



# INKSLINGER

HIGH DESERT BRANCH CWC

SAIL ON

MARCH 2013

## The Board: *On Being a Part of the Whole*

**T**hanks to our official club photographer, Anthony Enriquez, I get to view all the photos he took during our monthly meeting each month. Some of those photos include our guests, which are numerous each meeting, our speaker or the members participating and interacting in group sessions. It's very rewarding, as a board member, to see the strong involvement of everyone there.

**O**n the board, we help one another in selecting both guests and determining the interests and desires that club members express to us. In fact, we are ready to ask again about those interests and will supply you with a list of possibilities at the next meeting, as well as a place to make your own suggestion. Since we have both seasoned members and brand new members -- we have a wide range of topics to consider.

**I**n volunteering for an office, you get a much broader perspective of what the club is all about and how, as a branch of a statewide organization, we fit in. Recently, I learned that one branch has 241 members. WOW! I thought we were big as we hover around 100 members. As a board member, I receive the newsletter from all the other clubs that produce one, and it's fascinating to see what events they plan, who their speakers are and how they help the membership as well. Most of the clubs have formats for their meetings that are quite similar to ours, although I have not yet seen as much in the way of interactive programs in which all of the members and guests participate.

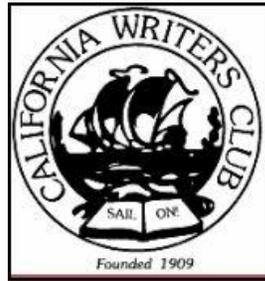
**T**he board members operate as a team. Each person contributes what their office requires to keep the club running smoothly. Perhaps you would like to consider taking on one of these roles yourself. Some positions are elected, others are appointed by the president. The five key board member officers are: the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary, the Treasurer and Member-at-Large. Also on the board is the Membership chair, the Historian, the Critique Group representative, the Newsletter editor, and the Publicity chair.



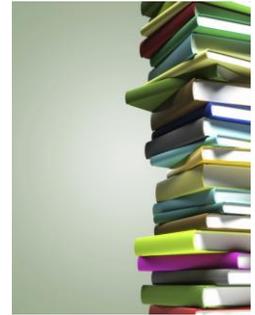
**A**lthough we all have very full and often busy lives, holding one of these positions not only is very rewarding, but allows us to give back to an organization that provides us with so much valuable information, help, and camaraderie. Many of our members have valuable skills that enable us to take full advantage of pursuing different avenues of writing, publishing, and marketing our work.

**I**n the next edition, I'll provide you with a better idea of what each of us provided this year and what we continue to do during the time we hold office. We love being creative and variable in what we can offer to make this club enjoyable and educational. I hope you will take notice of what knowledge or help you might contribute to the club by giving a little of your time to the fun of being on the High Desert Branch Board of Directors, too.





## Incarcerated Authors Group



Now that our CWC Writing Outreach Program has passed its first year in the federal prison system in Victorville, the group of writers held a planning meeting for year 2013. Guest speakers continue to show enthusiasm for the program by asking to return or be on the waiting list. The new schedule will accommodate them.

Bob Isbill, who created the outreach plan with the request from the Federal Correctional Center October 2011, will have guest authors such as S. Kay Murphy, Martin Lastrapes, Nina Amir, and Steven Wersan among others, plus a growing list of our local members offer writing advice, workshops, and marketing know-how.

"It's exciting to see the program grow," Bob said with a wide grin. "We have four High Desert CWC members on the team who have gone through the volunteer training program and satisfied the NCIC clearance requirements. We could use a few more volunteers." The group meets at the prison from 12:30 to 3:00pm on the first Wednesday of each month, he said. The volunteers also can schedule special events on the third Wednesday of the month to accommodate up to 85 inmates plus a guest speaker.

The inmates have also taken the role of authorship by being self-published, marketing their books through family members who have learned about the publishing process, and finding accomplishments in better writing. They call themselves the "Incarcerated Authors Group" or IAG for short.

