



The INKSLINGER

HIGH DESERT BRANCH CWC
Inspiring a Community of Writers

Sail On

January 2021

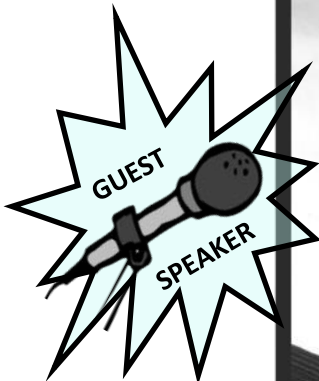
Gary "Griz" Drylie, AKA Old Town Griz,

Hesperia's Historian Zooming to HDCWC, This Sat.

January 9 will be a very special day for the High Desert California Writers Club. At 10:00, on Zoom, we will gain insights into the history and flavor of the town of Hesperia from one of its most interesting inhabitants.

In 2009 Gary was approached by Arcadia Publishing and asked to write the authoritative book on Hesperia history.

The book was published in 2010 and is a must read for those interested in how Hesperia evolved. Gary's coverage pays special attention to the problem of getting water to this desert area (quite an engineering feat). He also pays homage to the families who settled here early and became the backbone of this town. And, of course, he highlights some of Hesperia's more colorful characters (like photographer Myra J. Mcginnes).



Gary "Griz" Drylie is a man with a passion to know Hesperia. He works in tandem with the Hesperia Parks and Rec Department and helped create the Hesperia history exhibit at the Harrison Exhibition Center.

This exhibit (which was once housed in Shelly's Restaurant in Old Town Hesperia) is a must see for all who have an interest in High Desert history. It has pictures of the beginnings of Hesperia as well as artifacts, all collected and organized by Gary Drylie.

Zoom with us
Saturday 9th at 10:00 am

Continued next page

**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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Vice President

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Continued from page 1



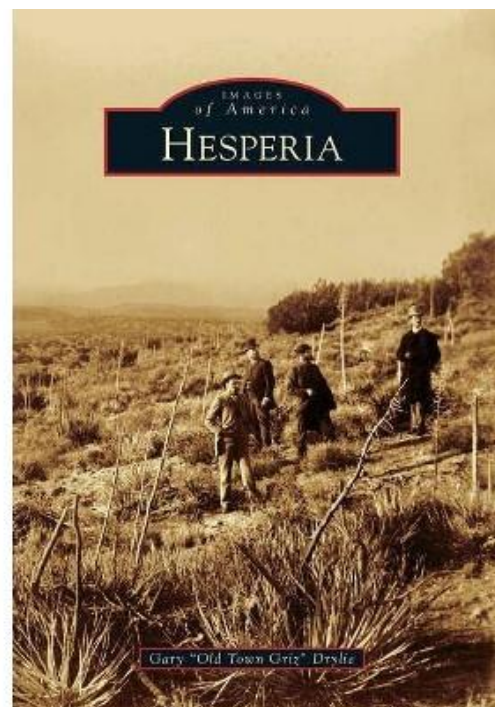
Stepping inside Hesperia's history exhibit at the Harrison Exhibition Center.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Please put this date—January 9 at 10:00 am—on your calendar so you remember to attend.

You will receive an email inviting you to the meet with Gary. He wants this to be a great conversation between him and our club members. Have some questions ready to ask and whatever snacks make you happy. This should be a wonderful event that you will not want to miss.

~~ Story by Mike Apodaca



Announcing the 2021 HDCWC Anthology

by

Michael Raff

Hello, fellow HDCWC members. Our board has approved the next anthology for 2021. The guidelines and other information will be forthcoming, but we expect the finished product to be published in plenty of time for Christmas this year.

We would like the submissions for our 2021 anthology to be “character driven.” The majority of our members will know what that means, but let me indulge anyway with a brief overview.

For a story that is character driven, as opposed to “plot driven,” the focus is on the characters, their point of view, (POV), motivations, and emotions. In most stories, the plot drives the story forward. In character driven stories, the character drives the story forward. In these stories, the writing reveals the character’s internal changes, more so than events and situations. These characters can be based on real life or can be fictional. Of course, this includes poetry as well. Something about the character’s *essential* self leads to a particular action or event. Good character development will make individuals more compelling, and engage your readers. This style of writing focuses on a character arc, inner conflict, and a well-defined POV. It reveals what makes your characters *tick*—and how they see the world. A clear POV will carry the story. A backstory can help flesh out the characters, and they should be people the readers will care about and root for.



