wonder who is submitting the materials. S/he will pull out his/her hair, have to investigate on the MRMS and send out emails like a detective on a tough case. In the end, s/he will be exhausted and embarrassed. So please, if you are going to use a pen name, let the editor know. Thanks..

For what it's worth

Writing is experiencing
everything twice

Catherine Drinker Bowen

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Dwight Norris

**from the
President**

Writing at the speed of change

A few days ago I took my car down to the hand carwash on Hesperia Road. The next day was my seventy-fifth birthday, a day I couldn't even imagine. The carwash was crowded and they warned me at the cash register that the time of completion could be an hour and a half, all the way up to two hours. I knew the quality job they did was worth the wait and I had brought some reading material.

One thing that was of some concern was the fact that all the restrooms I saw had on their doors a disturbing sign—RESTROOM CLOSED! Hmmm! Let me understand this. A one-and-a-half hour to two-hour wait, and no restroom access? I knew that might not work for me. The cashier handed me my paid receipt identified with the number thirty, and I asked her about the restroom situation. We joked about it a little bit, and she revealed that the restrooms on the other end of the hallway were open. Whew! Good to know.

The hour-and-a-half mark arrived and I did make a visit to the restroom. As I came out, my number apparently had been called and the cashier was looking for number thirty. She walked right up to me and said, "Are you thirty? Are you thirty?"

"I know I look like it," I said. "But I'm a little older than that."

I thought we might have to call the paramedics. This young lady was laughing so hard she almost fell on the floor. Okay, maybe I exaggerate! But we all know how fast time

flies by. In some countries, the elderly are respected, even revered, and are looked to for advice and wisdom. Not so much in America. Lots of young people assume someone who has lived so long knows nothing about life, and with the internet, who needs any outside input? All the answers are at their fingertips.

But let's call time-out for a moment. An article by expert Peter Fisk reveals some important facts. First, Fisk states that the amount of data in the world is doubling every two years, and more than four billion people are now using the internet. By hyperventilating the rate of change in the world, business executives and marketers are able to demand greater speed from their workers and a greater volume of work in a shorter period of time. But there are other important considerations.

If you think about it, all centuries are full of changes. Geoffrey Jones notes that the 19th century (the 1800s) saw the invention of the telegraph, where the speed of information traveling went from the speed of a horse to the electronic transmission of the telegraph. This is even greater than the internet.

For the 20th century (1900s), my grandfather always spoke of the time from his birth in 1899 'til his death in 1991 when man went from riding on a horse to walking on the moon. A bigger change is hard to imagine.

There is also the concept of *times of pause* between changes. In Fisk's article, these are the periods of time when the industrial world analyzes how best to apply the changes that have been discovered or invented. These periods can be three or four decades long. And sometimes, new developments occur during the pauses, such as nuclear energy.

So when writing, realize that the present is all that we have, whether it seems to be going by fast or slow. And human nature does not change, so write and write well. If you do that, your writing will have a chance to withstand the tests of time and be read one day by your grandchildren's grandchildren. Your writing may endure like that of Hemingway or Shakespeare and find a place of its own in the annals of history.





Mike Apodaca

**from the
Vice President**

Happy Valentine's Day

For thirty years I served families and my community as a sixth grade public school teacher. It was a job that had definite patterns.

It was easy to tell when February made its appearance on the calendar. A gray cloud of tension would hover over the classroom. Boys and girls would glance at each other warily, a kaleidoscope of emotions churning within them. Many sixth graders approach St. Valentine's Day with the same trepidation as they would the National Spelling Bee.

Each year I diffused the tension by explaining the (alleged) origins of Valentine's Day.

The Hesperia Unified School District gave me a one-page explanation which I read each year to my class. It told the story of a Roman who was imprisoned and condemned for his faith in Jesus Christ.

While awaiting execution, he befriended the jailer's blind daughter. He prayed for her and she received her sight and became a believer. Valentine then taught the young girl how to read and write.

The night before his execution, Valentine wrote a letter encouraging the girl to continue in her faith. He signed the letter, Your Valentine.

I'd explain to my students that true valentines are expressions of caring between friends, not mushy expressions of love. It went a long way of taking the weirdness out of the holiday for them.

Americans are good at commercializing our holidays. It's estimated that forty-three percent of Americans will buy candy this February for Valentine's Day, and \$27.4 billion will be spent on gifts for loved ones. Valentine's Day is a big deal for retail and drives much of our behavior.

But healthy couples don't really need a holiday to say they love each other. In a truly loving relationship, it's Valentine's Day every day (some of you know what I mean). Still, it *never* hurts to treat your spouse or significant other special.

On the other hand, Valentine's Day can be a symbol of failure to those who don't have a romantic relationship. This is a common theme in movies and sitcoms. Just one more source of stress and frustration for those who find themselves alone.

What may be more important for all of us this Valentine's Day, especially in the time of COVID, is to let a friend know how much they mean to you, to celebrate a Valentine's Day that does tribute to the event that started it all: the original celebrated friendship. Why couldn't we do the same?



This February 14th reach out to two or three friends and let them know how much they mean to you. You can call them or send them a card. Get ambitious and write them a poem. Do something personal and meaningful. Bake them something. Just let them know that they're in your heart. That, to me, would be a healthy way to celebrate Valentine's Day this year.

**HAPPY
VALENTINE'S
Day**





Jenny Margotta

from an

EDITOR'S DESK

DASHING THROUGH THE WORDS

There are three dashes used in writing today. They come in three sizes and have very different and distinct usages.

Probably the most familiar is the hyphen. It's the shortest of the three, and its size survives from the old typewriter days. It's the lower of the two symbols on the key just to the left of the 0 (zero) key on your keyboard, or it can be inserted by pressing the minus key on your keyboard's numeric pad. This shortest of dashes is used in hyphenated word phrases ([father-in-law](#), [merry-go-round](#)), to break a word at the end of a line (only at proper syllable breaks), to join words to indicate they have a combined meaning (such as long-term memory or face-to-face meetings), or to indicate a missing or implied element (such as [pre-and post-war economies](#)).

There is never a space before or after a hyphen, except when it is used to indicate a missing or implied element. In that usage, there is a space after the hyphen before the start of the next word. Also, when used to break a word at the end of a line, the break should come *after* the hyphen. The hyphen should never start the next line.

The second dash is called en dash, many believe because it is the same width as a capital N when typed. The en dash can be inserted in two ways. It can be found on the Special Characters tab when using the Insert Symbols method, or it can be inserted using Word's standard keyboard shortcut: Ctl + (minus sign on the numeric pad). There should be no space before or after an en dash in text.

The en dash is primarily used to connect numbers and, sometimes, words. With continuing numbers, such as dates, times, and page numbers, it signifies *up to and including* or *through*. For example: [The years 1939–1945 were marked by war](#). It can also be used to indicate a number range that is ongoing. For example: [The multivolume work was published by Jack Stag \(1950–\)](#). The en dash indicates that Mr. Stag was born in 1950 and was still alive at the time of the reference.

Less often, the en dash can be found with compound adjectives. If the compound adjectives are

themselves single words, then hyphens are used. But if one of the compound adjectives is itself two or more words and the other adjectives are single words, then an en dash or a combination of hyphens and en dashes is used. For example: [the post–World War II years](#). (“World War II” is treated as a singular item but is in fact three words, so an en dash is used between post and World War II. If the reference was just “post-war,” then a hyphen is used. Other examples are: [the University of Wisconsin–Madison](#) and [quasi-public–quasi-judicial body](#).)

