



# The INKSLINGER

HIGH DESERT BRANCH CWC  
*Inspiring a Community of Writers*

*Sail On*

**Nov. 2018**

## GOING BERSERK

### Personal Challenges and Triumphs Become Great Writing Material

Expect an illuminating presentation by author Gary McPherson during our November 10 meeting. McPherson will be “sharing a part of his life story through the fictional lens,” and he will share his unique details of extraordinary physical challenge and incredible triumphs. Our meeting starts at 10 a.m.-noon at the Community Church at Jess Ranch. Invite a friend.



McPherson’s debut novel was the breakthrough thriller *Joshua and the Shadow of Death*. Inspired by his unusual real life adoption experience and a rare genetic disease, it tackles relevant real world issues including national security, government contracts, and greed, plus a cadre of doctors unable to identify his disease until he was 32 years old.

He enjoys reading and writing mysteries, thrillers, supernatural stories, and when he need a break from the darkness he’ll write humorous short stories.

Researching his biological history with the help of the Children’s Home Society of California, the service his parents used to adopt him, McPherson discovered his international ties. He had a biological mother who immigrated from Denmark and father of Turkish descent. While Behcet’s disease is a rarity in the U.S., it’s far more common in the eastern hemisphere. It was this experience that gave birth to the idea of the Berserk legend - half-siblings carrying a gene they don’t know about.



### News You Can Use

Be sure to check page 2 for the activities coming up this month and December. *The Inkslinger* goes dark for December so your next submission deadline is December 23rd.

High Desert Chapter of California Writers Club Board of Directors



*The following officers and appointed positions are current to the fiscal year of July 2018.*

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## News You Can Use

### **ECSTATIC NEWS!! Scrooge to Appear**

Are you all sitting down? Ready for the most exciting news to flow through your computer screens for years and years and perhaps eons? Well prepare yourselves!

This year, for our December 8 Writers Club meeting, the most talented and incredible actor Travis Rhett Wilson, renowned for his performances as Scrooge at the Sturges Theater for Fine Arts in San Bernardino, has graciously accepted our invitation to come to Apple Valley and appear as Scrooge!



**Travis Rhett Wilson as Scrooge**

Not only that, but he says he would like to have an hour and 15 minutes, and in that time frame he will present the entire show of "A Christmas Carol" in a one-man monologue! I asked him if he would like an intermission, and he said it would break the momentum.

Now before any of you give me any "bah, humbugs" about the length, let me remind you that he is a professional, and this is his request, plus his most incredibly generous gift to us. I have agreed to this incredible arrangement. It's set. We can plan whatever other oh-so-important things we have to do around it. There will be time to visit during the break after the performance.

I should add - Liz Pye and I saw him in this performance last year in San Bernardino and he was mesmerizing. I can't say enough. I'm beyond thrilled at this coup.

~~ Lorelei Kay

News Continued on Page 3



We are fortunate to have a diverse membership composed of award-winning screen writers and poets, people who have published multiple books and novices who are working on their first publications. Our collective skills are vast, and include editing, graphic design, video production and more. These aspects are impressive and among the assets members may share when they talk about our extraordinary club.

You'll hear (or read) this from me often, until our meetings are so well known that we don't have room for everyone who wants to attend them: Publicity is every HDCWC member's business. When we all take this to heart, our membership will grow and we will be able to have more worthwhile programs to help us thrive as writers, and we will be able to contribute more to our community.

More than a year ago, when the now-former publicity chairperson Bob Isbill first approached me about serving in this capacity, I couldn't even consider it because I was too busy. However, I admired Bob for the great work he did as publicity chair and I wanted to contribute more to the club than just my annual dues. While I graciously turned down the position then, I assured Bob that as soon as there was room in my schedule, I would reconsider taking the position. It's been several months now that I have served as publicity chair, and the most outstanding thing that I learned early in my tenure was just how much work it takes to effectively publicize our club.

To aid my start, Bob and I met for hours in a coffee shop where he shared the history of the publicity chair and his thoughts about future publicity for the club. I had a substantial list of projects that I thought would benefit the club, publicity wise, which we also discussed.

Thus far a few of the goals we discussed have been met. They include monthly press releases about upcoming meetings, and the extraordinary October writers conference with the lively, engaging and skilled presenter who shared invaluable information about character development. Another 2018 publicity highlight was when the largest daily newspaper in our county, The San Bernardino Sun, featured some of our poetry contest winners.

