



INKSLINGER

HIGH DESERT BRANCH CWC

SAIL ON

Vol . 24, No. 2 – February 2010

The California Writer's Club (CWC) shall foster professionalism in writing, promote networking of writers with the writing community, mentor new writers, and provide the literary support for writers and the writing community as is appropriate through education and leadership

WHY IT'S ESSENTIAL TO GROW

& WHY WE SHOULD CARE

by Bob Isbill

(Carol Warren, our President whose column is usually found in this spot, is ill. We wish her speedy recovery, and hurry back, Carol. For this issue, we will run an article from our June issue, as titled above. It is particularly relevant to the metamorphosis HDCWC is currently experiencing.)

In the words of Dara Marks, author of Inside Story: The Power of the Transformational Arc, there is nothing in the universe that is in permanent stasis. We are either growing toward something (life) or resisting growth, going towards decay and death.

That is true not only of your protagonist, but also of an organization or a writers' club. Sadly, our members, like other friends, drop out, move away, stop meeting with us – it's life's process.

Most of us consider ourselves lucky if we can count on one hand the number of real friends we've cultivated.

We do not need to abandon the familiar and the loyal in order to enlarge our relationships and embrace new ones. We have the obligation to tell other people about our Club.

Many people have no idea that every second Saturday of every month, a hundred year old writers' club meets in Apple Valley. They need to know that. Cultivating new members is how we re-create ourselves and

develop the quality of our meetings and our structure.

Writers, overall, are pretty great people!

When was the last time you invited one? Tell them about www.hdcwc.org and look at our events, past and future. It's exciting! We're growing.

Growth means reaching out to others like ourselves, those interested in practicing and improving their craft. When we come together each month, it's a learning opportunity for every one who attends.

Again, if we're not learning (no matter what our chronological age) we're not developing as writers; our craft may be in danger of decaying – even dying.

Quality guest speakers *like* to speak to big meetings. Attendance reflects vitality of the group, and excites those who come to hear about us.

Increased membership also increases networking opportunities to meet and learn from those who can and will help us. It means having more influence over our future in terms of affording the equipment and instruments needed to educate ourselves.

You will probably never be asked to participate in a fund-raising car wash. However, if you can gift wrap, or just greet people, or volunteer to pick up refreshments (and be reimbursed) or give someone else a ride or serve as an officer or chairperson that's involvement! That's a contribution not only to the club but to your own personal development.

We have a larger responsibility than just increasing the numbers and populating our gatherings with lots of people; we have a sizable message to send to our fellow writers and the community:

We are here!

SPECIAL MEETING DEFINES HDCWC GOALS

An informational meeting was held at the McDonald's on Bear Valley Road on Saturday, January 23rd. An update of what we've accomplished in 2009 and some of our plans for 2010 were discussed.

Our history of this month this year versus this month last year (14 members increased to 66) was reviewed by Vice President and Publicity Chairman, Bob Isbill. We've improved the quality of our meetings and have had an impressive array of guest speakers; we've established a relationship with Barnes & Noble in public readings of the members' work, and in fund raising; we've been recognized with a proclamation honoring writers' week by the Apple Valley Town Council; we've had articles every month in the Daily Press to announce our guest speaker, established an online presence at highdesert.com as well as developing our own www.hdcwc.org, and publishing a quality Inkslinger newsletter. We put together a great centennial celebration in October with a panel of writers, and ended the year with a potluck meeting to embrace our "extended family".

Plans for this year are more of the successful same, and setting up another Barnes & Noble Reading Festival, a workshop at the Hesperia Library, a super conference on September 25th, and possibly an anthology of the works of our High Desert members.

The list of star speakers for our "Howl At The Moon" conference on September 25, 2010 is getting more and more stellar. At press time, we did not have total confirmation but we are expecting speakers that you will NOT want to miss!

