



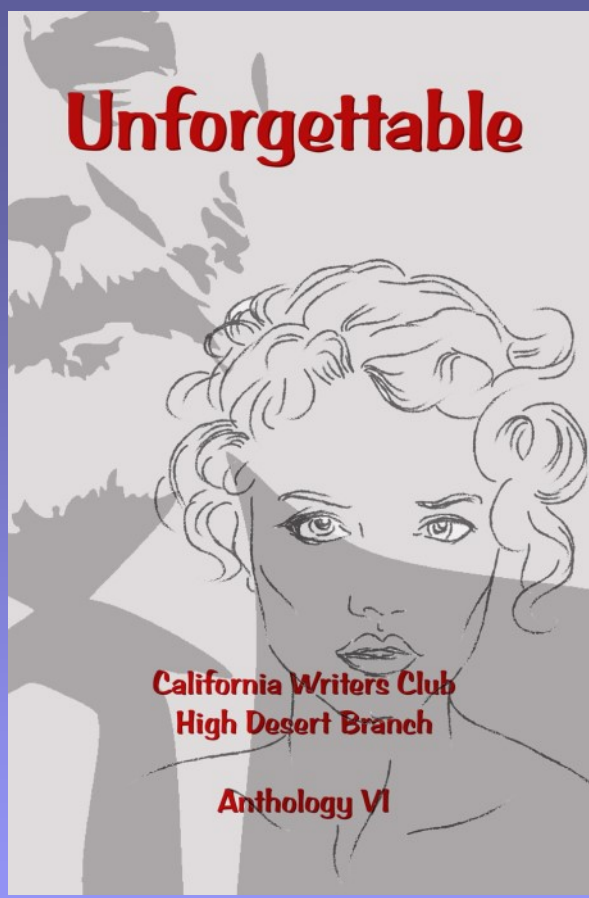
The INKSLINGER

HIGH DESERT BRANCH CWC
Inspiring a Community of Writers

Sail On
October 2021



Anthology Coming in November!



Don't miss the release of HDCWC's latest anthology, *Unforgettable*. The book will be hot off the presses just in time for our regular monthly meeting on November 13th.

The initial release price is only \$10.00. They will make great gifts for family and friends.

Winning submissions will be announced and cash prizes awarded to the authors at the November meeting

An anthology is an expression of a healthy club with members who can work together to accomplish something exceptional. This anthology represents the work of authors, editors, judges, cover artists, and talented leaders who poured hours into its production. The club would especially like to acknowledge and thank Jenny Margotta, Michael Raff, and Steve Marin who headed up this enterprise.

Club Meetings for October

Saturday October 9th 10:00 AM

Tuesday October 19th 6:00 PM

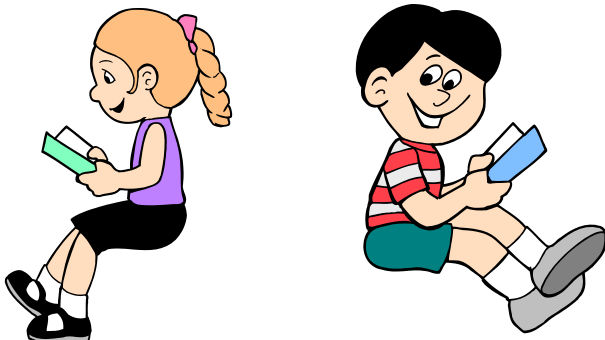
HDCWC Children's Book Panel Set for October 9

Nearly every parent, grandparent or adult writer has, at one time or another, considered writing a book for children. Most of us have wonderful memories of hours spent in our own childhood, turning pages in those beautiful books. Writing such a treasure sounds simple because, after all, it's for children. That should not involve a lot of deep thought.

Is it as easy as it looks? Join the High Desert Branch of the California Writers Club on Saturday, October 9th, at the Community Church at Jess Ranch, 11537 Apple Valley Road in Apple Valley beginning at 10 a.m. for an enlightening panel of people who have been there, done that.

The group of published authors of children's books includes Ann Miner, Roberta Smith and Mary Langer Thompson, who will discuss the challenges of structure, illustrations and publication. Adding to the valuable information will be Jenny Margotta, editor of over 140 books and an author in her own right. She will talk about formatting issues common in such publications. Time is allotted for Q&A so that those attending may be able to get their questions answered directly.

The public is welcome to attend free of charge. For more information, visit www.hdcwc.com.



October 19th Zoom Meeting to Feature Judith Favor

Got enough money? Enough love? Facing an uncertain future? *Sabbath Economics* is the spiritual guide for you.



Loving and being loved makes everyone happier. Looking at money matters from a spiritual perspective makes everything better.

Author Judith Favor helps each of us explore how much is enough as we move forward, individually and collectively, into an uncertain future.

Inland Empire member and author Judith Favor will be the guest speaker for the High Desert Branch's Act II Zoom meeting on Tuesday, October 19th at 6 pm. The public is invited to attend this free presentation. Invitation and link may be found by visiting www.hdcwc.com.

Judith Wright Favor loves conversing with people who are interested in finding sacred possibilities in the very human tangle of personal finances and relational challenges.

She just published *The Companion Journal: 52 Weeks with Love and Money for Sabbath Economics*. This book is loaded with insightful questions for every day of the year, plus lively quotes to get you thinking about money and love in fresh ways. www.judithfavor.com

Don't miss this provocative and unusual presentation.

High Desert branch
of
California Writers
Club
Board of Directors



*The following officers
and appointed positions are current for
the fiscal year of July 2021.*

President

Dwight Norris
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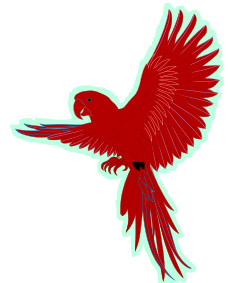
Roberta Smith
hdcwc_web@aol.com

Quote of the Month

By
Michael Raff

"The poet is a kinsman in the
clouds / Who scoffs at archers,
loves a stormy day: / But on the
ground, among the hooting
crowds, / He cannot walk, his
wings are in the way."

Charles Baudelaire
poet, critic,
and translator.



For what it's worth

Writing is risk taking

Arthur Plotnic

Our Address

HDCWC
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Dwight Norris
from the
President

That Time of Year

Yes, it's getting to be that time of year again. Sure, the heat waves will be breaking, but that's not what I mean. Holiday decorations will be displayed and gifts will soon be exchanged, but once again, not what I had in mind.

The event I'm thinking of is our participation in the *Scholastic Art & Writing Awards*. Select members of our club will be jurors, scoring submissions from teenagers ages thirteen and up, in junior and senior high schools across the country. The submissions we'll see will primarily be from our general western region, and students will be competing for art/writing awards and scholarships.

Many forms of art are considered, but since we are the California Writers Club, genres eligible for us to judge involve writing and include journalism, novel writing, short stories, poetry, critical essay, dramatic script, humor, and many others. Needless to say, students get excited at the opportunity to submit their work to a board of experts (that's us), and we (the jurors) get excited too. We get to see what young people are thinking about these days, their values and concerns.

We are not without guidance in our judging. The Scholastic organization provides a rubric for us to follow. Three core values rise to the top when considering whether a submission will receive an award. Scholastic describes them as follows.

Originality: Work that challenges conventions, blurs the boundaries between genres, and shifts notions of how a particular concept or emotion can be expressed. Jurors are encouraged to look for works of art and writing that surprise them and leave a lasting impression.

Emergence of a Personal Voice or Vision:

Work with an authentic and unique point of view and style.

Technical Skill: Work that uses technique to advance an original perspective or a personal vision or voice, and to create something unique, powerful, and innovative.

Remember that this process is simply to assign a numeric score to each submission that we judge, as in 1-10. We are used to critiquing, a much more involved process whereby the juror may write a small paragraph to explain a concept. This goes quicker.

I am looking for about twenty volunteers to serve as jurors, with maybe four or five backups if people cannot complete their assignments. I expect that we will judge about 1000 to 1200 submissions, about fifty to sixty-five each. Each juror will have the opportunity to express in advance a genre of literature they prefer not to judge. Based on experience we know we cannot guarantee you won't have some of what you would prefer not to have, but we do the best we can.

Let me tell you also that the dates for the judging run from December 18 to January 11 and that you will be working from the convenience of your home computer. This project is a wonderful example of satisfying our mission statement, to promote excellence in writing at all levels, and to encourage young and upcoming writers who may indeed make their mark in this world. Plus, this project is an excellent fund raiser for our branch, with Scholastic writing a generous check for our efforts.