A compound adjective that would not otherwise use a hyphen should not be hyphenated (such as at the end of a line.) Also, the line should always break *after* the en dash, not before.

The third—and longest—dash is the em dash, many believe because it is the same width as a capital M. As with the en dash, the em dash can be found on the Special Characters tab of the Insert Symbol menu. It can also be inserted by using Word's standard keyboard shortcut: Ct; + Alt + (minus sign on numeric pad). Unlike hyphens and en dashes, CMOS states there is no space before or after an em dash in text. (AP Style allows for a space before and after.)

Em dashes are primarily used to offset an explanatory element or interjection. They generally take the place of parentheses within text. An example is: [The influence of three impressionists—Monet, Sisley, and Degas—is obvious in her work](#). The writer should make sure the sentence stands as a complete, independent sentence when the text offset by em dashes is deleted (i.e., “[The influence of three impressionists is obvious in her work](#).”)

Only one pair of em dashes should be used in a sentence. Additionally, explanations or interjections that are very minor should still be offset with parentheses. For example: [Jack Stag \(1950–\) published a number of books](#).

The Chicago Manual of Style devotes six full pages, as well as numerous small references throughout the book, to the use of hyphens, en dashes, and em dashes. So, obviously, there is a lot I have not covered here. But these are the basics.

Word of the Month

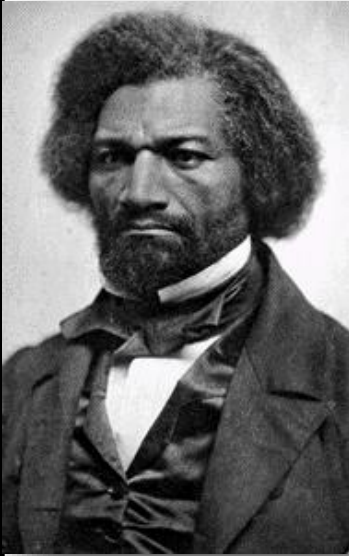
plu·mule [ˈplōomyōōl] NOUN

- (botany) the rudimentary shoot or stem of an embryo plant. (sprout, shoot, flowerlet, floret)
- (ornithology) a bird's down feathers, those that form an insulating layer under the contour feathers (plume, quill, plumage, feathering, eider down)

The Most Famous Authors of All Time

BY
Michael Raff

Frederick Douglass



Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey was born into slavery in Maryland. It's not known what year because records at that time were not usually kept for slaves. His mother was black and Douglass never knew who his father was, but it was thought he was either white, or Native American. Douglass was separated from his mother in infancy and was only allowed to visit her a few times before she died. He

grew up as property of the Auld family and was sometimes loaned out to other families. When he was 12, he learned the alphabet and taught himself to read from the Bible. He was whipped by a "slave breaker" so terribly, Douglass later said, "It broke my body, soul and spirit."

Douglass fell in love with Anna Murray, a free black woman. The fact that she was free intensified his desire to break his chains, and in 1838 he escaped by boarding a train in Baltimore and fled to an anti-slavery stronghold. From there he sought refuge at an abolitionist safe house in New York City. His quest for freedom took a mere 24 hours. He soon married Murray, and they settled in New Bedford, MA, then Lynn, MA. To help hide his identity, he changed his name from Bailey to Douglass. He became a licensed preacher in 1839, which helped him polish his oratorical skills. He became involved with several abolitionist organizations and this led to his being an anti-slavery lecturer. At one lecture an angry mob chased and beat him. His hand was so badly broken that it tormented him for the rest of his life.

Douglass published his first autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, in 1845. It's his best-known work. Some skeptics questioned whether a black man could produce such amazing

material. It received mostly positive reviews and became a bestseller. It was reprinted nine times and translated into French and Dutch. Most likely, the funds from his book provided the judicial means to gain his legal freedom. He went on to publish two more autobiographies, each one expanding on the first. He traveled to Europe, lecturing for two years in England and Ireland. In England he said he wasn't treated "as color, but as a man." In Scotland he was appointed Scotland's antislavery agent.

After returning to the U.S., Douglass started printing his first abolitionist newspaper, the *North Star*, its motto, "Right is of no sex—Truth is of no Color—God is the Father of us all, and we are all brethren."

On the tenth anniversary of his escape, Douglass published an open letter to his former master. He condemned the man's conduct, but he also wrote that he had no malice toward him and "there is no roof under which you would be more safe than mine."

Douglass also fought for women's rights and was the only black man to attend the first women's rights convention. He wrote, "We hold woman to be justly entitled to all we claim for man." In 1851 he merged the *North Star* with the *Liberty Party Paper* to form *Frederick Douglass' Paper*. The following year he gave his famous "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" speech, perhaps the greatest antislavery oration ever. Douglass encouraged blacks to be educated—what he viewed to be a key to equality—and advocated for school desegregation.

Douglass was the most photographed American of the 19th century and used photography to advance his views. He intentionally never smiled but looked into the camera as if to confront the viewer. By the time of the Civil War, Douglass was the most famous black man in the U.S.—perhaps the world.

To be continued . . .





A WRITER'S LIFE

RUSTY LAGRANGE



The Remington Syndrome

Over the past years, we've discussed aspects of setting the scene, selecting good dialogue, avoiding over-indulgent flowery words, and selecting character traits to make your work more enticing and readable.

One aspect of writing that must be addressed is the new writer's inability to let the reader "fill in the blanks."

It's a sign of an amateur to drag your reader around by the nose. A good story engages your reader in a way that he or she wants to invest time and focus on your skill in telling a story.

You must allow the reader to enjoy finding out little bits and pieces of the story like a puzzle. Is the main character set in stone because you described every little detail about him—his shoes to his hat?

If a reader can't use his own imagination, will he become bored? If she must pay attention to every detail of the road leading to the garden path, will she care about the weeds and butterflies along the way?

Shoes don't need to have a brand name unless it's specific to the story. Work boots should be a bit grimy in the reader's mind: dirt, debris, stains, and weeds clinging are just ways to overburden a reader with unnecessary wordage. If the killer just buried his victim in that garden, then a hint of debris on those work boots would be a little gem.

"Let your reader walk in your character's shoes. You know what shoes your character is wearing but we don't need to know the brand or color or the style, by your voice, your reader will know you researched the shoes and cared." ~~ Lara Prescott

Pace, timing, and scene changes will help to propel your reader along. However, if the reader is pushed by dictated movements, scene changes that are pointed out, or telling the reader the exact time of day, then these elements are too manipulative.



As an example, when a story comes to a scene break, allow the reader to figure it out in several ways. You can use a double or triple space break on the page. Then begin right into the new scene without introduction. You can place a decorative divider using several stars, a small flower icon, or a wavy line. Never use a hashtag because it signifies "the end" in many applications.

Another passage of time trick is to leave out mundane daily chores or mealtimes. You can say that the family planned dinner then move directly to "After dinner, . . ." This trick allows the reader to accept the time shift without dragging down the pace and watching dinner being served.

In books published in the early 1800s, it was often expected to see a "Drop Cap" embellishment to start a new scene on a new page. The drop cap was larger with scrollwork around it yet placed in the text so the reader could still follow the sentence. Today the drop cap is used to begin a new chapter's first line with a different color or type face to make it stand out.