All of these projects take many hours—and in the case of the conference, months—to produce, and a team effort

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*Continued from page 2*

## Submittorious Award

### Announced in January

The naming of this year's "Submittorious Award" goes to a consistent writer who has eagerly submitted to *The Inklinger* and helped balance the types of articles we enjoy reading. Whether it's a memoir, essay, instructional, or poetry that bring smiles to our faces, your assistance has not gone unnoticed.

Thanx from a very busy editor comes in the form of a \$50 cash award that can be used anyway you wish. A Submittorian is eager to share an idea and actively asks if I need anything to help keep interesting topics coming into *The Inklinger* "submissions box."

The winner will be selected prior to the January meeting. **~~ the editor**

## Holiday Gift Exchange

A traditional gift exchange at the luncheon will be for those who wish to offer a gift. Each participant will receive a simple voucher. Please keep the gift cost under \$10.00.

Mark your gift package for male or female. You choose one gift when your name is called.

No shaking, rattling, peeking, pulling of tape or ribbon will be allowed. McGruff the Crime Dog will be on call to monitor us.

## December Barnes & Noble Book Fair Voucher Arrives

Late news break!! Go to page 6. Bob Isbill is having voucher business cards made so you can share the number with friends and family. All sales during this Dec. 9th event across all national sales with Barnes & Noble using our voucher number will be given credit to us.

We will convert our cash to a donation to "New Books for Newborns" — a project shared with us several years ago with Mike Apodaca. It offers a gift basket to new parents full of books and ideas to promote early reading.

**GO TO PAGE 6 FOR DETAILS!!!!**



*continued from page 3*

including proofreaders, registration and set up crews. However, there is a lot more to publicity than getting articles published in newspapers and magazines, and producing a conference every couple of years. To be as successful publicizing our club as we would like to, we need to increase our outreach to include more direct interaction with individuals and varied agencies in the High Desert in addition to media, and we need a lot more members to participate.

During the referenced early-2018 meeting, we also talked about working more with colleges. Bob has a long-standing desire to start college chapters of the HDCWC, which seems worthwhile and will take a lot of effort. However, with the support and participation of HDCWC members, this is possible. Somewhat related, there may be opportunities to partner with colleges on other projects such as theatrical productions which would be great avenues to publicize our club. This would also provide another opportunity to serve our community.

This is some of the "out of the box" thinking that we need. I am hopeful that more HDCWC members develop ideas that will help tell our story to a larger audience more often, so that we continue to fulfill our mission, "to foster professionalism in writing, promote networking of writers with the writing community, mentor new writers, and provide literary support for writers and the writing community as is appropriate through education and leadership."

Upcoming we will discuss "Talking Points," to use when sharing information about our club. As always, your comments and ideas are welcome.



## ***News You Can Use***

### **After Our Meeting: Our Holiday Luncheon & Gift Exchange at China Palace Buffet**

This year the HDCWC board has decided to host the Holiday luncheon with gift exchange at the China Palace Buffet in Hesperia. Your cost per plate is \$10 with HDCWC covering the balance \$4.44. Only members in good standing can receive the discount. All friends and family will pay full price. You should make your RSVP as soon as possible to Lorelei Kay at [loleikay7@gmail.com](mailto:loleikay7@gmail.com).

The China Palace Buffet has many food items to choose from that are non-Chinese, so there should be enough selection to make everyone's palate happy. Find the restaurant on Hesperia Road south of Main in Hesperia.

## **TURN AROUND**

### **LOOK AT ME**

*by fumi-tome ohta*

*A View of Veterans in Four Parts*

**W**e were just out of high school when we got married. My wife has Type 1 diabetes. My job didn't pay well. I loved her so much. I joined the Army. They'd see to it that she got her meds and she got her care.

The guys would make fun of me and laugh, 'he thinks he's some kind of Boy Scout' they would say because my belt buckle and insignias were always Brasso'd (polished), my uniform neatly pressed and my shoes always spit shined like glass.

I was sent to the jungles of Vietnam. I lost a leg and an arm. When I came home, I didn't think my wife would want me anymore. She did. She kissed me and hugged me and said, "More than ever." I cried. I still keep my one shoe spit shined like glass and my beautiful captain keeps me and my clothes looking I.G. (Inspector General) sharp.

### **TURN AROUND LOOK AT ME**

I got drafted. I hated being in the service. They put me in the Signal Corps. I send and receive messages all day. That's my job, to keep the messages moving. There was shelling and machine gun fire in the distance and coming real close...too close. The last thing I remember I was tossing Cheri' our messenger pigeon up into the sky and was watching her fly toward headquarters. I don't see very well anymore. I got a cane to help me see.