Finding inclusion of their works in the *Desert Gold* 2012 CWC anthology is another boost for their egos. You'll find A.J. Scott's poem *Desert Gold* being such a perfect representation of the anthology that editors Freddi Gold and Roberta Smith selected the poem for the back cover.

During our November class, we asked if Scott had to sign autographs yet, and he demurely said no, not yet. But it's assumed that once the anthology is widely read, Scott will be getting writer's cramp for a good reason.

If you are interested in the Outreach Program please contact Bob Isbill, Dwight Norris, Mary Langer Thompson, or me, Rusty LaGrange, for more information. ❖

If you're just starting your writing journey, or are well on the road to publication, the March HDCWC meeting should encourage and inspire you to reach your writing goals. Five yet-to-be published club members will talk about their work.

In addition, two of the club's critique groups will demonstrate how they work to help High Desert authors finish and polish their project. All are local authors—*friends and neighbors*—with "real life" writing experience and expertise. Motivation, inspiration, success, feedback opportunities, and more—all in one informative meeting!

~~ Madeline Gornell, PR



### Tania Ramos -- After

Point of View can be a tricky thing when writing a fictional piece. And with the insight of Tania Ramos sharing her extensive study of the skill, it will make authors consider that they may

need to review their latest work.

If you missed Tania's presentation, her book titled: *Surviving the Writing Apocalypse*, will be a must-have tool in your writing kit. She helps define the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> person view, and exposes those tricky errors that make author intrusions, head hopping, and collaborative thinking stand up and be recognized for what they are... errors in crafting that perfect book.

Tania gave a concise and entertaining romp through a topic that could have been pure drudgery. She kept the program spinning along and added a dash of inspiration for the author's in us to ferret out POV problems everywhere.

~~Rusty LaGrange

# What the Roadrunner Saw...

by Joy Bryant

*Feather-beaten tail moves up and  
down  
as beak tweaks  
a rock forming a split-rail fence*

*Cocked-headed bird blinks around  
a branch of Eucalyptus trees laden  
with pigment juices*

*Another bark breaks  
the morning silence as the  
roadrunner skimmers  
to another tree*

*Hop to freedom, having escaped large, charging  
teeth, dripping with warm saliva and jaws  
ready to crush a pointed, beaded head*

*Pin-headed eyes look down  
and meet large  
piercing, brown eyes*

*A frozen stare, energized by fear, sudden death  
Powder-puff movement as the roadrunner  
butterfly's over the dog's neck*

*Yelp, and now stare forgotten, chase  
frivolous insect beyond fury creature of no respect*

*Roadrunner flutters to meet earth  
leaving its impression  
upon the sand*

*Water rings the tree  
as glassed immersed translucent the sand*

*Now who's staring who  
bird to water,  
water to bird*

*Water gives way  
under  
a slight breeze  
as ripples roll  
across  
the surface.*



Photo credit: [www.windows2universe.org](http://www.windows2universe.org)

## ReCap: Inmate Outreach Program Workshop

The High Desert Branch of the California Writers Club, in conjunction with the Federal Correctional Complex, proudly presented Alan Watt, author of "The 90 Day Novel" doing his presentation of "*Unlocking the Story Within*", to selected inmates in the HD CWC Outreach Program for writing education.

This two-hour writing workshop held February 5, was generously supported by Poets & Writers, Inc. through a grant they received from the James Irvine Foundation.

Alan Watt, author of *Diamond Dogs* which he wrote in 90 days and was paid \$500,000 for North American Rights, was accompanied by the HD CWC volunteers Mary Langer Thompson, Rusty LaGrange, Dwight Norris and Bob Isbill.

We are indebted to the Poets & Writers, Inc. organization who, for the second time, has granted our Branch matching funds to be able to provide this educational experience for our prison program.