The best novels, stories, and poems have elements of both: an interesting plot and engaging characters that connect with the reader on an intense, personal level.

Jenny Margotta, our industrious treasurer and talented editor, Steve Marin, an exceptional organizer and technical expert, and me, (I just like being involved), are on the Anthology Committee once again. It won’t be long before you’ll hear further announcements with more details. For Jenny, Steve, me, and the entire board, we are looking forward to your fascinating and inspiring submissions. Stay healthy and keep writing!



Open Genres & a Call for Acquisition Team Volunteers

The 2021 Literary Review is open for submissions.

We have a submissions manager, a managing editor, a starting acquisition team, and an art director/production manager. All volunteers! Our state webmaster has updated and posted the submission rules and forms. So we’re ready to go. The submission window opens Dec 15, 2020, and CWC members have until March 15, 2021, to send in their very best work for consideration for the 2021 *Literary Review*!

To quote a *Literary Review* luminary: “We have no particular theme, most content is acceptable. We do look at the technical stuff. When assessing fiction and memoir, we chew over story and character development, realism, pacing, grammar, and reader engagement. With essay we add information, persuasion, and factual interrelationships. For poetry we want to be moved with an emotional experience.”

Continued next page

Lit Review News Continues

And we add to the genres: non-fiction which needs character, scene, truth, and perhaps some story. Note this year's addition of humor. We all need it after this year. Let's have some things to giggle or belly-laugh over.

If any of your branch members would like to be part of the acquisition team, please have them contact the managing editor at elisabethtuck@yahoo.com. This year it is perfectly fine to judge **and** to submit. We managed it in 2018 and all the years before that. Submissions are not sent to judges in the branch from which they originated. Pieces are read and ranked by at least 3 readers then results calculated blind. We rely on everyone's honest effort. Judges can read as much or as little as they like in whatever genre they are comfortable in. They will not need to confer with each other. Join us!

~~ Elisabeth Tuck, managing editor

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Give Yourself a Pat on the Back

Glad to report that the membership is staying strong with 72 members starting the 2021 year. The HDCWC board was concerned how to keep interest over the pandemic months while sheltering.

They found that the "Challenge Blitz" during the summer helped by offering writing prompts for rewards, developing Act 2 events with different topics, and telephone survey calls to tap the specific needs of those not showing up in Zoom Rooms.

Not everything will be Zoom related this year; however, our members not taking advantage of this free benefit are missing out on direct connections with friends and continuing the relationships that made our branch stronger over the years.

We average 25 viewers in each Zoom event, so there is plenty of room for more. If you would like to see how easy it is to attend, just call any board member listed on page 2 and ask.

Photos on the Wall

When the new building for Kaiser Medical opened in Hesperia, the admin asked for photographic submissions for their walls.

Joan Rudder-Ward, our current Secretary and videographer, was honored to have four of her photos accepted. More details on that later.

Calling All Writers

Deadlines for the CWC's *Literary Review* and our branch's next character-driven anthology are coming up quickly—March 15 and tentatively May 1, respectively.

Prizes Are Nice Too

Are you interested in another "Challenge Blitz" for this spring or summer? Those who jumped in for the fun said they enjoyed the variety and the prizes for each challenge. And summer was boring anyway.

One of our big winners was Diane Neil, who said she didn't really need a prize to encourage her to play, but the idea of winning did validate her quality of writing. She submitted to each challenge, too.

ZOOM ROOM NEWS



Our Next Guest?

Unconfirmed at press time, Bob Isbill is hoping to sign up Richard Ledbetter of San Diego to be our next guest speaker for February.

Richard Ledbetter is a well-known columnist, educator, author, humorist, linguist, and public speaker.

More info coming soon.

Nothing sparks urgent reasons to bake bread and learn new skills more than a pandemic. ~~ Rusty

Time for a Laugh



Toasted News from Ann Miner

This is actually true...

It was 28 degrees that morning when I went to the end of the driveway to retrieve the *Daily Press*. The paper was so cold that I held it gingerly by one corner and brought it in to warm it in the oven.