Details can bite you if your research is faulty. Be careful when writing in a historical era and foreign country. This is where major mistakes can show up in those over-indulgent elements. Example—Never tell a reader "the lord of the castle checked his watch"—it's a timepiece. Never measure anything in ounces or inches when you should be using litres and millimeters and kilometers, oh my!

Once I gave up on a used paperback Western when some reader marked the line detailing a rifle that hadn't been invented yet. Dang, another one bites the dust.



The balance of using enough details, less direction, more scene breaks, less manipulations, and more understanding of how a reader appreciates following breadcrumbs will eventually make your story a really good read.



Club Meetings

There IS Wisdom among many counselors

Saturday, January 8, our branch hosted a very helpful meeting for our writers. We heard from our own writers on various topics. Here are some of the highlights:

Rusty LaGrange started us off, explaining her tips for conducting a good interview. She encouraged us to become familiar with our tools (tech) and to have back-ups in case of failure. We need to know who we are interviewing, what questions to ask, and how long the interview should last. She told us to think about having Kleenex, water, and a notepad ready, just in case. Lastly, Rusty said we may have to prompt the person we are interviewing. It takes planning and finesse to conduct a productive interview.

Mary Langer Thompson opened our eyes to the world of poetry. She said if we are just starting, we might want to try free verse (without rhyming). She encouraged us to read a lot of poetry to get an ear for it. We should start a poem with a rough draft. We need to end stanzas and lines with strong words, not the word “and.” She said to eliminate most adjectives and adverbs and to avoid commonplace words (ones overused and abstract). It helps to focus on symbols and rituals and to notice the metaphors around us.

Mary explained that poetry can be therapeutic and expressive. Good poetry is aesthetically pleasing and makes sense. Strive for universality, problems common to all.

If we are to use unusual punctuation or words, have a reason for it. Don't contrive rhymes. Use one poetic technique throughout. Oftentimes, there's a turn in the poem. Does the poem flow? Are all words vital? Is it original? Does it have impact?

Mike Raff spoke with us about writing horror stories. He said that this genre has all the earmarks of other stories, with the addition of fear—they must be scary. There are many fears: fear of dying, heights, confined spaces, the unknown, etc. Horror manipulates the reader. The author has to push for realism and to make the weird seem normal.

There can be humor in horror.

Mike used Stephen King as an example. After 29 books, 19 screenplays, and sales in the millions, it is obvious that a person can make a career in the horror genre.

Mike finished by giving us 1 prompts that make for interesting story starters.

To give his presentation the perfect ambiance, Mike played scary music.

Jenny Margotta shared the importance of getting dialogue right in our stories. She told us that dialogue is, “Talking on paper.”

We need to make our dialogue sound the way people actually talk. We need to listen to people. We need to get a feel for speech patterns, of how we would say something and how our characters would say it differently. Jenny encouraged us to read our dialogue aloud, looking for a natural flow. We have to account for the characters' age, ethnicity, geography, education level, place in life, etc. We need to be judicious in our use of foreign words. We should not overdo speech idiosyncrasies. We should not translate.

We need to use dialogue tags carefully. They are only to guide the reader. Don't put them in where they're not needed—especially when only two people talking. Although some say only use “said,” Jenny says we can use other words also (asked, replied, etc.), as long as we don't get cute with them.

Tags are better placed in the middle or end of the dialogue, unless we start the sentence with an action.

Finally, Jenny told us not to use smiled in place of said. We can use laugh, but only if it is one word the character laughs.

Roberta Smith shared with us the basics of screenplay writing. She told us to start with a logline for the entire story—the protagonist and what the story is about. Then create an outline with the basic structure of 3 acts. The beginning introduces the character(s), the middle (the longest part) shows the obstacles. And the end has the climax and resolution.

Roberta writes extensive character biographies, even for characters who don't appear in the action.

The next phase is to write a treatment/synopsis. This may be asked for by production companies.

Then write the screenplay in the present tense. Use proper screenplay formatting. Keep descriptions short and crisp. Use software, like Fade-In.

Edit your screenplay. Read it aloud with friends. Imagine the audience watching it. Identify all problems and fix them.

Lastly, I, **Mike Apodaca**, presented on twists in stories. I explained that a twist is like a punchline in a joke.

I went into detail using the *Wizard of Oz* to show my points. The twist begins with establishing the normal world of the story. It goes on to show a new world or reality and the character's response to it. Then come the twists. In *Oz* there are three: 1. That Dorothy kills the witch with water. 2. The Wizard is a humbug, but the characters already had what they needed. 3. That Dorothy had never left her bed. All of *Oz* had taken place in an altered state after she was hit with the window.

I finished my presentation with Disney's *Coco*, showing how it masterfully uses the twist for good storytelling.

Mike Apodaca

Find 23 top writing communities on Facebook at <https://thewritelife.com/facebook-groups-for-writers/>



When considering guidelines, make sure you stay in the word count. In fact, your word count, genre, and what you are submitting should all be in the first sentence of your query letter. Tim told us about William Shunn formatting (Shunn.net/format/story). Determine how the publication wants you to submit (imbedded in an email, as an attachment, or on a submission form).

It is important to remember that rejection is inevitable. Tim showed us his 259 rejection emails. Sometimes, rejection letters are helpful, and the editor will give you tips on how you can improve your writing. A form letter rejection is not personal and should not be taken as such.

Tim suggested that we start submitting to smaller publications first and work our way up as we become better known and build a reputation. The more you publish the easier it gets. Never pay to submit (unless it is for a branch anthology or the *Literary Review*).

If you are not sure that a site is legitimate, you can check them out at SFWA Writer Beware, a free internet watchdog site.

There are websites that will help you find places to publish. Two of the best are Horror Tree, Authors Publish, and The Grinder.

Facebook groups will also give you many leads for publishing. Tim showed us how to search for groups and how to navigate Facebook.

Tim ended his presentation by taking questions. He closed by telling us that our stories will find a home if we are persistent.

Thanks, Tim, for being such an inspiring example to us all.

ACT II

Tim O'Neal Writing While Working Full Time



Tuesday January 25th, Tim O'Neal joined us from snowy Colorado as our guest speaker for ACT II. Tim introduced himself (he holds down three jobs) and shared that he had more than ten stories published.

To get published, Tim told us to . . .

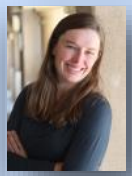
Have a catchy title, one that acts as a gateway into the story. The title can be a metaphor and should avoid the construction "The ___ of ___".

Know the publication. Carefully read the submission guidelines and follow them. You can always research the editor and make your main character similar to him/her. It doesn't hurt. Also, consider getting a copy of the magazine to see what they're looking for.

On-Topic Speakers for You Gaining Ground



How Can I Get My Books Sold? Join the On-Topic Speakers



With a heavy investment of research and time, you have written your book(s)—a repository of your ideas and original point of view. You put your treasure on Amazon, where you are hoping people find it and buy it. What can you do to boost your sales? You can become a speaker who speaks to various groups (most of which will pay you) and sell your books. Think about how many authors our club has sponsored through the years. That could be you. Speaking is how you and your work become known.



How Can I Get Involved?



Contact Bob Isbill at risbill@aol.com and let him know you are interested. Send the following information to me (Mike Apodaca) at mrdaca.ma@gmail.com.

