



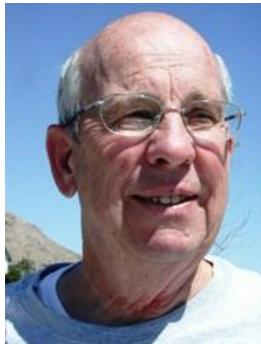
Founded 1909

INKSLINGER

HIGH DESERT BRANCH CWC

SAIL ON

Vol. 25, No. 3 – September 2010



President BOB's POV

People tell me all the time that they feel a buzz of excitement in our branch of the California Writers Club.

There's good reason why the High Desert Branch is growing so rapidly. It's a combination of several things. We have a lot to offer writers with our Mission Statement alone:

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.

For the last 18 months, we've tried to provide to local writers something to come to the HD CWC meetings for instead of just focusing on trying to get *more* members. Of course, by doing so, we have gained an enormous amount of new people.

Our guest speakers (witness our August visitor, Jim Brown) seem to just get better and better.

The critique groups are developing a life of their own, evolving into what they will become under the leadership of Mary Thompson and Roberta Smith. Other involved members are also helping to shape and grow this vital segment of our menu of attractions.

Along with the HD CWC officers, Elizabeth Paine, Dottie Gowetski, and Ann Heimback are helping to mold the upcoming "Howl at the Moon Writers' Conference", and Fran Savage has done a splendid job of contacting local businesses to involve them in donating to the event.

Through our extra efforts of holding events at the Hesperia Library, we're developing a friendship with the Friends of the Library as well as with the staff of the Hesperia Branch. The HD CWC is developing a program of a series of presentations at that location that you'll soon be hearing about.

And very recently, I've seen a great coming together in anticipation of our "Howling at the Moon" anthology. By the time you read this, the final version will be in the hands of Outskirts Press. It should be a work of which we will all be very proud.

So do what any proud member would do: Spread the word!

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JAMES BROWN

August 14, 2010

By Frances (Fran) Smith
Savage

James Brown, author, Master of Fine Arts, teacher at Cal State San Bernardino kept the audience captivated as he told about his life growing up. Born into a family of geniuses, he settled into alcoholism working at the Pussy Cat Theaters across California

If that wasn't enough, consider that two siblings committed suicide, his mother in jail for setting a fire in San Jose in which a woman was killed, his father embroiled in an affair with the baby sitter. Yet it was his father who encouraged him to further his education. He started writing fiction with published success, then went to non-fiction as he had to go back to make sense of his life. All the time with an editor sitting on his shoulders screaming at him, "You can't write, you are no good."

When he conquered the alcohol he decided to try to write his memoirs like he wrote fiction, creating scenes and drama, descriptions and details. He advised "Be truthful to the emotional core of your life, and reach a balance between truth and fiction. Don't fudge on the big things, but little things don't matter."

An example he told that he failed first grade. He stared at his teacher's pretty legs instead of doing his studies. It didn't matter if his teacher wore a blue dress or a red dress or if the weather was hot or cold. He embellishes on the small things to improve the story line.

His confidence was practically destroyed after nine years of degradation. He wrote and deleted, wrote and deleted, and his second wife encouraged him paragraph by paragraph, to continue to write.

At long last the manuscript was ready to send to a publisher, and he wasn't ready for more rejections. He received over thirty rejections for his first book, and he had no desire for strangers to look at his life's work. He eventually went back to his original agent after nine years. He called her after a long delay, and she hadn't even read his manuscript. But her sister had. He lost it, and she called within two weeks and said she wasn't sure she could sell it. Within five days they had two offers. He got an advance. After two years she got behind the book and he received several Best Book

of the Year Awards, among many others. Needless to say, his confidence grew with his success. Then silence.

Other great advice he gave was to "Get another set of eyes to view your work, but don't listen to or try to please everyone. Keep your ego at home when you go to a critique, but choose what others say regarding your writing."

The business aspect of writing is a "can of worms and opinions have changed over the years. New York isn't paying much, any more, when in the past New York was the only way to go. Don't feel bad about not cracking New York. Try the smaller publishers. Self publishing is no longer the stigma it once was. Some believe Kindle or e-books are the way of the future but I like to hold a book in my hand."

He said, "Put the hinnies to the cushion to keep writing. You won't be successful until you write."

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ALL VOLUNTEERS FOR THE HOWL AT THE MOON WRITERS' CONFERENCE

The last Volunteer meeting prior to our September 25, 2010 Conference will be held immediately after our September 11, 2010 general membership meeting. All volunteers please plan to attend.

All published authors who want their books displayed at the event, please bring a copy, or copies, of your book(s) to the September 11, 2010 meeting. Dottie Gowetski will display them the day before the conference. All easels have been sold, but those authors who did not purchase an easel, your publication will be displayed also. We cannot be responsible for irreplaceable books, so please bring your products to display with that caveat.

The program should be wonderful. We've arranged for fascinating guest speakers, the most popular caterer in the high desert for an included breakfast and lunch, and (despite the recession) we've procured some valuable and fun prizes for our drawing! Come at 8:00 a.m. and plan to spend an exciting day with your friends at the California Writers Club, High Desert Branch.

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TODD ANTON
September 11 Speaker
(From his biography page on Amazon.com)

Todd Anton- author of *No Greater Love: Life Stories From the Men Who Saved Baseball* and *When Baseball Went to War* has been a U.S. History instructor for over 19 years, and his ability to work closely with his students and World War II veterans has earned him national recognition - for an extensive oral history collection (nearly 5,000) involving combat veterans from WWI through the present.

As a result of his nomination as VFW "Teacher of the Year", legendary author/historian Dr. Stephen E. Ambrose took Todd under his wing and encouraged him to achieve even more. Anton serves on the board of Trustees for the late Dr. Ambrose's National World War II Museum, and the museum has featured Todd as a speaker at a gala function in Washington DC honoring the members of Congress who served in World War II and at the premiere of Steven Spielberg's documentary on his father, Arnold Spielberg's squadron in W.W. II, called the Burma Bridge Busters, at Fox Studios in Los Angeles.