In a continuing effort to provide high-quality similar programs to our regular membership, the HD CWC hosted this same workshop free of charge at our general membership meeting last July. In addition, Alan Watt will hold an all-day seminar Saturday, March 30, 2013. Several seats have become available. Contact President Freddi Gold for details.

~~Bob Isbill

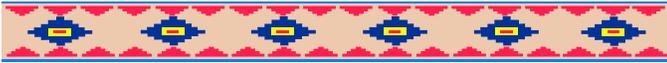
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### OPPORTUNITY for SUPPORT:

One of our local members is looking for an energetic person to share their residence and book publishing office in Hesperia. Room and board provided in exchange for sharing management and time-consuming chores. Computer skills a plus. Seeking ally and workmate – not romance!

Only those organized, goal-directed, and enthusiastic need apply. Must have personal transportation.

Email your interest and qualifications, including telephone number, to [varvi78@charter.net](mailto:varvi78@charter.net) ❖



## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Would YOU like to achieve greater visibility for your book? Build some street credibility? Earn acknowledgement for your work? Or hook up with an agent or publisher? You can also get into Publishers Weekly or win up to \$1,000 in prizes.

Interested?

Kindle Book Promos would like to tell you about a book contest with a chance for a literary agent to read your work, a publisher evaluation, or a one-hour book marketing consultation. In addition, there are free marketing tips, books, and other prizes. Find out more:

<http://bookcontest2013.luckycinda.com/>

Open to all US, Canada, and UK

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## Blogging and Talk Radio Show Interviews

**Who:** Mary D. Scott invites you to her new Spirit Driven Events Radio Show

**What:** Interview with Roberta L. Smith, Paranormal Mystery Author (now in archive format)

**When:** Wednesday, February 20, 2013

**Where:**

<http://www.blogtalkradio.com/spiritdrivenevents>

**Call the Host:** 347-855-8790

**Next Guest:** "Walk-In" Phenomena, with special guest, Theresa Chaze, Executive Producer, CEO Cosmos Productions LLC. March 6, 3:30 pm.

**Alert:** Freddi Gold coming in March.

If you write in the paranormal, phenomenon, or spiritual genres, contact Mary at [www.spiritdrivenevents.com](http://www.spiritdrivenevents.com) for more information.

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## Burying Dead Words

by  
*Mary Langer Thompson*

Are you guilty of writing "dead" words? If so, it might be why your writing is not rising to the top or being published. What are "dead" words? They are words so overused or non essential that they have ceased to have much meaning.

English departments in high schools and colleges often produce "No-no" lists of words teachers can't bear to see any more in student writing. Some of these words are: *clearly, definitely, fantastic, great, weird, unique, marvelous, and nice*. Phrases include *in my opinion* (who else's would it be?), *I believe, I feel, I think*. Perhaps you use the words for emphasis or because you can't think of a more original word. Teachers might say you are "padding" your manuscript or not thinking deeply enough.

Here are dead words used in abundance in an analysis of a short story by Kurt Vonnegut:

Kurt Vonnegut is a great author who writes about a bad society in "Harrison Bergeron." Many people like Diana Moon Glampers are not nice in this society and do a lot of bad things. Harrison, who is good 'til killed by Diana had lots of handicaps put on him cuz he had a lot of super talents. Cause he was so cute and all, he had to wear weird things all over him. Well, Diana shoots him in a gross way. You would think she would let him live cuz he was so neat. All he wanted was to have some fun.

The End.

Note the underlined words and phrases that are not needed, lack specificity, or are slang or abbreviated. The most commonly used dead words are "good," "bad," "beautiful," and "things."

What is the remedy?

Be more aware of occasional dead words or phrases and bury them after you have your rough draft written. Use them in dialogue only, and even then try to give your character more originality.