*Continued on page 5*

## Book Preview

### *Chance Meeting Turns Into a Book*

#### **“What’s Your Story?”**

On Thursday, October 10, 2018, Herman Edward (Sandy) Armistead quietly celebrated his 97<sup>th</sup> birthday at the South Apple Valley Pollo Loco, where he eats almost daily.

There were family and friends, and Rosie, the manager, had bought a chocolate cake for the occasion.

HDCWC past President, Dwight Norris, was also in attendance.

Sandy and Dwight had met months ago in line at the restaurant. Dwight nonchalantly asked the man ahead of him, “Is there ever a time when you don’t have to wait in line here?”

“No,” replied Sandy. “But you know why?”

“Right. Because the food is so good,” said Dwight.



**Sandy Armistead**

They struck up a conversation and decided to lunch together. At one point, Dwight asked Sandy, “So what’s your story?”

During the next two hours, Dwight knew he had the makings of a book, which he has been working on for almost a year. Dwight has a publication goal of February 2019, and is working with his critique group to get it as good as it can be.

“The Story of Sandy Armistead” has been lived for 97 years. Now it will just take a few finishing touches to preserve that life in print by Dwight Norris.

~~ submitted by *Bob Isbill*



*Continued from Page 4*

impulse because I loved my flag and I loved my country. When I signed up I wasn't thinking all that. When 9/11 happened I was angry and I was scared like everyone else but you know, enlisting was something that I had to do. I'm a quadriplegic and I can't do anything for myself anymore. After I found out, I was scared out of my mind. I cursed everyone, "Damn you! Damn everyone!" I cried and cried until I couldn't cry no more. I'm a soldier. In my heart I'll always be a soldier even though they tell me I'm not anymore. I am. You know what? ... I still feel I did the right thing.

#### **TURN AROUND LOOK AT ME**

I was just out of high school. I joined the WACs (Women's Army Corps) to be a nurse. I went to basic training, then to Fort Sam Houston for schooling and then I went to my first assignment. I asked myself over and over, "Why did I join?" I want to be with my little brothers and sisters. I borrowed money for bus fare from the sergeants in the hospital where I worked. They asked me why. I said I want to go home. I went home. The MPs (military police) came and got me.

When I got back to the barracks (housing for soldiers), the captain put me on restriction. The next time I got restriction and loss of pay. The next time after that, I lost my stripe. I didn't know it, but I made the girls in the barracks sad. They could hear me crying in the darkness of the basement. I just want to go home.

#### **TURN AROUND LOOK AT ME**



## More News You Can Use

### HDCWC To Hold Barnes & Noble Book Fair December 9<sup>th</sup>

There's the good news. HDCWC will participate in a Barnes & Noble Book Fair at the Victorville Mall store on Sunday, December 9, 2018 from 11 am to 7 pm. There will be book signings and selling by HDCWC member-authors Liz Pye, Dwight Norris, Judith Stroh, Barbara Parish, Michael Raff, Roberta Smith, Emma Hill, and Mary Langer Thompson.

The event is a fundraiser in which a percentage of the sales of books purchased that day during those hours and with a **Voucher Code of #12458956** will be given to the branch. In turn, the branch will then donate the gift card earned in whatever amount to the local nonprofit "New Books for Newborns" in order to promote literacy and an appreciation for writers and the written word.

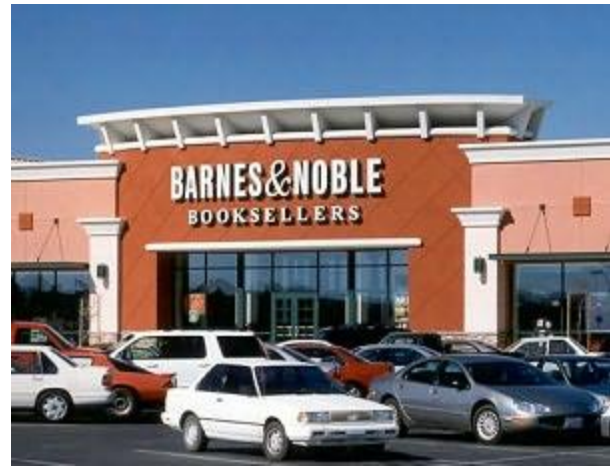
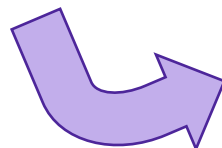
We will be assisted by HDCWC member and author Mike Apodaca, who is an active promoter of the "New Books for Newborns" organization. To facilitate parents of newborns to read to their child from early on, they donate baskets of books for that purpose.