Anton also serves as the Divisional Historian for his late father's World War II unit, the 70th Infantry Division-Trailblazers, and has written a history of the division's artillery units called *Distant Thunder: The Field Artillery units of the 70th Infantry Division in World War II*. All of these organizations understand the importance of preserving the memory and sacrifice of the "Citizen Soldier" in W.W II, and that this process begins in the classroom. They have chosen Anton as their ambassador.

As a son of World War II/Korean War veteran, the late Wallace P. Anton, Todd has been inspired on a personal level to honor the "Greatest Generation." Raised on a steady dose of Dodger baseball and stories of WWII, Wally Anton raised a

son dedicated to preserving the stories of the men who served America in the time of its greatest need and also played Major League Baseball. Shortly before his father's death on June 6 (D-Day) 2002, both father and son started on the path to remind America about baseball's great and heroic tradition in World War II. These two books are the culmination of that journey.

Anton's first book inspired FOX News Channel's War Stories with Oliver North to produce a show dedicated to Baseball and World War II veterans called From the Ballpark to the Battlefield: Baseball and World War II. Anton joined Boston Red Sox ace Curt Schilling and noted baseball historian Bill Nowlin as the advisors for this show.

A further collaboration led to the very successful "When Baseball Went to War" exhibit at the National World War II Museum featuring artifacts from the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY, the National World War II Museum's own collection which ran from November 2007 through April 2008. This conference sold out and featured veterans such as Bob Feller, Johnny Pesky, Morrie Martin, Lou Brissie, Jerry Coleman, and current all star Curt Schilling. This conference was inspired by Anton and Nowlin to national acclaim.

Todd Anton, 45, lives in Victorville, California with his wife Susan and their children Jamie and Jason, and continues to teach American History. *No Greater Love* (Rounder Books) is Todd's first book. A new book Anton's second book, "*When Baseball Went to War*" (Triumph Books) was released in November 2008.

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AN AUGUST AFTERNOON AT BARNES & NOBLE

Our High Desert CWC's second annual Read-a-thon at Barnes & Noble was a success, with seventeen authors reading from their own works; some serious, some humorous, but all in all enjoyable. Each reader had their own unique style of writing and presentation. Our MC's, Curt James, Emily Pomeroy, and Bob Isbill did a great job in spite of technical difficulties with the sound system.

Roberta Smith, a paranormal buff, read a fascinating, but strange, tale of transformation, at least in the mind of the protagonist, in her short story "The Miracle".

Denny Stanz, author of FOOD STORIES, read two emotional, but lovely, heartfelt poems, "Lincoln Avenue" and "Lonely Children".

Diane Neil, entertained us with an excerpt from her humorous memoir, *The Bionic Woman*. For those of us over fifty, we can certainly relate to the mumblings of others, instead of admitting the lack of hearing with our own ears.

Mary Thompson brought to us a delightful children's tale, "The Gull Who Thought He Was Dull". Great job, Mary.

Our next reader, John Kizziar, gave us a peek at life in the old west, in a chapter from his novel, *The Baby Sitter*. But what a baby sitter – Calamity Jane, no less. Smells, drinks, and swears like a man, but boy can she tell tales.

Thomas Kier, a relatively new author/member of CWC, did a great job as he read his short story, "A Day in the Life". A poignant, thoughtful story. His protagonist in love with life, but with a secret to be kept.

In contrast, Curt James delighted us with a humorous modern-day nursery rhyme, "Death in Nurseryland". A bit creepy, with a twisted sense of humor, familiar(?) names, but definitely a nursery rhyme with an adult audience in mind.

Emily Pomeroy made us stop and think with an excerpt from her book, *The Scott*, a love story. She reminded us to take care and not jump into anything without careful consideration of what could be, or what should be.

Mary Scott presented a segment from her novel, Spirit Driven Events. Spirits are present all around us, she told us, wishing everyone would become as aware as she. She read to us from the third chapter of her book, describing how, through a bag of M&M's, her late husband made contact with her.

Bob Isbill read a wonderful story, "The Knock Off", about a villager who could neither read, nor write, nor speak. But he played the violin in a manner as to charm and bring delight to his fellow villagers, until he was made aware that his precious violin was not what he thought it was. The magic of the violin was no longer his, and even though the villagers begged him to resume, he never played again. How sad.

Linda Bowden brought to us two thoughtful poems – "Disregard the Statement", and "Beyond the Darkness". She rightly pointed out, how can one disregard anything once it has been spoken? Her second poem was of an historical writer, candlelight and a quill. Well done.

Harold Meza spoke of the horrors of the Viet Nam war in his short story, "Incident at 881 North". Realism, moving, unexpected twists. We will remember. In his poem "We are the Viet Nam Veterans", he explains just who the soldiers really were. Thank you, Harold.

Carol Warren repeated two humorous anecdotes from her time as a hospice nurse, "Answer Your Phone, Honey", and "Please Shoot the Dog". If you haven't heard these ask Carol to share them with you. She also made a point to remind us to "Write what you know". A good point to remember.

I, Suzanne, read a poem titled, "The Other Son", which gives us the Biblical story of the prodigal son, from the perspective of the brother left behind. "The Rose", a short story, reminds the reader that appearances can be deceiving, and that not everything is always as it seems.

Willard Brumbaugh, one of the few non-fiction writers in our club, read two chapters from his book *Life Insurance and Retirement – The Unvarnished Truth*. One chapter dealt with the impact on the stock market by baby boomers and 401K's. The other spoke of tax-free retirement.

The prelude to *the Cat and the Cop*, by Naomi Ward tells the story of the misadventures of how Naomi and her husband became the proud owners of her beautiful white cat. Who knows what 'evils' lurk in your neighbor's RV. Funny, but painful, in places, at least for the mister.