Make your writing a cut above a Hallmark greeting card. ❖

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## History You Can Use

### WHY IS A TANK CALLED A TANK

by Jenny Margotta

Etymology is the study of the history of words, their origins, and how their form and meaning have changed over time. Often the basis of a current word can be found in Latin, French, Old English or German. But sometimes a word has no ancient language basis and originates simply by common usage or even, sometimes, by accident.

I've been interested in etymology for years, but what really intrigues me are the stories behind words and terms that cannot be traced to older languages. I thought it might be fun to compile a list of such words and terms and a short explanation of how each came into being. As I'm a history buff – particularly military history – I started there. Here's the first in my series.

THE TANK. Everyone should know what a tank is. Big. Armored. Powerful. Played a major role in the Battle of the Bulge in WWII and in many other military battles.

But why is a tank called a tank?

The military tank was developed in 1915 and 1916 by England for use in the First World War. Its first use in combat by the British Army was during the Battle of the Somme in France on September 15, 1916.

There was so much secrecy surrounding the development of this formidable new weapon that the engineers working on it did not even give it a name for fear that even by naming it, its concept would somehow be leaked to Germany. When the English finally completed several working prototypes, they were loaded onto flatbed train cars for shipment to the front. Still maintaining the need for extreme secrecy, the machines were covered by canvas tarps and secured to the flatbeds. Still, no name had been assigned to the new weapon.

However, the machines were so large that they could not possibly travel across England and France without people noticing them and asking about them. Some enterprising member of the military told a questioning crowd that they were actually water carriers being sent to British units in the Sinai Desert – hence the name, tank.

And tanks they remain to this day. ❖

## Butterfly Memories

By Ann Miner Heimback

Memories come tumbling into my reverie  
Like waves onto the silent sand.  
They take me to places I haven't been for...how long?

Touching down randomly like a butterfly  
Drinking in the sweetness and color of the moments.

And I weep, unashamed.

You were there for me when it was so necessary,  
Through traumas too awful to recall.

You came, unbeckoned, to be by my side.  
You were there for me when it was so necessary,  
Through laughter and love and feelings  
So intense they could hardly be expressed.

And we touched and talked and stumbled  
In the attempt.

Loving the moment, knowing the moment  
would pass.

The tears flow freely now.  
Butterfly Memories flutter to the Beginnings...

A look, a smile, a dance...magic?...and a  
Song whose melody lingers still.

We did not know then that the music would play on,  
If more softly, for so many years.

The Friendship feels good.

The Bond is strong.

You are gone now. I celebrate your new life.

But, oh, how I mourn the loss of you.

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## Communications Gap

Wife texts husband on a cold winter's morning:

"Windows frozen."

Husband texts back:

"Pour some lukewarm water over it."

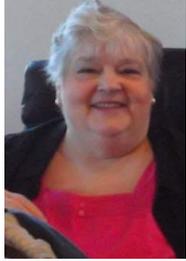
Wife texts back 5 minutes later:

"Computer completely screwed up now." ❖

**NOMINATED HONOREES:**



*Anita Holmes*



*Jenny Margotta*



*Anthony Enriquez*

**Michael Raff, Marilyn Ramirez,  
Mary Thompson, and Mary D. Scott.**

It is an honor to be nominated and the fact that so many people were nominated shows that our branch has a very active and healthy club. The selection committee had excellent comments to make about every nominated individual along with the remarks of the people who nominated them.

The Jack London selection committee consisted of: *Ann Heimback, Dwight Norris, Carol Warren (previous winner), and Freddi Gold.*

The recipient's name is sent to Oakland and a plaque honoring that person will be presented at a future meeting.

The state's CWC annual all-members-welcome picnic is slated for Saturday, July 20<sup>th</sup> at the Fire Circle in Oakland's Joaquin Miller Park. It combines potluck, readings, networking, camaraderie, and a "Lit Cake" competition.

The award ceremonies are held on Sunday, July 21<sup>st</sup> in Oakland, where a member from each branch, winning a statewide distinction, represents their club for the year.



