



The INKSLINGER

HIGH DESERT BRANCH CWC
Inspiring a Community of Writers

Sail On

Jan. 2020

MEETING CANCELLED DUE TO GAS LEAK

Doors Closed Saturday!!

By Wednesday evening, President Dwight Norris had confirmed that a gas leak found and scheduled for immediate repair will delay the opening of the Jess Ranch Church Community Room.

With no time to change meeting plans, Norris decided that we will need to cancel our general meeting for January 11th.

"No one wants to be chilly during a winter meeting," he informed the membership by email Wednesday.

Be sure to tell your friends and other members that may not read their email notices by then.

Norris will be stationed at the church to inform others who may not be aware of this last minute news.



Plans to Re-schedule Our Guest Speaker



Paul Levine, attorney consultant for authors.

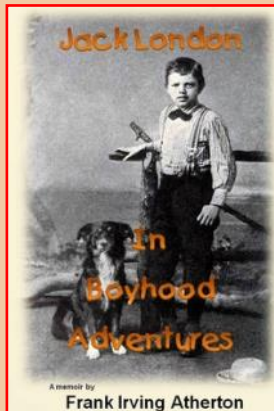
Levine has practiced entertainment law for over 30 years.



JACK LONDON IN BOYHOOD ADVENTURES

— A document found stashed away in a box of mementos, recounts the downhome early years of a famous California boy and his pal. They find life full of serious & frivolous days of summer in early Oakland.

First Printing now available for only \$13.35 at Amazon. \$13.08 at Barnes & Noble.



Jack London Was

Born 144 Years Ago

Our members planned to celebrate the birthday of one of its honorary founders, famed author, Jack London, on Saturday January 11 at the Community Church at Jess Ranch ... but this can also be rescheduled.

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High Desert branch
of
California Writers
Club
Board of Directors



*The following officers
and appointed positions are current to
the fiscal year of July 2020.*

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THE INKSLINGER IS MY LIFE ... forever?

It's been loads of fun for the last ... what? ...10 YEARS???

Yup. I'm in my 10th year now creating insider articles, producing 12– 20 pages an issue, and sharing in the news we all want to know about.

But if I had some members who could help me out, then the process of producing *The Inkslinger* wouldn't tie me down so much.

I'm a writer, too. I have my first book out — *A Microphone is Not the Muzzle of a Gun: The Art of Interviewing*. I have three other projects in the works, and my retirement plan to create a commercial online magazine.

So, I'm not bailing.

Here's what I could use: **a committed proofreader** (not just those great friends I call on speed dial hoping they can proof), **a graphics assistant** that can capture, convert to jpg, and reduce photos for print, and **three regular column writers** (like Jenny now, Mary DeSantis and Angie Horn, and Karen Ohta, and Diane Neil and others who have helped over the years) who can meet deadlines with an article in rotation 3 or 4 times a year.

Hey, I can even create a Staff Box and give you a title!!

So, what do you think?

Do you have skills you've been hiding, hoping no one will call on you? A secret calling to be on staff of a newspaper (ok, I'm not that big, but it's a stepping stone), willing to learn some new skills that can help advance your marketing?

Think about it and let me know:

Rusty@RustyLaGrange.com

Let's Continue Our Vision in 2020.

~~ Rusty, the editor.

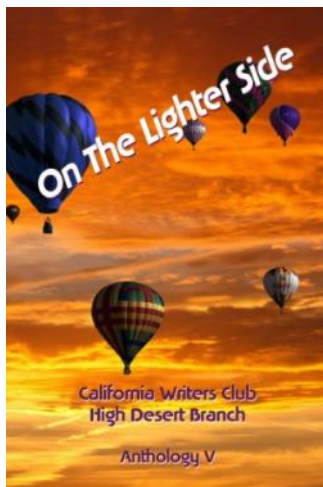


Stories that will stop your heart ... but not your spirit.

Grinch
for
Lunch



Stylish and green, The Grinch smiles his best fiendish grin with HDCWC party-goers in December. Lorelei, also in green, helped arrange our guest's special appearance during our meeting, followed by the luncheon at Lone Wolf Colony. *(photo credit: Bob Isbill)*



Our latest HDCWC Anthology V with a lighter more humorous tone, *On The Lighter Side*, went on sale in December just before the holidays..

Jenny Margotta did the editing and the cover this time.



HDCWC planning committee holds meeting at Olive Garden to consider programs for 2020. Beginning at top then clockwise: President Dwight Norris, *Inkslinger* editor Rusty LaGrange, Webmaster Roberta Smith, Membership Chair Mike Raff, Secretary June Rudder-Ward, A/V Assistant Mary DeSantis, Dorothy C. Blakely coordinator Mary Langer Thompson, Member-at-Large Linda Boruff, Vice President Mike Apodaca, and Programs Director Bob Isbill.