Jim Elstad completed our session with his very funny story, "That's the Best Shower I Never Had". Although we've heard it before it was well worth the re-telling.

A special thanks to all those who took the time to read their works at this Read-a-thon. You were all wonderful.

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS NOTIFICATION

Please note our HD CWC mailing address
has changed to:

20258 Hwy 18 Ste 430-PMB 281
Apple Valley, CA 92307

CRITIQUE GROUP ACTIVITIES

The club's critique groups are growing and evolving in order to meet the diverse needs of club members. Current groups include the following:

Groups 3 & 4 – OPEN TO NEW PARTICIPANTS
Groups are for writers in any area of interest: Poetry, short story, novels, non-fiction, memoir etc. Meets every two weeks on Tuesday nights from 6 to 9. Contact: Ann Heimback (schatzitoy@yahoo.com or phone 760-242-2923)

Group 5 – OPEN TO NEW PARTICIPANTS Still forming. Will be limited to six members for writers in any area of interest: Poetry, short story, novels, non-fiction, memoir etc. Meets Thursday mornings from 9 to noon. Will meet either every two weeks or every three weeks depending upon what participants decide. Contact: Carol Warren (califcarol@verizon.net or phone 760-242-367)

Group 6 – TEEN GROUP. OPEN TO THE CLUB'S TEENS For teens interested in all areas of writing: Poetry, short story, novels, non-fiction etc. Meets Saturday afternoons from 12 to 1 after the club's regular monthly meeting (second Saturday of the month). Contact: Carol Warren (califcarol@verizon.net or phone 760-242-3367)

Group 7 – OPEN TO NEW PARTICIPANTS Still forming. Will begin in October and be limited to five members for writers specifically interested in Screenplay Writing. Meeting time and frequency to be determined. Contact: Anne Fowler (annebclarke@yahoo.com or phone 760-247-2082)

Group 1 – CLOSED/FULL It has eight members who write short stories, memoir, novels for adults, novels for middle school children, and even a non-fiction book about insurance. Meets every two weeks on Thursday evenings from 6 to 9. Contact: Mary Thompson (mh_thompson@hotmail.com or phone 760-553-1644)

Group 2 – CLOSED/FULL Also called Novelist I. It has evolved into an experimental specialized group for those writing novels. It has limited its number of members to five and increased the amount of work to be submitted for each session in the hopes that the novels will be written more quickly and a review of each entire novel be completed in a more timely fashion. Meets every two weeks on Thursday evenings from 6 to 9.

Contact: Hazel Stearns (C21hazel@aol.com or phone 760-964-5797)

Any member interested in forming and leading a general or specialty group (for instance: poetry, short story, memoir, children's stories, novel, etc) is welcome to do so. To discuss contact critique group co-chairs Roberta Smith, cwrlsmith@verizon.net or 760-240-4822, or Mary Thompson, mh_thompson@hotmail.com 760-553-1644

Critique groups serve several purposes:

- You discover how your work is perceived by others.
- You learn what other people are interested in writing as well as how they write.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT OUR CRITIQUE GROUPS

Critique Group Co-chairs are:

Roberta Smith e-mail: cwrlsmith@verizon.net
phone: 760-240-4822

Mary Thompson e-mail:
mh_thompson@hotmail.com
phone: 760-553-1644

Group Leaders - open groups:
For all writing genres: Ann Heimback e-mail:
schatzitoy@yahoo.com
phone: 760-242-2923

For all writing genres & Teen group: Carol Warren
e-mail: califcarol@verizon.net
phone: 760-242-3367

Screenplay writing : Anne Fowler
e-mail: annebclarke@yahoo.com
phone 760-247-2082

**YOU MIGHT WANT TO CLIP THIS BOX AND PUT IT WHERE IT WILL BE A HANDY REFERENCE GUIDE TO THE VARIOUS CRITIQUE GROUPS..
THERE'S SOMETHING AVAILABLE FOR EVERYONE!**

THE GOOD THINGS

By Freddi Gold

This morning I woke to the sound of my husband preparing the food for the animals and accomplishing other early morning rituals before he left for work. It was Monday morning again. I lay in bed under a warm sheet, barely keeping out the slight chill of a summer morning still to break. He was intent on leaving before dawn to drive the two hours to honor his commitment to the project at hand, the deadline for completion of which was looming.

How fortunate I am, I thought to myself, to be married to this steady, reliable and honorable man. I slipped out of bed and into something just soft enough to keep the cozy morning bed warmth about me. Four o'clock. I smiled, feeling happy to be getting up to share a cup of coffee with him and exchange our wake-up thoughts before we said goodbye.

When he left, we kissed and hugged. I held the screen door open as he passed thought, duffel bag in one hand, car keys in the other. He dragged the trash bin down to the curb. Today was garbage day. He paused as he tossed the duffel across to the passenger seat and retraced his steps to the wrought iron gates. His soothing, quiet voice called their names with love and affection as the three dogs happily moved toward him, wagging their tails, jumping up and loving the hand that reached to scratch their ears and smooth their furry heads. They loved him leaving and adored him coming home.

"Do you have your phone?" I called out as the dogs ran and tumbled around on the grass. The dark clear sky loomed all around us; all the nearby houses asleep except for front porch beacons of light. A few stars sparkled and half a moon illuminated his silhouette as he opened the driver's door again. He answered yes. I could barely make out his tolerant smile as I always asked him that when he left for the week. "I love you; drive safe." I called from the porch. "Love you, too." he answered.

The throttle-like rumble of the diesel pickup broke the stillness of the dark. For a quick moment music sliced the air from the vehicle's radio. The head lights sprang to life and the driver's door closed. Down the driveway they receded, a stop at the street, a turn to the left and a shift of the gears. My wave from above let him know I cared, even

though he was not visible through the dark window glass.