"Interest Lists" of chores were available for those attending to sign up for activities that they may be interested in doing. The same lists will be available at our February 13 meeting. We urge everyone to participate in the "life" of our branch by making yourself available for some extra duty. All members were urged to check out the Events page on www.hdcwc.org for writers' events that have come to our attention.

HOW TO SUBMIT AN ITEM TO THE INKSLINGER

Nearly any publication worth its ink maintains a "**style sheet**" setting out the format for submissions.

I have neglected to do this in the past, and I apologize. One would have thought, given the number of key strokes I've entered changing the "face" of Pantry contributions, that I would have done it before now. But, not one to shy away from a cliché – "better late than never"! So, here goes:

Please send your items **single spaced**. I know, almost everything we've ever read about submitting MS calls for double spacing, but this is a newsletter and single space is fine in fact, better for designing the layout.

Try to have a **title** – I might title it for you and totally miss your emphasis.

Font size should be at least 10 point, 12 is better but may be reduced to allow inclusion in a given space.

Don't trust your **spell check** blindly – "to", "too" and "two" don't mean a thing to a spell check – they are all correct and its choice may not be your choice. Recheck after you use Spell Check,

Please understand that with our space constraints submissions should be less than **800 words**. But you can easily give us a sample of your style and skill in that amount of words – make them short and pithy – fun to write, fun to read!

"Word" seems to be the processor of choice. I have converted to it just recently, and am still learning but finding it to be a very good program for our purposes.

Oh, and please indicate on the submission **who wrote** it! Don't laugh! I have several pages given to me at meetings with my own almost impossible scrawl across the top to identify it!

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"Only a mediocre writer is always at his best."
W. Somerset Maugham



At the business meeting

MEMORIES OF RAISING AN ADOLESCENT

By Carol Warren

I recently overheard two mothers at the grocery store discussing the trials and tribulations raising teenage boys; all the driving to and from school sports events, trying to minimize the “exposure” to what they felt were bad influences, limiting their time playing video games and other challenges.

I couldn’t help but think back to my own teenage son, many years ago. He was very into what I called his fascination with critters.

One day as I was preparing to do some laundry after work, my son Ron said, “Don’t bother with my hamper. I’ll do my own laundry later.” I thought about that and suddenly realized he had been doing his own laundry for months. I couldn’t help but be suspicious so I went into his room. As I walked toward his clothes hamper, I offered to do part of his clothes to complete a load of my own. He jumped up from his bed and rushed over to the hamper before I could open it, holding the lid down. “All right,” I said. “What’s so secret in your hamper?” There is a six foot king snake in there. I jumped back like the snake had already escaped. I began pointing to the door as I shouted, “Out, Out, get it outside right now!” He grabbed one of the empty garbage cans that had a lid, as he went outside with the snake draped around his neck.

Another day, I was returning from the grocery store and as I entered through the kitchen, I overheard my daughter telling my son, “You better get that snake outside before Mom gets home”.

As I approached the bathroom, there he was with a snake draped around his neck and over his shoulders. “What in the world are you doing, son?”

As we had been remodeling our older home room by room, an item we replaced was an old cast-iron bathtub, with an all-in-one fiberglass unit. Our son promptly asked if he could keep that outside and make a kind of terrarium in it. I thought that would be o.k. - any thing to keep the critters outside our house. Our son and his friends spent hours watching the snake and lizards in the converted tub.

That didn’t explain what he was now doing with the snake in the house again (a different, smaller snake, but a snake is a snake to me). He went on to explain that they had been keeping an old screen door over the tub to protect from the family cat. Somehow, the screen got knocked partially off so that the cat had access to the snake. I think it was what they called a red racer. My son was busy providing first aid to his snake. He was dabbing each puncture mark with hydrogen peroxide. Then putting Neosporin and a band aid on it. He was promptly ordered outside again.

The joys of raising boys in the desert had different challenges than this current generation. I would still take our problems over current day obstacles.