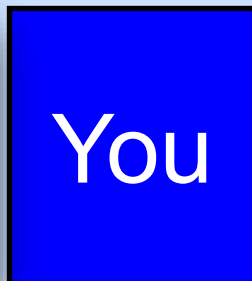
- ◆ A headshot
- ◆ A short biography (one that you would want to be introduced with)
- ◆ A list of presentations you will do with a short logline for each
- ◆ Pictures of your book covers and a short description of each book
- ◆ Any social media or website you want linked to your page



Put together your speech, including your audio visuals (PowerPoint, videos, artifacts, etc.). Practice your speech. Keep studying and become an expert on your topic. Contact Bob Isbill and see if you can practice your presentation for an audience.



We launch our On-Topic Speakers for You Website in March (we want to give our speakers a little more time to prepare). On-Topic Speakers should provide new opportunities for you to introduce yourself and your passion and to help you sell your books.



The Power of the MRMS

This morning one of our members didn't show up for an appointment. How do we get in touch with them? How do we find out if they're okay? We can use the MRMS and get their address and phone number. This information is not public. It is only available to members of our club. It provides an excellent way for our members to find others who write in the same genre. When you want to connect, use the MRMS.

If you need help logging in, contact Bob Isbill, Jenny Margotta or Michael Raff

<https://mrmsys.org/>



The screenshot shows the login interface for the Member Record Management System (MRMS). In the top left corner is the logo for the California Writers Club, featuring a ship and the text "CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB" and "Founded 1909". In the top right corner is a "User Manual" link. The main heading reads "Member Record Management System". Below this, a red message states "You must Select Your Branch. High Desert Branch". Underneath, it says "Enter User ID and Password". There are two input fields: "User ID:" and "Password:". At the bottom, there is a checkbox labeled "I'm not a robot" and a reCAPTCHA logo with "reCAPTCHA Privacy - Terms" text.





Help Wanted: Storage Unit Manager



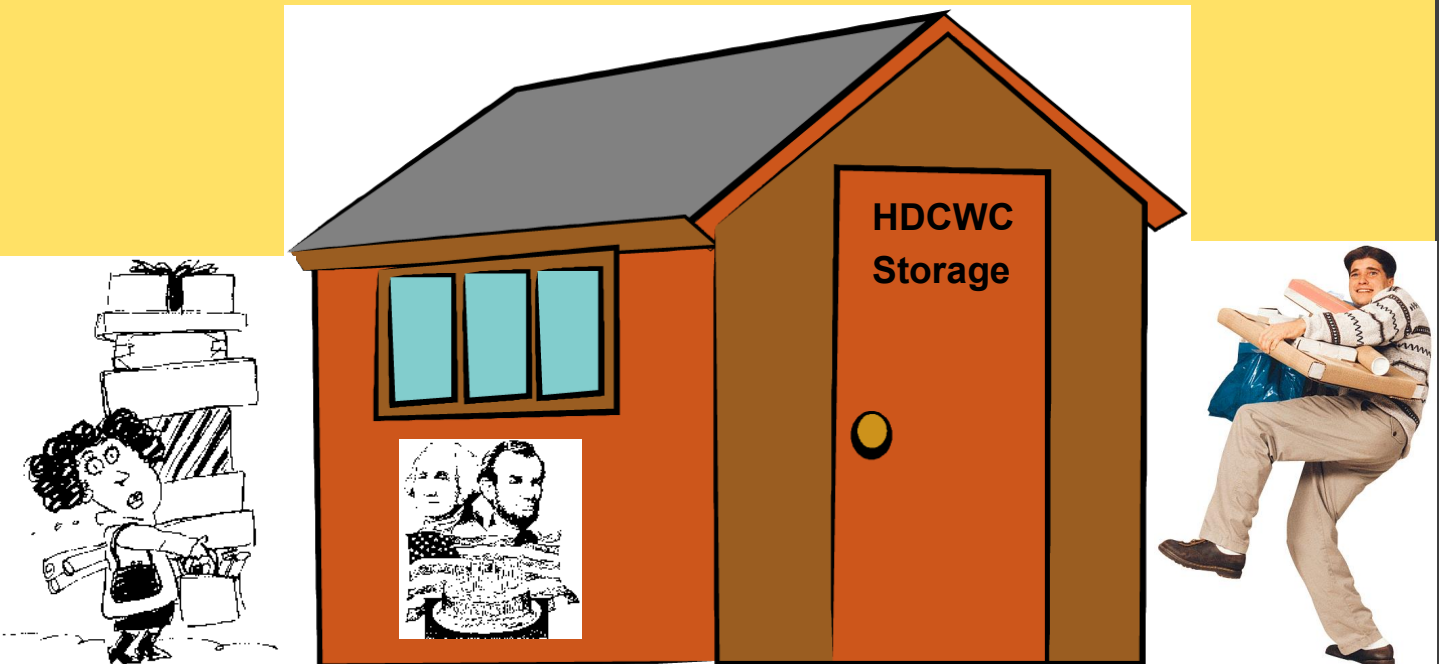
If you are that person who straightens every picture when you enter a room, we want to talk with you.

If you have ever reorganized a messy and disorganized shelf in a store and felt great satisfaction afterwards, then this might be your next venture.

If you have ever offered to clean someone else's messy room, then you might have what it takes for this job.

The latest **HDCWC volunteer opportunity** is for a Storage Unit Manager. We currently have a storage unit that would drive a person with OCD right up the wall. It's become the place where we "stuck" things for a while and now, to be quite honest, we aren't even sure of everything that is in there. What we need is someone who would be willing to donate some time for a few weeks to organize and clean out our current storage area, make an inventory list of what we have there, and then organize it all so that it becomes useful. Also, be available to help when we need things from storage.

The Board's hope is that we'll eventually have a fully working storage system with an inventory that is functional. In other words, we want to go from simply storing stuff to keeping things ready for use. We want this facility to change from stuff that sits to vital tools that are used. If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact Dwight Norris at: dwightedwardnorris@gmail.com.



San Francisco Writers Conference

The 18th Annual **San Francisco Writers Conference** has been postponed due to COVID complications. It will now be held **JULY 21-24, 2022**, at the Hyatt Regency San Francisco across from the Ferry Building on San Francisco Bay. Submission deadline for poetry and screenwriters is July 23rd.

Keynoters and speakers are listed on our website. Attendees will learn from a faculty of 100+ presenters, including bestselling authors, editors, publishers, and literary agents. For updates and to subscribe to our FREE SFWC e-Updates, go to www.SFWriters.org



www.Facebook.com/SanFranciscoWritersConference Twitter @SFWC

Wisdom From the Trenches

If you publish a work of fiction and name each chapter, Kindle Direct Publishing will send you numerous Quality Notices. Checking it out on your Bookshelf will instruct you to add a Table of Contents. Be sure to address the issue on your Bookshelf by indicating there is no need for a Table of Contents in your fiction book unless you want to add one. **Freddi Gold**

Never read a book without figuring out a way to retain its wisdom. I always buy my books (physical books) and read them with a pen in my hand. I underline only what I need to reproduce the main thoughts on each page. That way, if I want, I can reread a book in about an hour. I also write at the top of the page the main idea of that page. When I come across a great quote, I put it in brackets and label it in the margin. Then I write on the last blank page in the book the label and page number. When I finish the book, I type these quotable labels into a Word file. This file is now almost 300 pages single spaced. I can do a search and find any quote from any book I've ever read. I know others have different ways of organizing their writing life. The point is have a plan and make it work for you. **Mike Apodaca**

Announcing a New Book!