What would he be thinking as he drove down empty streets? Would he know how long the pleasant, comfortable feelings about him would wrap around me? I smiled to myself again. I knew my husband. His mind was on what he needed to get down that day as he focused on the road. An altered state of consciousness would envelop his passage to land down south. Music would fill the interior of the cab gliding down the main street through the center of town. Soon enough the freeway with other pre-dawn voyagers would deliver its gleaming lights.

I called the dogs. They ran to me, pushing and gnawing at each other's feet and the scruff of necks. They pushed me aside as I gingerly held onto the handle of the door for balance. I pulled it close. "Let's go back to bed." I suggested, knowing that only my border collie, the oldest dog, would lie down. I slid back under the sheet quickly and felt the coolness gather around me. Apache leapt up near me and settled down. I stroked his back for a second. The younger dogs scooted into the hallway and began their return to a quiet game of trading a nylon bone which they tried to steal from one another. Maybe they would let me stay in bed for half an hour. My eyes closed. Peace came over me. I thanked the powers that be and drifted into slumber sweet.

HELP WANTED! Can you do this job?

1. Bring sign-in sheet to each meeting and keep the sheets in a file for our records.
2. Bring blank membership applications to each meeting.
3. Take new membership applications and write the names in a tablet in the name tag box for Naomi and Judi.
4. Fill out an uncomplicated "Status Change" Form for the state CWC from each new application.
5. Contact guests for a follow-up phone or email call.

If you are willing to do all or any part of this job, please contact Bob Isbill.
Thanks very much!

POLLY POSSUM'S WINDING PATH

By Ann Heimbeck

Polly Possum popped open her beady little possum eyes and pushed her head up out of her mommy's pouch. The bright daylight made her blink.

She stretched and yawned. "Where am I?" she wondered. She had been taking a nap, and now her tiny little possum tummy told her was hungry.

So Polly Possum left her mommy sleeping and wobbled along the path on her pillowry little possum paws, and looked for food. Her pointy little possum nose led her through a fence into a yard with some lovely green grass. She bit a blade of the lovely green grass and discovered that it was delicious!

"Yum, yum!" she exclaimed. And she nibbled and nibbled the lovely green grass, while her beady little possum eyes and her pointy little possum nose pointed to the ground, and she did not notice where she was going.

Polly Possum had eaten all the lovely green grass she could hold. Soon, the path led her to a garden. There she found some luscious leafy lettuce. She licked a leaf of luscious leafy lettuce and liked it!

"Yum, yum!" she exclaimed. And she nibbled and nibbled the luscious leafy lettuce, while her beady little possum eyes and her pointy little possum nose pointed to the ground, and she did not notice where she was going.

Polly Possum had eaten all the luscious leafy lettuce she could hold. She sniffed the air with her pointy little possum nose, and looked around with her beady little possum eyes. Further down the path she discovered a long row of yummy yellow flowers.

"Yum, yum!" she exclaimed. And she nibbled and nibbled the yummy yellow flowers, while her beady little possum eyes and her pointy little possum nose pointed to the ground, and she did not notice where she was going.

Now her tiny little possum tummy was full, and Polly Possum was ready to go home.

"But where am I?" she asked. Polly Possum raised her pointy little possum nose and sniffed the air. She opened her beady little possum eyes as wide as they would open. But she did not know where she was.

Polly Possum had been nibbling while her beady little possum eyes and her pointy little possum nose pointed to the ground, and she had not noticed where she was going.

Polly Possum was lost! "Oh, dear! What will I do?" Polly Possum began to cry. "How will I find my way home?" she cried. Oh, how she wanted to be home with her mommy. Then she remembered something that her mommy had taught her. "If you ever get lost, just ask God to help you find your way home."

So Polly Possum put her pillowry little possum paws together and prayed. "Dear God, I am lost and I want my mommy. Please help me to find my way home. Thank you. Amen."

Polly Possum felt better. She thought, "If I can find the food - the yummy yellow flowers, the luscious leafy lettuce, and the lovely green grass - and follow it back the way I came, then maybe I will find my way home.

Polly Possum sniffed the air with her pointy little possum nose. She could smell the yummy yellow flowers, and walked over to them with her pillowry little possum paws.

"Yes! There they are!" she exclaimed, but she was too excited to eat.

Now Polly Possum looked around with her beady little possum eyes and spotted the luscious leafy lettuce. She raced over to the luscious leafy lettuce, nearly tripping over her own pillowry little possum paws in her excitement! But, of course, she was too excited to eat.

"If this is the luscious leafy lettuce," Polly Possum thought, "then the lovely green grass is near by!"

She looked down the path with her beady little possum eyes and, sure enough, there it was!

Just then, Polly Possum heard her mommy calling her.

"Polly Possum, where are you?"

"Here I am, Mommy!" And Polly Possum knew, with her happy little possum heart, that she was finally home!"

DUES REMINDER

Reminder that all HD CWC dues are now due.

Note: You must be a member in good standing to attend the HATM Conference at member rates and/or to be included in the "Howling at the Moon" anthology.

UTAH SHAKESPEAREAN FESTIVAL

By George Gracyk

Our recent Utah Festival experience was delightful as expected. It was our 27th adventure with the group long known formerly as "Elderhostel". A year or so ago the name was changed to "Exploritas". Unfortunately, or not, this new name was in copyright conflict with another group. Currently, the name is "Road Scholar". The Bard's three outdoor plays in the Globe Theatre replica were excellent. Our "Macbeth" was said by many to have been the finest they had ever seen! "Much Ado About Nothing" and "Merchant of Venice" had the usual plot complaints and some of the director's ideas were questionable but the performances were terrific. The witches in "The Scottish Play" were suitably ugly and spastically twitchy. But the director had them perform their evil without the usual boiling cauldron prop. I rather missed the big black pot. "The eye of newt," etc.

I was a bit disappointed with the concept of trying to turn Dickens' "Great Expectations" into a musical. "South Pacific" it ain't. The musical score was eminently forgettable. My wife, Marj, used some afternoon free time to catch "Pride and Prejudice" and loved it. Alfred Hitchcock's "39 Steps" was a four actor, quick change comedy and it was a hoot.