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December Potluck



TREASURES

By Winifred E. Rueff

I kicked the precious stones along the dirty Chicago sidewalk. Rubies, emeralds, and diamonds sparkled in the sun. Crimson red and royal blue. 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 the 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 lust after the "real ones", but have discovered that they were THE REAL ONES after all.

DWIGHT NORRIS SPEAKS TO CWC ABOUT

SELF PUBLISHING

By Bob Isbill

In his thriller, The Gentleman Host, a serial killer makes the ocean his playground as he poses as a suave gentleman host on cruise lines and throws unsuspecting middle-aged women overboard in the middle of the night.

He tried 80-plus times to get editors interested before he decided to do it himself. "I figure something (this book) is better than having a file in my computer", Dwight Norris, featured speaker at the January meeting of CWC, said about self-publishing.

He came across the idea for his book when he met an older gentleman on a cruise who explained he was a Gentleman Host – someone to dine with and accompany single, middle-aged women.

Dwight said to himself, "What if there was a serial killer who had the trust of the cruise ship and who worked as a Gentleman Host?"

Norris became serious about writing and took two separate writing courses: One on writing novels and one on writing short stories. He explained you are assigned a certain instructor; you read assignments, do exercises and return it to your instructor. It's all done by correspondence. After three months on the short story course, he signed up for the novel course as well. The told him he was the only one to ever take both courses at the same time.

Dwight Norris has a B.A. and M.A. from Pepperdine University in communications. He lives in Apple Valley.

"I've written two screenplays, about a dozen short stories, and am working on my second novel." His next novel is a sequel to The Gentleman Host.

NINETEEN DRESSES

By George Grayck

About the fourth evening at dinner, the only meal she took in the dining room, we noticed something about the woman in Cabin C. She wore a different dress each evening. Wolfgang, our steward, served her juice, oatmeal, prunes, toast and tea in her stateroom each morning. Ten dollars could buy all kinds of gossip from Wolfgang. She would order lunch from the ship's daily menu, again delivered to her third deck cabin by Wolfgang.

As our West German freighter plowed through the Pacific south towards the Canal Zone, we learned a bit more about our fellow passengers each day. It didn't take long, there were but six of us aboard. My wife and I shared Cabin A. Louise and Stanly Fletcher were in Cabin B and the lady in question in Cabin C.

Retired British Navel Commodore Sir William G. D. Kentlent-Whattley III, DO. BBK was assigned Cabin D. He was gentle old soul and we came to calling him "Captain Billy". His Cabin D was the smallest with just one forward facing window and the view was blocked by a large cargo container. And D was the only cabin without a patio- balcony.

The Fletchers were an odd pair, semi-retired; they published a radical far-left Socialist weekly newsletter from their home in Milwaukee. They considered the Socialist party line ridiculous but claimed the effort paid too well to give it up. She was tiny, old and wrinkled. She would dip in the small saltwater pool each morning. He chain-smoked Camel cigarettes and had a fitful, hacking cough.

Our dress lady's name was Dame Marianne Aldrich but she asked, "Please, just call me Mary." She was eighty or so with bad knees and the steep freighter stairs would allow but one round trip a day to the main deck. She would join us for drinks at the late afternoon "Happy Hour" and socialize prior to dinner. Mary lived with her sister in Ipswich in the summer months and traveled the high seas on freighters and cruise ships the balance of the year. It was her preferred lifestyle.

We dined with the Captain and ship's officers. Even though we more or less had the run of the ship, the routine on a freighter is constant and tiresome. Freighter cruising is not for everyone. Dinner and counting the number of Mary's different dresses became our amusement. The day long journey through the Canal was a welcome diversion. A fierce Atlantic storm forced a 300 mile detour and added time to the normal schedule.

Nineteen days had passed; Mary missed Happy Hour and had Wolfgang bring her dinner upstairs to Cabin C. Her huge steamer trunk held only nineteen dresses. She thought it rude to dine in the same dress

twice on a voyage. Three days later we docked in Rotterdam. We didn't see Mary depart. We wondered what she was wearing. But then again, she was British.