We encourage you to ask your family and friends that if they are planning a book purchase, to do it on that day using **Voucher Code #12458956**.

Remember, too, that any purchase made during that day with our voucher code will be applied to our organization. Any person anywhere nationally who has the code will help us earn more donations. So encourage your friends and relatives to buy during that day and use our code.

For your convenience, you can ask for a MSWord page with paper vouchers you can print in advance and be ready to use December 9th. (ask Bob Isbill or Rusty LaGrange for the email "vouchers" that you can print). Vouchers can also be handed out in the Barnes & Noble Bookstore and in the Mall. If you wish, you can help pass out vouchers that will help more shoppers become aware of our one-day goal.

Here's your  
personal voucher



BARNES & NOBLE  
**BOOKFAIRS**  
supporting

**California Writers  
Club, HD Branch**

Sunday, December 09, 2018  
Victorville Mall  
14400 Bear Valley Road Suite  
107



12458956

Please present this voucher prior to making your purchase. A percentage of the net sale will be contributed to your school/organization.\*

\*The purchase of gift cards, Barnes & Noble memberships, textbooks, video games, digital devices including NOOK, purchases made at Cafés owned and operated by Starbucks, and other items Barnes & Noble may exclude from time to time in its sole discretion are not included in bookfair totals. Institutional discounts may not be applied. See BNCOM/bookfairs for more details and to shop online.

#BNBOOKFAIRS



# What You Missed

Text & photos compiled  
by Rusty LaGrange

## Open Mic & Panel of Peers Share Insights & Expertise

We offered a panel to speak on designing and running your book launch Road Show with details from MaryRuth Hughes, looking at your taxes and managing your income from books sales with Treasurer Jenny Margotta, website benefits and options with our Webmaster Roberta Smith, and how creating a business for your book sales and marketing plan has a stronger base than one author marketing alone from Michael Raff and Roberta Smith. Gathering for the panel and sharing four different views and topics gave particular cues to other authors who are considering their next steps in sales and marketing.



(l to r) Raff, Smith, Margotta and Hughes.



Open Mic readers offered a wide variety of topics and their improved reading performances for many who had taken an Open Mic Etiquette salon earlier in the month. They shared humorous poems, intriguing excerpts, and a paranormal skit.

In order of readers: Diane Neil, Roberta Smith with Michael Raff, Katina Newell, Mary Ruth Hughes, Lorelei Kay, Rebekah Koontz, Jenny Margotta, Susan Hannah, Michael Raff, Linda Cooper, and Rusty LaGrange. I was also the Emcee for both programs.

## Michael Raff set up his booth at the Desert Rocks Film and Concert Festival in Hesperia



**Michael Raff with his newest flag. (left)**  
**Freddi Gold joined Joyce Raff at the booth. (center)**  
**Michael sat in with his wife Joyce and Freddi. (right)**

A venue for artists, film watchers, authors and readers offered great weather and a pleasant way to share the love of music, a selection of films, and the park-like setting for book browsers.





**Jenny Margotta**

from an

**EDITOR'S DESK**

**DYNAMIC (adjective): 1. pertaining to or characterized by energy or effective action; vigorously active or forceful; energetic:**

In the October *Inkslinger*, I wrote, "A good storyteller does not simply recite facts and actions, he ... uses words to paint a picture. A good storyteller ... [m]akes us mentally *feel, taste, smell, and hear*. A good story—a great story—will transport us *into the story*."

But exactly how does a writer accomplish that? It is done by creating dynamic description, not just filler to increase your page count. Keep in mind that, while description is necessary to create your character's world, it should not be so exact—to the precise shade of nail polish or the exact length of a man's hair—that there is no room for the reader's imagination. After all, your goal is to keep your reader engaged in your story.

There are three key elements to writing good dynamic description.

**Number 1: Description should include specific, real-to-life detail.**

James Patterson in *Murder House* writes, "When his eyes pop open, it is still dark outside, the air cool and crisp ... Normally, he wouldn't be up for another hour yet, but he could hardly sleep last night waiting for today."

Consider what information that passage gives us. We know it's dark and just a little chilly. Notice Patterson says, "It is *still* dark." That tells us it's very early in the morning. He didn't need to add superfluous wording like, "It is still dark at this every early hour of 5:30 a.m." The additional words, while providing great detail, do not actually tell the reader anything more; the added description doesn't move the story along.