This was our fourth Utah Festival and again the schedule was tight but we always had prime seats and were very well housed and fed. Utah's comic book liquor laws are annoying when you cannot have a glass of dinner wine even in some of the better restaurants. All in all, it was wonderful experience in a beautiful setting populated by a bunch of savvy and critical theater goers. Cedar City is a charming little town just over a mile high in altitude having moderate summer temperatures. The Dixie State College complex offers everything within walking distance. The Festival received the prestigious Tony Award in 2000 and in my opinion it is the equal of the older, better publicized Ashland, Oregon Festival.

Only one thing marred the trip- a disaster (a charitable rating) of a show at the outdoor Tuacahn amphitheater in St. George. "Tarzan" was little more than a bad joke, no wonder it played less than 500 performances on Broadway. I'm still waiting for "O. J." the musical. It's a shame after seeing what a terrific locale Tuacahn can be for a decent play

I KNOW WHERE THE RAIN COMES FROM

By James Elstead

While we were out shopping my 5-year-old daughter and I ran into a heavy rain storm.

We had no choice; we went from store to store and were finally on our way home. I could tell that she was thinking of something very profound and just waited for her to say what she was thinking.

Finally, with the windshield wipers on high she spoke up, "Daddy, I know where rain comes from."

"Oh really, where does it come from?"

"Well, when God waters his flowers in heaven the extra water comes down on top of us."

(Remembering the outstanding rain storms of August, perhaps this is an explanation!)

#

CWC Headquarters(Sac) had a problem with some record keeping which has "dominoed" down to High Desert. I hope I have all the names for new members not yet recognized in the Inkslinger. We Welcome the new members below – happy to have you on board. If you are among the missing, please let us know – we want to be sure we have name tags for each of us, both old and new members:

Norm Gayer, Patricia Massie, Vicki Gesso

Richard Levant, Gail Levant, Angie Horn

Katherine Humor, Virginia Hall, Barbara LaGrange

Linda Cooper, Tom Saunderson and Mary Scott.

(List available as of 8/5/10)

TIMELY TIP FROM HAZEL STEARN

In case you haven't found it, here's how to get to the Microsoft Word all-in-one Thesaurus, dictionary, etc.:

On the tool bar, go to Review, then over to the left and click on Research (click once--then I have to wait just a few seconds) and up comes the Research window along the right side. In the second window down, select where you want your info to come from--just the dictionary or "All reference books" (the one I use). I haven't tried "All research sites, yet).

Hope this helps!

THE DAY JAPAN BOMBED OREGON

By Norman Goyer



Warrant Officer Fujita and his crewman are shown with their Yokosuka E14Y (Glen) float plane prior to his flight.

September 9, 1942, the I-25 class Japanese submarine was cruising in an easterly direction raising its periscope occasionally as it neared the United States Coastline. Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor less than a year ago and the Captain of the attack submarine knew that Americans were watching their coast line for ships and aircraft that might attack our country. Japan had hopes of using their huge submarine fleet to attack the eastern end of the Panama Canal to slow down shipping from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

September 9, 1942: Forestry ranger, Keith V. Johnson, was on duty atop a forest fire lookout tower between Gold's Beach and Brookings Oregon. It was cold on the coast this September morning , and quiet. Most of the residents of the area were still in bed.

Aboard the submarine, the Captain's voice boomed over the PA system, "Prepare to surface, aircrue report to your stations, wait for the open hatch signal". You could hear the change of sound as the bow of the I-25 broke from the depths. A loud bell signaled the "All Clear." The crew assigned to the Yokosuki E14Ys float equipped observation and light attack aircraft sprang into action. The wings and tail were unfolded, and two 176 pound incendiary bombs were attached to the hard points under the wings. This was a small two passenger float plane with a nine-cylinder 340 hp radial engine. Warrant Officer Fujita started the engine, let it warm up, checked the magnetos and oil pressure. There was a slight breeze blowing and

the seas were calm. A perfect day to attack the United States of America. When the gauges were in the green, the pilot signaled, and the catapult officer launched the aircraft. After a short climb to altitude, the pilot turned on a heading for the Oregon coast.

Johnson was sweeping the horizon but could see nothing. The morning moved on. Every few minutes he would scan low, medium and high but nothing caught his eye.

The small Japanese float plane had climbed to several thousand feet of altitude for better visibility. The pilot had calculated land fall in a few minutes; right on schedule he could see the breakers flashing white as they hit the Oregon shores.

Johnson was about to put his binoculars down when something flashed in the sun just above the fog bank. The pilot of the aircraft checked his course and alerted his observer to be on the lookout for a fire tower which was on the edge of the wooded area where they were supposed to drop their bombs. The plane reached the shore line and the huge trees were easy to spot and easy to hit with the bombs. The fog was very wispy by this time.

The pilot activated the release locks so that when he pickled the bombs they would release. His instructions were simple, fly at 500 feet, drop the bombs into the trees and circle once to see if they had started any fires and then head back to the submarine.

The forest ranger could see the two bombs under the wing of the plane. He grabbed his communications radio and called the Forest Fire Headquarters.

The bombs tumbled from the small seaplane and impacted the trees, the pilot circled once and spotted fire around the impact point. He executed an 180 degree turn and headed back to the submarine. The small float plane lined up with the surfaced submarine and landed gently on the ocean. A long boom swung out from the stern. His crewman caught the cable and hooked it into the pickup. The plane was swung onto the deck, The plane's crew folded the wings and tail, pushed it into its hangar and secured the water tight doors. The I-25 submerged and headed back to Japan.

This event ,which caused no damage, marked the only time during World War II that an enemy plane had dropped bombs on the United States mainland. What the Japanese didn't count on was coastal fog, mist and heavy doses of rain made the forests so wet they simply would not catch fire.