*****NOTICE*****NOTICE*****

Nevada Magazine is offering a writing contest. Here are the details:

From now until August 2, 2010, Nevada Magazine will be accepting submissions for their first Writers' Contest. The submission must be received by Monday, August 2 at 5 p.m. (PST) electronically, via e-mail to editor@nevadamagazine.com. Specify "Writers' Contest" in the subject line, double space your story (preferably in Microsoft Word format), and provide your contact information at the top of the document.

- **It must be 1,500 words or less**, including any sidebar or contact information. Stories that exceed the word count will be automatically disqualified.
- **Must be tourism specific and highlight a Nevada place** that is reasonably accessible to the public.
- It is not mandatory, but **quotes from at least three relevant sources are highly encouraged**.

Prizes:

- 1st Place: \$500 Story will be published in the November/December 2010 issue of Nevada Magazine and the writer will receive 10 copies of the issue.
- 2nd Place: \$200 Story will be published in the November/December 2010 Web Extras section of nevadamagazine.com.
- 3rd Place: \$100 Story will be published in the November/December 2010 Web Extras section of nevadamagazine.com.

All winners will receive a certificate suitable for framing. For more details on the contest, visit nevadamagazine.com or e-mail editor@nevadamagazine.com, or call 775-687-0602.

(Be sure to check our website for more opportunities for contests and other workshops. They are posted as they come in and the website is a valuable resource for our members)

Member Mary Langer Thompson (aka Mary Thompson) has a poem, "Not Entirely Lost in Paradise," in Manorborn, the annual publication of the Hartford Poetry and Literary Society. The issue is on the theme of water:

Not Entirely Lost in Paradise

I'm moving to
a tropical tiara
in the Pacific where
both shacks and estates
are numberless
and flame tree streets
nameless
and the shameless sun
lolls around the sky
all day 'til the
banana moon appears.

Here I could wear
purple muu muus
and flip-flops or
go garbless
as a Chamorro girl
passing time
eating plump papayas
on LauLau Bay.

Or I could be
a philosopher queen
thinking thoughts
as deep as
the Mariana Trench
while savoring
addresslessness.

* * * * *



WE WILL FILL THIS ROOM!

(Lone Wolf conference room – ours, 9/25/10)

A DIFFERENT KIND OF MAGIC

By Curt James

Denny Morrison was a man without a sense of humor, and if you asked anyone who knew him, the teat which fed him the milk of human kindness dried up a long, long time ago. He was rude, always wearing a perpetual scowl and about the only kind thing that could be said about him was that he was a true equal opportunity hater.

Delores Crandall, "De-plor-es" to those who knew her, was a woman who had absolutely nothing good to say about anything...to anybody. She was generally regarded as back stabbing busy body who, so legend has it, had the innate ability to track down any smile and squash it. It seems that her sole purpose in life was to rob any sort of joy from the very air of those who had the misfortune to be around her.

Both Denny and Delores lived in a small suburb of Seattle called Bothell, Washington. And even though the two of them had lived there for many years, they had never met. They rode the same public transit buses, often eating alone at the same restaurants and abusing the same wait staff. But it always happened that they would arrive and leave at different times.

Clarence Cupid, Badge number One Hundred and Fifty Four, meaning that he was the one hundred and fifty fourth cupid in his district, which covered the greater Pacific Northwest, had just arrived at his desk and began the arduous task of planning out his day. Sure, Clarence could flit in and out at the blink of an eye from one location to another, but that didn't mean that he still didn't need to organize his route very carefully. Being a Cupid wasn't as easy as everyone made it out to be. It was all in the timing. Anyone could shoot an arrow and pierce a heart, but to do so, precisely at the right time where the target was caught in such a way that the other person was sure to notice them as well...Yes definitely much more of an art form than science.