*Marilyn Ramirez*



*Rusty LaGrange*



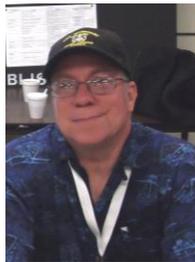
*Mary Thompson*



*Mary D. Scott*



*Anne Fowler*



*Michael Raff*



*Roberta Smith*

**JACK LONDON AWARDS:  
HONOR OUR OWN**

The CWC Jack London Award honors members for exemplary service to the CWC and/or branch, independent from creative writing accomplishments. Each branch may select one designee every other year and, importantly, this year.

The current honorees under consideration are:

**Jenny Margotta, Anthony Enriquez,  
Anne Fowler, Rusty LaGrange,  
Anita Holmes, Roberta Smith,**

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***Anthology Review on Amazon  
to Promote All Year***

You can hold in your hands the top 44-authors and poets from the High Desert in the pages of our new 2012 CWC Anthology. *Desert Gold* is available all year. The price is \$10 per book. Buy one at our next meeting, on Amazon.com, or arrange to purchase extras. See Jenny Margotta, Treasurer, for details.

If you enjoyed *Desert Gold*, take a moment to enter a written review online at Amazon.com to keep our book on the active reading list. It only takes a few moments to make a comment.



## The Brass Ring

by Debbie Weltin

The differences between men and women are greater than the commonalities. I'm sure there are masculine romantics, but where are they?

When I was young it was all about looks. I'd go to the bars and look for the prize package. I was ready to be taken to greener pastures only to find that the pasture was no different than the one I'd been grazing. Did that stop me? No. I continued to look for Prince Charming in the ruins of alcohol.

So why did I do this? I was so totally unhappy in my marriage. At seventeen with child on the way what did I know about love? There was abuse abound in the house that I lived in. I grew up in the same atmosphere. I knew deep in my soul that there had to be something different. Through the years, the faces and situations changed but the outcome was always the same. I compromised my values because some masculine guru told me to 'just do it.' While compromising my values I became an empty shell.

In a long affair with a married man, I was on a path of self-destruction. He told me that he loved me. I believed him because I needed to be loved. Where do you find love? After fourteen years, he told me he was getting a divorce. In an instant, I was so excited and before I could even take a breath he said he was in love with someone else. Deep, meaningful love surely must be out there. Perhaps I'm just too much of a romantic to my detriment.

Have we become so callused by violence and living in the moment that we have forgotten how to totally be enveloped by the essence of another? Are we so goal-oriented and materialistic that we are missing God's gift that is right in front of us? Today, there seems to be no time for finessing of anything, let alone a relationship. We are only passing through one moment into the next.

I joined an online dating site. Actually I joined a few. It's the same scenario over and over again. They seem like they are really interested and come across romantically, but by the time I have exchanged messages a third time they are into the graphic conversation of what they would like to do with my body. They are actually getting turned on with their verbal seduction to the degree that they are hoping for the next sentence out my mouth to take them over the edge.

I guess at our age men are cutting to the chase. They are going after what they really want.....the happy ending! They desire more variety and less connection. Women don't mind variety, they just want more connection. Will the two ever meet?

Yes, we are from different planets, but I know that some people find the magic connection that binds them for many years. Perhaps we are all in search of the magic element that would really connect the two different planets so that we could actually dance in harmony. I, for one, am still looking. Perhaps I am a hopeless romantic, but I'd rather hold out for romance than sacrifice my needs for the brass ring that will disappear all too soon.



**~~~In An Orderly Fashion, the announcements for book readings & signings, book fairs, announcements of new titles, authors' reviews, new blogs & marketing alerts, & other news members would like to read, will be here. Please give the Editor enough lead time to post. ~~~**

If you are interested in being part of the book fair at Ft. Irwin April 15, 16, 17 & 18th, please contact Jim Elstad at [comesthesouthernrevolution@gmail.com](mailto:comesthesouthernrevolution@gmail.com).

Mike Raff's new book "Seven: Tales of Terror" has just been released. It can be purchased through his web site [www.mraffbooks.com](http://www.mraffbooks.com)

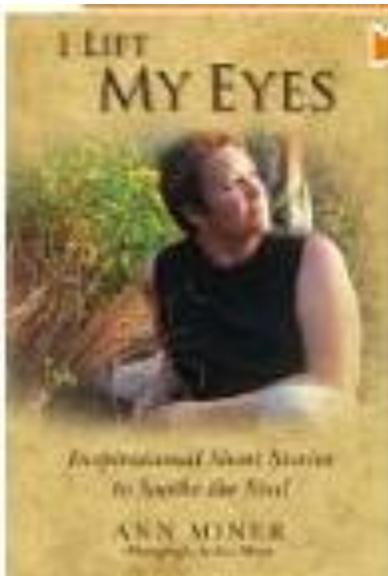
Blog about your books. Engage readers in the processes you took on the way to publication. The extra exposure is helpful for your marketing. [www.HighDesertBlogging.com](http://www.HighDesertBlogging.com)

Post any of your latest news to our free at <http://www.hdcwc.com/members---news.html> news page. It's up to you to share any tidbits that are writing and book related.

# I LIFT MY EYES ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Written by Ann Miner

## A Kirkus Indie Book Review:



In her debut nonfiction collection, Miner weaves together short stories about her life and the inspirational nature of the everyday.

The author presents 27 short vignettes about some of the most important events, people and experiences of her life, from a memory of going to a duck blind with her father at age 7 to reflection about preparing for a coming winter.

In between stories, she depicts happy and sad memories, ordinary moments such as cooking spaghetti sauce and life-changing events such as the deaths of loved ones.



At the end of each story, Miner explains how she found meaning in the experience and includes a Bible verse that helps amplify that meaning.

For example, she compares the ingredients used to create spaghetti sauce to the events and attitudes that help form an individual. The stories are compact, precise and well executed, making them easy to digest. There is nothing especially out of the ordinary about the stories Miner tells about her life, but her stories are far from dull. In fact, their commonplace nature is part of what makes them effective, as it emphasizes the theme that inspiration can be found even in the most mundane experience. Miner writes in the preface, "While our lives are unique to our experiences, we can find similarity with one another." Indeed, readers many connect to many of the author's life experiences, see how Miner drew inspiration from them, and even adapt her ways of thinking to their own lives. An engaging book that illustrates how meaningful ordinariness can be.

Book is available at Amazon.com. Published by Hainbuch Publications

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## ARE YOU A GOOD WRITER?

*Guest editorial by Daphne Gray-Grant,  
The Publication Coach, reprinted with permission*

*Our society is pretty funny* (funny-strange, not funny-ha-ha) when it comes to the word "good." This one-syllable, four-letter word is both vague and imprecise and yet it's jam-packed with assumptions.

*For example, what is a good mother or father?* Do we mean people who make their kids happy? Or do we mean parents who help prepare their children for the real world? Or do we mean something in between?

*I can ask exactly the same questions* about good husbands and wives, good sons and daughters, and good employees. And I'd expect that every one of my readers would have a slightly different definition. Somehow, we're not particularly *good* -- yikes! there's that word again -- at being clear about exactly what we mean.

*This namby pamby-ism* is particularly troubling with the phrase "good writer." For example, many people call Ernest Hemingway a good writer -- yet I don't enjoy reading his books (although I'm resolving to read *A Moveable Feast* before this summer ends.) So does that make him a bad writer - or,

at least, a bad-to-me writer?

