



The INKSLINGER *Sail On*

HIGH DESERT BRANCH CWC
Inspiring a Community of Writers



MARCH 2023

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dwight Norris

SATISFACTION



Have you ever been so hungry that you welcome a meatball buffet and forgot you're a vegan?

Well, maybe not. But this is the idea for a writer who is eager to express his ideas before others who are interested and can be part of a supportive writing community. Writing can be hard, lonely work, and it's good to have intelligent, knowledgeable people who are able to offer encouragement and guidance.

That's what you have in the High Desert Branch of the California Writers Club—lots of writing activity and lots of expertise and enthusiasm. If you are new to the club and to the almost daily regimen of writing, you can find others who are used to the practice and have mastered it nicely. Many will work on writing on a daily basis, but much of the work involves reading and study and research to get ready to put the ink on the page.

What you have before you in the High Desert Branch of the California Writers Club is a wonderful extended family who will offer help and support in many ways. For casual support and conversation about writing, you may want to join in with the early morning group at 8:00 AM on Mondays on Zoom where writers gather for coffee and to chat.

Further socializing can be found on the HDCWC You Tube channel and Facebook. All members can be in touch with any other members through the MRMS or just asking them for their contact information.

Critique Groups are a great way to expose our writing to other members and to get to know one another. Critique Groups are comprised of anywhere from four to ten members (usually within that range) and members provide for each other samples of their writing. When a week or two go by, members share their assessment with each other. It is a great way to improve your writing, analyze the writing of others, and make new friends.

Some of our members have been very successful in writing contests. Loralie Kay, for example, won first place and \$1,000 for the North Street Book Prize for her memoir *From Mormon to Mermaid*. Her experience in this contest has put her in touch with new agents and marketing representatives and techniques she didn't even previously know. All of this contributes to her overall success.

As you may know, we have our regular monthly club meeting at the Jess Ranch Community Church on the second Saturday of the month, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 noon. At these meetings we often have a guest speaker, special training on some aspect of writing, some interactive activity where our own members can train us, or an opportunity to share what we've done. So jump in, get involved, and get into the process. We look forward to the enjoyment of each of us improving our writing skills.




FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

By Mike Apodaca



SHORT STORIES

I was surprised one morning when a writing friend of mine called me asking for help with a short story he was writing. He told me the basic outline of the story but said that something was off. This launched a wonderful conversation that stimulated our thoughts about stories told well. Here's what we came up with. Hopefully, this will help you as you write your short story for our coming anthology.

- Good stories are not overly simple. A story where a protagonist overcomes their problem by making a good choice leaves the reader little to chew on. The best stories are complex, with unsurmountable difficulties and surprising endings.
- Characters in our stories must be multi-dimensional. Paper-thin characters are boring and inauthentic. Real people are a conglomerate of conflicting ideas and motives.
- We can be self-destructive and governed by past wounds. To write authentic characters, we need to know their history and their context (family, friends, lovers, etc.). We need to know how they feel and respond to what is happening to them. We need to know their personalities and their voice.
- All parts of the story must contribute to the story. You may like unicorns, but if they serve no real purpose in your story, get rid of them. Especially with short stories, the reader should be able to say in the end that they knew why every part of the story was included—but we have to know this first.
- Don't give away too much too early. Readers like to be surprised. Set up your story for a great twist at the end, something the reader will not expect. The best stories have unpredictable endings.
- Know why your story is important. We learn how to live by the stories we store deep inside us. They form our world-view and make us who we are. If we want a better world for ourselves, our children, and our grandchildren, then we need to tell better stories. You really are doing something that will change lives—even your own!
- Be brief. Although, as writers, we enjoy spending a lot of time describing every flower and toadstool, we must resist the temptation. Short stories are meant to be short. Don't weigh it down with unnecessary description.
- Write well and have someone who knows what they're doing read your writing. Hopefully you are in a critique group where growing writers who care about you and your writing are partnering with you through this difficult journey. I submitted the story I'm considering for the anthology to my critique group. I've already received some invaluable feedback and have changed my story accordingly.
- There is great satisfaction in creating a well-written story. Best wishes as you put your mind, your imagination, your heart, and your determination to this honorable process. 