For Clarence, today's biggest challenge was Darnell Thomas and LaShanda Wilkens. Both city bus drivers who had certainly earned the right to have a little love in their life and according to the roster, today was *the* day. It would be tricky of course, the only time that Darnell and LaShanda would be near each other was when the number 37 Kenwood to North Creek bus, driven by LaShanda crossed the Five Twenty Seven, and Darnell, who drove the number 122 Bothell to Everett, merged onto the Five Twenty Seven from Two Hundred and Twenty Eighth Street. Clarence took his time, studying all the angles and the location of the sun, finally determining his optimal targeting location.

Clarence then prepped his gear, he chose a PSE 151 tactical crossbow, an EOTech 556 Holographic sight with night vision capability, and of course a quiver of carbon fiber reinforced love arrows that were shipped

directly from headquarters. Clarence also loaded the coordinates into his handheld GPS and then donned his AAE IR/Thermal Stealth cloak. Gone were the days of running around naked with a simple bow and arrow, the Cupids Union local 136 had seen to that. Seemed like you were either freezing your toucas off or ended up with a very uncomfortable sunburn. It was always a gamble using the old rickety bows which had a tactical engagement range of zip zero nada! And Heaven help you if the target saw you and took off running...easier to run down a cape buffalo than seventeen year old girl who just knew she would be stuck with the pimply faced boy down the block. No, technology was the answer here. One shot, zero detection.

Corey Martin, aged nine, had successfully spirited his father's laser pointer from his dad's office and was quietly exiting the house. He was fascinated by this pen that had the ability to put someone's eye out (at least that was what his mother told him). Of course he had no intention of doing anything like that, it was just the feeling he got by wielding such a powerful device that had the ability to put a red dot where ever he pointed it. Corey's plan was to take it down to the end of the street and point it at the empty lot across the street where he was determined to find just how far this laser could shoot.

Clyde Cupid, Badge number 17 sat at his desk staring at Clarence's after action report with his mouth agape and in unabashed shock. A subsequent investigation into what was being called the St. Valentine's Massacre around the office revealed that unbeknownst to Clarence, Corey Martin did flash a laser light into the sight optics of Clarence's scope at the exact moment that he was squeezing the trigger. This resulted in a flinch which caused the crossbow bolt to miss the target's heart and enter the left shoulder thus bringing on symptoms not unlike a massive coronary event. The Target, one Darnell Thomas, then swerved uncontrollably into the on-coming lane which resulted in a head on collision with the bus being driven by La Shanda Wilkens. Both were declared DOA. Additionally, Clarence Cupid was being placed on indefinite convalescent leave due to a burned cornea and severe emotional distress. A final entry in the report stated that several days after the event a meeting was held for the survivors of the accident by the law offices of Dewy, Cheatum & Howe. The meeting was thrown into disarray by two members of the group, Denny Morrison and Delores Crandall. Witnesses said that the pair were extremely argumentative, dismissive of any reasonable legal action to compensate them for their trauma and highly insulting even to their own legal team. The two were seen entering a cafe after the meeting walking hand in hand.

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FIRST BOOKS AND GROWING PAINS

by Holly La Pat (aka Sierra Donovan)

I once had a conversation with a recently-published author who said airily, "I think every writer should throw their first book away."

To this day, I think of him as an evil human being.

Why? Because Mr. Recently Published knew darn good and well that I was in the throes of pouring my heart and soul into my first book. He knew I'd be horrified at the very idea that my cherished efforts might never see the light of day.

Was he right? In my case, maybe. But he didn't have to SAY it.

You see, I believe new writers are to be encouraged. If there's bad news to be told, you break it gently. I've heard it said that every writer has to write a million bad words (gee, I didn't know there were that many profanities!) before they get to the good stuff. Me, I don't think any hard-and-fast rules apply. It's probably good to know, and accept, that the vast majority of us start out "bad," to one degree or another. But there's always the rare chance that a new writer could be another Harper Lee, the author of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, whose first and only book was brilliant. Who are we to say?