Let's Get to Know ... JENNY MARGOTTA

Most members know Jenny as the Treasurer, sitting at the welcome table, right by the door, to handle your transactions for the branch. Many of you know that she is the editor of our branch's anthologies and busy with lay-out and even book cover designs.



Jenny—Reaching a level of Achievement with 100 edited books for her clients.

However, beyond the fact that she is also an author of a cookbook, and fantasy titles, she released her book on Alzheimer's disease as seen through the fictionalized vision of her mother. The book entitled *The Woman in Room 23*, delves into the realization that her mother's strange habits were part of a series of changes and challenges into the peculiar world of dementia.

100 EDITED FULL-LENGTH BOOKS

Jenny Margotta, everyone's favorite book editor for the High Desert branch, has reached a milestone. In addition to numerous short stories and articles, she is currently working on her 100th full-length manuscript as a professional editor.

~~ Rusty LaGrange

Jenny says, "My thanks to Elizabeth Pye for allowing me the opportunity to edit her first two historical romance novels, and now *Mon Amour, Friend or Foe*, the third in her series. I was excited to find out what my 100th book would be, and it's just perfect that it's hers. Not only is Elizabeth a long-time HDCWC member, but the book is set in WW II France. And as a passionate WW II historian, what could be better as my 100th edited book!

Question 1: Give a quick description of your early years knowing that your writing was leading you into editing.

As a child, I didn't really know about a career called editing. But I did know I loved spelling and grammar. One of my favorite class activities was sentence diagramming. And I always loved it when I could point to someone else's work and announce, "That's not right."

Question 2: Do you believe that editors are wired a bit differently than most writers?

Yes, I definitely do. Even though I include lots of comments in my editing work, citing various rules or pointing out why something needs to be changed, most of my authors will tell me they don't want to be bothered with all the "nitpicky" stuff. Their passion is being creative. My passion is making the results of their passion even better. H.G. Wells said it better than I can. He said, "No passion in the world is equal to the passion to alter someone else's draft." Yep.

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Jenny Margotta's novel about the disease was discussed Thursday during the California Retired Teachers Association meeting

By Martin Estacio
Staff Writer

APPLE VALLEY — The depths of her mother's mental decline, Jenny Margotta said, only became obvious once she went inside her Denver apartment. Forgotten coffee stained the floor near the chair where her

Latest Daily Press Clipping

Question 3: Technically, is it hard to preserve the “voice” of the author while trying to maintain a clear grammatical standard?

Absolutely. But it's something I try very hard to do. It's music to my ears when one of my authors says to me, “I really like that sentence/paragraph/ whatever. But I don't remember writing it.” To which I get to reply, with a smile, “You didn't write it. I did.” To impose my “voice” on everyone else would be to rob them of their individual creativity. Yet there are still many rules that must be followed, so it's give and take.

Question 4: Doesn't it drive you crazy to see the same errors popping up like red flags in everyday print?

Yes, and it's not just in print. People don't seem to know how to speak correctly anymore, either. It drives me nuts when I hear something like, “Leave it up to him and I.” No, no, no! “I” is always subjective; “me” is objective. I'll yell at the TV, “... him and me, get it right!” Even worse, I cringe when I hear, “I've went there before.”

I used to read 150 or more books a year. Now I'm down to about 75 or 80, and I'm much choosier about the authors I do read. I find I can't turn off my editing brain when I read. I'll constantly be saying to myself, “Well, *that's* wrong!” or “How could an author of that caliber let *that* mistake go?” More and more, I'm turning to audio books. Only problem is, now I say, “They pronounced *that* word wrong!” or “I would have put the emphasis on *that* word, not *that* one.”

Question 5: Congratulations! It's quite an accomplishment to reach 100 edited books for clients. How do you think you will springboard from this to gain new clients and promote your business?

I would like to get my name out to other branches of the CWC. And other writing organizations in California and across the country. But honestly, everything just seems to be falling into place for me now. While I will always try to make HDCWC/CWC au-

thors my priority, I now work with several authors in L.A. and Orange County, one in Arizona, one in Louisiana, and I still freelance for a small, independent publishing house in the D.C. area. Work is steady and, at least for now, I don't have to hunt for it. That's a nice feeling.

Thanx, Jenny. Let's hope the next 100 are knocking at your door.



CELEBRATE JANUARY

Is it customary for you or your family to celebrate more than birthdays and holidays? Seems like we have an occasion for every day of the year—and then some.