It's "he" so we know the character is male. And he's added the clues of something coming that day that the character is anticipating. His eyes "pop" open – conveying excitement. He "could hardly sleep" conveying impatience and a sense of importance for what's coming.

That brings us to the second key element of dynamic description.

**Number 2: Description should reveal something of the character's inner life.**

Patterson further writes, "He perks up as he approaches the school. He stifles the instinct to skip along like an eager little boy. But he's not a little boy. It's not like he was eight or ten anymore."

What does this reveal about the character? He wants to skip but resists the urge, so we know he's conflicted about something. But why can't he be a boy today? Are conflict, turmoil, and possibly uncertainty, keys that something is going on in this boy's life and that, possibly, it is going to be resolved today? Those questions lead us to the third key element of description.

**Number 3: Description should include motivation.**

What is driving that particular character in a particular scene? Revelation and motivation often overlap, by the way.

Continuing the scenes from above, Patterson writes, "The first bell ... will come soon. Some of the students will [be] congregating around [t]he playground equipment, for the younger kids. ... He wanted to dress up today as Darth, fitting for the occasion but too clunky with the oversized helmet—visibility through the rifle's scope was nearly impossible when he tried it out."

So what we know at this point? It's early morning. The character is a young boy—after all he wanted to wear a Halloween costume—but he's older than eight or ten. And his motivation? To get to school early enough to see everyone arriving. Why? Patterson doesn't spell it out, but the rifle is a pretty good clue to the boy's motivation.

It all combines to paint a picture in the reader's mind while, at the same time, creating a scene that makes the reader want to know more.

And that's the key to any good story. Authors should always strive to write in such a manner that the reader wants more, wants to turn that first page to

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the second, to the third, to read with rapt attention to the very last word on the very last page. And one way to do that is with vivid details that touch our senses, make us empathize, ask questions, and believe in the characters and their story.

There is one downfall to description that every writer should keep in mind, however. Description slows the pace of the story. There is definitely a time and a place for description. I address that issue next time.



## A PURSE FULL OF SECRETS

by MaryRuth Hughes

A few years ago, a delicately beaded purse displayed in an antique store window caught my eye and seemed to say, "Buy me." I've always loved purses from the 1920s and '30s. This one was exceptionally pretty. The price was right, so I bought it.

When I arrived home, I examined my purchase before adding it to the collection of purses I keep in a curio cabinet. To my surprise, inside were two theater ticket stubs from Warner Hollywood Studios, dated January 22, 1938, orchestra section, seats: left center "F" 8 and 9. \$11.00. Questions filled my mind. "What would be playing at a theater that would cost that much money in 1938?" Curiosity drove me to seek an answer.

I assumed there would be an advertisement for the movie playing that night, so I decided to start my search by checking the *LA Times*. After hitting several dead ends, I finally found a helpful clerk at the California Division of the Rosemead Branch Library in Rosemead, CA, where records of the *LA Times* are kept.

It took several days before the clerk called to tell me he couldn't find anything about a movie playing that night at the Warner Hollywood Studios, but there was an article titled "TESTIMONIAL FOR HEALY TONIGHT." The clerk copied the article and sent it to me.

*LA Times*

January 22, 1938

*Ted Healy testimonial tonight at Warner's Hollywood Studios promises to be a memorable event. In fact, it will represent a galaxy of names from radio and pictures, with a cluster of masters of ceremonies and various others taking part in the entertainment. List in part includes Kenny Baker, Phil Baker, Jack Benny, Larry Blake, Ben Blue, Ray Bolger, Fannie Brice, George Burns, James Cagney, Cliff Edwards, Clark Gable, the three Galli Sisters of the Eddie Cantor program, Judy Garland, Hugh Herbert, Bob Hope, George Jessel, Al Jolson, Allan Jones, Tito Schipa, who personally asked to join the others, Borrah Minnevitich, Robert Montgomery, Pat O'Brien, Dick Powell, Peters Sisters, Martha Raye, Raymond Scott Quintet, Stroud Twins, Spencer Tracy, Rudy Vallee, George Wheeler, Roy Atwill, Mickey Rooney and Sidney Miller as a team. Healy, of course, was one of the best loved performers.*



Now I was even more intrigued. Who was Ted Healy? Thanks to the marvels of the Internet, I found several pages telling about him, his career, and his life. Ted Healy was born in 1896. He started his career as a comedian in vaudeville. He did imitations and burlesque jokes. It was said that all his acts were impromptu because he was unable to memorize his lines. Ted was noted for his comical, crushed hat. An article in a Baltimore newspaper said, "Healy is remembered for the dilapidated hat he always wears. He is one of the most informal of comedians. His naturalness makes for his success."