We will have a workshop to train all volunteers and answer all questions. You will have support and backup as we go through this process. I am estimating that this project will take between three to five hours of your time spread out over the approximate three plus weeks, but the rewards and memories will last a lifetime.

If you would like to be considered for juror duty on this important project, please send your name to me now at hdcwcpresidentdnorris@gmail.com and mark it for juror duty.

I appreciate your willingness to help.

Sincerely,

Dwight Norris

President, HDCWC





Mike Apodaca

**from the
Vice President**

We All Start As Posers

When I was in high school, my major distraction was performing in plays. I was vice president of our drama club and did many performances—even once performed as Charlie Brown for Russian dignitaries—and won various awards.

One day a director handed me a book and told me to keep it. It was called *The Bluffer's Guide to the Theater*. I am not sure of his motive. My mom was incensed, thinking he was insulting me. But I was happy to get the book. It was full of very helpful information (nomenclature, the tools of the trade, and stuff like that). I found the book invaluable and read it over and over again cover to cover.

I had a similar experience becoming a public school teacher. Hesperia Unified really wanted me, so they hired me to teach first grade with absolutely no experience in teaching six-year-olds. Luckily, I could play guitar (we sang a lot), and loved theater (we did plays and made movies), and enjoyed art (we did a lot of drawing and painting). I was made teacher of the year twice but didn't feel like I knew what I was doing until I'd been teaching for years.

Malcolm Gladwell came up with the 10,000-hour rule (see his book *Outliers*). He explains that it takes 10,000 hours of doing anything before we become proficient in it. I guess until then we are all posing, faking it until we make it.

Let's confess, we're all posers. I was a poser when I became a parent. I remember bringing home our daughter and wondering, "Who in their right mind would trust my wife and me with such a small and frail human being, and full-time, no less. It was terrifying. I compare it to the first day on the job as an air traffic controller. So much depends on you and you do not feel up to the job.

We all start the craft of writing as posers. Now, we have some wonderful writers in our club, some real experts who have put in their 10,000 hours and then some. But, to be honest, most of us are still beginning. I know I am.

AND THIS IS OKAY!

All writers start as beginning writers. They all start with limited understanding of grammar. They all start making mistakes that are unique to them. They all start as posers, pretending to be writers until they can actually become writers.

So here's my plan.

I plan to be honest with where I am. I am not to the place that some of my friends are. And that's okay.

I plan to grow. Writers grow by writing, just as swimmers grow by swimming. I am (most weeks) writing 6,000 words every week. I always have a book on writing that I am reading (I just finished, *Stein on Writing* by Sol Stein, an excellent read, and am now reading *How to Enjoy Writing* by Isaac Asimov. I also read novels and magazine articles, looking for style and exceptional descriptions and turns of phrase. I want to see how the experts do it. I just finished reading *Horus Rising* by Dan Abnet and am now reading, *False Gods* by Graham McNeill. I'm also reading *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury and *Bloodline* by Skip Heitzig. Everything I read has a direct connection to what I'm writing.

The idea that excellence at performing a complex task requires a critical minimum level of practice surfaces again and again in studies of expertise. In fact, researchers have settled on what they believe is the magic number for true expertise: ten thousand hours.
Outliers by Malcom Gladwell

So, if you are a closet poser, more than a little intimidated by the craft of writing—the rules, organization, and discipline required to do it well—relax. Greatness is developed with time. All these successful authors you see around you have been at it for a while. And you know what else? They were once as you and I are now—newbies. Stay with writing. Don't give up. Give yourself the time it takes to develop. Work at it. Come to all meetings, even the Zoom ones. Join a critique group and listen to those farther along the road than you are. You'll get there. Have faith in yourself and enjoy the ride.



Jenny Margotta

from an

EDITOR'S DESK

SHOULD POETRY FOLLOW "THE RULES"?

Most of my editing work deals with prose: novels and short stories in fiction, and memoirs, historical works, and genealogies in non-fiction. Lately, however, I've been editing more poetry.

I am the first to admit that poetry often frustrates the editor in me. It seems sentence structure, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar—the essentials of my work—are casually disregarded by a great many poets these days. Even rhyming seems to have become "old school."

My go-to source for editing is the *Chicago Manual of Style*, but it has little to say regarding poetry, and most of the poetry-related citations deal with how to handle inserting poetry into prose or how to present it structurally on the page. So my fingers went a-hunting through the internet to see what gems of poetic wisdom I could find.

I started with reading several poetry selections online. My mother loved e.e. cummings, so I started with him. Those of you familiar with cummings will not be surprised by the following four lines:

anyone lived in a pretty how town
(with up so floating many bells down)
spring summer autumn winter
he sang his didn't he danced his did.

In his many works, cummings eliminated capitalization entirely, and his punctuation and syntax are seemingly random, yet it works.

This contrasts markedly with the first four lines of John Keats' (1795-1821) "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer":

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.

Period. Apostrophe. Comma. Even a semi-colon. Balm to my prose-driven heart. (I do admit that the syntax is a little stilted.)

Next, I went looking for advice on writing poetry. I found there were many, many books available, including but certainly not limited to: *A Poet's Guide to Poetry* (*Chicago Writing Guides*), *Mind's Eye: A Guide to Writing Poetry*, and *Easy Guide to Writing Poetry*. There's even the *Complete Idiot's Guide to Writing Poetry*.

Then I found a great article titled "Breaking Grammar Rules in Poetry Writing," by Melissa Donovan. (<https://www.writingforward.com/poetry-writing/breaking-grammar-rules-in-poetry-writing>.)

Miss Donovan discusses that poetry is often especially attractive to writers who are rebellious and enjoy coloring outside the lines when it comes to following grammar rules. They contend that such rules, particularly punctuation and spelling, are only tools, and poets are free to disregard them altogether or "use them to decorate and add aesthetic elements to a poem."

It has been said that one needs to know the rules in order to know when to break them. I think this applies to poetry, too. But it shouldn't be done carelessly. According to Miss Donovan, "If you choose to forego the rules because you don't know them rather than as a creative technique, your lack of knowledge will show and the poem will present as amateurish. ... Breaking rules doesn't necessarily mean giving up on the quality and essence of your pieces. Modernist poets compose pieces which have a lot of grammar errors but because the dancing words sound good, the poems become famous."



I will probably always lean toward classic poets like Shakespeare and Keats, or modern-day poets like Maya Angelou, but I commend both types of poets: those who break the rules in their work and those who "color within the lines."

WORD OF THE MONTH

Aubade: (noun) au·bade | \ ɔ̄' bād

A poem that ponders lovers separating at dawn.
Example: John Donne's "The Sun Rises."

The Most Famous Authors of All Time

BY
Michael Raff

Edgar Allan Poe

Since I've started researching famous authors, I have been shocked to discover how many of them suffered horribly. Writer, poet, editor and literary critic Edgar Allan Poe led the pack. No wonder his writing was so dark and sinister.

Born in Boston in 1809 to parents who were actors, the father abandoned his family the following year, and Poe's mother died soon after. He was taken in by John and Frances Allan, who never adopted him. Edgar and John maintained an antagonistic relationship. Poe attended the University of Virginia but left after a year. He enlisted in the army under an assumed name, made the rank of Sergeant Major, but fought to get himself out early. He attended West Point and purposely got himself court-martialed. He began drinking and gambling and remained in debt. Poe married his thirteen-year-old cousin, Virginia Clemm, in 1836, who died of TB in 1847. They had no children.

However, Poe *definitely* succeeded as a writer, publishing *Tamerlane and Other Poems* in 1827, then began writing for literary journals and periodicals. He published his first novel, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket*, followed by several newspaper articles. Becoming well-known, he was able to make a living at writing but not enough to get him out of debt. After he published *The Raven* in 1845, his wife became ill. The illness escalated his drinking.

On Oct. 3, 1849, Poe was found delirious on the streets of Baltimore. He died four days later at Washington Medical College. Poe stayed true to form until his very end. So painfully similar to his works, his death is shrouded in mystery. Some say he died of alcoholism or substance abuse. Others say from heart disease, or rabies, or epilepsy, cholera, syphilis, and even carbon monoxide poisoning. There are theories of suicide, or perhaps he was a victim of cooping, a form of electoral fraud when a person is kidnapped, given alcohol against their will, and made to vote repeatedly for a candidate. I sure hope our modern-day politicians don't take note!

In his brief lifetime, Poe created an impressive legacy. Other than Stephen King, who comes to mind when a reader thinks of horror writers? Poe does! His best-known fiction is considered gothic. He is considered an early practitioner of the short story and often deemed the inventor of the detective fiction genre. He was also a contributor to the

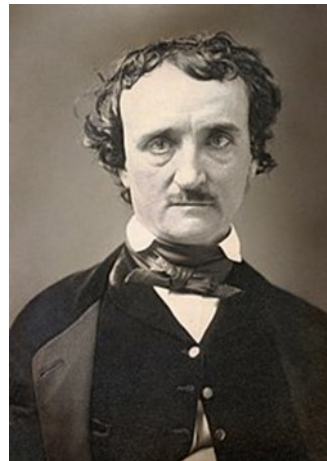
emerging genre of science fiction. The titles of his poems speak volumes: *Annabel Lee*, *The Conqueror Worm*, *The Haunted Palace*, and of course, *The Raven*. Then there are his short stories: *The Black Cat*, *The Cask of Amontillado*, *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *The Masque of the Red Death*, *Morella*, *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, *The Pit and the Pendulum*, *The Premature Burial*, and *The Tell-Tale Heart*. A horror reader's goldmine. I'm foaming at the mouth here!

I read *The Tell-Tale Heart* in high school and it sealed my fate. And I'll never forget *The Raven*. The term "Nevermore," was procured for Roberta Smith's and my partnership, "Nevermore Enterprises." And I've seen nearly every movie with a Poe title. If you ever want a shiver and a chuckle, see "*The Raven*," starring Vincent Price.

Fun fact about Edgar Allan Poe:

Mystery Writers of America present the Edgar Award for distinguished work in the mystery genre.

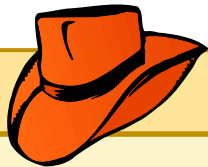
Until next time, happy writing and pleasant dreams!



A WRITER'S LIFE

RUSTY LAGRANGE

Look for the Overlap



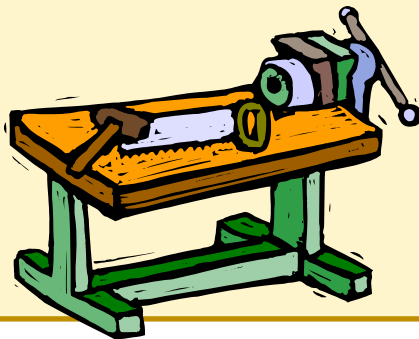
I like using resources from folks I look up to. I can find take-away gems or embellish on the thoughts they are sharing. Michael Katz is a newsletter crafter and business coach for a list of clients back East. In his emailed newsletters he reminds me of techniques I often forget or file away. Overlapping can be considered one of them.

When you wonder why more writers don't do the things you do, then you've found an opportunity to expand your opportunities and reach out with other creative options.

If you enjoy writing romance novels, then you can look toward romance magazines, too. A quick search reveals that heading to the *Writer's Digest* portal will give you a very good start. Be sure to read the writer's guidelines to each magazine topic that seems on target, and do your follow up to be sure the magazine has current needs from freelancers.

If your hobby tends to overlap with what you want to read, you can develop a readership through a magazine, guest blogging spot, video how-tos on YouTube... and more. Years ago, the avenues to expand your writing outreach and overlap was much harder to research. Today, we have the internet.

Let's say your interest in woodworking at home led to finding better tools, which led to resources you use, which led to being an expert in a specific area. Suddenly, you are the person who knows more about this topic than the magazines you relied on to learn about the topic in the first place.



By compiling your research and writing up an article that shares what you've learned, you'll help others to love their hobby even more. You might even attract the attention of the editor/owner/publisher and become a regular. It happens. That's how "influencers" became the next best thing and got a paid contract to raise awareness and funds for their online advertisers.



Years ago, (I may have mentioned this before) I travelled off-road with our Victor Valley 4-Wheelers club from the High Desert that offered to take Mohave Historical Society members on a three-day trip across a famous trail many had never seen. The event took 23 vehicles packed with excited historians from the Colorado River along a 220-mile Indian trade route to Barstow. Members ranged from age 88 to as young as eight. I took photos and interviewed the participants. It was a great success. I offered the story and photos to *Four-Wheeler Magazine* and earned a 7-page spread. I also rewrote it to the magazines that would enjoy camping, family tours, and ghost town trails and spun it many different ways. Two newspapers and a magazine were happy to have it. And I became a welcomed writer at *Four Wheeler*. The *San Bernardino Sun* newspaper gave me a focused off-road pull out in its Sunday section as well as a nice bonus.

Extending your reach as a writer gives you many more avenues to make money and overlapping does bring new angles to a once-completed topic that you thought you had finished.



Together Again



We had our second in-person meeting on Saturday, September 11. We had about 35 people in attendance with another six on Zoom.

So much happened that morning. I will give you my highlights. First, I was able to see and talk with some people I haven't been able to connect with. John Garner was one and we had a delightful (and too short) conversation about our writing.

Marilyn King did a masterful job showing us how she gets organized. She raised my appreciation for creating materials on the background and visuals of your characters. She revealed her secrets in a practical clear way. I have already purchased two of the books she recommended. This was just what I needed at this time for my writing.

I was particularly impressed with Marilyn's attention to detail. She knew every fabric made and its usage during the times of her writing. She knew the calendar (I did not know that Thanksgiving was in the spring and not in November during the 1800s). She looks at everything to make sure she gets it right. Marilyn also graciously shared her worksheets with us (which I have sent out to the club with her permission). What a great morning for writers.



We are also still learning how to do hybrid meetings. The members attending on Zoom taught me many things during this meeting. Here's what I learned:

1. Speakers need to be amplified. This was my mistake. I did not know that Marilyn was going to need her hands to show her materials and could not also hold a microphone. In the future I will try to get speakers to use our headset microphone.

2. Those joining us on Zoom should also have the opportunity to ask questions. We had a lively question and answer period but did not include our Zoom members. Again, my oversight. They will be included in our next meeting.

We are still feeling our way around this whole hybrid thing, and I appreciate so much the patience and good humor of those who participate with us on Zoom. I will try to give you a better experience next time.



Another important part of the morning was hearing from our resident experts. Bob Isbill shared some of the groundbreaking things going on in our club, things like the On Topic Speaker's For You, our own High Desert speakers bureau. We have seen this year that writers can expand their readership by doing speaking engagements—especially those where they can sell their books. Bob is working to create a vehicle for this for our members.

Our question and answer time also turned into a dynamic think tank. Members, like Jenny Margotta, shared their experiences in the publishing world. I was impressed with the pool of wisdom and insights available in our club.

Meeting together, whether in-person or on Zoom, strengthens and inspires us.

Mike Apodaca





Dara Marks Helped Us Go Deeper

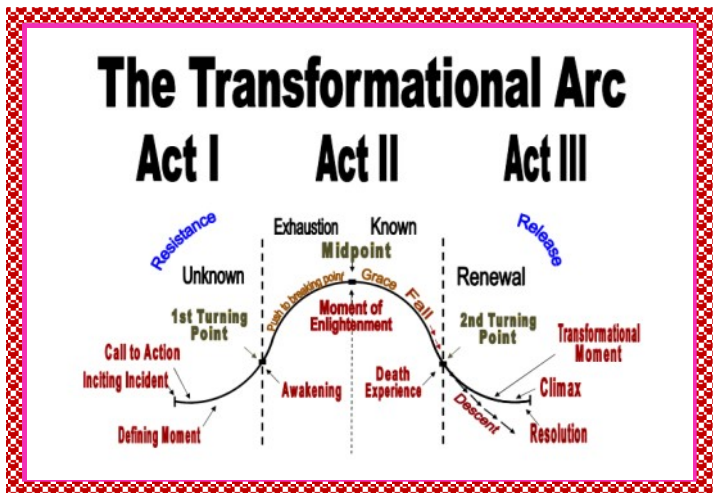


On Tuesday, September 21st, from 6 to 7 pm Dara Marks blew our minds.

Rarely have we heard from anyone with such wisdom and knowledge of story as Dara Marks.

Ms. Marks explained to us that when she began her career in story consulting, she felt that the traditional three act scenario was lacking. It didn't get to the real heart of what made a story work. So she added the element of The Transformational Arc (see the graphic in the upper right). Behind every great story there is a character arc where we see the character reacting to situations and learning how to live their lives. As Ms. Marks said, "We don't grow and change because it's a good idea." We change because we experience life situations that are bigger than we are and call upon us to grow to meet them.

Ms. Marks explained to us that there is only one story—the human story. This functions on two levels: The first one is where the character experiences conflict from the external world. Things are happening to the character. The second level is how the character is processing these experiences, how they are growing in response to them.



In nature everything is either growing and changing or it is dying. The same is true with stories.

As a story consultant, Ms. Marks always tries to represent the story, asking herself what it is trying to say.

With a doctorate in mythological studies, focusing on the use of myth in the human stories and Jungian archetypes, Ms. Marks discovered that myths are simply human stories. She explained, "The human code is displayed in mythology. The more we tell stories, the more we are telling our stories."

Narrative is not simply entertainment. It is the way we understand the world. We relate to everything through narratives. Narratives can teach us how to live. Story is the human instruction manual, teaching us how to live and grow. Ms. Marks encouraged us to write quality human stories that have this deeper personal narrative.

We ended our meeting with a lively discussion period. Ms. Marks explained that art is creating the next new thing for you. It is all about self-discovery.

Ms. Marks ended by sharing that there are many resources on her website (Dara@Daramarks.com).

This was one of our most rewarding sessions to date.

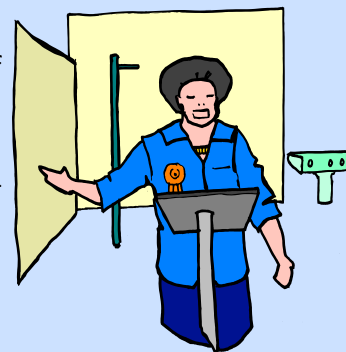
Mike Apodaca



On Topic Speakers for You Gaining Ground

The writing world has changed. The internet, social media, and print-on-demand have created a new environment for authors. Add to this the impact of the pandemic and Zoom, and you can see we are not in Kansas anymore.

On Topic Speakers For You is one attempt to meet these new challenges. By creating a speakers bureau, HDCWC will provide our writers the platform to introduce themselves to the public and to sell more books. For years we have been hosting authors at our meetings. Soon others will be hosting us.



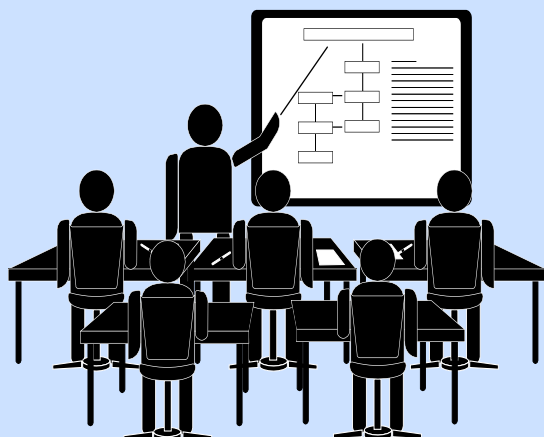
Here are some of the steps forward we are taking:

Web Page

Bob Isbill and I are creating a web page for our speakers. It will be a user-friendly place where groups can see at a glance who our speakers are and what topics they have to offer. The website has a home page which leads to four pages covering our main topics: Writing, Living life, Inspirational, and How to. When one of these categories is chosen, the link takes the viewer to a page that lists all the presentations in that category. Clicking on the presentation they are interested in takes them to the presenter's page where they can read the presenter's biography, see their head shot, and review all the topics they have to offer. The link to this website will be sent out to writing clubs, community groups, and religious groups far and wide. With Zoom, we can literally reach the world. We are hoping to go public with this page by the first of the year.

Opportunities to Practice and Get Feedback

Over the next few months our speakers will be given opportunities to speak to our club to try their presentation in front of a safe audience of friends. We will give our suggestions and help the speaker fine tune their presentations. Those wishing to take advantage of this opportunity should contact Bob Isbill at risbill@aol.com.



Meetings

The speakers bureau continues to meet regularly at the Isbill home. We discuss our topics and give each other feedback. All members of the HDCWC can become members of the speakers bureau. This will give you a greater platform for your brand and will help you sell your books.

Mike Apodaca



Continued next page

On Topic Speakers for You Participants Hold Taco Feed Meeting

Continued from page 11

On Thursday, September 23, we had an evening meeting of On Topic Speakers for You at Bob Isbill's home. The meeting was attended by Joan Rudder Ward, Jenny Margotta, Rusty LaGrange, Ann Miner, Roberta Smith, and me. We started the meeting just chatting about our writing and the things we were doing—life is so busy for everyone right now!

Bob started the meeting by explaining the vision for the speakers bureau—something he has become expert in after ten years of securing speakers for our club. Our intention is to build a cadre of high-quality presenters who can go into the public, sharing their expertise and expanding their writing platforms (selling their books and becoming known).

One of the keys to the success of the program will be getting our website finished. Bob Isbill and I are creating the webpage. The webpage is clean and professional looking on (mostly) a white background with different texts (for instance, large script for the presenter's names). The pages use graphics where appropriate. The goal is to make something that is easy to navigate while being visually pleasing.

Those in attendance approved of the webpage. We are on our way and hope to launch by the first of the year.

Lastly, Bob had each share their topic ideas. These were varied and interesting, showing that we have a lot to share as a club.

If you'd like to be on the speakers bureau, contact Bob Isbill at risbill@aol.com.

This is the way authors build their platforms today and sell their books.



Mike Apodaca

Things to Expect When Hiring A Book Cover Designer

By Mary DeSantis

The average cost of a book cover is \$250-\$500. Designers who work for the big publishing houses can be paid as much as \$3,000-\$5,000 per cover, but that is the exception. Ready-made templates found online are either very cheap or free, but they cannot be customized and do not allow your book cover to stand out. Instead of buying a designer mansion that commands a hilltop, you are purchasing an assembly-line tract home in suburbia.

Your book cover must attract potential readers. It should stand out from the other books on the shelf; it should intrigue the reader and beg to be picked up. The design should inform your reader immediately about the genre, tone, mood, and tempo—based upon the colors, fonts, layout, and images used. The title—although important—is almost inconsequential to luring potential readers.

A book cover designer is hired to do more than create artwork; she must understand the requirements of the publishing industry with regard to template size, print margins, trim margins, CYMK vs. RGB, and how page number and color affect the spine width.

Your book cover designer should ask you detailed questions about your book in order to ascertain what style, mood, tone, fonts, images, and colors to use in creating a cover that most effectively informs a potential reader what to expect from your book. To that effect, your cover designer must know how best to portray your book's particular genre.

Depending on the type of book you have written, if the cover designer does not ask you questions similar to the following, you should not consider hiring her: What is the genre and subgenre of your book? What is the story about? What is the central theme or message of your book? What is your vision for the cover? Who is/are the main character(s) and what is their central dilemma? Are there any scenes from the book that you would like represented on the cover? Are there any special symbols or images in your story that could be reflected on the cover?

Don't be afraid to ask the designer for references and samples of book covers she has created for other clients. Also, make sure she knows how to design a cover for your particular genre. It is very important at this stage to establish good communication with your designer. She should provide a phone number or email address and be easy to contact.

You should be prepared to tell the designer what you envision for your cover, and she should be willing to work within those parameters. However, you must expect your designer to provide feedback based upon his or her knowledge of the psychology of art and design; for example, how colors project a mood or which font styles are typically associated with your genre. Therefore, although the final decisions about the book cover rest ultimately upon the author, you should expect some discussion from the designer if some of your requests violate hard-and-fast rules of design. A designer who agrees with you all of the time about everything, and never ask questions, may not care what your book cover ultimately looks like.

Your designer should provide constructive advice and criticism, with the goal of perfecting the cover for greatest impact. Her suggestions and objections should always be accompanied by an explanation. While she does not have a right to force you to go with one design or another, you should take into consideration her knowledge and experience, and be willing to work with her. Remember, if she is truly worth her salt, she will have a vested interest in providing a cover that will leap off the store shelves; after all, artwork and design is her passion, and she will want to make a name for herself. To that end, she will be interested in collaborating with you, the author, to create a marvelous product that you will both be proud of.

A good designer will be prepared to offer advice about the content of the back-cover blurb. Remember, she is working with immovable margins, and if she requests that you trim the wording, you will have to comply or else your blurb font size will be too small to read.

The designer has to choose a font style and color that will be visible against the background, and you might meet some resistance if you suggest colors or fonts that will not allow the text to be legible. You should take her advice in this matter; potential readers will not bother to buy your book if they cannot see at a glance what it is about.



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Things to Expect When Hiring A Book Cover Designer (Cont.)

By Mary DeSantis

The designer you hire should be aware of the current trends in cover design and book marketing. She should understand what types of software files are required by publishing platforms and what color processing is used by the publisher's printer. It is also imperative that your book cover designer be versant in what graphic formats you, as the author, will require when posting your book cover on various social media platforms.

Your designer should be capable of providing a copy of your book cover ready to upload to your online e-book file. However, it is important for you to know that this is *not* usually part of the original contract, unless you specify it. And, if you do request the cover in a format that can be used for your e-book, you must expect to be charged extra. (\$75-\$150 is usual.)

Always insist upon a written contract up front, in which you and the book cover designer set out the details of the job and what is expected from both of you. Terms and fees must be agreed upon before the work starts. The designer should be able to provide a ready-made contract and should be willing to customize it for every job. This contract stipulates who will own the copyright and will protect you both in case there is any disagreement or misunderstanding later on.

A very important thing for you to understand is the difference between Work For Hire and work that is *not* a Work For Hire. The designer you hire should understand about copyright law in this regard. A Work For Hire is one in which all the artwork and design elements are sold outright to the client (i.e., YOU, the author) at the end of the contract period. The client (YOU, the author) retains all rights to the artwork provided by the artist. For this reason, because the artist relinquishes all claims to said artwork, a Work For Hire contract always costs a lot more, because you are purchasing the copyright. If you want to own the exclusive rights to the cover artwork, it is vital that you stipulate so at the very beginning and ensure that it is detailed in the contract.

If you pay your designer less than the industry standard price for your book cover, it is usually *not* a Work For Hire. In such a case, the artist/designer retains all the copyrights to the artwork and grants you (the author) the right to use it only to sell and advertise your book ... nothing else. You are not purchasing the copyright. That means that you cannot "reverse engineer" the design to use in another project or isolate elements of the artwork/cover for personal—or any other—use. But, even if not a Work For Hire, it is essential that your contract details your rights to use the artwork.

A professional book cover designer will ask for a deadline. In order to allow enough time to produce the cover, you must allocate a reasonable amount of time to do the work entailed. Designing a book cover takes time. If the designer will be supplying original artwork for the cover, you must expect that to take longer than a cover that contains author-supplied images or stock images purchased online. You can expect a book cover to be created within 20-30 hours, longer if original artwork is required. The designer will give you an estimate of how long the job will take, which will depend on the level of detail required.

Very often an artist's vision is not the same as the one you have in mind, and when you see the first draft of the cover, you often experience shock. Professional designers will expect this and are prepared to revise their work until you are completely happy with it. However, there is a limit to the number and depth of revisions that a designer is willing to perform on the same contract. Remember, if a job takes longer than anticipated, the designer is going to lose money! Some revisions require complete overhauls (which illustrates the importance of detailed questions up front) and will take a long time to complete, and will naturally cost more. If the designer has done her homework and has a clear understanding of the author's vision, the first draft will be very close to completion and any revisions will be minor. Make sure that your contract includes the limits and cost of revisions.



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Things to Expect When Hiring A Book Cover Designer (Cont.)

By Mary DeSantis

Typography is the science behind the arrangement of text. The word has also become the term describing the art of creating unique, one-of-a-kind lettering. Many big corporations hire artists to create unique fonts to represent their brand. If your designer is a true professional, she should have a vast stock of font styles to choose from and be able to manipulate those fonts to create a specific look and feel. Beyond that, she may be able to create custom fonts for your book's title. Of course, that will more than likely increase the cost of your cover. (See this newsletter's header for an example of a custom-designed font which I created for the *Inkslinger* some years ago.) A custom-designed font cannot be used in a word-processor such as a computer, because each letter is actually a piece of art.

Here's a little-known tip that will enhance your book's quality and professionalism: Ask your cover designer to provide you with a copy of the book's title and subtitle exactly as they appear on the cover. This image can be a JPEG format, which can be inserted or imported into your Word document, in the title pages. It can be converted to grayscale and enlarged or shrunk as needed to fit. This is a fantastic way of providing visual continuity between the cover and the interior.

Another idea is to ask the designer to provide a copy of a small element (such as an arrow, or a flower, etc.) from the cover art. You can use this symbol to embellish chapter headings, headers and footers, or as fleurons within the text.

Ω

Mary DeSantis is a freelance graphic designer and editor with several years' experience in creating book covers. She offers a reduced price for HDCWC members, with most book-cover designs priced at \$150.

Age is Just a Number

By Ann Miner

I jumped out of a perfectly good airplane on my 70th birthday. A year later I took a 3,000-mile serendipitous trip—alone, with my little dog—in my 5-speed Mustang convertible GT.

At 73 I published my first book and that same year began to write the first of 200 columns on Parkinson's disease for the newspaper.

At 79 I went to Italy for two weeks with my daughter.

When I say I long for younger days, I could be referring to my 70s.



HDCWC Celebrates 31 Years with Spaghetti Party

The California Writers Club, founded in 1909, has 22 branches statewide, with nearly 2,000 members.

Our High Desert Branch was founded in October of 1990 by a lady named Ruth Theodos. We are therefore celebrating 31 years this month. Ruth was before my time, unfortunately, but was a powerhouse of a woman who was a mover and a shaker. I understand that she always dressed to the nines and carried a little dog everywhere she went. Our local community theater, the High Desert Center for the Arts, will tell you that she single-handedly saved them from bankruptcy by raising \$100,000 in funds to save the historic little theater. They have a gallery there named for her. She was state president of the CWC at one time and was a recipient of both the Jack London and Ina Coolbrith awards.



They began with good roots and great leadership. The High Desert Branch subsequently had other good leaders who accomplished notable things, including publication of the 1994 anthology *Images*. They also had a successful conference in 2005. At one time, even Dale Evans was an honorary member.

And then, between 2003 and 2008 something happened. I wasn't around until 2009, but history shows there was a loss of membership and, apparently, interest.

By January of 2009, the High Desert Branch had only 14 members. Because at that time each branch was required to have a minimum of 15 members, the branch was on probation with the Central Board and in jeopardy of losing its charter. The causes are probably several. However, in retrospect, a huge red flag stands out for me. It is this one factor: Two opportunities for Jack London Awards went by with none being bestowed on some volunteer. That is a four-to-six-year period when there was no member doing outstanding things, or worse yet, doing outstanding things and not being recognized.

But by April of 2011, we had reached a membership of 100, published the first branch anthology in 17 years, held a profitable and extremely popular writers' conference and were well on our way to hosting another in September. And we were able to brag a bit about all this in a vastly improved *Inkslinger* newsletter. We had almost \$3,000 in the treasury and had an average attendance at each meeting of over 70 people.

Two dozen of our members were authors of books, and we had put on some exceptionally good meetings with high-profile guest speakers who gave us inspirational and informative material for our attendees. We let our Mission Statement be our guide in determining what our branch was going to be about.

This success story all came about because we had a determined core of people dedicated to making our branch not only survive but excel. If you look at the list of subsequent Jack London Award winners who have been nominated and/or recipients of that honor, you will see the excellence in human contributions that we attracted in those ensuing years.



HDCWC Jack London Award Winners

1993 Ruth Theodos
1995 J'Amy Pacheco
1997 Carol Bachofner
1998 Wilma Willis Gore
1999 Liz Pinto
2003 George Gracyk

2009 Robert Isbill
2011 Carol Warren
2013 Roberta Smith
2015 Dwight Norris
2017 Jenny Margotta
2019 Mary Langer Thompson
2021 Rusty LaGrange

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HDCWC Celebrates 31 Years with Spaghetti Party (Cont.)

Our High Desert Branch continues to be involved in supporting and promoting literary and cultural events in the area. We have, in the last few years, presented seven major writers conferences, as well as sponsoring other exciting and educational events open to the public. These have featured award-winning artists in fiction, non-fiction, poetry, film, and television.

The HDCWC has been mindful of literary contributions by women and African American authors and has put on programs for the public to highlight these extraordinary gifts to creative writing.

We have been able to donate substantial sums to the Hesperia Library Literacy program and to the remodel of the Newton T. Bass Apple Valley Library in 2013.

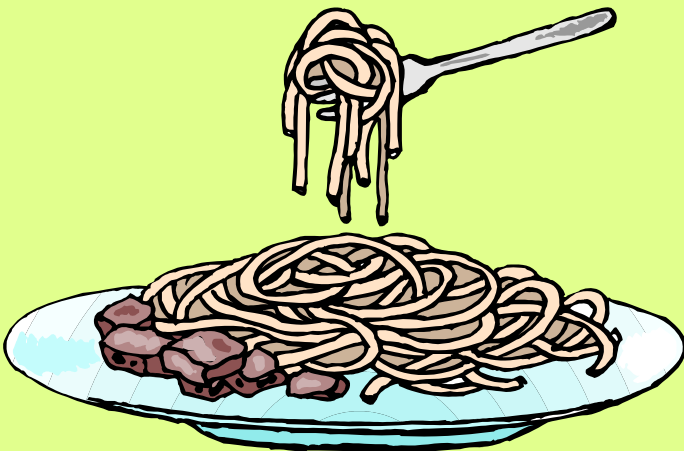
Three times we made in-kind donations of over \$15,000 in verifiable volunteer hours to the Dorothy C. Blakely Memoir Project. These involved teaching memoir writing to students at local high schools and then compiling and publishing anthologies containing their stories of senior citizens. In addition, we awarded \$650 in scholarships to those judged to have written the four best stories within those books. *Let it be Recorded - A Collection of Memoirs* in 2014, *All Our Yesterdays* in 2015, and *Footprints from Around the World* in 2017 were funded by the HDCWC with generous support from the CWC Central Board.

We have promoted reading and literacy, especially in underserved communities, by continuing to celebrate World Book Night. We have done creative writing workshops at the Federal Correctional Complex in Victorville and published 7 of our inmate students in *Desert Gold* 2014. The HDCWC has participated as a panel of judges in the Scholastic Awards for young writers and have established emphasis on poetry at the San Bernardino County Fairgrounds.

With the publication of *Unforgettable* in November, we will have published six branch anthologies, each a collection of our member writers. We also published the COVID-inspired anthology, *SURVIVAL: Tales of Pandemic*, which included submissions from many branch members across the state.

Moreover, we are proud to say that several of our members have been recognized with various awards and literary honors. They continue to go out on their own to explore the world of creativity, contributing enormously to the value of life and to let us know, as readers, what it is like to be a human being

And so, we proudly celebrate our existence as an exemplary and formidable branch of the California Writers Club.



There is something profoundly satisfying about sharing a meal. Eating together, breaking bread together, is one of the oldest and most fundamentally unifying of human experiences.

Barbara Coloroso

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HDCWC Celebrates 31 Years with Spaghetti Party:

The Party by Mike Apodaca

I just got home from club's 31 year celebration. I had a great time. The event started at 3:30. People who came found seats around lovely decorated tables. The chairs were spaced well and we were outside, so I felt pretty safe.

Bob began the festivities by welcoming everyone and having Lorelei Kay read her poem, "Ballet at Hesperia Lake," from the latest edition of *The Literary Review*. Afterwards we chatted at the table. I found I had much in common with those I was seated with. They were such fascinating people! We then filled our large plates with Caesar salad and spaghetti and meat sauce and meatballs from Mama Carpinos. Oh yeah! This was definitely good eats.

Bob asked me to come up and read my story, "The Stupidest Thing I Ever Said," which was also published in *The Literary Review* this year. My story, which is based on actual events, brought chuckles across the crowd. I could not have been happier.

Next Mary Langer Thompson read an adorable piece by Anita Holmes titled, "I Might've Been a Cat Lady." Lastly, Barbra Badger read a story written by Amy Burnett called Trains and Dresses on a Summer Day." What a terrific story!



After the readings, Jenny Margotta read a history of our club (after all, we were celebrating 31 years). It was fascinating. The recurring theme was that a strong club is built on the people who are willing to step up and contribute, who will do their part and then some.

After these ceremonies Bob showed us the cake with the club logo (designed by Mary DeSantis) in the center.

After cake and more wonderful conversation, we had to call it a night. Thanks to Bob and Judy for putting together this magical evening.

If you were not able to attend, I hope you can be at our next club meeting. It's just so great to see



Let's Walk and Talk

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 October 26th at 3:00 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 3:00.

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





What I Learned from Frankenstein

By Mike Apodada



Some time ago we had a speaker who shared that one of the things that good writers do is read—read carefully. Read like writers. Jenny Margotta has also written about this recently.

To me this means we read to see patterns of quality writing.

I'm currently reading the classic book *Frankenstein*. It is not at all what I thought it would be. I discovered how deeply I was affected by the overwhelming visual images of the movie. The book of *Frankenstein* is far more a study in human psychology than a simple monster tale.

A pattern I noticed in Frankenstein went like this:

Unique Event - - - Emotion - - - Life Reaction - - - Change

Mary Shelly goes to great lengths to make everything in the story make human sense. She creates a **unique event**—a man who, by his willingness to challenge orthodoxy, discovers the means to bring the dead back to life. This brings disaster (I will not spoil it).

The **emotional response** to this is painstakingly laid out in the main character and narrator, Victor Frankenstein. He is overwhelmed with remorse over what his ambition has created and the destruction that it brought. He feels guilt at the suffering caused by his actions. Buried in shame, he hides the truth from those close to him. Drowning in his emotions he contemplates suicide but feels the obligation to help his family and not compound their grief. Finally, he is overwhelmed by his many losses—his life's direction, sense of self, and those he loved.

Frankenstein's **life reaction** is to spend nights on the lake in the serenity of the void. He contemplates suicide here. He harbors murderous feelings and imaginations toward the monster. He articulates his change in perspective—for instance, how he relates to the things that used to bring him joy in life that are now far from him. Finally, he attempts to find relief in travel and escape.

We read to feel what the characters are feeling, to join them in their life journeys in all their aspects, including their emotions and life responses. We do this to check ourselves, our feelings, and to ask ourselves if we would respond in the same way. Key to this success is that our characters remain consistent, real to who they are.

This kind of psychological depth requires we really know our characters. We can explain how their complex psychology, built by their previous life experiences, has shaped them to this point and how new events affect this character now. We may want to do this by creating what Mary Thompson has termed Turning Points, life-shaping events that memoir writers use to help explain their Memoir Stars. We can do the same thing for our literary characters.

In *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, there's a short scene that explains the backstory of the relationship between Indiana Jones and his father. Indiana explains his youthful resentment of his father's obsession with the Holy Grail and how he felt his father ignored his mother. Henry Jones Senior responds with his perspective that his mother understood and that he was frustrated that Indiana left home just when he was becoming interesting—and could have joined with his father. The rest of the movie is about them joining in the quest.

If we take the time and effort to understand our character's early life (their Turning Points), and then introduce a significant event, the emotional reactions will follow. The chips will delightfully fall for our readers.



Excerpt from *The Door*
From the anthology, *Seven: Tales of Terror*
by
Michael Raff

Tommy opened his eyes and found himself alone, stranded in the dark. It was a darkness that relinquished nothing and possessed no limits or boundaries. Logical reasons for this startling phenomenon escaped the boy. What manner of desolate place he dwelled in he could not even begin to imagine. He took a breath and swallowed. Feelings of intense dread and abandonment escalated within him.

It occurred to Tommy that perhaps he had died, killed at only twelve years of age. As his Catholic upbringing had taught him, he could very well be trapped somewhere between heaven and hell in a place known as Limbo where his soul would wander aimlessly until Judgment Day.

The boy shuddered and forced his feet to move. First his right and then his left. They felt like lead weights. He inched along within the blackness, listening to his heart pound like a jackhammer.

Then, through the darkness, he spied a distant glowing. It appeared to be a light and he crept toward it. But as he approached, the object became clearer: it was a door, an immense, metal door. The details of this unexpected discovery were still hidden by remnants of the clinging darkness.

Tommy felt hope surge through his body. The glow that had guided him was escaping from the space between the bottom of the door and the floor. Perhaps he had found a way out. His heart raced all the more.



Graphic from Pixabay.com

(Continued on the next page)

Excerpt from *The Door (continued)*
From the anthology, *Seven: Tales of Terror*
by
Michael Raff

As he struggled closer, his legs fought each step of the way. He shuddered as the next thought crept into his mind. What if the door did not lead out? What if there was something behind it, something that possessed a craving for death and destruction? At that very moment, Tommy heard a low, gasping utterance—a voice so hostile and malignant it chilled his blood and unnerved his mind and his body. It beckoned him, even dared him. From just behind the door he heard it bel- low “RELEASE ME!”

A hand suddenly reached through the darkness and clutched his shoulder. “Tommy, wake up.”

The boy lunged upward in his bed. Beads of perspiration clung to his face. “What?”

“It’s time for school,” his mother announced.

A wave of relief rippled through him and his racing heart eased a bit. “Okay,” he managed to croak.

She frowned and sat on the edge of his mattress. “What’s wrong? Did you have a nightmare?”

He exhaled and nodded.

Leaning forward, she appeared concerned. “Do you remember it?”

Tommy glanced to the foot of his bed. During the course of the night he had kicked his blankets into a disheveled heap. “Yeah, it was about a door.”

His mother’s concerned expression changed to a puzzled look. “A door? What’s so scary about a door?”

As hard as he tried to fight it, a cringe still swept through him. “I-I think there was . . .” he paused, swallowed, and murmured, “. . . something *evil* behind it.”

MY FAVORITE SEASON

by Diane Neil

Each season has its charms: winter brings crisp, cold days that urge us inside before a warm fire; spring brings showers and the promise of flowers; summer brings a blazing sun that calls us outside to play.

But my favorite season of all is the one we're in. The autumn equinox occurred on September 22. Fall always seems to me to be a time to knuckle down and get back to business. Big yellow busses are picking up children in the morning and delivering them to school. This year, especially, that is a welcome sight after the long pandemic lockdown.

Leaves are turning golden and bronze. We must enjoy them before they fall and denude the trees, creating piles to be raked and burned. I love the aroma of burning leaves. Bonfires and toasting marshmallows come to mind.

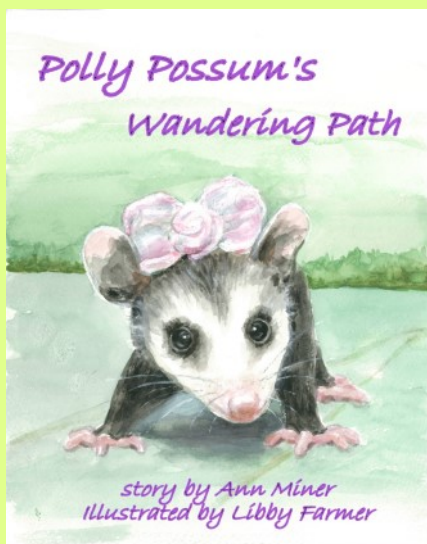
The days get shorter, reminding us of the winter to come. Like life itself, fall passes quickly. Savor it, live it, love it while it is here.

THE END



Keeping My Eyes Open

By Ann Miner



There we were, having a sunset dinner on the pool deck when we noticed something across the lawn. A baby possum was sniffing around the lower branches of the hedges, never looking up to see where she was going.

My assignment that week with the Institute of Children's Literature was to write a story for little children, ages pre-school to six years. When the little possum looked through my screen door later that night, I knew where to begin.

Polly Possum's Wandering Path was born, with the help of talented watercolorist, the late Libby Farmer. I'm forever grateful to her. It's the most popular of all my books.

Poetry

That Autumn Scent

Villanelle
Lorelei Kay

Golden leaves rustle in the crisp autumn breeze,
and lift my drooping spirits in the air
Promises of things to come drift through trees.

Ruffled orange faces of marigolds tease,
Just keep raking leaves—don't think of his affair.
Golden leaves rustle in the crisp autumn breeze.

I just never thought that he would really leave.
Lawyer's papers came today; how will we fare?
Promises of things to come drift through trees.

Working in my yard, I'm often on my knees.
My hands tug at weeds as my heart holds a prayer.
Golden leaves rustle in the crisp autumn breeze.

The wind whispers low of possibilities,
filling me with strength; life still has much to share.
Promises of things to come drift through trees.

Scents of new beginnings, opportunities,
blow across the grass and dance around midair.

Golden leaves rustle through the
crisp autumn breeze.

Promises of things to come drift
through trees.



Places to Publish:

A new online magazine, Kitchen Table Quarterly, is looking for submissions. They focus on life and its impact.

<https://www.kitchentablequarterly.org/submit>

See also . . .

<https://www.tckpublishing.com/get-paid-to-write-short-stories/>

Lady Behind the Mask

By Peg Ross Pawlak

*Her laughter sounded carefree
but a soft sigh
escaped her mouth
every time she heard him play*

*Born with a frown
happiness eluded her
with days of empty chores
and long, lonely nights*



*She was high-spirited
loyal to a fault
"lost in a masquerade"
that forgot to stop playing*

*inside her head
decades ago
So she sits silently
adjusting her mask*

How to Write Horror Stories

by
Michael Raff



Okay, brace yourselves, get comfortable, and dim the lights. I'm peering into my crystal ball to offer advice on how to write horror stories. The truth is, it's pretty much the same as writing any fictional story: sharp dialogue, realistic characters, and intriguing narratives. All elements of good writing must be present, but there's an additional component which makes horror writing even more challenging: the story must be *scary*.

For horror stories to give readers a suitable amount of gooseflesh, the author has to establish the sense of fear. There are many types of fear. I have a fear of heights but not everyone identifies with acrophobia. The horror writer must generate a *universal* fear. The majority of people have a fear of being isolated in a dark, strange place, which can be delightfully effective. Most importantly, just about everyone identifies with the fear of dying, which happens to be the *crème de la crème* in horror writing.

The premise, fear of the unknown, has always intrigued me. For my first horror story, "The Door," Tommy Stockton knows there's something hideously evil behind a locked door, but he doesn't discover what it is until—you guessed it—the ending. Knowing something horrifying is just around the corner, but not knowing what it is, is a sure-fire technique in

creating what I call—the fear factor.

The horror writer explores the malevolent and the inexplicable. Using the proper atmosphere, they arouse fear by building a heightened sense of suspense, mystery, and surprise. (Predictability to a horror writer is like an iceberg to the *Titanic*). As the successful writer builds suspense, they employ longer sentences. For action sequences, they employ a short, staccato-like structure.

Because the plots of horror stories are often improbable, the author needs to construct their characters, dialogue, and settings with as much *realism* as possible. Published in the *New Yorker* magazine in 1948, author Shirley Jackson attained convincing realism with her iconic story, "The Lottery." Everything appears normal at a small-town gathering until a woman gets stoned to death to assure a good harvest.

When writing fiction, a compelling imagination is essential. When writing horror, a compelling, *weird* imagination is vital. I write all types of fiction and nonfiction, but due to the way my mind is wired, the horror genre has enticed me into its frightening, challenging web. All those scary movies, Stephen King novels, and staying awake when I was a kid, agonizing about the boogiemer in my closet, has at long last, paid off.



The Difference Between Content Editing, Copy Editing, and Proofreading

by Mary DeSantis

Content Editing (also called Substantive or Developmental Editing)

Content editing is wider in scope than other forms of editing, involving detailed analysis of and feedback on the structure and development of a story, and providing advice to the author concerning the deeper aspects of content. Copy editors and proofreaders, on the other hand, only skim the surface of the text to ensure that a manuscript is error free.

Content Editing provides detailed analysis of:

Plot development Story structure Dialog Pacing Character development Character arc	Introduction and conclusion Chapter hooks Transitions Integration of sub-plots Fact checking	Timeline Contradictions, inconsistencies, and anachronisms Rewrite suggestions Effective storytelling techniques
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Copy Editing

A copy editor checks for grammar, spelling, sentence structure, capitalization, punctuation, accurate word choices, verb tense, wordiness, missing and repeated words, and word/line/paragraph spacing.

Sentences often need to be rewritten or restructured for clarity.

Proofreading

Proofreading is typically done after the book is formatted. This is the last stage before the document is ready to send to the printer.

Proofreaders search for overlooked misspellings and typographic errors, double-check the accuracy of page numbers in the table of contents, ensure that diagrams/tables/photos are correctly labeled or captioned, and cross-check index page references. Formatting issues are also caught at this stage, such as font-size discrepancies, hyphenation errors, word/line/paragraph spacing, and widows and orphans (words or lines separated from the main body of text and left hanging alone at the top of a page).



What Type of Editing Do You Need?

To produce a great book, all three levels of editing—content editing, copy editing, and proofreading—are necessary. Most editors specialize; i.e., they will only perform one category of editing. Some are capable of providing all three levels of editing.

Smart self-publishers have their manuscripts edited and proofread by professionals.





HALLOWEENS OF YESTERYEAR

By
Jenny Margotta



It is not a cliché to say that the '50s and early '60s were much simpler times. They were. If you were lucky, you had maybe four television channels—on a black-and-white television. The family had one telephone and it was hard wired into the wall. My family even had a “gossip bench” specifically designed to hold the telephone with a shelf beneath for the telephone book. The seat was padded and ours was removable. My mom used the storage area beneath the seat for the Electrolux vacuum cleaner.

These simpler times extended to the holidays, too. *Especially*, Halloween, at least in my town of only about 1,100 residents. Maybe things were different in Chicago or New York or L.A., but I think my memories of Halloween are pretty standard for small-town America during my childhood years.

To start with, we were allowed to go trick-or-treating for three days: two days before Halloween and then on October 31st itself. Kids started roaming the neighborhood at late dusk, which was about 6:30, and we could stay out until 10:00. And we went by *ourselves!* It was almost unheard of for adults to accompany us. The older kids took the younger ones, and if you were an only child, your mother asked the neighborhood kids to look out for you. There were, of course, bullies—older boys who liked to prey on the younger kids. My brother, Richard—who is five years older than I am—and his friends took care of that. They would “patrol” and “discourage” anyone trying to take advantage of the trick-or-treaters. There was a price to pay for this service, however. If one of them “protected” you, his reward was his choice of any one thing in your bag. (I learned early on to hide the “good stuff” in my pockets, else it become “payment for services rendered.” There were no razor blades or rat poisoning issues either.

On the actual night of Halloween, the town held a cake walk downtown. I wonder how many kids today even know what a cake walk is. The mothers all made cakes—brownies were acceptable, but not cookies. (No officials ever appeared to verify if the cakes had been baked in kitchens that met state health regulations.) The cake walk proceeded, based on rules similar to musical chairs, until all the goodies had been distributed. Prizes were also given for the best costume, most unusual costume, etc.

The costumes were different then, too. We would have laughed anyone off the streets who showed up in a “store-bought” costume. *What? You didn't have enough imagination to come up with a costume on your own, so you had to buy one? Not cool.* You wouldn't have caught me in a store-bought costume for all the cakes on the cake walk. One year I went as an article of dry cleaning. I wore a dry-cleaner's bag—the front and back were brown paper and the sides were clear plastic. Fortunately, the logo was placed such that I could somewhat lessen the impact of the eye holes. I made an over-sized clothes hanger out of sticks and a hook I borrowed from my dad's workshop, and I wore a long skirt of my mother's as the cleaned article. I even included an over-sized payment receipt, safety-pinned to the bag. I think I won one of the prizes at the cake walk that year.

Today, it's all mall crawls and “trunk-or-treating” in parking lots. I haven't had a single kid come to my door on Halloween night in over five years. Kids today think they have it made with their cell phones, X-Boxes, and 211 cable TV channels. They don't know what they're missing.



WHO GOES THERE?

By
Diane Neil

I have lived long enough to see the beginning and end of "Trick or Treat." When I first heard of it, I was only about four years old. On Halloween, some costumed older kids rang our doorbell, and my father answered. "Trick or treat!" they chorused.

My father, puzzled, quipped, "Well, don't trip or it won't be a treat!" and promptly shut the door. I don't remember any trick they may have played.

A few years later, all the merchants on East 14th Street in Oakland gave candy to all the costumed children traipsing into their stores, and for many years afterward, we dressed up and knocked on all the doors in our neighborhood, carrying paper mache pumpkins or sacks for the candy, apples and gum we'd be given. Then we'd go home and dump out our haul, gloating over it and trading pieces back and forth.



When I grew up, married, and had children, I delighted in baking Halloween cookies to give out and taking my kids to get treats from the neighbors.

By the time my grandchildren came along, Halloween was becoming dangerous. Bad people were inserting razor blades into apples, and some groups came up with the idea of safe trunk trick-or-treating.

When my husband and I moved into our present home in the High Desert, we gave up all thought of anyone coming to our door for trick-or-treat. Our long driveway is so far from the road in front of our house that no one would ever traipse that far.

Nevertheless, we did have exactly one trick-or-treater in the twenty plus years we've lived here.

One Halloween, shortly after we had turned off the lights and gone to bed, we heard a distinctive "Who! Who! Who!" right outside our window. This was repeated several times during the night.

When we got up in the morning, we discovered a big hoot owl had perched in our huge oak tree overnight, the one and only trick-or-treater we've ever had.

THE END



Events Ahead > Book Fairs & more

OCTOBER— NOVEMBER ACTIVITIES

October 2 5:30 Yard Party Isbill home
October 5 4:00 Board Meeting
October 6 8:00 Accountability Meeting
October 9 10:00 HDCWC Meeting
October 13 8:00 Accountability Meeting
October 14 3:30 Poemsmiths Meeting
October 19 6:00 Act II meeting
October 20 8:00 Accountability Meeting
October 27 8:00 Accountability Meeting
October 28 3:30 Poemsmiths Meeting
November 3 8:00 Accountability Meeting
November 9 9:00 Board Meeting
November 10 8:00 Accountability Meeting
November 11 3:30 Poemsmiths Meeting
November 13 10:00 HDCWC Meeting
November 19 6:00 Act II Meeting
November 17 8:00 Accountability Meeting
November 24 8:00 Accountability Meeting
November 25 3:30 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.



Book Sale Just Before Christmas

These dates are available for selling your books at Town's End in Apple Valley. The last time we sold 92 books. Contact Mike Raff at mpseven@aol.com to reserve a table. They're going fast.

Wed Nov 24 (two spots), Sun Nov 28 (two spots), Wed Dec 1 (two spots), Sun Dec 5 (one spot), Sun Dec 12 (full), Sun Dec 19 (two spots)



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.

"Writers Accountability"

Zoom call each Wednesday morning at 8:00 am

Discussions

Looking for weekly accountability to . . .

Write your book

Ideas on publicity

Website book page with links

Amazon Author Page

Join us on Wednesday mornings at 8 am

Zoom meeting ID: 985 7081 6164

Password: 216757

HAPPY BIRTHDAY HDCWC MEMBERS BORN IN OCTOBER

October 12 Mary Ruth Hughes, October 28 Linda Jones

Famous October Birthdays: 3 Gore Vidal, James Herriot, Thomas Wolfe, 4 Anne Rice, 5 Clive Barker, 7 William Zinsser, Thomas Keneally, 8 R. L. Stine, 9 Belva Plain, 10 James Clavell, Nora Roberts, Harond Pinter, 14 e. e. cummings, Katherine Mansfield, 15 Fredrich Nietzsche, P. G. Wodehouse, Mario Puzo, 16 Eugene O'Neill, Oscar Wilde, Noah Webster, 17 Arthur Miller, 19 John le Carre, 21 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 22 Timothy Leary, Doris Lessing, Ann Rule, 23 Michael Chrichton, Michael Eric Dyson, Augusten Burroughs, 25 Geoffrey Chaucer, Ann Tyler, 27 Dylan Thomas, Sylvia Plath, Emily Post, 28 Ann Perry, Evelyn Waugh, 29 Dominic Dunn, 31 John Keats

Are You a Poemsmith?

You may be. Poets are the craftsmen of words. They love all words, from their syllabification, their beat and rhythm, to their origins and definitions. Poemsmiths love the hunt for just the right word to convey the feeling they desire.

We have a wonderful group of poemsmiths that meet every other week on Thursdays at 3:30 on Zoom. Mary Thompson, who leads the group along with some other powerful writers, graciously sent me the following information:

1. *We meet every other Thursday at 3:30, currently on Zoom. We bring one poem (must be unpublished! We expect drafts) only per session, any form or type (haiku, free verse, sonnet, rhyming). We send no later than midnight the night before, but no pre-reading (unless you want to) required. At the session, each poet reads his/her poem aloud. Then we take about 5 minutes for everyone to re-read silently and make notes on the paper (or screen if possible, to put on it). Then we go around, and each makes first positive comments (what are the strengths?) and suggestions for improving. The poet takes the suggestions or not.*
2. *If you are thinking of joining, we hope you like to read a lot of poetry (not just your own) and have goals of submitting and publishing and learning a lot from the group itself. We strive to be always kind but honest in our reactions. Poetry is probably the most personal genre there is, and therefore, we realize poets make themselves vulnerable to the reader. We all started writing poetry as amateurs; we've all grown in knowledge and understanding of what makes a poem better, stronger, and more powerful.*
3. *We have judged our anthology submissions and hope for an October publication of our first anthology, *From Silence to Speech: Women of the Bible Speak Out*. We are keeping our fingers crossed that a California Humanities Quick Grant for \$1500 for the publication of the anthology will come through for us in August. Jenny Margotta would distribute the funds.*

Poemsmiths meet July 8 and 22, August 5 and 19

Those who would like to visit the Poemsmiths and sit in on a meeting, please contact Mary Thompson at:

mh_thompson@hotmail.com

She'll give you the Zoom login information and answer any questions you might have.

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!**

Temporary Editor



Mike Apodaca

Notes From the Editor

Thanks to all who continue to contribute their creative pieces to *The Inkslinger*. I see this as your newsletter, your opportunity to share your writing with our community and brighten our day.

If you have yet to contribute, think about writing something (a poem, memoir, or story) to submit. The challenge is that it has to be pretty short (200-500 words). Of course, there will be exceptions

We all need encouragement in these strange times. Who knows? Maybe your piece will lift a spirit and bring a smile. It will have made it all worth 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 November items by October 23rd
Submit December items by November 23rd**