A few of the National Days in January:

JANUARY 13 NATIONAL RUBBER DUCKY DAY

JANUARY 15 NATIONAL HAT DAY

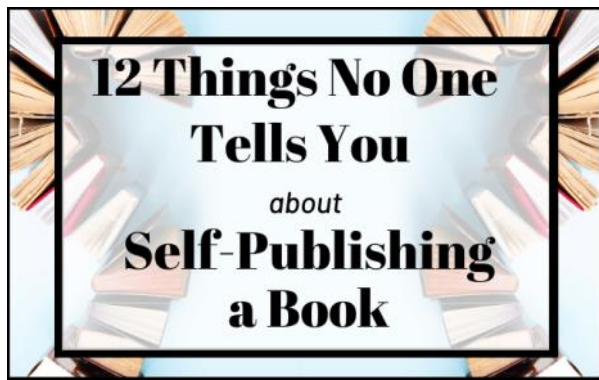
JANUARY 18 NATIONAL THESAURUS DAY

JANUARY 20 NATIONAL PENGUIN DAY

JANUARY 22 ANSWER YOUR CAT'S QUESTION DAY

JANUARY 27 CHOCOLATE CAKE DAY

AND HOW WAS *YOUR* DAY?



by Penny Sansevieri, printed with permission

Countdown: 12 Things No One Tells You About Self-Publishing a Book

Self-publishing a book has become easier and easier in the last decade, but at the same time, becoming a successful author has become more challenging.

Because the reality is, self-publishing a book is just the first step. The long game involves keeping your expectations and goals in check, having a solid book marketing plan outlined, learning from your mistakes, and adopting new strategies, and of course, writing and releasing that next book.

So, in the spirit of the endeavor, here's a Countdown for 12 things no one tells you about self-publishing a book:

12. Assume no one has ever heard of you.

Unless you're J.K. Rowling, or you're standing inside your own publishing house, assume that nobody you meet has ever heard of you or your books. If they have, you can be pleasantly surprised.

11. Booking events is the big win.

It's hard to book author events because it's a competitive market. So be grateful for anything you get. Five attendees when you're expecting just a couple is always going to feel better than 50 attendees when you're hoping to get 100.

10. You need to focus on what's really important.

Blurbs achieve almost nothing, everyone in publishing knows it, and everyone in publishing hates them. Don't hold your book release for blurbs, and

9. Take advantage of "moments of success."

Bestseller rankings can come and go overnight, so when you're lucky enough to hit that coveted spot, screenshot your win and share it everywhere. Now is also the time to pitch bloggers and remind people to post reviews.

Because the reality is, when your book is on a best-seller list, people find you more amusing and respond to your emails faster.

8. Take advantage of "moments of calm."

When your book isn't on a bestseller list, you can give yourself more time to write and construct your marketing plan, without being in the trenches of shopping your book at 100 miles per hour.

7. You have to be realistic about your media goals.

Self-publishing a book should not be done for the glory, let that concept go. And the goal is not to be a media sensation; the goal is to have a career.

Getting media coverage is fantastic, and it's a great way to build your resume, but much like blurbs and "big name" reviews, media doesn't equal sales — media is a long game and you should approach it as such.

6. Be prepared to roll with the punches.

It's not your responsibility to convince people who don't like your books that they should. Taste is subjective, and you're not running for elected office.

If you get a bad review or even a handful of bad reviews, that's a bummer, but when the book is already out there, there's not much you can do.

Now, if the bad reviews speak to poor editing, a jumpy storyline that's hard to follow, or other issues that can be fixed, by all means commit to doing so and doing a re-release as soon as possible. Otherwise, let it go.

5. Social Media needs to be a part of your book marketing plan.

By not being active on Social Media, you're probably shooting yourself in the foot.

In today's market, Social Media is one of the best brand-building tools you have, and the easiest, most effective way to stay in touch with fans and in front of potential readers.

But don't worry, it's not about being everywhere; it's about being everywhere that matters. And that's a

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combination of figuring out where your strengths are, and where your reader market is hanging out online. Take my quiz in the Resources section to get started!

4. Finding time to write that next book will be hard.

Fiercely, fiercely, fiercely protect your writing time. Unless you're independently wealthy and live alone, you'll probably struggle with finding time to write.

Definitely don't fall into the trap of: "I'll write my next book once this one does well." That is completely backwards.

Few authors are a success with their very first title, and I challenge you to name more than 5 without Googling it.

The sooner you release your second book the more momentum you'll create within your genre, and you'll also establish yourself as a sure thing. Readers are investing their time and money in you, and proving you're going to keep delivering the goods is one of your best sales tools.

3. Self-publishing a book doesn't have a perfect time.

It's alright to move forward with self-publishing a book if you can see its flaws but don't know how to fix them.

But do not let your book be published if it still contains flaws that are fixable, even if fixing them is a lot of work. This includes hiring a professional editor

with a proven background in your genre, and a book designer with bestsellers.