REJOICING WITH LORELEI KAY

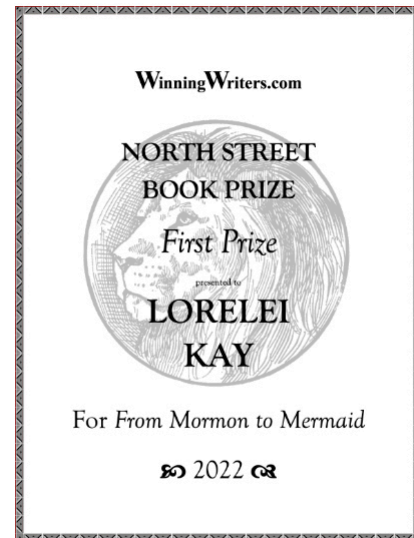
By Mike Apodaca



When one of our members experiences success, the rest of us applaud and celebrate. Today, we're rejoicing with Lorelei Kay. Lorelei has been awarded first place for Creative Nonfiction with Winning Writers' North Street Book Prize for her memoir, *From Mormon to Mermaid*, her well-documented story of liberation and personal discovery.

You can learn more about Lorelei and her book on Amazon.com and at <https://winningwriters.com/past-winning-entries/from-mormon-to-mermaid>.

We hope Lorelei can hear us all putting
our hands together for her. 



TWINKLE, TWINKLE TINY STAR

By fumi-tome ohta

Twinkle
Twinkle
Tiny Star
How I wonder what you are
I wish, I may
I wish I might
Wish you here with all my might
Twinkle
Twinkle
Tiny Star
Upon this starry night so high
like many a dew drops in the sky
"Here comes the hard part, Tiny Star"
Well, shoot!

now my mind's gone blank
and nothing rhymes
Twinkle
Twinkle
Tiny star
Kiss me night
and wish me fly
I'll try again to make you smile
Twinkle
Twinkle
Tiny Star




ACT II FRONT AND CENTER

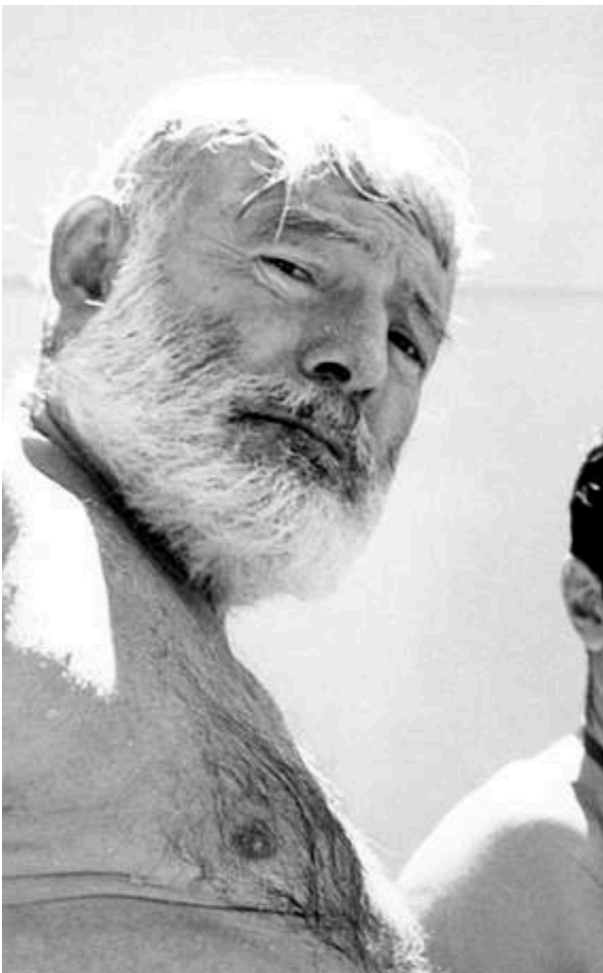
By Mike Apodaca

On Tuesday, February 21st, we had a Zoom ACT II meeting targeted to new members and those who just wanted to know more about all the things our club has to offer. Dwight Norris (president), Mike Apodaca (vice president), Jenny Margotta (treasurer), and Michael Raff (membership chair) all spoke to their particular areas of involvement with the club and the many activities, projects, and outreach opportunities available in the HDCWC.

Twenty terrific people attended this meeting. We started with a PowerPoint covering the many aspects of our club, then ended with questions and answers. All the feedback we received from this meeting has been positive. After the meeting, the leadership sent out a sheet to all members of the club with helpful links to our many services.

Thanks to all who contributed to the success of this important meeting.

It is our intention to hold one of these New Members meetings whenever they are needed (maybe when we gain fifteen to twenty new members). 



*It's none of their business
that you have to learn to
write. Let them think you
were born that way.*

~ ERNEST HEMINGWAY

HDCWC MARCH 2023 BIRTHDAYS

MARCH 14 JOAN RUDDER WARD

MARCH 19 REBEKAH KOONTZ

MACH 24 LINDA COOPER

THE WEIRDNESS OF WRITERS

By John Paul Garner



I've become a voyeur of sorts. An eavesdropper, too. I blame Richard Zone and Dwight Norris for it. It was they who suggested it. I was at the time—and still am—experiencing difficulty in writing dialogue between women. I know how men talk, but the conversation of women is a different art form. So it was their idea that I go to public places like Starbucks and listen to their conversations to learn how they talk. They talk in a way that is foreign to men, and it is the way they talk that I must understand if I am to write believable dialogue between them.

So I listen, I learn, and I take notes.

I go nowhere anymore that I don't have my little notebook with me to jot down an idea, a scene, or a section of dialogue I can use in the book on which I'm currently working.

Here recently, for example, I was driving on the 15 toward Barstow one morning and was so enthralled by the sunrise that I parked on the shoulder, took a picture of it, and quickly wrote down my impressions of it. And there are times I simply watch people and try to affix a word or phrase that describes their facial expressions, how they're standing or gesturing with their hands, or I simply describe a scene that maybe, later, I can incorporate into my story.

At the last club meeting, for example, I benefited from the guest speaker's use of two phrases whose words I had yet to use in anything I had ever written: "I stared blankly" and "He furrowed his brow." Blankly and furrowed were the new words I wanted to remember, as I was sure there will come a scene in the future in which I can use them. Having been spoken aloud, the words registered with me.

There was also a scene at the table where I was seated of three Styrofoam cups, each containing a different drink, and three cookies on some napkins. Next to the cookies were some crumbs. In itself, the scene was unremarkable, so the challenge was to describe it in such a way that it became remarkable, even relevant. I have discovered that this simple practice has aided me when trying to describe settings in my book.

What I don't do is read romances, which is the genre in which I am currently writing. I know the argument for reading the work of others, and I do—just not the work of others in the same genre, because I don't want to be tempted to modify my style to emulate theirs. So I read anything else. For example, I'm currently reading *The Measure* by Nikki Erlick. It's not a romance, but because of how she captured my interest with her short Prologue, I questioned the effectiveness of mine and cut it down in length, which made it more focused and, to my delight, more dramatic.

Less was again more.

These practices perhaps add to my weirdness. No sweat. We're writers, so in a way we're all kind of weird. When we write, we live in our imaginations and draw from our experiences so that a reader will be enthralled, maybe educated, and, hopefully, entertained. What we do to become better writers—better storytellers—is part of our craft. What I share with you here is simply some tools that, in working for me, may also work for you in achieving that purpose. 🚢



*The first draft is just you telling
yourself the story.*

~Terry Pratchett

HDCWC ANTHOLOGY PUBLICATION OPPORTUNITY

Just a reminder that the HDCWC is seeking poetry, fiction, and non-fiction submissions for this year's bi-annual anthology. This year's theme is conflict. Submissions may be up to 5,000 words each and each member may submit up to 3 submissions for consideration. There is a \$15 fee for each submission. Keep in mind that the anthology is one of our best fund raisers, so your submission fees help the profitability of the project.

The deadline for all submissions is June 15, 2023. But please try to submit as early as possible. Submissions that do not meet the guidelines for this year's anthology will be returned to the authors for a chance to correct any errors or even submit an entirely new piece if necessary. The earlier you submit, the more time you will have to fix any issues with your submission(s). So waiting until the last minute probably is not a great idea.

Works will be judged based on either poetry or prose criteria by a panel of non-club-member judges. Cash prizes will be awarded for winners in both poetry and prose.

If you have not received your copy of the guidelines and authorization to publish please contact Jenny Margotta at jennymargotta@mail.com to request copies of those documents.

Don't miss this opportunity to let your creative talents shine!



HDCWC TO PRESENT ERIC UGLUM ON AUDIO BOOKS

By Bob Isbill

The High Desert Branch of the California Writers Club (HDCWC) will present local owner/operator of New Wine Recording Studio and Mastering Lab, Eric Uglum, on the topic of recording audio books and music. The presentation begins at 10 a.m. at the Community Church at Jess Ranch, 11537 Apple Valley Road in Apple Valley. The public is invited and welcome to attend at no charge.

Eric Uglum is an American musician, vocalist, audio engineer, and producer. In 2016 Eric and Bud Bierhaus were included on the Grammy Ballot for Best Bluegrass Album for their CD release titled *Traveled*. In addition to working independently through his New Wine Sound Studio and Mastering Lab, Uglum is also a staff engineer at Blue Night Records.

In 1997 he began engineering and producing out of his New Wine Sound Studio and Mastering Lab in Apple Valley. Clients have included The Black Market Trust, Sierra Hull, Sean Watkins, and many more.

Uglum continues to operate New Wine Sound Studio and is currently touring with Bud Bierhaus & The

Vintage Martins. Their debut album titled *Traveled* was released 2016 and includes guest artists Rob Ickes, Ron Block, Christian and Austin Ward.

Eric Uglum is scheduled to speak to the HDCWC about doing professional recordings, whether you have written music, lyrics, or a book.

For information on the California Writers Club High Desert Branch, visit www.hdcwc.com or call 760.221.6367.



WRITERS ARE READERS

BOOK REVIEWS by Mary Langer Thompson



THE ART OF LENT

By Sister Wendy Beckett

Even before the AIMS (Art and Ink MatterS) program at Premier Academy with HDCWC member/teacher Debbie Rubio, I enjoyed reading a book in preparation for Easter beginning on the first day of Lent. Many might remember Wendy Mary Beckett or Sister Wendy (1930-2018), a British religious sister and art historian known for her popular BBC and television documentaries on the history of art in the 1990s. Beckett became “the most unlikely and famous art critic in the history of television.”

Before she became famous, however, she studied English Literature at Oxford. J.R.R. Tolkien was president of her final exam board and asked her to stay on at Oxford. She declined. She taught and lectured at a girls’ school until 1970 when health problems forced her to become a hermit, during which she translated Medieval Latin scripts before deciding in 1980 to pursue art. She published several books and then was videotaped lecturing. She surprisingly was often very entertainingly descriptive in her depiction of human anatomy.


The Art of Lent is a small book, and along with forty pictures, has meditations on themes like forgiveness, humility, peace, love, and more. The first picture is *The Great Wave* by Katsushika Hokusai. Here is what Sister Wendy says: “We cannot control our life. As Hokusai shows so memorably, the great wave is in waiting for any boat. It is unpredictable, as uncontrollable now as it was at the dawn of time. Will the slender boats survive or will they be overwhelmed?”

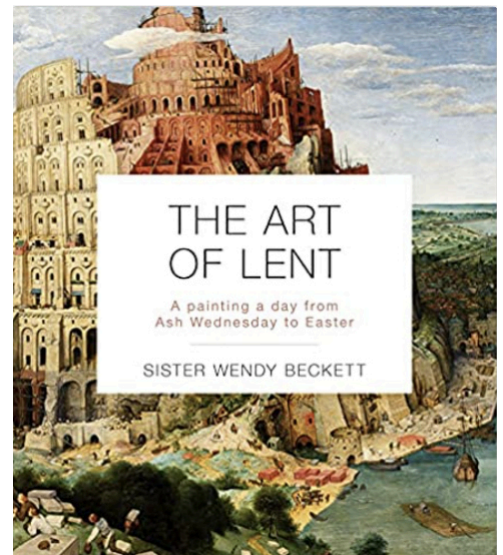
Other paintings Sister Wendy comments upon are *The Return of the Prodigal Son* and *Woman with a Pink*, both by Rembrandt. Writers will appreciate her insights on Bruegel’s *Beyond Babel*: “To express what one means, and to hear what another means: this is a rare thing.” Sometimes, Beckett, reflects on elements in the painting, such as light in Vermeer’s *Young Woman with a Water Jug*, or the light in the more modern *Epiphany* (1990) by Robert Natkin, or even the way light shines on emptiness (*Queen’s House, Greenwich II* by Ben Johnson). She is a very honest critic. About *Still Life with Ginger Pot II* by Mondrian, she says it “. . . might or might not have a meaning.” Sometimes she speculates about a meaning. About *Composition in Red, Yellow, and Blue*, also by Mondrian, she says, “The secret of peace is determining where this infinitude is, and here is where the need for balance becomes paramount.” She goes on to say that moving a line or modifying a rectangle will make the painting dull and make it lose balance. Sometimes, she says something about the artist’s life. About *White Lilac* by Manet, she says, “In the last year of his life, wretchedly shortened through illness, Manet painted several of these vases of simple flowers.” She chooses to write about Monet and his unselfish love and how he catches a tiny glimmer of light on his dying wife’s face in *Camille on her Deathbed*.

Sister Wendy connects paintings and their meanings to our lives. We long for our own “personal angelic visit” she says about Botticelli’s *Annunciation*. She philosophizes that “we choose joy, making a deliberate commitment to happiness” when writing about Peter Paul Rubens’ *Rainbow Landscape*. She includes paintings by unknown artists she likes like *Baby in Red Chair*, then returns to a classic Renoir (*Children on the Seashore*) or Monet (*White Clematis*).

The final painting in this book is *The Supper at Emmaus* by Caravaggio, which depicts the astonishment on the faces of two grieving disciples who suddenly recognize Jesus. “Better perhaps if we were astonished,” she writes.

There is a full-color painting on one page with Beckett’s comments on the opposite page. This can be a quick read or a long reflective one if you meditate on the timeless wisdom of Sister Wendy.

This book can be read at any time of the year, but whatever you do, do not give up reading during Lent, because writers are readers. 





Jenny Margotta

From an Editor's Desk

EXTERNAL CONFLICT IN STORYTELLING

As most of you know by now, this year's bi-annual club anthology's theme is conflict. In literature there are two main types of conflict: internal and external. Last month, Mike Raff wrote an excellent article on internal conflict, so this month it's my turn to delve into external conflict.

In literature, conflict is a struggle or problem that the protagonist must face. External conflict focuses on the character against an outside force. There are five different ways that conflict can be presented:

- ❖ Character vs. character
- ❖ Character vs. society
- ❖ Character vs. supernatural
- ❖ Character vs. technology
- ❖ Character vs. nature

Conflict is an essential element of any plot. External conflict drives the action of a plot forward. For example, the protagonist can be fighting to defeat an enemy, win a promotion or coveted job, settle old scores or grudges, right a wrong, win the love of another character, or work to resolve another type of problem. A story can have just one central conflict or it may have multiple storylines with different protagonists involved in separate, ongoing conflicts. Additionally, a good conflict story may have elements of more than one of the five external conflict types.

Classic fairy tales and myths often fall into the first category: character vs. character. For example, the miller's daughter outsmarts Rumpelstiltskin, Cinderella is freed from her evil stepmother, and Theseus slays the minotaur. Fairy tales and myths often meet the criteria for character vs. supernatural conflict as well.

George Orwell's *1984* is an excellent example of character vs. society. