



INKSLINGER

HIGH DESERT BRANCH CWC

SAIL ON

MAY 2013

March Writing Workshop Revisited ~~

Getting Inside Your Mind With Alan Watt

First, I would like to thank you all for participating and a special thanks to everyone who helped out in the preparation, set up, and clean up for the Saturday workshop. I truly appreciate the spirit of teamwork and cooperation we had on making this a very successful workshop. I wish all of you were able to make it.

Now that the conference with Al Watt is over, he is interested in possibly presenting to other clubs as well. In the re-cap for *The Inkslinger*, and in the note I will send thanking him from the club, it would be



very nice if some of you would write a short sentence or two about what you learned or felt from the workshop. I'm sure he would really appreciate it and he could use it for promotion just like the rest of us would use testimonials.

Many of you commented to me and to others about

the positive effect his teaching had on you so if you would take a moment to send a short sentence or two — that would be terrific — thank you so much.

~~**Freddi**

~~ More Comments from Attendees on Page 3 ~~

MAY GUEST SPEAKER

Gornell to Share Art & Craft of Writing with Authors Panel



Author Madeline (M.M.) Gornell will briefly share a few insights and experiences from her writing journey. Dear to Madeline's literary heart is what she calls the "Art and Craft" of writing. Her focus for May 11th CWC meeting is Setting/Location.

After her comments, she will moderate a panel discussion on aspects, experience, and perspectives on "taking the reader there."

Panel members are Jim Elstad, Anne Fowler, Freddi Gold, Davida Siwisa James, and Roberta Smith. Each author will elaborate on their unique perspective on the importance and development of settings—both as readers and authors. Madeline says, "I've been told by too many readers they closed many a book because the author failed to 'set the scene.'" ❖

Books to Benefit “Fringe” Readers

The chance to give away books drew a larger crowd than last year. The event brings books to book ambassadors who give freely of titles they selected. All printing costs are absorbed by sponsors and Barnes & Noble hosts the program.



**WORLD
BOOK
NIGHT
April
23rd
2013**

Book Review

The Making of a Story — Praises Talent

I won *The Making of a Story: A Norton Guide to Creative Writing* by Alice LaPlante at a recent CWC meeting, and what a win it was. It's full of advice and exercises to create stories. LaPlante praises the talent required to associate complex meaning with common things: sensory objects, people, and events.

LaPlante's exercises are different and fun. For example, here's one for characterization: "Write down all the things that can be found on your character's person." You might list a purse, a wallet, or depending on age, a backpack. Be specific. For example, Character A might have a Walgreen's brand Naturally Neutral lipstick, half gone, a solar calculator, a mini screwdriver, and a crumpled shopping list. Get to know your character.

In terms of habits, notice your character's sins of omission. Maybe he doesn't notice the distress in his wife's voice. And don't forget sins of commission. Does he leave the Daily Press in disarray?

The author describes three steps to the writing process. First, notice something that deserves to be written about. Second, discover the emotional heart of your material by writing. Move from the "triggering" subject to your "real subject." Third, render your material so that the emotion or truth is apparent by attaching concrete sensory details to correspond with emotions. It's not always easy, but LaPlante will guide you.

On the subject of critique groups, LaPlante believes the person being criticized should say nothing and simply listen. She talks about how to do deep revision with up to twenty or more drafts. She suggests, for example, if you have a mother/daughter situation, writing five vignettes ending with the mother and daughter disagreeing or agreeing.

She also provides analytical or mechanical exercises where you, for example, highlight all forms of "to have" and "to be" so you can replace them with more active verbs.

I particularly like the "chance-based" exercises. Try turning on the radio to a music channel and waiting for the fifth song. *Freewrite* based on your association with the song. Or, flip a coin. If heads, go someplace you don't ordinarily go and do a *freewrite*. If tails, go to a familiar place to write.

The book has an extensive bibliography and glossary. As a writing teacher, LaPlante compiles fifteen years of her expertise. This hands-on book is for any writer—fiction, non-fiction, poet.

With my radio playing, I'm off to flip a coin to see where I'm writing next. ❖

Officers Slate to be Announced

Club elections will be held at the June 8th meeting. Candidates' names will be posted in the next issue of *The Inkslinger*. Members who are present and who vote will elect the officers." Be sure to nominate someone who wishes to run for an office.

Dwight Norris is chairing the nomination committee for the club's 2013 - 2014 slate of officers. Also on the committee are Rusty LaGrange and Mike Raff. Contact Dwight (dwightnorris@yahoo.com), Rusty (rustyl@hughes.net), or Mike (mprseven@aol.com) to make the nomination. ❖

Yesterday was an awesome day. I'm glad I went. I bought the "90 day rewrite" book. I hope I can utilize it :-)) ~~~ Monica Edwards

LIMERICK FOR ALAN WATT

There once was a writer named Watt
Who inspired creative thought.

New authors will "wine" him,

New writers might find him

In the *90-Day Novel* they bought.

By Rusty LaGrange, Workshop, Apple Valley, 2013

PS: I'm always amazed how Al Watt can help you draw out the reasons for how you write. His enthusiasm for defining character and plot, with insights for first time authors as well as established authors, is like that light bulb flashing above your head. You can see it hovering over other authors as they suddenly "get it."

More Limericks

by Diane Neil

VERIFYING APRIL

Spring has sprung and March is done.

We have a brand new month.

No fool am I,

Tell me no lie.

Welcome to April oneth.

FRIENDSHIP

Angel is a water sprite.

To watch her swim is a delight.

She's young and zippy;

I'm old and drippy,

But our friendship is water-tight.

THE LA TIMES FESTIVAL OF BOOKS

By Davida Siwisa James

Imagine Disneyland or a county fair with individual booths that are set up for different games, people walking around, talking, eating, happy, sipping something refreshing, enjoying a beautiful day. But every single person is there because they love books—because they love to read and/or write. How often in your life will you be around thousands of people who all love books?

This is the 19th annual L.A. Times Festival of Books, which was held at UCLA for the first sixteen years. We lost it to USC three years ago, and that still pains me. I say "we" because I am a UCLA alum and a retiree. I used to love watching the festival set up right outside of my office, practically. But since I love the festival, more than I dislike USC, I continue to go.

This book festival is the largest, best, and most prestigious in the U.S. People drive for hundreds of miles to attend, and that is not an exaggeration. I've spoken to people who have driven from San Diego, Palm Springs, and other cities. It is held annually on a Saturday and Sunday at the end of April, now on the USC campus. For more info go to <http://events.latimes.com/festivalofbooks/general-information/>.

And you should not let the idea of 'thousands' of people deter you because you can always find a bench or table or someplace where you can sit and chill out. One of the most exciting things is the lectures and autograph signings by famous authors. There is a period of time when you can request free tickets to the lectures. I've seen Mary Higgins Clark, Nicholas Sparks, Dr. Phil, Frank McCourt (Angela's Ashes), Terry McMillan, and many others. The authors speak on different topics dealing with their craft. Ray Bradbury used to attend practically every year and he would be at various booths and do signings. There really is no way to list all the famous and soon-to-be famous authors who attend.

Continued from Page 3

I say that because Bruce Bauman, a guy whose house I used to go to for a writer's critique group (he was our leader), is a presenter this year! Just noticed that. He wrote a wonderful book, *And the Word Was*, that has been optioned for a movie. I think he had just started teaching a class or two at Cal State when I knew him. He is now an adjunct professor in the Cal Arts MFA Writing Program.

There are also panels by literary agents, book publishers, and new writers. There are publishing houses and specialty book store booths for every genre you can imagine...romance, mystery, sci-fi, horror, etc. And so many opportunities to talk to people who love your genre and write in it. The California Writers Club always has a booth there.

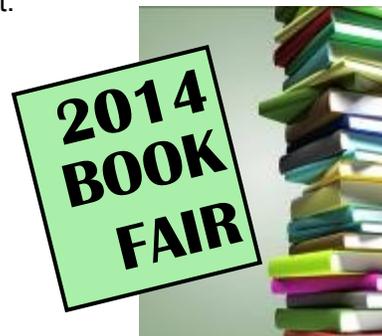
For the autograph signings, people bring carts of books from their libraries for their favorite authors to sign. You don't have to buy a new book. There is a wonderful children's plaza where you have storytellers and costume characters and lots of readings. One of the most delightful sights I've ever seen was this little boy standing by one booth intensely reading his book. So, yes, definitely, generations of families can be seen there.

And though unsanctioned, you will always find authors who did not opt to pay for a booth who are walking around distributing their bookmarks or other promotional material. Consider in the future, for our club to sign up for a booth and have our members' books on display for sale. Thousands of people arrive just to "buy" books and share new experiences with books. I've bought the occasional book by a writer with whom I was not familiar.

You can also enjoy live music stages, lots of foods, and a \$5 book booth at which I always find something interesting. In addition to the ticketed events inside the lecture halls, some authors speak in the various open seating plazas. And if you don't have a ticket, you can stand in line for the waiting list because a certain amount of people always get tickets and don't show up. And it's also a great place to buy book-related items as gifts. There are booths that sell handmade tote bags, book marks, tee shirts, mugs,

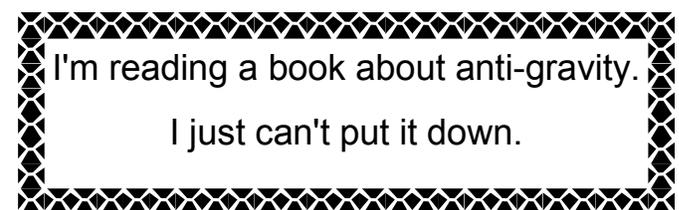
It seems something is magical about being around all these people who love books as much as you do. No one is going to be talking about the Lakers or Nascar or politics or gun control or global warming (unless they wrote a book about it). This is two days of everything and anything that has to do with books, book gifts, writers, and readers.

It is simply, for me, the best two days of the year, second only to the Oscars. Evening events are book awards and a concert with a band comprised of famous authors. If all else fails, bring your favorite book, find a place to sit and read. It is a wonderful event.



Next year I am more than willing to organize the car pools for anyone who wishes to go, but we do need people who can drive. And I want to stress that this is "NOT" a club-sponsored event because of insurance purposes. This is a group of like-minded club members who want to make this very worthwhile trek to an "annual" book festival that is so worth attending. I would recommend leaving about 8:30 so we make sure to get parking in one of the campus lots.

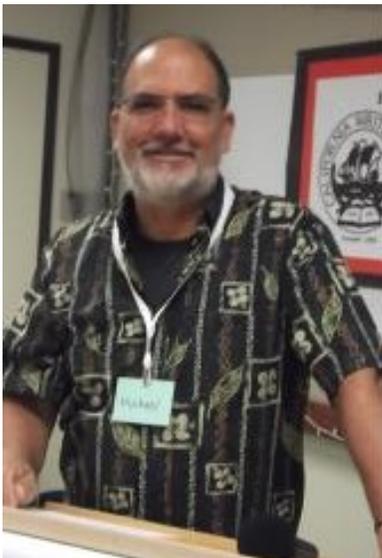
Feel free to contact me at dsjwriting@rocketmail.com or call me on my cell at 310-435-5270 if you would like to go next year. Let me know if you are willing to drive. It's a 90-minute drive. That's all...90 minutes and you are in book nirvana. I hope, that in future, we have a serious discussion about renting a booth. ❖



WHAT YOU MISSED

Storyteller Welte Knows his Voice In Audio Book Reading Services

"I'm not a writer, I'm not a journalist. And I don't do what you do. When I thought about that, I asked myself, why am I here?" said Michael Welte, featured



guest speaker at our HD CWC April meeting. He said he celebrates individuals who can do that. Welte said, "What you, as an author, give me is what I have to work with." Although Welte does not mind being called a narrator, he prefers to think of himself as a story teller.

Michael Welte is a 30-year resident of Apple Valley, and is an experienced audio book narrator. "What does reading aloud imply?

Reading aloud implies the materials for someone else's ear, mind, and heart. It is to affect the listening audience. Writers are paid to provoke the reader into reacting. My job is to convey the writer's material in a different medium. We are not paid to react to or comment on the writer's material. That is the listener's responsibility."

He explained that he asks himself how he is going to play the character, searches for intonations, and tries to get to know the author. Then he experiments with recording samples, gets the input of people he trusts, and sometimes goes through the entire book five or six times before it is completed.

"A few years ago we had 2,400 voices out there in the digital world. There are now about 44,000, and the number will soon double." For more information on narrating and finding narrators, visit www.tantoraudio.com and go to Our Narrators Page.

If you missed the meeting, you can listen to it on our www.hdcwc.com website through the exclusive Podcast located at <http://www.hdcwc.com/2013-speakers.html>.

~~Bob Isbill



Photo Collection By Anthony J Enriquez

Ahhhh.... So Cute



As reported last month, Felicia Macomber, Branch Manager at Newton T. Bass Apple Valley Library, , delivered a beautiful baby girl named Hannah Isabella Macomber, Friday, March 1, 2013. This is an actual photo of the baby. Thank you, Bob Isbill, for forwarding it to *The Inkslinger*.

[Prison Prose & Cons](#)

Outreach Program Wins Accolades

The High Desert Branch of the California Writers Club was specially honored at the Federal Correctional Complex (FCC) on Saturday, April 6, 2003 for the ongoing writing workshops that the Outreach Programs volunteers have conducted for the last 23 months. The recognition happened at the annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet held annually to show the gratitude of the FCC to some 300 volunteers.

The Assistant Supervisor of Education congratulated the HD CWC for our inclusion of 9 inmates in the 2013 anthology, "Desert Gold", which had a profound effect on those contributors. He also said that he had pulled the disciplinary records of those inmates attending our workshops and since our classes began, not one member of those workshops has had any disciplinary action whatsoever.

Four HD CWC members have been involved since June 8, 2011: Mary Langer Thompson, Rusty LaGrange, Dwight Norris and Bob Isbill. We now have two more volunteers who will be joining the group, Denny Stanz and Davida Siwisa James. To keep up with critiques of work done by the prisoners, the Outreach Program has requested volunteer critiquing by anonymous members of the HD CWC and we have had a great supportive response.

The FCC volunteer group program has been so successful and proven to be such a positive impact that we have been invited to go to another facility at the FCC to duplicate our program, which will begin in June.

Read & Edit Anonymously

As announced at our last meeting, we are in need of volunteers who would be willing to devote one hour per month (or less) to read and critique work done by the inmates in our FCC prison writing workshops. Let me explain:

These would be done anonymously and from your own home via email between you and me. You would never need to accompany us to any of the workshops, and your involvement and identity would remain secret. In fact, we prefer you just make up a

pseudonym to use on your responses.

All correspondence will be between you and me or one of the other regular HD CWC volunteers.

We would ask that you be honest in your evaluations, just the same as in your critique groups or with other writer friends, and to make constructive criticisms that can be used in a positive manner.

We have found that this is what they most need, and what they most cherish. Just someone who will "listen" to them by way of reading their poetry and/or fiction and non-fiction, and to give them your educated evaluation. And by "educated", I don't mean anything fancy, but as one writer to another.

We have two new volunteers who want to become involved in going to the facility and participating in our meetings with the inmates. If you are so inclined, a security background clearance is required, and attendance at a Volunteer Indoctrination meeting once per year. Without exception, everyone who has participated at any level has been astounded at the respectful, willing, enthusiastic demeanor of these men.

As I told you today, according to the Assistant Educational Supervisor, there has not been one single disciplinary action on any of our inmates since we began this program! The prison has over 300 volunteers. We represent about 2% of the total volunteers in the FCC system.

If you would like to assist with the critique effort, contact me at risbill@aol.com. Thanks very much,

Bob Isbill, Outreach Programs

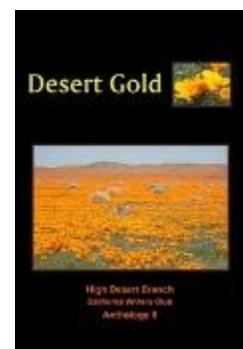
Desert Gold

Anthology 2012

Available for \$10

at every

regular meeting



Membership Dues Reminder

Hello Member,

Your membership dues are coming due in July. A couple things to keep in mind:

1. We are fast approaching the time for membership renewals. In order to prevent a lapse in membership, please remember to send your \$45.00 to either 20258 Hwy 18, Suite 430-PMB 281, Apple Valley, CA 92307, or you may give them to me at the meeting in June.

2. Please remember to log on to the MRMS website and update your information. You may access this through www.hdcwc.com. Go to the "Links For Members" and click on the MRMS website link. If you do not know your password and member ID, please feel free to contact me with any questions.

~~Amanda Smith, Membership Chair



CWC Computer Guru Croons a Patriotic Song on YouTube

Ray Malus, CWC member of the San Fernando Valley Branch, and creator and administrator of the CWC MRMS membership tracking program, has written a song which has been posted on YouTube: "Hello, God (This is America Calling)" Have a listen and, if you like it, spread it around by sending the link to your friends and family. This song has some potential! Here's the link below.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?>

News You Can Use

Breaking Through Spiral Ceiling

Dr. Laura L. Mays Hoopes will be the guest speaker at the Apple Valley Library Book Club on June 11th at 5 p.m. in the Community Room of the Apple Valley Newton T. Bass Branch Library.

Dr. Hoopes has written the book *Breaking Through the Spiral Ceiling* which deals with how a woman can combine a science career and warm human relationships. Dr. Hoopes is a DNA scientist and professor at Pomona College and has previously found that men were not ready for women in the field of science. Her memoir shows that women can balance a career and a family, enjoying both.

If you are interested in attending this special meeting, please call Betty Plumlee at 760 946-0354.

A BLURB BY ANY OTHER NAME

We missed a birthday, a chance to celebrate one of the first words, if not the very first word, coined by the publishing industry to convey a specific book marketing concept. The word is "blurb."

Endorsements on book jackets had existed for a very long time. But not until Gelett Burgess, poet of "The Purple Cow" fame, did we have a unique term for them. Burgess, a prominent figure on the San Francisco Bay Area literary scene, in 1907 depicted a comely fictional lass named Miss Belinda Blurb on the cover of his book "Are You a Bromide?" He showed her spouting high praise for his product. Her name instantly became an adjective. This means "blurb" has been around for more than 100 years.

Submitted by our state CWC PR person: Donna McCrohan Rosenthal, PR director, pr@calwriters.org

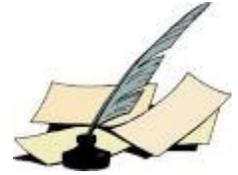
SUBSTITUTIONS OF MERIT

"Substitute 'damn' every time you're inclined to write 'very;' your editor will delete it and the writing will be just as it should be." — *Mark Twain*

What If We Were ALL Writers?

By Hazel Stearns

At our meeting on April 13, when Bob Isbill gave his report about the success of our program with the inmates in the FCC prison writing workshops, it made me wonder: If troubled teens, the mentally ill, and *all* inmates wrote daily, maybe the discontent, misery, hate, confusion, sadness, could all be poured onto paper rather than onto society. Or better yet, maybe from the time we are first able to put words together, we should *all* be taught to write our feelings daily: *Today I'm happy/thankful because:* and, *Today I'm sad/mad/glad because:*



The assignment would insist that both sentences be completed, even if the thankful part consisted only of a comment such as, *I'm thankful I'm able to breathe, or, I'm thankful I'm able to think.*

Like a sore, bad thoughts fester and grow if they never see light and air. Too many people have no one to share their thoughts with, to confide in. I know I sound like a "Pollyanna," but what if those negative thoughts were countered with hope and encouragement or, at the very least, brought to light so someone else could see the need for help? Would some of our world's violence be tempered?

I know that my personal method for solving a problem, or for working through pain and sadness, is to write it down. It's cathartic. By writing it, I have preserved it, because whatever the event was, it was too important to throw out. By writing it, I have unloaded the burden, and I no longer have to carry the weight—I am then able to move forward. I believe that old saying about, "You're either moving forward or sliding backwards." It's good to remember our sorrows and mistakes if we can take away something positive and grow from them, but it's not beneficial to wallow in the past, or dwell on hatred, confusion, and misery. We authors know that the act of writing is creative, time consuming, brain encompassing, and rewarding. It forces us to dig into our psyches, stretch our imaginations, utilize our senses, and ask the *what-if* questions. Writing focuses our attention and holds our interest. It challenges us and gives us a purpose in life, even if nothing else in the world does. *What if* writing left no room for negative thoughts? *What if* everyone, to one degree or another, was a writer? *What if* writing offered self-esteem to anyone who pursued it? *What if* . . .

Notes From the Editor ---

Next month will be on a shorter deadline to accommodate our slate of officers nominations. Remember when submitting: use Arial Font, 11-point type, and attach photos and /or submissions to your email, no need to double-space. Place *Inkslinger* in the subject line of your emails.

Call for info: 760-646-2661 if you have any questions. Email : Rusty@aFlairForWords.com or RustyL@hughes.net. Deadline for each month is the 15th. It won't change. That's what deadlines are for. To offer a suggestion, please contact me and we'll discuss it. I love new ideas.

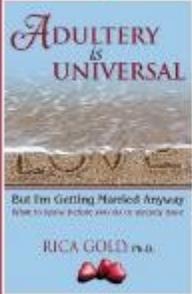
-- Rusty LaGrange

Contact the Editor



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 Well, sort of.

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Ad Size	Cost
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Half Page	\$50
Full Page	\$80

Submit your ad along with payment to Roberta Smith (cwrsmith@verizon.net) by May 11, 2013 Provide them at the HDCWC club meeting or mail to: HD CWC, 20258 Hwy 18 Ste 430-PMB 281, Apple Valley, CA 92307

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