Fifty years later the Japanese pilot, who survived the war, would return to Oregon to help dedicate a historical plaque at the exact spot where his two bombs had impacted. The elderly pilot then donated his ceremonial sword as a gesture of peace and closure of the bombing of Oregon in 1942.

(Norm Gayer is a new HD CWC member with an extensive background in aviation publications. This is his first offering to the Inkslinger. Thanks Norm and welcome aboard!)

THE SHOT

By Denny Stanz

Jonathon Bunkbupps is standing on the first tee at Sky Hawk Golf Club. It is Eight AM on a beautiful summer morning and he is here with three buddies to enjoy a day of golf .

JQ, as everyone calls him – his middle name is Quincy – is a terrible golfer. He has never scored less than one hundred over eighteen holes. His friends are even worse. No matter, their bond runs deeper than golf. They are all Vietnam Vets and retired Los Angeles Police Department cops. Playing golf together is an opportunity to get away from their wives and swap stories about really important stuff - stories about trudging through the jungle and chasing down bad guys on the streets of Los Angeles. They have enough life experience between them to fill countless novels. But these guys don't read or write. What they really like to do is talk – to anyone, anytime and anywhere. The two ears and one mouth rule does not work with these guys.

They flip coins – Vietnamese currency of course – to determine who will tee off first. JQ wins the honor. He takes a sip of his beer, places his cigar on the ground, grabs his driver and strolls to the tee box. He is sixty three years old, stands six feet five inches tall and weighs a good two hundred fifty pounds.

He is wearing a Marine Corps cap with a USC pin on the left side, a Vietnam pin on the right and an embroidered LAPD on the back. The belt

holding up his pants has a Marine Corps buckle the size and weight of a bicycle pedal. He wears no socks and his golf shoes are sandals.

JQ'S hair is cut real short. He has an Adolf Hitler mustache. His head and face are long and sit atop a neck so elongated only a swan would be comfortable carrying it. His chicken legs crawl into size fifteen feet. Put it this way – JQ is a real weird looking dude !

The first hole at Sky Hawk is four hundred and ten yards long . Large oak trees border both sides of the fairway. Situated on the left side, between the fairway and trees, one hundred and fifty yards from the tee box, is a big boulder with Sky Hawk painted on it. Behind the green, small palm trees seem to hold hands in a semi circle, with a sand trap, known as a bunker in golf lingo, on the left and right side. A small stream runs across the course and in front of the putting green. The hole is visually stunning.

The object in golf on this hole is to cover the four hundred and ten yards in four shots. This is considered par and is a very good score. This type of scoring is alien to JQ and his friends. JQ knows from experience that a score of four is impossible for him. Anything under nine would be acceptable.

JQ puts his tee in the ground, places his ball on the tee, and positions himself to take his first swing of the day. In order to appreciate how unorthodox JQ's swing is try to picture a right handed batter standing in the batters box in a baseball game . His left foot is pointed directly to first base and right field. His right foot is pulled backward as far as possible. His left shoulder and back are facing the pitcher. This is how JQ is set up to hit his golf ball.

JQ grips the golf club as if he were choking a chicken . The angle of his body shows that he will hit the ball so far to the right that it will probably land in the pond two holes over. Not to worry.

JQ swings the club with all the might his two hundred fifty pounds and skinny arms can muster. His ball is propelled like a rocket, streaming six feet off the ground and heading straight for the boulder on the LEFT side of the fairway. The ball ricochets off the boulder and heads directly across the fairway to the right side, hits an oak tree, and buries itself in a patch of grass that is about four inches tall. He will need a weed whacker to get that ball out of the grass.

His friends applaud . JQ picks up his cigar and takes a puff. As he retreats to watch the next player hit, his cell phone rings. It's his wife, reminding him they are having dinner with friends

tonight and he should not drink too much. They had this conversation one hour ago over breakfast. JQ agrees, tells his wife he loves her, and that he will be home no later than five pm. He turns off his cell, gulps down his beer, and laughs loudly. Today is his day, he can feel it. He pops the tab on another beer. Life is good !

THE LEDGE

By Dwight Norris

On this ordinary Monday morning, Harold Zimmerman and his wife Stella sat at their square little wooden table in the kitchen of their corner 14th floor Flatbush Avenue apartment, in Brooklyn, New York. As they had for years, they shared a breakfast of oatmeal, poached eggs, English muffins, an open jar of peach preserves, and sundry cups of boiling black coffee.

Only today was different. Today they were free. Harold, a slightly built man, turned 68 years old last winter, and after 42 years of taking the subway down to Wall Street five days a week, his career as a stock broker was over. He even put in a couple of extra years to make sure their retirement was comfortable. Stella worked almost as long as the head librarian for the Kings County Unified School District. Friday was her last day of work as well. Their future was secure, and retirement would be sweet.

Breakfast was consumed in relative silence as was their custom, but with a happy undercurrent of anticipation. They had always heard, "April showers bring May flowers," and so it happened this year as well. Summer was upon them.

"When do you want to pick up the motor home?" Stella asked.

"Well, we gotta stock it with food, and drink, and the cameras, and clothes," Harold said. "But mostly I want to sit down with the folks at Triple A and go over our itinerary."

"They give you maps, too," Stella said.

"Yeah, we gotta get all the maps."

"But we're gonna take our time, right?" Stella said.

"I mean, we don't have to be in a hurry, right?"

"Yeah, we don't have to be in a hurry," Harold smiled as he looked at Stella. "We can go anywhere we want, and take all the time we want."

Stella smiled back and was glad she married Harold all those many years ago. They reached out their hands and held on for a precious moment of satisfaction.

Just then the couple heard the animated cry of a baby alarmingly close by. How could this be? With a 14th floor, corner apartment, no neighbors were

that near. Harold walked to the double-hung window that was partially open, and shoved the bottom casement fully upward. He rarely operated the window because he was terrified of heights, but he stuck his head into the opening to investigate the sounds. Stella rushed to his side.