From the Back Cover:

No one chooses Parkinson's, but you can choose how to live with it. If you or someone you know or love has Parkinson's, then this book is for you. It is full of tips on how to live well with the disease. When someone in the family has Parkinson's, the whole family experiences it. There are several pieces on respite for the caregiver, which caregivers are encouraged to take to heart. The author writes with the perspective and understanding of someone who has cared for a loved one with Parkinson's disease.

Ann Miner has been associated with the Parkinson's community for over twenty years. She has attended conferences in Southern California sponsored by Davis Phinney, Michael J Fox, and the Parkinson's Foundation. She applied for and achieved a grant for special Parkinson's programs in the community. She and her husband attended the local Parkinson's Support Group for years, and she continued, for a time, as facilitator for that group after his passing.

With the skill and understanding she gained, she wrote a popular column titled, "Parkinson's Postings," and it is with encouragement from her readership that she presents this little book.

Congratulations, Ann! This book is the culmination of years and tears. May it be a blessing to many. The Editor



Professional Photography Bargain for Headshots Set Up for February 6th

Several of you were unable to take advantage of the August 15, 2021, photo shoot. Because of this, and because many of you have now seen the quality of those photos, we have requested Joan Rudder Ward to do another photo session for CWC members and their family and friends.

Some of the comments by those who attended on August 15 were: "Beautiful work!" "Incredibly professional!" and "Outstanding value!"

Through her generosity, we are again able to offer an extraordinary value for two professional headshots for only \$30.

Joan will provide 2 jpeg files of softly retouched photos. Each photo will have one 5x7 300 dpi format and an emailable publicity jpeg file for your portfolio. The cost for each photo is \$15 when combined in this deal!

Note: This offer is for the jpeg files only. Participants may obtain prints on their own through Walgreen's or Costco for example.

This remarkable value would ordinarily cost around \$150. This is only one more example of getting your money's worth out of being a member of the CWC! Please make checks for \$30 payable to **The Image Maker**. **PayPal will not be available for this amazing offer.** Personal checks or money orders only, mailed to:

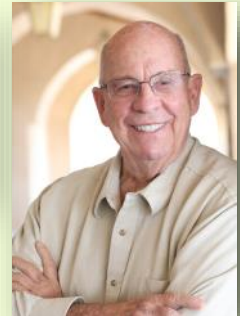
HDCWC
17645 Fisher St.
Victorville, CA 92395

This offer is also extended to the Inland Empire Branch and is anticipated to fill up fast, so don't delay. First come, first served, and once the maximum number of clients is reached, the offer will be withdrawn.



Sunset Hills Memorial Park
24000 Waalew Road
Apple Valley 92307

Sunday, February 6, 2022
9:30 am to 3:00 pm



Group photo times to be announced prior to that date

We will also be taking a group photo of our **Scholastic Judges** on that day, so be sure to attend. Another photo of our members present will be taken at that time also.

Those interested in this offer, please notify us by emailing risbill@aol.com. Put your name and the word Photo in the subject line.

Put the desired time of your photo appointment in your email. **Upon receipt of your check, we will make every effort to comply with your requested time slot.**

Because of this great value, there will be no refunds if appointment is cancelled by the member or in case of no-shows on the date of photography. The only refunds that will be made are if this offer is cancelled.

Critique Groups: The Writer's Secret



There's nothing more helpful to a writer than being in a good critique group. Having other writers put their eyes on your work and give you suggestions is invaluable.

Marilyn Ramirez (King) is starting up the Wordsmith's critique group again. Meetings will be held twice a month on Thursday evenings at 6:00 pm. If you've been wanting to join a critique group that is serious about getting your work published, this group is for you. You can contact Marilyn at: marilynking6318@gmail.com.

Dwight Norris and Richard Zone are looking for two members (preferably female for balance of views) for their critique group. Time is flexible. Contact Dwight at: dwightedwardnorris@gmail.com

Anita Holmes and Mike Apodaca are looking for two new members in their critique group. We are looking for serious writers who want to up their game and will come prepared every session. We meet on Thursday afternoons every two weeks. Contact Anita at: pennedbyanita@outlook.com

Poemsmiths, who meet every other Thursday at 3:30, have one spot open at this time. Contact Mary at: mh_thompson@hotmail.com

Black History Month

Fourth Annual African American Read-In

In Memory of Sandy Armistead, 1921-2021

On Monday evening, February 7, 2022, members of the High Desert branch of the California Writers Club will feature black voices, current and classic, at the Hesperia Library from 5:00-7:00 p.m. For a fourth year, literary contributions from African Americans will be shared. The Read-In began thirty-two years ago by the Black Caucus of the National Council of Teachers of English.

Be thinking about your favorite black author from the past or present. Read a 3—5 minute poem, passage, or even a condensed bio. Sing a song by an African American composer. Read a short scene from a play or movie. In the past we have had readings of writers such as Maya Angelou, Langston Hughes, and Toni Morrison. Members can sign up early by e-mailing Mary Langer Thompson at [mailto: mh_thompson@hotmail.com](mailto:mh_thompson@hotmail.com) by Friday, February 4th, or bring a guest to read or listen and come early to sign up for a remaining spot. Some spots will be left open for non-member guests.

Sandy Armistead was an Apple Valley resident who passed away last year and experienced racism many times in his long life. Our president, Dwight Norris, wrote his moving story in *The Story of Sandy Armistead: A Black Man's Journey in a White Man's World*, published in 2018.

Come, be a reader at this annual Open Mic.

Hesperia Library
9650 7th Avenue
Hesperia, CA 92345

If necessary, we will move the program to Zoom

The event will be emceed by T. Faye Griffin, 3X NAACP Award winner, producer, best selling author, visual artist, and board member of Arts Connection, the arts council of San Bernardino County.



Let's Walk and Talk: Weather Permitting

I can't be the only one who needs to exercise. A great way to get our needed daily steps is to walk the Apple Valley River Walk, a wide two-mile walkway of beautifully laid concrete. The ground is level and easy on the feet. It's one of the great features of the Victor Valley.

On February 15th at 2:00 pm, we will meet at the starting point of the trail, just east of Victor Valley College, up from the Campus Police Station.

Directions: From Bear Valley Road go north on Mojave Fish Hatchery Road then a quick right on the first street (the one next to the Campus Police Station). Take that road to the end and you'll see the covering over the tables where we'll meet at 2:00.