*Sometimes, I'm tempted to call John Grisham a bad writer but even though I find his sentence structure repetitive and his characters wooden, his books are bestsellers and, on a beach in sunny August, I've been known to find his plots at least mildly engaging. So is he a good writer or a bad one?*

*I simply adore the work of British novelist Salley Vickers yet I know many readers would find her too literary and, perhaps, too dull. So is she good or bad?*

*Do you see the problem?* The word "good" is not only imprecise but it also seems to be attached with bonding cement to the word "bad." So if we allow it into our vocabularies, we also run the risk of being saddled with its opposite.

*First*, logic tells us that so-called good writers must inevitably have bad days.

*Second*, the *good-bad assumption* takes it for granted there are only two ways of looking at something. I know this from my history as a journalist, when I was always instructed to "get *both* sides of the story." Early in my career, I realized that situations often had *far more* than two sides. Our world is far too complicated to fit neatly along good-bad lines.

*So, instead of wanting to be a **good** writer I urge you to seek another label. How about: Writer?*

Here's what writers do:

- They write every day.
- They read *a lot*, and they read *mindfully*, looking for techniques and strategies employed by others.
- They always revise what they've written, sometimes profoundly, to make it richer, more meaningful, more understandable.

*Are they any good?* That's not for them to judge. Writing is not about judging; it's about producing.

*The judgment always belongs to the reader.*

*Author's Bio: Daphne Gray-Grant has one of the most valuable and insightful business writing resources on the web. With years of journalism and corporate expertise, she offers easy, quick and informative tidbits on her blog. <http://www.publicationcoach.com>*



## *Notes from the Editor —*

### Contact the Editor



[RustyL@Hughes.net](mailto:RustyL@Hughes.net)

or

Do you like what you see in ***The Inkslinger***? I welcome all different genres of short fiction, non-fiction newsworthy items, poetry, and new age. Remember: use Arial Font, 11 point type, no need to double-space, and attach photos and /or submissions to your email. Place *Inkslinger* in the subject line of your emails. Now taking short book excerpts of about 300 words to entice new readers. Tell me if your book cover is posted on HDCWC.com and I can copy it directly to the excerpt.

Call for info: 760-646-2661 if you have any questions. Email : [Rusty@aFlairForWords.com](mailto:Rusty@aFlairForWords.com) or [RustyL@Hughes.net](mailto:RustyL@Hughes.net). Deadline for each month is the 15<sup>th</sup>. 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*

# Books

Want to advertise in the April, May, June 2013 issues of *The Inkslinger*? We've expanded what we will include.

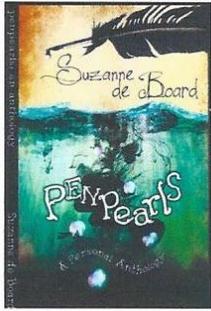
Ad Size	Cost
One Business Card	\$10
Double Business Card	\$20
Triple business Card	\$30
Half Page	\$50
Full Page	\$80

Submit your ad along with payment to Roberta Smith by March 9, 2013. You may provide them at the HDCWC club meeting or mail to:

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

If you have questions, contact Roberta at [cwrlsmith@verizon.net](mailto:cwrlsmith@verizon.net)

# Services



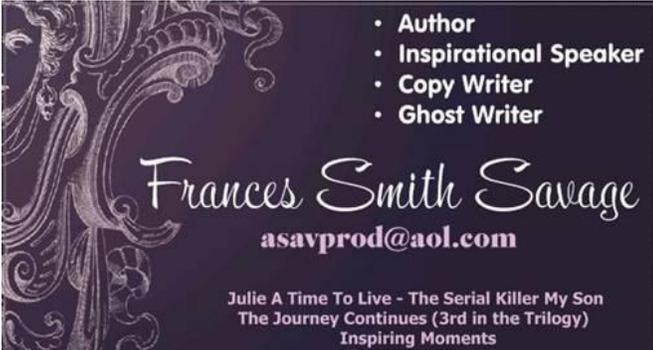
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