



INKSLINGER

HIGH DESERT BRANCH CWC

SAIL ON

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Mission Statement

The California Writers Club (CWC) shall 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.



CAROL'S COMMENT

Greetings to visitors and members. Do we feel like we've been on a whirlwind these past two months?

CWC has been very busy during October and November. Just a recap for those of you not present during the events.

October 13th Carol, Bob Isbill and Naomi joined together to be honored by the Town of Apple Valley when they received a lovely plaque declaring the third week of October as California Writer's Week.

October 24th we participated in additional celebration of California Writer's Week and our 100th Centennial. I was proud to be among our members doing public readings and having an opportunity to tell visitors about California Writer's Club by brochures, business cards and talking to others.

November 8th I was able to fly to Oakland for the quarterly meeting of the California Central Board. This was a great opportunity to meet state officers that I have read about or had multiple e-mails back and forth.

The co-publishing opportunity with the Redwood branch is being extended another year. Members wanting to participate need to submit a work limited to 50,000 words. No poetry or science fiction. Need to include a marketing plan. It needs to be submitted and approved by your branch by March 1st and submitted to Redwood branch by

April 1st, publisher ready. Limited to one submission per branch. The author will lose all rights to the novel for 12 months then it will revert back to the author.

There are efforts to save a lot of money for the state by polling members if they would like to receive the state newsletter, The Bulletin, electronically or if they want to continue with a paper copy. The cost of paper copies are the second largest expense for the state. We will be doing this the next few meetings.

It was inspiring to hear the stories about all the Jack London Award recipients. We are honored to have our own winner this year, Bob Isbill. This is a special award given to a member that has made outstanding contributions to their branch in various capacities. It is not a writing award. We felt this was epitomized by Bob for all he has done for High Desert Branch since joining. He jumped right in and began impressive and consistent articles for publicity release, finding many avenues that had never been tapped. He has been almost single handedly responsible for the impressive growth of High Desert. He then also accepted redesigning and maintaining an updated web site. He puts additions on every month and sometimes more often. As if this wasn't enough, he added Vice President to his responsibilities. He is always helpful at mentoring other writers and we are so glad he found us a year ago. He was on vacation in Texas for the actual award ceremony so this will be presented at our December meeting.

We wrapped up November with our guest speaker, Alton Gansky and had a record breaking 58 people attend. I think all enjoyed the great presentation from Mr. Gansky that was both informative and fun. We will remember "So what are you working on?"

SPECIAL REQUEST

This was sent "blind copy" to the HD CWC membership as a special request.

This is to solicit members who are willing to read and review submitted manuscripts. The time frame for your involvement will be during January, February and March of 2010. We need dedicated people to give a reasonable amount of time to carefully and thoughtfully read and evaluate submitted manuscripts and recommend a single submission from our branch. This would be a special autonomous committee separate and apart from members of the HD CWC Board.

Per Carol Warren's announcement on 11/14/09 and my recent email you should be aware that the HD CWC plans to participate in a very important event in early 2010.

In cooperation with the Unlimited Publishing, LLC, and the coordinator at the Redwood CWC Branch, our effort will be to have one author from our branch publish his/her book in 2010 with advance releases anticipated to be available in October of 2010.

Any member of HD CWC is eligible to submit an entry. The entry must be accompanied with a business plan. More details about that will be released soon.

THE IMPORTANT FACTOR IS TO GET YOUR BOOK READY TO SUBMIT!

Submissions will be accepted from January 1 to the deadline date of March 1, 2010. The guidelines are that they must be print-ready, not exceeding 50,000 words, edited and proofread in professional MS form in Word or RTF. Must be primarily text and written for the adult mainstream market. Short non-fiction book preferred. Other genres considered with a clearly identifiable market, such as fiction, humor, memoir. Disqualifying manuscripts: Screenplays, poetry, science fiction, photo, illustrated, spiritual/religious, cookbooks. Those genres are not for this event.

Other rules may apply. ***The main thrust of this correspondence is to request readers for this event.***

IF YOU BELIEVE THAT YOU WILL HAVE AN ENTRY TO SUBMIT, PLEASE RECUSE YOURSELF FROM THIS VOLUNTARY DUTY. If you do not have an entry, nor is it possible to put one together for this 2010 opportunity, please consider taking the job!