Ten minutes later, having been distracted, I heard the beep telling me the oven had heated to 350 degrees. The aroma of newspaper fiber reached my nostrils as I rushed into the kitchen to find no fire and no flames, but the paper was toasty brown and crisp, through and through.

Then I put a slice of bread in the toaster to go with my coffee. Moments later I saw that I hadn't pushed the button down, and the slice was still just bread.

So now I had untoasted toast and toasted news.

I got the idea to bake a loaf of Buckwheat Honey Bread before I worked the crossword.

Directions: While you grind the buckwheat into flour, put the honey in the microwave for 45 seconds. You will need extra-hot water to clean the honey from the insides of the microwave. Throw away the melted honey bear jar and lid and find some sugar to replace the honey.

Work the crossword and notice the clue for "make things right." I think I did well to "atone" for all of it...

After all, I turned 82 that day.



Toasted Brain? from Rusty LaGrange

After reading Ann's tales, instead of saying "too funny" I should say too close to home. I too got mad at my toaster when I thought it broke. It just seemed way to long to toast my English muffin. I was thinking that this toaster was only two years old. But I just forgot to press the lever. Oy!!

We often get so wrapped up in ourselves as we get older; we forget so much. That alone is enough to make us think Alzheimer's is right around the corner.

My sweet father-in-law used to say he had "almost" lost his mind, so he only had *Halfheimer's*.

It's a simple way to deal with overloaded files in our overused brains. It's content for "Chicken Soup."



What Do You Do When You Find a "Y" in the Road?

This generation has actively voted and taken positions of leadership... (contributed from the Internet prior to the attack on the Capitol Jan. 6.)

GENERATION Y

- People born before 1946 were called The Silent generation.
- People born between 1946 and 1964 are called The Baby Boomers.
- People born between 1965 and 1979 are called Generation X.
- And people born between 1980 and 2010 are called Generation Y.

So, why do we call this last group Generation Y?

Y should I go to school?

Y should I get a job?

Y should I leave home and find my own place?

Y should I get a car when I can borrow yours?

Y should I wash and iron my own clothes? What's an iron?

Y should I get married (so what if I have kids)?

Y should I buy any food?

Y should I stop smoking pot?

Y should I work?

Y should I care about taxes, I don't pay any?





Jenny Margotta

from an

EDITOR'S DESK

My Crowded Bookshelves

Like many, I spent the better part of 2020 at home, isolated from people and denied the pleasure of monthly meetings of HDCWC and other organizations. But although I was isolated, I was not alone. I had my books!

With every talk I give on writing, I always stress the importance of reading. On the most basic level, if no one reads, why would we waste our time writing? Reading books within our own writing genres shows us how fellow authors handle story arcs, character development, dialogue, and more.

Anyone who has been to my home knows I have multiple bookshelves in every room except the bathrooms. Even my kitchen has a bookshelf stuffed from top to bottom with cookbooks on foods from around the world. I often take five or ten minutes out of my day to just sit and contemplate all the books I will someday have the pleasure of reading.

Just being surrounded by my books gives me comfort and I eagerly anticipate opening the next one and the next. I am the epitome of the phrase, "So many books; so little time."

When people see all my books, one of the most common questions I am asked is, "Have you read all these books?"

My answer is always, "No. If I had read them, chances are they wouldn't be on my shelves, because then I wouldn't have room for all the books I haven't yet read."

I have no idea of the total count, but I know I have read literally thousands of books in the last 65 years, and I freely admit most of them were fiction.

I began reading before my third birthday and I was reading in the adult section of our local library by the time I was in fourth grade. I don't know how my mother did it, but she always made sure I had at least \$1.00 to buy books at school when the Scholastic magazine came out. How many of you remember that? Books started at \$0.10 and the expensive ones could be as much as \$0.50!

With our current isolation issues, my books are more important to me than ever.

I go on clandestine adventures with Juan Cabrillo on the *Oregon* in Clive Cussler's *The Oregon Files* series. I'm on the edge of my seat, turning page after page to see how Michael Bennett and his ten children handle his current NYPD crisis. (James Patterson is definitely one of my favorite writers.) I'm waiting for the next book in Randy Wayne White's *Doc Ford* series so I can once again find myself off the Florida Keys with "retired black ops operative turned marine biologist" Marion Ford.

I get my history fix with Edward Rutherfurd (*Sarum, London, The Forest*) or James Michener (*The Caribbean, Texas, Mexico*), or William Martin (*The Lost Constitution, Harvard Yard, Citizen Washington*). My comedy fix comes by way of Stephanie Plum in the Janet Evanovich books or any number of cozy mysteries (Susan Albert Wittig, Diane Mott Davidson, Mary Daheim.)

I even took time this year to re-read a book, something I rarely ever do. I have seldom read a book that captivated me like *Jack, 1939* by Francine Mathews. It is a masterpiece of fact and fiction in which college-age JFK is hired by FDR to spy for the U.S. while JFK is traveling in Europe during the summer of 1939. I consider myself somewhat of an expert on WW II, and even I had to research several points in the book to determine if the event really happened. If you have even the slightest interest in Kennedy, Roosevelt, or the years leading up to WW II, I cannot recommend Mathews' book strongly enough. If you don't have an interest, the book is so good it might give you an interest.

Would I like to have a party and invite 20 people? Yes. Would I enjoy returning to monthly, in-person meetings of HDCWC? It goes without saying, of course, I would. Am I alone most days? No. I am by myself, but I am not alone. I have JFK, Doc Ford, Michael Bennett, Stone Barrington, Emma Lord, Stephanie Plum, Cotton Malone, Peter Fallon, Goldy Schultz, and dozens of other "people" lining my bookshelves, just begging me to visit with them. With that crowd, how could I ever be alone?

Happy New Year to everyone.

Jenny



Join the conversation... share your favorite reads and offer up your list of notable authors. We'll be looking for some insightful books that are living on your bookshelves.
Send to Rusty@RustyLaGrange.com



Mike Apodaca
from the
Vice President

Tell Your Story with Dialogue

Dialogue is a key way to tell your story. Done well, it can communicate to your reader aspects of your characters and drive your story in a fun and interactive way. Consider this exchange between David and his dad, Moishe, from the movie, "Independence Day" by Alice Hoffman.

MOISHE

What are you waiting? My social security will expire, you'll still be sitting there.

DAVID

I'm thinking.

MOISHE

So think already.

David makes a move. Instantly Moishe counters his move. David furrows his brow in thought.

MOISHE

Again he's thinking.

Moishe reaches into a paper bag and retrieves a coffee in a Styrofoam cup.

DAVID

You have any idea how long it takes for those things to decompose?

MOISHE

You don't move soon. I'll begin to decompose.

MOISHE

You don't move soon, I'll begin to decompose.

Just as David finally makes his move, Moishe counters again.

David shoots him a look and stares back down to the board.

MOISHE

David, I've been meaning to talk with you. It's nice you've been spending so much time with me, but...

DAVID

Dad, don't start.

MOISHE

I'm only saying, it's been what? Four years, you still haven't signed your divorce papers.

DAVID

Three years.

MOISHE

Three, four. Move on. It's not healthy.

Moishe takes a big puff on the cigar and coughs.

DAVID

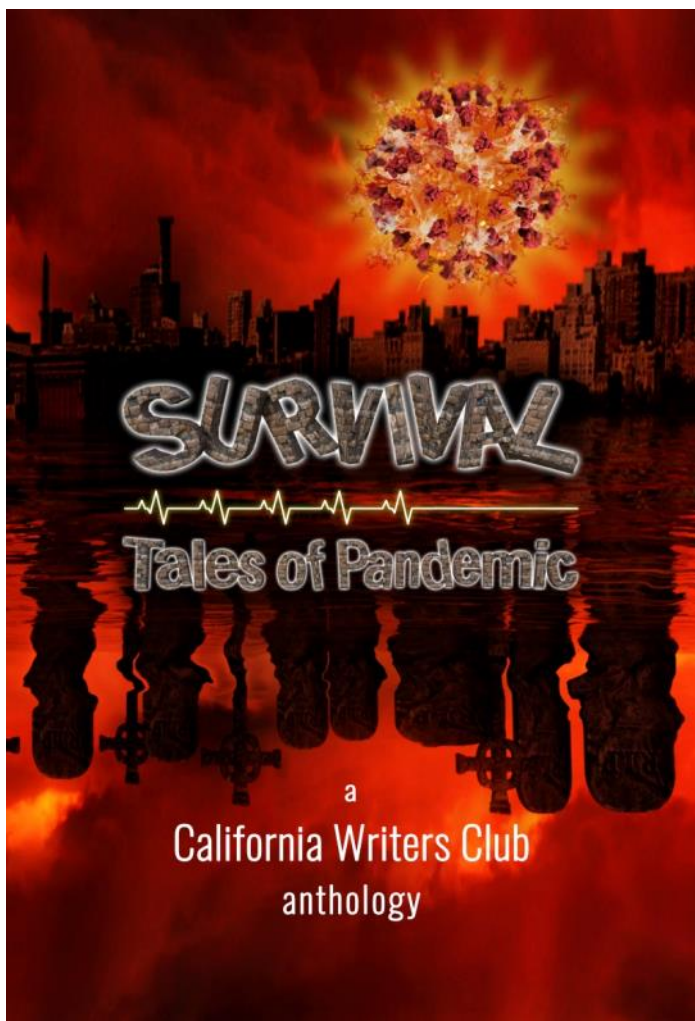
Look who's talking healthy.

What do we learn from this exchange? The men are of different temperaments: the father is impatient and compulsive, the son is thoughtful and strategic. Moishe is not concerned with the environment, David is. David is separated from his wife but won't sign the divorce papers. The father is urging him to move on, but, just as he analyzes the chessboard, he is also strategizing his relationship with his wife. We see this characteristic later in the way he figures out what the aliens are doing and with his final solution—removing their force fields.

In twelve conversational exchanges we understand these men and their relationship. That's the power of dialogue.

The book, *Dialogue*, by Lewis Turco, demonstrates how many of the elements of dialogue can be used to positive effect in our writing (things like nomenclature, diction, dialect, etc.). As in all aspects of the writing craft, dialogue is crucial to communicating our stories.





The “first”
statewide anthology
created by members of
CWC.

Available now.

Michael Raff (HDCWC) came
in Third Place overall.

Curious what goes through
the minds

of our best writers?

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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!

Events Ahead >

JAN. & OCTOBER ACTIVITIES

January 5 HDCWC board meeting
January 9 HDCWC regular meeting
January ?

February 9 HDCWC board meeting
February 13 HDCWC regular meeting

(virtual meetings are in ZOOM
format & dates may change)



BIRTHDAYS IN JANUARY

January 6 *Rusty LaGrange*
January 8 *Angie Horn*
January 9 *Anita Holmes*
January 18 *Robert Young*
January 22 *Dwight Norris*
January 22 *Tom Foley*

If you would like to join the rest of our members enjoying a little recognition for another year shared with writing friends, be sure to update your birthday date. We use our local branch's MRMS database.

Go to www.hdcwc.com then from the menu go to "Links for Club Members" and click on MRMS. If you don't remember your sign-in name, then ask for help from Bob Isbill, Michael Raff or Jenny Margotta. ~ *the editor*



What's That Number?

Stay connected with your exclusive access to MRMS—our roster of members—That's how I found the birthdays listed. Ask for help to gain easy access anytime.



WE HAVE A YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Here's the link to the channel:
[https:// www.youtube.com/channel/
UC28XLtEK5oBNq5gW2Zy1ssg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC28XLtEK5oBNq5gW2Zy1ssg)

Managed by Joan Rudder-Ward

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ANGIE HORN

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References:

Mary Langer Thompson: (@Mary Langer Thomp, Twitter)

Elizabeth Pye: (epye.com)

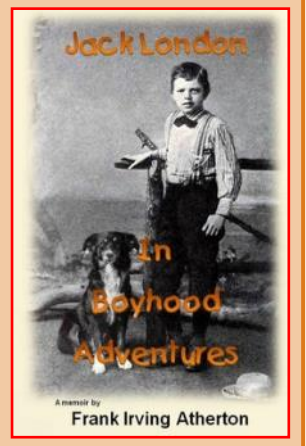
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Notes From the Editor



Rusty LaGrange

*Editor of the
CWC's
The Bulletin*

Were you expecting for this virus to run along and fade out by the end of December? Surprise! That didn't happen. We are still defining our roles in our community, trying to stay safe, using our Zoom Rooms for events, as well as seeing loved ones, and yet the vaccines may not roll out for us until June. This could be the year to publish your book, like now. Many more readers are searching for more titles.

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 200 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. items by Jan. 23; Submit March items by Feb. 23