2. No one can predict what will be a bestseller.

Sometimes good books sell well; sometimes good books sell poorly; sometimes bad books sell well; sometimes bad books sell poorly. That's life.

Back to J.K. Rowling, she was rejected 12 times but has currently sold more than 500 million copies and counting. You just never know what lies ahead...but I know it involves hard work.

1. Self-publishing a book doesn't determine your worth.

You don't need anyone's approval or permission to write a book and enjoy getting your thoughts, ideas, stories, and expertise on record.

Yes, I talk about the importance of writing for a specific, detailed market if you want to make a living as a writer and sell books, because writing for a market with purpose is the easiest first step in that road to success. But if your goal is simply to say you published a book, or books, then more power to you – and enjoy the process.

Bonus: You can start and stop. You can even work different chapters out of sequence. One thing though, you must finish your book. Make that a promise to yourself.

XX

*Author Marketing Expert.com (866) 713-2318
info@amarketingexpert.com*



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Jack London was born on January 12, 1876 and passed away on November 22, 1916 at the age of 49.

In 2015, the local branch published a biography of the young Jack London written by Frank Atherton, grandfather of one of its HDCWC members. The book, "Jack London In Boyhood Adventures," will be on sale at the meeting.

The granddaughter of Atherton, Diane Neil, will be on hand to autograph the book once the date is rescheduled.



www.JackLondonInBoyhoodAdventures.com

I Write Like Who?

On a cold gloomy day, when you need someone to cheer you up, head over to a website that seems to compare your writing style with someone famous. Here's the news from Amy Burnett:

If you are not familiar with it, here's an interesting -- kinda fun -- site: iwl.me (As in **I Write Like Me**)

The site lets you copy and paste a sample of your personal writing -- a few paragraphs at a time -- into it. When you hit the GO button, the site analyzes/ compares your sample to styles of famous writers.

It might be a bit optimistic -- I've been compared to J.D. Salinger, Edgar Allen Poe, and Mark Twain, for instance. That's flattering, but.... Still, it's encouraging to be even compared to such luminaries. So I don't totally discount the feedback. Enjoy (or not) as you wish.



Events Ahead > Book Fairs & more

FEB. — MAR. ACTIVITIES

Feb. 4	HDCWC Board meeting
Feb. 8	HDCWC regular meeting
Feb. 29	Lit Rev. Deadline
Mar. 10	HDCWC Board meeting
Mar. 14	HDCWC regular meeting

(dates may change)

OUR OWN YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Here's the link to the channel:

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

Managed by Joan Rudder-Ward

OUR NEW MAILING ADDRESS

We have a new address for any branch business. Clip this ad to your virtual fridge.

Jenny Margotta has graciously let us use her address. This will help expedite the time in sending and mostly receiving mail.

HDCWC
17645 Fisher Street
Victorville, CA 92395



Something New for Indie Book Sales:

OUR OWN POP-UP STORE

Consider a rented **Pop-Up Store** for our books for **2-days** only in a busy storefront where people walk and shop.

Join my committee to investigate our options. HDCWC Board has approved to make the next step.

- ◆ Where?
- ◆ How much?
- ◆ Rental agreement?

We set the rules. We set the price based on the square footage. Sell your titles your way.

Are you in?

Call Rusty LaGrange: (760)646-2661 leave msg.



Order extra copies of our HDCWC anthologies for your bookshelf, your gifts, as a Senior Center donation. Titles can be found on Amazon.com. Pre-orders can be delivered at our regular meetings.

Member Services

Do you provide a service that could benefit other writers?
Send a JPEG file of your business card or ad to Rusty@RustyLaGrange.com.
We'll advertise it free of charge!

Take advantage of your membership benefits

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

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

Contact a Board Member, our Webmaster Roberta Smith, or review your Benefits Booklet online: www.HDCWC.com

**YOUR
FREE
AD HERE**

Editor



Rusty LaGrange

*Editor of the
CWC's
The Bulletin*

next issue is mid-March

Notes From the Editor

Remember those days when everything you wanted to do was scheduled before and after work hours? And now with retirement life at hand, I never have enough time to finish a project or start a new one. That's partly why I'm looking for help. My December month off turned into training 2 Christmas puppies. They're worse than toddlers!! And my idea to learn new software fizzled as I fended off a sinus infection and hubby's flu, too. I won!

Submitting to *The Inkslinger* is easy. Use Microsoft Word, single-spaced, 11-point Arial font, please. The email address for submissions is Rusty@RustyLaGrange.com. Articles and stories between 300 to 700 words are accepted. Photos, poetry, and drawings are always welcome. Please avoid sending items that were embedded in other media. Call me to discuss an article or idea, 760-646-2661.

Submit Feb. 2020 items by Jan. 23, 2019
Submit Mar. 2020 items by Feb. 23, 2019