"Oh my God!" he shouted.

Off to the left, lying on her back on the 12-inch ledge, was a three-month-old baby, wearing only a diaper and little pink shirt. She continued to cry in an agitated manner, and kicked with her pudgy little legs.

"Aah!" Stella exclaimed, placing a hand over her heart. "What are we gonna do?"

"Call 911!" Harold yelled.

"But they could take 20 minutes to get here!"

"I know, but we still have to call," said Harold. "I'll go out and get her."

"But you'll freeze up!" Stella said.

"Well, I gotta do something. I can't just watch her roll off that ledge!"

Harold crept out onto the 12-inch precipice. Swirling winds buffeted his face, and the narrow rim creaked beneath him. He inched forward on his hands and knees, staying as close to the ancient brick wall of the aging edifice as he could, forcing himself to not look down.

Stella made the call to emergency services and leaned out the window to watch. The baby lay with its feet toward Harold, very close to the corner of the ledge, and 15 feet from the Zimmers' window. How did the baby get there? How mobile was this child? That she was distressed was obvious, but did she have the capability of flipping herself over and rolling off the side? Harold knew that when people hurried they most often made mistakes. He tried not to hurry, but with each crawl, he tried to conserve time and be as efficient as possible.

He was two feet away now. One foot, yet still not within reach. How shall he secure this child?

Cradling the baby in his arms would be ideal, but not possible on this ledge. Such an action would throw him off-balance, plunging both of them to their deaths. The only sure way to save the baby was to grasp her left calf with his right hand, firmly and decisively, and inch his way backwards. He hoped his action would not hurt the baby, but if it was the only way to get her off this death-dealing shelf, so be it.

He was upon her and it was time. He wrapped his hand around the lower portion of her leg, above her ankle and below her knee. Her flesh was cold to his touch, and looking into her face he could see the

child was not well. He began his backward retreat and pulled the babe with him. Her crying intensified, but he maintained his firm grip and continued his backward motion.

Just then, a crazed, wide-eyed, spiky-haired woman popped her head around the corner and screamed, "What are you doing?"

Harold almost lost his balance in the surprise and shock, but hurried his retreat, dragging the child with him. The maniacal woman leapt to her hands and knees with startling alacrity as if she'd lived on the ledges all of her life. Harold scooted quickly to the rear, but to no advantage. The woman was on the child in a second, yanking on her arm.

The baby's cries intensified. Harold didn't know what to do, but he knew he couldn't let go. The woman pulled vigorously on the little arm, hurting the baby. Harold moved forward toward the child and covered her with his entire arm, trying to gain control. He lay flat on his stomach, struggling to keep his legs on the ledge, which diminished his leverage. He grabbed the woman's wrist with his other hand, but she wouldn't relinquish her hold. He dug his fingernails into her hand and wrist to cause pain, and finally she released.

He grabbed the child's calf again and retreated as rapidly as he could, dragging the baby in swoops of two feet at a time. The woman would not surrender, and lunged forward in a desperate effort to obtain a controlling grip on any part of the child's body. The force of her action knocked the babe off the ledge, and the space just occupied by the infant's body left a flagrant, hollow void. Harold, however, did not loosen his grip on her leg, and though she dangled upside down in the air at the end of his fully extended arm, she fell no farther, and was quickly yanked through the open window.

Stella took the shaken baby from Harold and cradled her in her arms. Harold's heart was racing and he gasped for breath. Stella was so upset she quickly sat down with the baby, rocking and comforting as much as she could. Harold stretched out on the floor, trying to compose himself and comprehend what had just happened. The woman, presumably the baby's mother they now realized, had thrown herself off-balance in her last desperate lunge toward the child, and hung precariously from the ledge with her fingers. She was suspended six feet from the Zimmers' window.

"Help me!" she cried out. "Help me!"

A siren sounded in the morning air.

Harold sat up and started toward the open window. Stella was on him in a second.

"No, you can't," she said. "You've got nothing left."

You'll both fall to your deaths!"

Harold looked into Stella's eyes.

"You're right," he said. "Maybe with a little rest."

The fire trucks got closer, and the sirens louder. "Aah!" the scream from outside diminished as the woman fell to the unyielding concrete below.

The next morning, two newspapers published an account of the tragedy. One newspaper called Harold a hero; the other called him a bum. People spoke of what transpired on a narrow shelf 140 feet above a sea of ultimate finality, and they spoke of what they did not know—of a humble little man from Brooklyn, and the wife who loved him.

YOUR GRAVE

By Thomas Kier

I sit here, hopeless. I would say my life has no more meaning, but it would require thought to say that and I don't want to think. I want to lie motionless on this hallowed earth, next to you, except that I would contaminate with human life the ground on which I lay. I did my thinking before and after the funeral; during it my mind was blissfully unaware, maybe overloaded with grief, but it was peaceful. I had to thank all those smug guests for attending, the heartless and cruel people who were glad it wasn't them who had lost the only thing that meant something in life. I wanted to rage at them. I wanted to kill them all with my bare hands, and laugh like a maniac while doing so. I wanted to shout my grief and my loss and my unending despair at the sky.

And you came to me. You spoke with me, and I was helpless but to listen. You calmed me and made me human again. You always could. When we met, when I was nothing, you came to me and showed me I could have a life just like everyone else. You were my breath, my hope, my future. You were then, and your memory is now. I will not forget. But please don't make me think; I can only remember. I wish to follow you; I told you so as I watched you go into the ground. I was about to step in after you, but was stopped by a man in a black robe. I didn't know who he was then, and I can't remember who he is now. I only know he was full of words that made no sense to me, while you were full of silence I could understand and wished to share. Take me with

you! My attempt to join you in your lonely place made those others mutter and cry out in shock, and so I left. I don't need them. I need you, and so I returned after.