Suggestions:

Wear comfortable shoes

Watch the weather and dress appropriately

Use sunscreen and bring a hat and sunglasses

Bring water

Come ready to make a friend

Mike Apodaca

Put it on your calendar now before you forget



Book Review

Writers Are Readers

Braver Than You Think

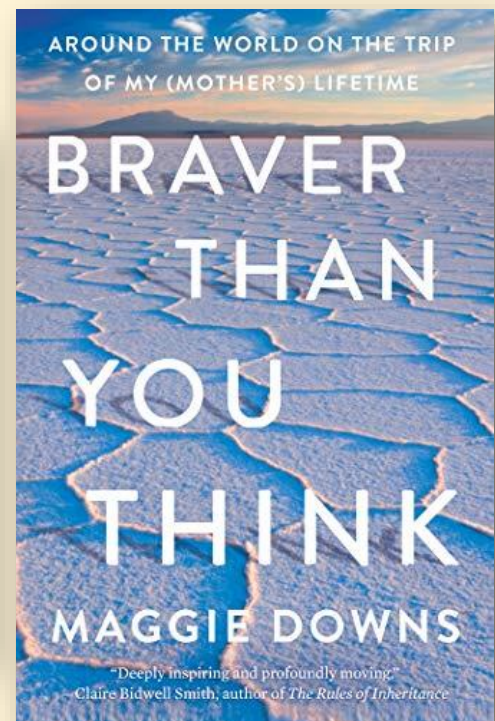
by Maggie Downs

Reviewed by Mary Langer Thompson

Was there ever a city or place where you felt at home even though you had no roots there? Maggie Downs' book is a memoir/travelogue in which she tries to see parts of the world with her mother's eyes because her mother is in a nursing home in Ohio with Alzheimer's. Downs is newly married, however, so as a mother and new widow, I kept wondering whether Downs is doing the right thing to be away for a year from her teacher/husband. Several times I wanted to say, "Go home!" But her writing is poetic as she describes the places she visits and as she goes back in memory to her mom and original family even as her mother is dying. This book is better than *Eat, Pray, Love*, and I am glad Downs spoke at one of our HDCWC meetings. I love the ending, and her acknowledgement that this book is for those who are grieving. I shed several tears.

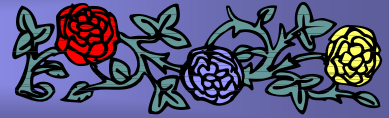
"The decision to live as my mother dies has brought me to the dirty floor of an airport, muddy hiking boots and suitcase wheels near my face. Once Jason leaves, I will be roaming this world alone."

Excerpt from *Braver Than You Think*, by Maggie Downs





Prose



Petal to Petal plus Too

by
fumi-tome ohta

There was something magical about the breeze as he twirled about, stirring the air as tenderly as soft whispers to the crown of a hummingbird. As he swirled about, he passed two buds growing on a tree. Although they were mere specks of life, the warmth of the sun and the delicate movement of the wind deeply touched the hearts of the buds.

Each day the buds grew as they morphed into beautiful blossoms, and as they did, the young buds began to notice each other through stolen glances and happenstance moments as their eyes gazed upon all that was around them. After their initial, "Ah, hi!" they began to speak to each other by the wave of their petals. As their friendship grew, so did their hearts, and as their hearts grew, their friendship warmed into two spheres that came together to form a single point, a beautiful, reddish expression of their feelings for each other. A heart.

One day the softly illuminating sun and frolicsome breeze were playfully teasing each other while a special moment was happening in all of nature, a natural abscission where leaves and blossoms fluttered off their stems then drifted away to their destinies.

The two blossoms, not knowing what was happening grew afraid as leaves and buds began falling all around. The blossoms yelled for each other in desperation and terror as they too fell away flying helter-skelter to the garden below.

The breeze, seeing the frantic looks of the two blossoms caught them in midair as he swirled and fluttered with them to the symphonic elegance of nature in song. The blossoms glided together like dandelion seeds in flight as they continued to descend to the ground, two inches apart, side by side. When they landed, they were touching petal to petal. The blossoms had lived, loved, and danced to the music all their own in the normal course of life, and as the final phase was setting in, they were fading from life. The blossoms were afraid, but being petal to petal, holding and caressing each other, they felt calmed, serene, and at peace, with an inner feeling that they would always and forever be together under the warmth of the sun and merriment of the wind.





THE PERFECT VALENTINE GIFT



by Diane Neil

Husbands, what are you giving your wife for Valentine's Day? Flowers? Candy? Another piece of jewelry? Forget it! I have a better idea. Give her a toolbox! Before you scoff, let me tell you about mine.

Many years ago, there was a woman who had a TV series for housewives about doing home repairs. She had a pink toolbox, and she was quite pretty, but she could tackle difficult jobs far beyond hanging pictures or replacing light bulbs. She ventured into roof repair, plumbing problems, and installing cupboards and she encouraged other women to do the same.

Although I never advanced to her level of expertise, I do have my own toolbox, and it probably saved my marriage. When I want to hang a picture or fix a squeaky hinge, I want to do it RIGHT NOW. If I ask my husband to do it, he might get around to it next week or when he can find the right tool in the garage. Let me tell you, the garage is the black hole of Calcutta! I haven't been there in five years. I keep my toolbox in the laundry room, and I've stocked it with all sizes of nails, screws, hooks, a tape measure, and my own hammer and screwdriver.

When I need to rehang a picture, BAM! it's done. And I don't have to nag a bit.

So give your sweetie flowers if you must. But also give her a toolbox.

Editor's Note: My wife has a tool box she bought herself. She loves it.



The Value of Listening

By Mike Apodaca

Listening and understanding those who do not agree with us is a virtue. It acknowledges contradictors as valuable human beings, as having heart-felt opinions, and it opens the door for back-and-forth discussion. When we listen to others, they begin to listen to us as well.

Listening requires humility, being open to the possibility that facts may prove us wrong. I'm always amazed at the Apostle Paul when he writes in 1 Corinthians 15 "If Christ has not been raised . . ." What he's doing is allowing for the idea that all he had been preaching, that he had given his life to, that he had suffered so much for, might not be true. This shows a startling open-mindedness and willingness to listen to other points of view. He allows the space to be wrong. He is willing to learn.

We learn by listening. It expands our perspective and enlarges our hearts. It helps us view others as fellow learners and not as enemies. In fact, the ferocious attacks some make to fight vehemently for their beliefs betray an insecurity and the weakness in their positions. When facts are on your side, you don't have to lash out and attack others.

Hearing is not necessarily agreeing, but sympathizing. It is respecting everyone as fellow sojourners with something to say.



Solstice

By Ann Miner

Every year on the date of Summer Solstice, I'm reminded of the summer of 1983, when I was in England traveling with my three young-adult children. One sunny day, we boarded a train in London's Victoria Station and headed towards Salisbury. From there, we took the local bus to Stonehenge.

Along the two-lane country road, we noticed people who looked a lot like the '60s hippies walking in small groups.

Ahead, we saw a sea of color on one side of the thoroughfare directly across from the giant statuesque monuments of Stonehenge. We learned shortly that the colors were of the tents set up to house hordes of young people celebrating the Summer Solstice.

It was a bit chaotic, to say the least. The youth were wearing belts and other accessories with spikes and sporting various colors of hair. The odor was not what one would expect of an English meadow in the summertime.

A more memorable moment was when I looked beyond the tents out to the rolling terrain. There was a tall, skinny man wearing a black coat and top hat and, apparently, nothing else.

He had a small, portable shovel with which he dug a hole in the earth. Then he lifted his coat and squatted over the hole.

One couldn't blame him, really. The large portable restrooms brought in by the government had an eternal line of people waiting to get in. This was made even worse by the event of a girl evidently fainting inside, causing authorities to make everyone wait outside until she was cared for.

We walked across the road and observed the ancient stones for a few minutes. The anticipated atmosphere of awe and quiet in such a mystical place was replaced with a desire to just get out of there!

But it was not to be an immediate escape. We waited an hour amid the unpleasant milling crush for the bus to return and take us away.

Once we were back in Salisbury, we sat on the shady lawn near the cathedral and had a nice, quiet picnic until the train pulled in to take us back to London.



Olivia's Stage Debut

Ann Miner

The Las Vegas Ballet Company was scheduled to perform *Coppelia* that weekend. Because it featured dancing dolls, I thought the five-year-old girl next door would enjoy it. Her mother consented, and I went to the box office to buy tickets ahead of the performance.

The show was very popular, and, to my dismay, there were no tickets left. I was expressing my disappointment when the gray-haired man who was walking away, and who had bought the last two seats, approached me.

"I have an extra ticket, if you would like to join me."

I hesitated but asked the ticket agent if she thought the little girl could get in with us and sit on my lap. She said that would be fine. I was ecstatic! (You may ask how I could join a complete stranger, but somehow, I knew he was okay).

I gathered up Olivia that evening, and off we went to join this nice man. We looked like a normal pair of grandparents with our granddaughter.

The show began and, before long, Olivia was no longer on my lap, but leaning on the back of the seat in front of me and hanging onto every move of the dancing dolls, enthralled.

Intermission came, and I took her out to the lobby to stretch her legs. On the way back in, she ran to the steps leading to the side of the stage, climbed them, and began to perform her own type of ballet.

I was mortified. Some people thought it was cute. Others wondered why I didn't snatch my granddaughter off that stage and take her to the seat. But Olivia would not come down.

The house lights went off, and the room was suddenly pitch dark. The proverbial "can't-see-your-hand-in-front-of your face" phrase comes to mind.

Olivia had no choice but to join me, and we stumbled in the darkness over the feet of the dozen or more people in our row to get to our seat. My embarrassment was palpable.

Olivia remembers this as a wonderful experience. I remember it as the first time I was tempted to strangle a little girl.



FIRE DEPARTMENT TURNOUTS

by Gary Layton

For those of you who don't understand the meaning of turnouts in fire department terminology, I will give a brief explanation. The turnouts consist of a pair of boots, trousers and a coat. These trousers are placed on the right side of the bed at night. The trousers are folded down over the boots with the boots sticking out over the top of the trousers. If an alarm comes in, you simply jump out of bed and into the boots, grab the suspenders, pull them up, and the trousers come up with them. You are dressed when you put the suspenders over your shoulders. This only takes a matter of seconds to be up and dressed. You then run out to the apparatus floor and grab your helmet and turnout coat. You put the coat and helmet on and jump into the truck and you are on your way to the emergency. This whole procedure usually takes less than a couple of minutes.

During the time I was at the Riverside Fire Department, we only used our turnouts at night. We wore our regular fatigues during the daylight hours.

I was stationed at the Riverside Fire Department Fire Station 6 that was located on North Main Street near Russell Street for about a year. Our captain's name was Scoop and he was a pretty good-sized man. He stood about six foot four and was slender but husky. Bob was a fireman like me and was about five foot eight and rather thin. Buzz was the engineer and was a rather nervous guy. We were a pretty good crew and all got along well.

One night we got an alarm. I usually slept through them, so they would always come over and shake me to get up. This time something woke me up. Bob was crawling around the floor, waving his hands around like someone blindfolded. He was hollering, "Where's my boots, where's my boots." About that time, I heard some noise coming from the hallway. I looked over and there was Scoop pulling and tugging on his suspenders, cussing and trying to figure out why he couldn't get his pants up. It dawned on me that he had jumped out of the wrong side of the bed and stepped into Bob's turnouts. You have to realize that Scoop's feet were probably four sizes larger than Bob's. How the heck he got his feet into those boots I haven't a clue but there was no way he was going to get those small trousers up.

I got so tickled that I could hardly get into mine. I finally got over to Scoop and he was still confused and half asleep. Bob and I finally got him calmed down and convinced him that he was in Bob's turnouts. Scoop had really jammed his feet into Bob's boots and we had a heck of a time pulling them off. We finally got everybody into the right turnouts and we were on our way. That was one night we didn't make it out of the station in two minutes. I still laugh whenever I think about Scoop standing in that hallway, trying to pull those little trousers up.



An excerpt from a serialized steampunk novelette

The Cogsworth Files

Tess DeGroot (Therese L. Moore)



Prologue — The Assignment

Washington D.C., United States Secret Service Headquarters, August 1884

I sat in the commander's office feeling like a small child. In his leather chair, my feet didn't reach the floor. I wanted to open a window to let a breeze into the stiflingly hot room but that left us vulnerable to listening devices. I felt sweat dripping from my too-tight bun to my tweed collar.

Commander Josiah Smithson looked up from his files, an eyebrow raised.

Had he found me an assignment? I was tired of being in the typing pool. At a hundred words per minute, I was in demand and very busy, but I didn't want to be a typist. I wanted to be an agent. I was more than qualified with my training in criminology and modern investigating methods. But it was often pointed out I'm a woman. Apparently, that disqualifies me.

"Miss Cogsworth." A smile flickered under his bushy mustache. "Mary, I'm not sure I should promote you to agent status."

"Sir." I felt my face warm. I exhaled, willed myself to relax. "Uncle Josiah, you know I can do this."

"Yes, you've proven that to me." He chuckled. "You were the best spy I had during the war. I thought my commanding officer was going to explode when he found out I was using a twelve-year-old girl to run dispatches."

"In the last twenty years, I've proven it multiple times." I slid forward in the chair, rested my elbows on his teak desk. "Give me an assignment."

"Higher-ups think it's too risky."

"Do you?"

"Of course not." He reached across the table, took my hand. "You and your mother taught me sometimes the best man for a job is a woman."

"An assignment, then?" I narrowed my eyes, daring him to say no. Josiah bit his lip and tapped the top file.



Poetry

APPLE VALLEY AQUATICS

Aylin Belle Amie

Milky blue sky,
What will you give me today . . .
a sliver, a nail clipping of a moon,
that wains brightly at dusk?

From splashing in aqua pool waters,
I look up and wave . . .
at cobalt painted bleachers
as a few people and a shaggy dog look my way.

Teen life guards in red swim suits
chant lessons to eager children.
Orange and white lights to the west
marks the spot with a large, well lit 76.

I leave those warm waters
And shiver as I grasp a big towel.
My quick, quick walk to the shower
to a "burn my bod" deluge.

It ends my longed-for lull from the clutches,
of the covid virus, that dictate masks,
separation and seclusion as a new
black plague takes the breath of life.

Global fear and a malicious, vicious virus
dominate our smoothly moving era.
We live in a gridlock of wasted months--
fearful and hopeless, swallowed by time.

A Home for Your Poetry

Authors Publish has collected a list of sites that publish poetry without charging reading fees.

<https://authorspublish.com/94-poetry-manuscript-publishers-who-do-not-charge-reading-fees/>

The Tea Set From Zimbabwe

Aylin Belle Amie

Gilded edges on fragile china,
with delicate grey scroll work inside
A style of an elegance gone by,
gives me a glimpse of the opulence of
my father's life.

Chaos left shards of fine bone china,
as this treasure came in many broken pieces.

Like the lives of those who built the land,
were shattered for those who fled or
were killed in terror.

A white- haired, handsome Dad
smiles at me in a photo.
He leans on a cane in an impeccable
blue suit and tie and gives a presence
framed in frosted white and gold.

Poetry

Plot Twist

Tess DeGroot (Therese L. Moore)

My story was unfolding
With joys and sorrows,
Many chapters finished.
And as this chapter was closing,
The fates sent me a plot twist.
One I wouldn't have guessed
To me was coming.
You, my beloved friend,
Have brought a renewal
Of hope and growing.
I do not know the future,
Because the next chapter
We've just started writing.

A Winter Haiku

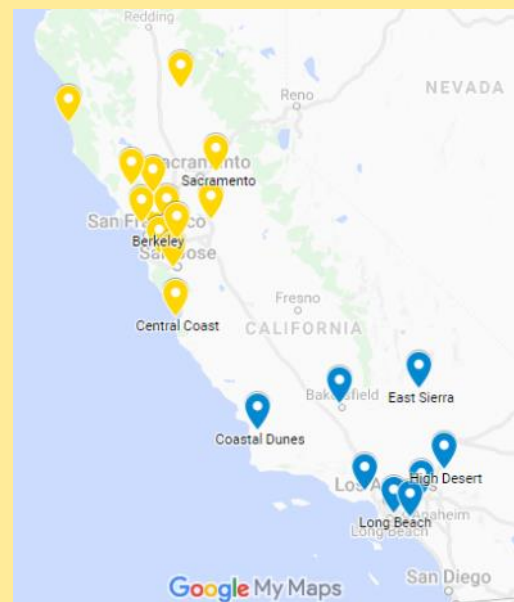
Tess DeGroot (Therese L. Moore)

Snowflakes drifting by
A cardinal calls from the pines
Frost on my windowpane

More Choices

Because the HDCWC (our local branch of the California Writers Club) has been making our meetings available throughout the club (thanks to Bob Isbill), the club leadership has noticed and wants to spread this throughout the writing clubs across California. To encourage this they have set up a special calendar to make us all aware of the meetings being held at different clubs. We will be able to tap into speakers presenting at other branches as well as our own.

The web address for the calendar is <https://calwriters.org/events-month/>



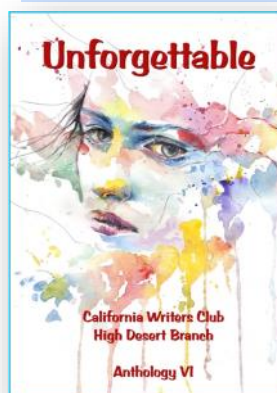
Events Ahead > Book Fairs & more

FEBRUARY — MARCH ACTIVITIES

February 1	Launch On-Topic Website
February 2	8:00 Accountability Meeting
February 6	Photo Shoot
February 8	9:00 Board Meeting
February 9	8:00 Accountability Meeting
February 10	3:30 Poemsmiths Meeting
February 12	10:00 HDCWC Club Meeting
February 14	St. Valentine's Day
February 15	2:00 Mojave River Walk
February 16	8:00 Accountability Meeting
February 19	8:00 Accountability Meeting
February 20	3:30 Poemsmiths Meeting
February 21	President's Day
February 23	Inkslinger Deadline
February 25	6:00 ACT II Zoom Meeting
February 23	8:00 Accountability Meeting
February 24	3:30 Poemsmiths Meeting
March 2	8:00 Accountability Meeting
March 8	9:00 Board Meeting
March 9	8:00 Accountability Meeting
March 10	3:30 Poemsmiths Meeting
March 12	10:00 HDCWC Meeting
March 15	2:00 Mojave River Walk
March 16	8:00 Accountability Meeting
March 22	6:00 Act II Meeting
March 23	8:00 Accountability Meeting
March 23	Inkslinger deadline
March 24	8:00 Poemsmiths Meeting

If you have a special group meeting regularly and would like to open it up to the membership, please contact Mike Apodaca to have your group included in the calendar.

mrdaca.ma@gmail.com



Do you
have your
copy yet?



Order copies of our HDCWC anthologies for your bookshelf, gifts, or as a donation.

Titles can be found on Amazon.com in hardback, softback, and ebook editions

Pre-orders can be delivered at our regular meetings.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY HDCWC MEMBERS BORN IN February

Feb 12, Amy Burnett; Feb 17, Mike Raff; Feb 23, Steve Marin

Famous February Birthdays:

1, Langston Hughes, Jerry Spinelli; 2, James Joyce, Judith Viorst, Ayn Rand; 3 Gertrude Stein, James Michener; 5, William S Burroughs; 7. Laura Ingalls Wilder, Charles Dickens, Sinclair Lewis; 8, Kate Chopin, John Gri-sham, Jules Verne, Donna Jo Napoli; 9, Alice Walker; 11, Sidney Sheldon; 12 Judy Blume; 14, Fredrick Douglass (exact date unknown, but sources claim he celebrated on Feb 14); 15, Norman Bridwell; 17, Dorothy Canfield Fisher; 18, Toni Morrison; 19, Amy Tan, Carson McCullers; 21, Edna Bombeck, Anais Nin; 22, Edward Gorey, Edna St. Vincent Millay; 23, W.E.B. DuBois; 25, Anthony Burgess, Peg Bracken; 26, Victor Hugo, Christopher Marlowe; 27, John Steinbeck, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow; 28, Megan McDonald.



"Writers Accountability"

Accountability makes it sound as if people are going to shame you if you don't keep up your writing. This is NOT what happens on Wednesday mornings.

What does happen is writers get to talk and listen to other writers. Everyone gets a chance to share what they're working on and what goals they have for the next week. Sometime we talk about other things (gardening, life stuff, etc.). We are more than our writing, after all.

If you are looking for a safe place to get encouragement for your writing and a supportive group of friends who will cheer you on, this is the group for you.

Zoom call each Wednesday morning at 8:00 am

Zoom meeting ID: 985 7081 6164

Password: 216757



MEMBER SERVICES



Dorothy C. Blakely



The DCB Memoir Project is alive and well. The committee met recently to discuss the guidelines being written for the project and to plan an upcoming project with Barstow College and the Veterans' Home.

Take advantage of your membership benefits

Free advertising and free posting of your book titles, your latest project, your free PR author's webpage and other free and fantastic benefits!

**Because you belong to
CWC High Desert branch.**

Contact a board member, or our webmaster,
Roberta Smith.

Or review your Benefits Booklet online at:
www.HDCWC.com

OUR OWN YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Here's the link to the channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC28XLtEK5oBNq5gW2Zy1ssg>

**Do you provide a service that could benefit
other writers?**

**Send a JPEG file of your business card or ad to
mrdaca.ma@gmail.com**

We'll advertise it free of charge!

From the Temporary Editor



Temporary Editor



Mike Apodaca

It's always been my intention to be the temporary editor of the *Inkslinger*. April will be my 12th consecutive issue—one full year.

Dwight, our president, has been very supportive and has cautioned me about getting overwhelmed and taking on too much in the club.

Well, I think it's getting close to time for me to turn over the newsletter to the next editor. I feel that editor should also give a one-year commitment—not a life sentence.

Of course, I will be more than willing to help the new editor get their feet wet and they'll be able to contact me with any questions.

As always, I want to thank all who've helped me produce this wonderful publication. This really is a team effort.

If you've been looking for a way to get involved with the club, have some basic computer skills, and like to know what's going on, you might make a good editor. Think about it.

Submitting to *The Inkslinger* is easy. Use Microsoft Word, single-spaced, 11-point Arial font, please. The email address for submissions is Mrdaca.ma@gmail.com. Articles and stories between 200 to 500 words are accepted. Photos, poetry, and drawings are always welcome. Please avoid sending items that are embedded in other media (like Word files). Call me to discuss an article or idea: 760-985-7107.

**Submit March items by February 23rd
Submit April items by March 23rd**