Healy, with his solo act through the pre-World War I years, became a Broadway star. He was quick witted and

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a slick talker. Ted soon decided that his particular style of physical, slapstick comedy needed “stooges” to take the brunt of his comedy. His boyhood friend, Moe Howard, was just who he needed. In 1922 Moe went on stage with Ted. During one act, they heard Moe’s brother Shemp’s unmistakable laugh coming from the audience. Ted called him on stage. The impromptu skit was completely ad-libbed. It was a wild, slapstick performance that had the theater roaring with laughter.

Healy was asked by a reporter, “What is the purpose of having stooges?” Ted explained, “They’re handy guys to have around. If a star’s too busy to give an interview, he can send his stooge. And a stooge is a swell alibi. If a star’s wife or girlfriend says she saw him in Sardi’s with another doll, he can always say, “It must have been my stooge.” And then a stooge always comes in handy when you feel like throwing something at somebody. Whenever I’m in doubt or feel mixed up, I always hit the nearest stooge. Makes me feel better. Nothing like it. Hollywood’s tired of ‘yes-men.’ You can never guess what a stooge is going to do next.”

In 1925 Ted hired Larry Fine, a violinist, to be his third stooge. Ted Healy and his Three Stooges appeared in a long list of Broadway shows. Their first movie was in the classic 1930’s comedy feature, “Soup to Nuts,” for 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox. Larry, Moe and Shemp left Healy’s act in 1934 and continued in show business as “The Three Stooges.” Ted, alone, continued to appear in a succession of films for 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, Warner Studios, and MGM.

Ted Healy was 41 years old when he died on December 21, 1937. That same day his only child was born and his Warner Studios film “Hollywood Hotel” premiered. What a coincidence to have all three events happen on the same day!

Newspaper accounts attributed his death to serious head injuries he received in a night club brawl while celebrating the birth of his son. Other reports say he died of a heart attack at his home. A friend of Moe Howard said Ted had been drinking at the Trocadero Night Club on Sunset Strip when he got into a fight. Ted was kicked in the head, ribs, and stomach and died of a brain concussion.

Ted Healy made millions of dollars over his lifetime. He was the highest paid vaudevillian of his day, earning

\$8,500 a week at the time of his death. Unfortunately, he spent more money than he made and he died penniless.

According to Moe Howard, “Ted’s friends had to give a benefit to pay for his burial.”

Ted Healy was loved by his fans and respected by fellow actors. A testimonial in his honor was held Saturday night, January 22, 1938, at the Warner Hollywood Theater.

The beaded purse continues to hold one more secret. Who was the lady in the orchestra section carrying this reticule?



## ***SUBMIT YOUR BEST WORK TO THE CWC LITERARY REVIEW***

The California Writers Club is looking for great writing from our members for publication in the 2019 CWC *Literary Review*.

Submissions are now being accepted in four categories: fiction, poetry, memoir and essay. For guidelines and the required submission form, go to the CWC website, [www.calwriters.org](http://www.calwriters.org). Deadline is November 30, so don’t delay.

This year instead of the traditional Managing Editor, the *Literary Review* is chaired by four volunteers: Tish Davidson (Fremont Area Writers), Kimberly Edwards (Sacramento), June Gillam (San Joaquin Valley) and CWC President Joyce Krieg.

The team points out that even though the publication has “literary” in its title, genre fiction is welcome, as are pieces that are humorous or deal with lighter themes and topics. The emphasis is simply on good writing that entertains, informs or inspires, regardless of style or subject matter.

The CWC *Literary Review* offers members the opportunity to showcase their work in a high quality, glossy print magazine that is sent through the U.S. mail to some 2,000 fellow CWC members. Publication of the next edition is slated for May or June of 2019.



# Analysis of Character for Writers

– a seven-part series

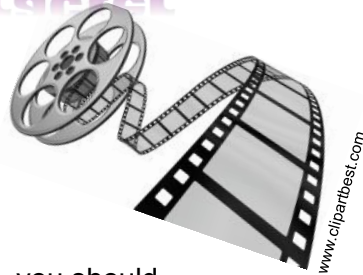
## PART 5

### Character Biography

In order to fully know your characters, you should develop a Character Biography on all your primary and secondary characters, including the opponents. You should also develop the main character's backstory in detail.

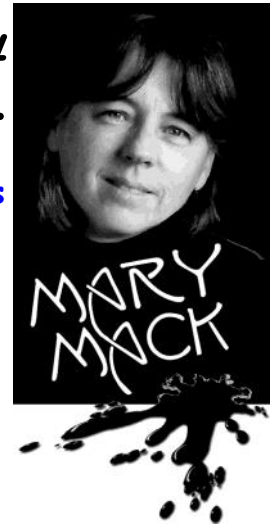
A Character Biography should include:

- Full name
- Nickname
- Gender
- Age/birthdate / Place of birth
- Race & ethnicity
- Accent?
- Current residence
- Family background
- Eyes, skin, and hair / Facial hair
- Height & weight
- Parents & siblings / Spouse/children
- Friends
- Pets
- Religion / Politics
- Moral code / Code of ethics
- Deal Breakers
- Education/schools / Favorite subjects
- Popular/unpopular



*Graphically  
Speaking ...*

by Mary DeSantis



- Special skills
- Military
- Job/profession
- Hobbies/sports/interests
- Favorite movies/TV & radio shows
- Favorite colors
- Personal vehicle
- Physical imperfections
- Missing fingers/ limbs/teeth/eye
- Scars / Warts/moles/cysts
- Jewelry / Fashion / clothing style / Shoes
- Glasses/contacts
- Bad habits
- Secrets / Fears
- Fetishes / Obsessions
- Fantasies
- Hopes & Dreams

Since nobody is perfect, make your Main Character more human and identifiable by giving him/her flaws. Flaws and failings in a character are what make an audience identify with and care about that character. Ideas for Character Imperfections/Idiosyncrasies/Flaws include:

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- Pathological liar
- Pack rat / hoards things
- Obese / malnourished
- Superstitious
- Messy/dirty/sloppy / Poor personal hygiene
- Constantly washing hands
- Exaggerated physical features
- Maimed/misshapen features
- Hunchbacked/Scoliosis / Bow-legged
- Blind / weak eyesight / color blind
- Lamé / crippled / wheelchair / walking stick
- Deaf
- Asthma / Hayfever
- Stammer, lisp, difficulty talking
- Nervous twitch/tick / Blinking rapidly
- Chewing fingernails
- Cracking finger joints or knuckles
- Spitting
- Passing gas
- Chewing lip / Popping lower jaw
- Cracking neck
- Sniffing / Clearing throat
- Picking nose
- Chewing on hair / Chewing on matches
- Smoking cigars/cigarettes/marijuana
- Chewing tobacco
- Drugs / Other Addictions
- Shaking or rocking leg / Tapping fingers
- Twirling hair / Twisting / Stroking one's clothing
- Twirling pen between fingers
- Tuneless humming
- Annoying noises / Talking to oneself
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Afraid of dogs/birds/worms /other phobias, etc.
- Crossing oneself/touching wood
- Constantly applying Chapstick/lipstick
- Grinding teeth
- Staring at people
- Tugging on an ear
- Body odor / Bad breath
- Crooked teeth/retainer / Hare lip
- Hair problems/bald spot
- Acne / Eczema
- Freckles
- Manner of walking
- Wrinkles nose
- Chewing gum
- Crooked eyes
- Body piercings

**Continued from Page 13**

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## Further Tips for Creating Awesome Characters

- Don't let your character speak out of character.
- Know your characters intimately.
- Develop very complex characters.
- Know your characters' responses to each situation – both initial and instinctual.
- Know your Main Character's goals.
- Know your protagonist's deeper emotional need. What is his/her greatest weakness? What deep need or internal problem is hurting the character fundamentally and ruining his/her life? Seeing a character overcome a deep weakness is more important than seeing him/her accomplishing his/her outward goal, from the audience's point of view.
- It is important to show this internal weakness in the first pages of the script so that it does not seem contrived.
- **Deal Breakers.** What is your character's Moral Code? Choose one of those morals and force your character to violate it. Choose the one that will have the most effect in the plot. This creates great dilemma and adds great layer and dimension to the character and the story. If the hero is forced to violate his/her values, emotional and physical stakes are raised. It creates a natural dilemma which makes a deeper character arc, and pays off in the end. You must set up these Deal Breakers and values from the start of your script / outline so that the audience 'gets it' when the dilemma occurs, and in order for it to feel natural and not contrived.
- Design a progressive character arc by creating a strong external goal and a strong internal goal, which are often the exact opposite, or reverse, of one another.