You have made your blanket beautiful with the grass and flowers; my heart was always full of life at your very gaze upon me. I guess some things don't change--just our time together. Don't worry; I'm not leaving. I will stay with you forever and keep you warm and safe. I love you. I will embrace you and remain by your side; I would join you in the same body if I could, but I never did figure that one out. And it didn't seem as important back then. I know you are as lonely as I am. I am here! I need you! And I need a shovel.

Here I am, my dear. Sorry about the lock on the door; I had to use the shovel to break it. And I know I'm a little late, but I had to keep running away from the groundskeeper and the police he called. But no one was watching after dark, and I'm surprised I didn't think of that earlier. Probably I'm used to your good advice.

Let's pretend it's our first date, what do you say? Here is a flower you can wear; there were plenty of them a few stones down, and they were free. I really like your perfume this evening; I can foresee it will become my favorite. Don't look now, but it looks like you could use a little help with your hairstyle; do you mind? Thank you. Oops, here is the hair back; I didn't mean to pull so hard. Let me help you smooth your lovely dress.Oops, I didn't realize it was so fragile. Can it be repaired? What is that you are whispering: sweet nothings in my ear? Ha, ha; I hear nothing. Just kidding! Let's just lie here without speaking; we understand each other that perfectly. I'll just close the door now.

The groundskeeper closed the hole that had the shovel in it. He used the shovel to do it. He did not check the box; it was bad luck to open a coffin. No reporting: too much paperwork. If there was any guilt associated with his actions, it did not show in his face. But we all have our little secrets, don't we? Mine lies here in my arms forever.

"I write in order to attain the feeling of tension relieved and function achieved, which a cow enjoys on giving milk."

H. L. Mencken

Dear Newsletter Editors,

I hope we haven't missed your CWC publication deadline! Could you please announce this in your newsletter? We have pushed back our contest deadline to September 30. Thanks!

Writing Contest! Winner to be published!

Fault Zone: Words from the Edge, an anthology of short stories, will be published this fall by the SF/Peninsula Branch of California Writers.

We're perched on the edge of the San Andreas Fault, on the edge of the Pacific Rim. Will we fall in? Or is Fault Zone more of a comment on human frailties and foibles? Interpret as you wish and have fun. We can't wait to see it!

First Prize is \$300 and publication in our Fault Zone anthology. Second Prize is \$100. Third Prize is \$50. Contest deadline has been extended to September 30, 2010. Contest fee is \$15. Previously published work will be considered. Novel excerpts must stand on their own.

Submission Guidelines:

Submit 2 copies of your short story or stand-alone novel excerpt plus SASE or email address. Title and author should be on each page, as well as page number. Include word count on first page. Please submit work typed, double-spaced, 12 pt. Times Roman, with one inch margins. Word limit: 2,500 max. (more or less, within reason). Shorter entries are encouraged! Mail to: SF/Pen CWC, P.O. Box 853, Belmont, CA 94002 with contest fee of \$15.

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And now, for a little fun – and be glad you're not Pres. Isbill! He let the cat out of the bag! The story starting in the next column came as a late submission but is too good not to share!

MAPQUEST VS. GPS

by Bob Isbill

There was no question about it. We were lost.

Mapquest had let us down. Or was it the way it had been interpreted? That was the question, but not the solution. The problem was that we were in unfamiliar territory, and had not too much time to get to our meeting.

"Now would be a good time to have a GPS device," I said.

"Yeah, that would be good," Diane Neil seconded the idea.

"I have one in the trunk," our driver stated.

"In your trunk?" I asked incredulously.

"Yes," Carol Warren said. "I have one. I just don't use it much."

"In your trunk," I said again. "You're kidding, right?"

Carol shook her head.

I looked at my watch. "Just an idea," I said. "But how about pulling off the road and getting it out and using it now."

"I think we should keep going this way," Carol said.

"I like the high-tech thing," coaxed Diane.

"Carol, it's time to trust the Force. We need the GPS!" I persisted.

"I think if we keep going we're going to be okay. Just intuition," she explained.

"Carol, pull over. Really. The time for the GPS is now!"

I must have sounded urgent, or maybe half-crazy. Carol pulled off the next exit. The time was 10:14 a.m. Our meeting started at 11:00. True, we had left early to allow a cushion, but the pillow was rapidly going flat.

Within a jiffy, Carol had retrieved the device from her trunk, plugged it into the power outlet, and with a few adroit clicks of her fingernails on its screen, she had entered the address of the Inland Empire's Writing Seminar.

A cultured, soothing female's voice suddenly reassured us: "Arrival time: 10:30."

She did not sound much like a computer.

Carol said, "We'll never make it by 10:30."

"Wait a minute," I said. "How can you distrust this GPS? I trust it and I've never even used one before. Betcha we make it by 10:30!"

The very nice lady who lived within that little box courteously guided us. The GPS was far more efficient than the days gone by when I would stop

and ask a service station attendant for directions. (Yes, I used to do that. Really.) I usually was more confused than when I started, and often had trouble remembering whether he said turn right or turn left exiting his business. The GPS woman's voice did not sound bewildering at all.

Soon, exactly 10:30 to be precise, we arrived.

We met up with Roberta Smith, Hazel Stearns, Mary Thompson and her husband, Dave. We had a great time as we had predicted.

The whole adventure will remain our little undisclosed exploit. Just some secret to be kept among Carol Warren, Diane Neil and me. Forever. Vault closed.

Hah!

I couldn't wait to get home and write it up for the *Inkslinger*!

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"There's not much to be said about the period except that most writers don't reach it soon enough."

William Zinsser

And we've almost reached the last period for this issue of the *Inkslinger*. Thanks to our members' generous contributions, it's the largest we've ever published – at least since I've been doing it. What a kick! For those submissions included here, I thank you, and for those still in the Pantry, I thank you. It's great to know this didn't strip our shelves bare – we're still in business! And if Lady Luck stays with us, there will always be "provisions" in our HD Pantry as our writing members continue to write.

Thank you and see you at the Conference!

Naomi Ward, Editor