To try to give Mr. Recently Published the benefit of the doubt, perhaps what he meant was simply that I should be prepared to spend some struggling in the trenches. That's good advice. But it sounded more like, "My first book(s) were wretched -- YOU should suffer, too!"

Ahem. Now that I've finally gotten those 25 years of resentment out of my system, here's what really became of My First Book.

I had visions of writing the great American vampire novel. It would be romantic, funny and sexy. Trouble was, I didn't know how it ended. I couldn't make up my mind whether my vampire was good or evil, or even whether he would live or die. I went through six months of ecstatic rough draft before I stalled. Then came the agonies of trying to figure out where I was actually going.

Uh-oh.

That book now lives in a hefty box in my office, full of file folders of infinitely revised chapters. I'll probably never finish it ... but you'll notice I haven't thrown it away.

That book taught me some valuable lessons:

1) If you're writing your first novel, I beg you to plot it out first. Some professional writers are what we call "pantsers," but I say if you write your first book without a plan, chances are there's a big brick wall ahead of you.

2) No book is wasted. I cut my teeth (ba-dump-**BUMP!!!**) on that vampire novel, and the next thing I wrote was a short story that blew my previous efforts out of the water.

3) I would NEVER tell a fledgling writer to throw his or her first book away. But I would tell them this: No matter what, don't think of your FIRST book as your ONLY book. When you finish the first one, start another. Because if you don't sell, guess what? You're gonna want another one to send out there. And if you do sell, guess what? The publisher is gonna want another one!

You're in this for the long haul, baby, unless you want to gamble on being the next Harper Lee.



HOLLY LA PAT
(aka) Sierra Donovan

(The preceding story is by Holly and we thought you would enjoy a bio of her adventures in the world of self expression. Bob Isbill has done this brief bio of Holly. Read and enjoy as you can also enjoy her numerous by-lines in the local press.)

Holly La Pat is the author of "Love on the Air" and "Meg's Confession." Holly writes romance novels under the name of Sierra Donovan, and has conducted romance writing classes at Victor Valley College. She gave a presentation in September 2009 to the HD CWC analyzing the classic film, *Casablanca*.

Her first book, "Love on the Air," was a finalist for the Holt Medallion award. The second, "Meg's Confession," received a Reviewers' Choice Award from CataRomance. Both novels were published by Avalon Books. She is currently writing another novel as well as short stories. Holly recently branched into journalism with feature articles in the Daily Press. She is also a member of the HD CWC critique group who meet twice monthly. And if that's not enough, she's a working wife and mother of two.

Holly La Pat describes her books as traditional romances with very mild sensuality. Still, she says, "A good story is a good story. I have friends who write steamier books, and I read those, too. I'm just more comfortable writing stories my kids can see!"

It's exciting, to say the least, to learn we have two members who have published since our last issue!

Congratulations to member **Chuck Harris**, who recently published his novel, Proof of Atlantis. More about the fictional account can be found at <http://proofofatlantis.com> and purchased through amazon.com, xlibris.com, barnesandnoble.com or your local bookstore.

Congratulations also to member **Harold Meza**, whose short story, "Old Man Gomez", appears in print in a new anthology: "Castrated Hearts PTSD" which was published in December of 2009.

It is a book of poems, passages, lyrics, and one short story. Harold Meza, is the author of the short story and two of the poems.

"The best time to plan a book is while you're doing dishes" - Agatha Christie

FEBRUARY 13 FEATURES AN EXCITING CLUB
SPEAKER -

S. Kay Murphy teaches English and journalism at Upland High School. She is a freelance writer and the author of Tainted Legacy, a memoir about her great-grandmother who is alleged to be America's first female serial killer. Murphy lives in Mt Baldy and can be contacted through her website, www.skaymurphy.com.