If you are willing to participate and volunteer your talent and your time, please contact Carol Warren, Anne Fowler or Bob Isbill as soon as possible.

Thanks in advance for your consideration.

Bob Isbill - VP/Publicity

IN MEMORIAM GEORGE A. ROBINSON



A few weeks ago, we lost our good friend George Robinson. He always kidded me about my lack of appreciation of poetry, so I wrote a poem for him in Haiku – he was not overly fond of this poetic style.

Wan afternoon sun
Old friend's poem now over
He can rest his pen

Back when I was Membership Chair of our branch, I badgered George into joining despite his doubt of being comfortable as an accomplished poet amongst a gang of scribblers. In time, he shared with us his knowledge and deep respect for Mark Twain. George was that great asset: he was a "doer". This man could be counted on to do what he promised and do it well. He edited the *Ink Slinger* and was a Past President but he is best remembered as a poet.

By George Gryack

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(Winnie Rueff is one of our newest members. She participated in the B & N readings and here is her first offering to the Inkslinger)

TREASURES

I kicked the precious stones along the dirty Chicago sidewalk. Rubies, emeralds, and diamonds sparkled in the sun. Crimson red and royal blue, they were just like the colors of the velvet robes worn by the people in the pictures in my Sunday school books! I never tired of trying to find different colors and pretending that they were really priceless gems. Some day I would buy real ones! If these pieces of glass were so beautiful, I could hardly imagine how spectacular the genuine stones must be!

Many years have passed since that broken glass glittered yellow, blue, red and, green as it caught the sun's rays and my imagination.

I have visited the Taj Mahal in India and the Topkay Palace in Turkey and viewed the jewels worn by kings. Never have I seen a precious stone fashioned into a crown or tiara that is as beautiful as those shards of glass on those Chicago sidewalks.

The jewels of my childhood were an illusion, but so is the notion that one can put a price tag on beauty. I no longer luster after the "real ones", but have discovered that they were THE REAL ONES after all!



JACK LONDON AWARD

The Jack London Service Award is given to one recipient, if nominated by their Branch, every other year for outstanding service to the California Writers Club. There can only be one award per lifetime of each receiver.

Since the foundation of the High Desert Branch in 1990, there have been seven such honorees.

1993	Ruth Theodos	1999	Liz Pinto
1995	J'Amy Pacheco	2003	George Grayck
1997	Carol Bachofner	2009	Robert Isbill
1998	Wilma Willis Gore		

DON'T FORGET

Our December 12 meeting will be a potluck with a short program on the "nuts and bolts" of preparing to publish by Anne Fowler.

Bring a dish and be ready for a pleasant time with fellow writers and good food!

MORE KUDOS TO HDCWC MEMBERS

Our congratulations to Howard and Emily Pomeroy, whose son Jesse recently took top honors as Best Director for his film, *World Full of Nothing* at the 2nd Annual Naperville (Illinois) Film Festival.

The film, soon to be released on DVD, also featured Howard and Emily Pomeroy as actors in their son's movie. *World Full of Nothing* earned nominations in three categories: Best Actress, Best Feature, and Best Director.

Jesse Pomeroy previously directed the award winning short films *Candlelight* and *The Fire Inside*. He has also been a supervising sound editor on over 500 feature films and is an owner/partner in Mission Post, a boutique post-sound company.

We are proud to have Emily Pomeroy, one of the readers at our recent Barnes & Noble Event, as a member of the HD CWC

IN CASE YOU'RE NOT AWARE....

We have been asked to inform our members of the following:

In adherence to CWC Policies and procedures Article XXII (D), members and guests shall not use meetings or e-mail to distribute any unsolicited material that does not pertain to the craft, education or marketing of writing.

I am sure no one would want us to be in jeopardy of losing our non-profit status.

If anyone has questions about this policy, please contact any Board member.

Carol Warren
President
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**"It's no wonder that truth is stranger than fiction. Fiction has to make sense."
Mark Twain**



A great turnout to hear author Alton Gansky

WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON?

By Bob Isbill

“The power of writing,” said Alton Gansky. “Is the ability to put your fingerprints on someone else’s mind.”

At a very busy time in his life when Gansky was doing many other things but writing he got a call from a friend who had just got a writing contract. “What are you working on?” asked his friend insistently. Gansky tried to get around the question but his writer friend wouldn’t let him off the phone. As a result of that unrelenting challenge, Alton Gansky wrote his first novel. “A writer is not someone who talks about writing. You’re not a writer if you’re not writing.”

Alton (Al) Gansky, Christian writer who resides in the High Desert in Oak Hills, entertained and enlightened a record crowd at the Apple Valley Library at our November 14, 2009 meeting. He held the attention of members and guests with anecdotes about such great writers as Stephen King and Norman Vincent Peale and tales of his experience in his struggle in the writing world.

“The key to writing is to write, write, write,” he said. “No one has ever hit a home run from the dugout.”

He suggested some methods to become a good writer:

First, study the craft.

Read, and find out what good writing is. Study other writers and find out what they do well.

Ruin your reading. Destroy your reading by learning. Study what is right and what is

wrong with what you read. He seldom gets lost in a book as he used to do because he’s intent on studying and figuring out what works.

Use as few words as possible. Read William Zinsser’s book, “On Writing Well.”

Get rid of double prepositions. i.e., He pulled out on the road.

Use as few adverbs as possible. They are the seasoning of writing.

“Exclamation marks are the cockroaches of writing. Use them sparingly. Pretend they cost you \$20 bucks each. Don’t ever use more than one. It marks you as an amateur. You don’t start great; you become great.”

A VERY SPECIAL STORY

(Early in October, our President, Carol Warren, lost her dear mother. Our sincere condolences are with her. We have learned that laughter helps lessen grief, and shortly after her passing, Carol sent this delightful story of her mother’s wedding. We’re pleased to present this in her memory.)

This short story was shared at the recent memorial service for my mother and I thought it was worth more sharing.

My father loved to tell the story of their wedding as follows:

They were both 20 years old but at that time (1942) you had to be 21 in the State of Illinois. They wanted to marry now in August, not wait until the following January for Dad and March for Mom. They could not or did not want to have to get written permission from their parents.

They took a bus trip across state lines into Michigan where the age requirement was 18. They got off the bus a short distance from the courthouse and it was near noon. They suddenly realized the courthouse would be closing at noon and they took off at a run.

My father loved to tell people that Helen (my mom) chased him all the way to the court house because she wanted to marry him so much!

(Where there’s a will, there’s a way, we’re told!)



A BANNER MONTH OF CELEBRATIONS FOR CWC



Yes, it's not easy to reach 100 years! Ask us mere mortals! But the California Writers' Club attained that prestigious status in October, this year, and our own Branch was involved to our limit!! What a celebration we've had! We started off with a blast as the Town of Apple Valley honored the CWC with a special plaque commemorating the centennial. Carol Warren and Bob Isbill join the Town Fathers "(and Mother)" for a ceremonial acknowledgement of the occasion! Yes, we made the local papers, thanks to the most helpful staff at Town Hall ! It was an exciting and happy day for the HDCWC



An outstanding October meeting featured a panel of three published authors, two of whom, Glen Hirshberg and Michael Burgess, aka Robert Reginald, are closely affiliated with the State University at San Bernardino as teachers and the Librarian Emeritus, and Diane Sholley, popular newspaper columnist. The presentations were capped with a lively Q & A which left the audience re-committed to their individual projects, goals and dreams.

A birthday celebration really needs a cake, so not one but two cakes were provided at our meeting during the social hour which followed an outstanding panel of published authors . Mary Thompson and Holly LaPat show off the cakes which were cut and served at the break.



On October 24, with the participation of Anita Merrill from Barnes & Noble, a number of our members joined in to do readings from their work, and that of other members, at the B&N Café in the mall. It was a joyous, creative day!



Above, Evelyn Blocker is part of the group of readers. Below:(L to R) Holly La Pat, Roberta Smith, Emily Pomeroy and Willard Brumbaugh were part of the large group of readers. The day's events brought numerous queries about the CWC and a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment among the participants.

CHRISTMAS

Evelyn Blocker

The temperature was five degrees below zero in South Dakota that winter day in 1928. The sky was already dark and overcast even though it was only four o'clock in the afternoon. It was almost Christmas. My sister, Lorraine, and I had been saving our dime allowance that we received each week so we could go Christmas shopping. Our family had always been great on presents for each other. The presents might be little or be homemade, but everyone got a present of some sort.

Rainy and I were bored with our paper dolls so we begged my mother, "When are you going to take us Christmas shopping?" My mother was trying to finish our Christmas dresses before the big day. She was getting tired of our nagging so she finally said, "I think you are old enough to walk downtown to Henry O'Ready's and do your Christmas shopping without me. Bundle up, and be home for supper by six o'clock."

I was nine and my sister was seven. We felt very grown-up as we were going to be allowed to walk downtown by ourselves. Downtown was only five blocks away. We could do it! And we were going by ourselves! What excitement!

There was a blanket of fresh snow on the ground and our feet made a crunching noise as we walked. We could see our breath as we hurried along.

The sky was dark, but we could see the lights shining through the windows of the houses as we walked through the snowy streets. We knew where everyone lived. I could see my friend Marjorie setting the table for supper as we hurried by. Philly's collie dog wanted to go with us but I shooed him home. Philly was my best friend and lived next door.

There were Christmas bells on the lamp posts on the two blocks of Main Street so everything looked very festive. Cornwell's Drug was decorated with red and green tissue paper streamers and Fikdahl's department store had some beautiful Christmas wreaths in their windows.

Henry O'Ready's store was where we got our penny candy and small items that cost less than a dollar. His store had a wooden front and we had to walk up two wooden steps to get into the store. The lighting was very poor so it took us a minute to adjust our eyes to the dim light. It was not very warm in there but we could see the pot-bellied stove in the back of the store. "Rainy, let's get warm before we started shopping", I said. It will feel good after coming in out of the cold." So we took off our mittens, loosened our scarves and warmed up a little before we began our big shopping spree. Then the excitement began.

Many years later a dime store was built up the street next to Fikdahl. After that was built, Henry went out of business. But then, he had two long glass cases of merchandise at the entrance of the store. There were some delicious penny candy in one case and in the other case were a few things that sold for less than one dollar. Just for today we would pass up the candy counter. We had more important things to do. Another neighbor, Mr. Ross, had a jewelry store and jewelry repair in the back of the store. We did not even look at his merchandise as we could not afford that much money. We had to buy a present for our mother and father and little brother Jimmy. Plus we wanted to buy something for each other. I got some dusting powder in a blue jar for my mother. It cost fifteen cents. For Lorraine I got a ten cent coloring book and Jimmy got a comic book. I can't remember what I got my daddy.

We shopped and shopped and before we knew it, it was six o'clock. We could hear the bells ringing from the Catholic Church. I said to rainy, "We had better get home, fast". I was an unwritten rule in our home - home by six o'clock!

As we skipped home with our Christmas packages, my beautiful brown-eyed sister and me, I was aware of such a joy in living. Even though it was below zero weather, we felt warm and we were brimming with happiness. The world was a great place and full of wonder. A bright happy glow followed us all the way home. Christmas was here.

I still remember the happiness of that early Christmas Day so long ago.

JOY! JOY! JOY!



*It's Christmas time and on he lighter side,
for all of us who have, or had, furry feline felons
in the household, here's a bit of fun as we
remember their mischief at the tree!*

REMEMBER DECEMBER

A kitten whose name is December
whose antics we will long remember
assumed you see, that the Christmas tree
was exclusively hers to dismember. (Oh, December!)

The ornaments so beautifully lighted,
were a challenge in which she delighted.
She regarded with glee that beautiful tree
that her family so thoughtfully provided. (So excited!)

She played with each ball for a while,
and then with a devilish smile,
She swatted each ball clear into the hall
with never a thought of her guile. (Just a smile!)

Although knocking off ornaments was fun,
she could hardly wait 'till it was done.
The best part of all (oh she had a ball!)
was pulling off tinsel on the run. (How the tree spun!)

The next day they redecorated the tree.
Thought December, "They did it for me!"
That night, in the quiet, she had another riot,
a bash, a smash, a jamboree! (Oh what glee!)

Next day it was set up once more
and that pleased December to the core!
She attacked the tree with a fiendish glee
until ornaments were all over the floor! (Until there were
no more!)

Now her mistress, it seems, did not share
the joy of stripping the tree bare.
So the following morning, when dawn was a-borning,
her mistress grabbed her up by the hair! (In the air!)

"See this tree? You leave it alone!
Or I'll turn you into a stone!
Keep your paws away all night and all day'
Or you won't even be able to moan!) (Or groan!)

Now December only thought it was fun
she didn't consider harm done.
She's a good little cat, don't you know that?
but she can't help what's already done! ('Twas just in
fun!)

By David W. Worden 12/1979
Judi Isbill's father



CHRISTMAS 1965

I thought the world was dark and gray
I thought that the world had forgotten God

Lasts year
My brother was burned!
There ere floods on the Mississippi!
There were riots in Watts!
There was unkindness!
There was coldness and
People passed by without a smile.
There was a war
And my boy is only eighteen!

And then I saw the Christmas lights
People put them up on their houses-
House by house and street by street.
I heard the carols and saw the Christmas trees!

For a while people stopped
To say Marry Christmas and Peace on Earth!
And they smile and are kind for a moment.
Now I know people have not forgotten God after all
And I felt my hard heart soften.

Perhaps they have only lost their way
For the moment and on Christmas they
Will return to the fold.

Maybe it was not only other people
Who had lost God – maybe it was also me!

By Evelyn Blocker

MEMORIES

Amber flames lick at the darkness
Shadows drifting here and yon
Memories of past time pleasures
Passing, fleeting, nearly gone.

Thoughts of childhood weave their tendrils
Grasping, clinging to my mind
Dragons, fairies, leaping turning,
Leave reality behind.

Suzanne Deboard Holbrook-Brumbaugh

LOVE IS MAGIC

Love is like magic, but like most magic
it is an illusion so let your love appear,
become solid and don't let it dissolve
and disappear.

by Alyssa Schultz

**WELCOME ABOARD THE
GOOD SHIP HDCWC**

Since our last issue of the *Inkslinger*, eight new members have joined our crew! We are happy to welcome **BRIAN COOPER, ZOIE McCALL, ANN HEIMBACK, WINNIE RUEFF, FRAN SAVAGE AND LINDA BOWDEN.**

Winnie hit the deck running by being one of the readers at our B & N program! We hope the rest of you will also feel comfortable participating in our meetings and whatever events are coming our way.

So, Welcome aboard and "Sail On".

CWC OFFICERS

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Does Alton Gansky have our attention or what?

THINKING OUT LOUD FOR A MOMENT:

As we come to the end of the year and look back, I hope each of you will join with me in recognizing what a productive, outstanding, 12 months this has been. There is a new energy at our meetings and the room fairly crackles with positive vibes during our "socializing" period as our members exchange ideas and comments. We've had a fantastic group of speakers and I know you will be delighted with the line up for 2010. It's hard to believe we have someone on tap as a speaker for every one of the next 12 months!

The critiques are going fantastically; new members are joining our ranks, and we've several projects lined up to keep the membership busy and productive. More about those as we go along. One thing we are striving to do, though, and we need the cooperation of each member, is to make necessary arrangements to have the *State Bulletin* delivered electronically to those of us with on-line capabilities. The sign up sheet will be out at the next meeting, again – Alton Gansky's program was so exciting most of us didn't get around to checking out the items on the back table, of which this was one. The other one was for the potluck, next meeting. Carol has been giving you information concerning that.

So, as we move through the holidays, and into the bright promise of the coming year, your Editor would like to say "thank you" for helping to keep the Pantry afloat. There are still several submissions I'm anxious to bring to you, but I always need more – seems with our Centennial celebration activities, plus the holidays, we've not been without copy for each issue – and I know when I'm blessed. Do keep it coming.

And there are two special people who provide support and help consistently but whose contributions are rarely recognized as they should be: **Judi Isbill**, thank you for helping us know each other better through the fine name tags you continue to provide. And **Clark Fowler**, whether it's manning the coffee pot or making a run in when more doughnuts are needed, thank you for your helpful presence.

And to all of you, HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Don't forget to check our website at www.hdcwc.org! There is always something new being added and it is, truly, a site we can be proud of, thanks to VP Isbill.

We are finding that new people are coming to us through the website and the newspaper as well as word of mouth - how fortunate we are to have such excellent media coverage.

MERRYCHRISTMAS AND SAIL ON