- Create powerful emotional stakes as well as high physical stakes for your character.
- The character traits should create a natural connection between characters. Examples include personality clashes, on-screen chemistry, sparks flying, opposites attracting, opposing morals that cause disgust/hatred for one another.
- Let your characters surprise you. Revealing a secret about your character at a later point in the script can surprise the audience and be a great turning point.

**“Secrets and dilemmas for your characters are what make actors drool over your script.”**

—Danny Manus (screenwriting consultant)

For your convenience, you can keep on hand a copy of this extensive list to check your characters' traits and characteristics.



## Sneak Peek: 2019 Guest Speakers

This sneak peek for our up-coming guest speaker or speakers in January 2019 is an invitation to the film genre promoted at Desert Rocks Film and Concert Festival.

Two film creators and producers from Brazil were available to promote their recent showing of “Cowboy Heart.” If everything works out they will share their interesting journey from Brazil to LA and the processes they learned in filming.

For February, Producer of Jay Leno's nightly comedy show, Dave Berg, has written several books and is out promoting them. His commentary of behind – the-scenes at Jay Leno's show should be very entertaining.

Then in March, we may bring back “speed dating” — no not that kind... five topics and five tables with five facilitators... These high energy antics of moving from table to table in search of topics you can grasp quickly is a membership favorite. If you haven't speed dated with us, you're in for some great fun.

~~ Rusty LaGrange

# Reading Room > Our Books in Print

## NOVEMBER & DECEMBER ACTIVITIES

- Nov. 10** HDCWC regular meeting
- Nov. 15** CWC's *The Bulletin* will be posted
- Nov. 30** Closing deadline for CWC's *The Literary Review*
- DEC. 8** HDCWC Holiday meeting with Scrooge 10-noon then
- DEC. 8** Holiday Luncheon and Gift Exchange noon to 3pm
- DEC. 9** Barnes & Noble Fundraiser event from 11 am to 7pm?
- DEC. 23** Deadline for January *Inkslinger*



Here, on this bookshelf, is the awesome accumulation of our HDCWC branch's anthologies over the past few years. All titles are still available for purchase. If you wish to buy in person just ask and we will have the book available. Pre-order and/or pre-purchase is required in most cases. Share our high quality anthologies with others. All titles are available online and make great holiday gifts.



Remember we now offer PayPal as a payment method for dues and purchases.



*The Inkslinger* will go dormant for the month of December — unless someone wishes to try their wings at desktop publishing. It's easier than you think. Submit holiday stories early for the November issue. Send in your poems and photos. send to [Rusty@RustyLaGrange.com](mailto:Rusty@RustyLaGrange.com)

**OUR OWN YOUTUBE CHANNEL**  
Here's the link to the channel:  
[https:// www.youtube.com/channel/UC28XLtEK5oBNq5gW2Zy1ssg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC28XLtEK5oBNq5gW2Zy1ssg)

**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.

[www.JackLondonInBoyhoodAdventures.com](http://www.JackLondonInBoyhoodAdventures.com)

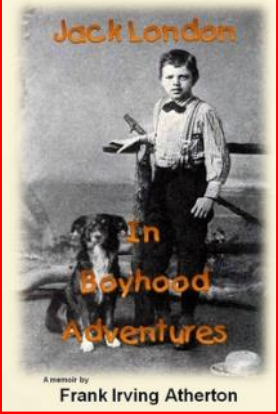


Illustration by Frank Irving Atherton

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Send a JPEG file of your business card or ad to [Rusty@RustyLaGrange.com](mailto:Rusty@RustyLaGrange.com). We'll advertise it free of charge!

## Editor



Rusty LaGrange

*Editor of the  
CWC's  
The Bulletin*

## Notes From the Editor

*Gearing up for events in October means charging your cellphone, keeping your calendar up-to-date, and checking your email daily. Check Page \_\_\_ for the latest calendar dates. I'd like to thank our columnists who are helping to keep these pages full of high-quality expertise-laden information catered to you and your writing career. If you have some topics that you'd like covered, just let me know. You can even ask directly to the author of their columns. I know they'd love the feedback.*

*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](mailto:Rusty@RustyLaGrange.com). Articles and stories between 300 to 700 words are accepted. Photos, poetry, and drawings are always welcome.*

*Don't be shy about giving me feedback on the job I'm doing. And tell me what subjects you would like to have covered in future issues.*

**November's deadline for submissions: Oct. 23**  
**The December issue will be dark. January submissions are due Dec. 28.**