THE BEE HIVE HONEY

Place a bee hive on my grave

And Let the honey soak through

When I am dead and gone

That is what I want from you

The streets of heaven are gold and sunny

But I'll stick to my plot and a pot of honey

Place a beehive on my grave and

Let the honey soak through

Alyssa Schultz

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(Two of our younger members join us, today, on our "Poetry Page" – not that it's formally titled as such! It would be so nice if everything fit together perfectly, but since it doesn't, we put it where we can! Mary Thompson's offering can be found on page 5)

ANGEL WITH BLACK WINGS

Guardian of the abyss, protector of suffrage
Inflictor of pain this creature is the angel with charcoal wings.
Feared by even the most powerful of them all, he's the ring master of the souls.
Desires eaten alive by his eyes, also known as the angel of death.
Monster whose soul is no more blood ridden by fear and exile he found a safe haven in the faces he found.
Works for the devil himself and passes by night secretly working for the light.
His arms entwined in thorns constantly soaked in the never ending flow of blood and black roses.
His arms are livid smudged in black and white.
Legs of a stout horse he's built to run at the speed of light passing the stars as he flies by.
Hair black cut short sprinkled with white drops of purity; soft to the touch.

Walking the fence his head never stays in one place.
A day on earth was his demise hoping for a different life he made a compromise that cost him his life.
He watched it disappear as he signed on the dotted line.
He traded his eyes for black holes which were used to chase pain away at just one look.

Spending all his time convincing others to sign away their pain as he once did when life began to rain.
Thinking all the time how sorry he felt for those who are lied to by the decorated side of the truth.
His body changes shape to fit each new contestant he dooms. That poor lost fool!
Never could I be encased in such lies.

Yet such a fate is tempting I would never be the one who's such a fool to think a happy ending comes so easily.
I believe the happy ending is worth the fight you must use to set it free.
Though I must admit part of me is always wanting that sweet something...

..... By .Zoie McCall

~~~~~WE'RE GROWING~~~~~

We are very happy to welcome nine new members to HDCWC and look forward to a long and happy association as they contribute to our learning and writing experiences!

- Iris Baker
- James Elstad
- Robert Fowler
- Anita Holmes
- Diane Neil
- Jeanne Newcomer
- Elizabeth Paine
- Bonnie Souleles
- Hazel Stearns

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***"Never regret. If it's good, it's wonderful. If it's bad, it's experience". Victoria Holt***

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**DISCLAIMER**

All items in this newsletter are the opinions of the author(s) and do not in any way represent the views or official position of CWC

**High Desert Branch – Old Stuff**

**George Grayck remembers when...**

Ruth Theodos had a home in Spring Valley Lake. This allowed the High Desert Branch to meet monthly in the SVL Equestrian Center. Ruth always referred to it that way. To everyone else, it was “The Horse Place”. Half the time, the SVL Security People forgot to have it opened on those second Saturdays. The heating/cooling system did little of either very well. And with horses, you get horseflies. I won’t mention the furnishings.

But overall, we had some great meetings there. Ruth was always the driving force, helped then by John Beyer and Teri Lucia. Emmett Harder was always good for a new Death Valley story. My first duty upon joining was VP/Membership. The former holder of that lofty title handed me a large envelope stuffed with forms. She said, “Good luck.” I never saw her again.

I was sweet-talked into editing the Ink Slinger and at one time or another have held every position except President. The Jack London Award in 2003 was a complete surprise but truly appreciated. One of the things I really enjoyed was running the annual writing contests. It was an honor to represent the Branch at the Central Board Meeting. Best of all are the friends made who share a common interest.

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And finally, reserve Saturday, September 25, 2010 for our all-day "Howl at the Moon" Writers' Conference. You do NOT want to miss this! Visit our web site for more information on this event very soon.

Bob Isbill  
VP/Publicity  
HD CWC  
[www.hdcwc.org](http://www.hdcwc.org)

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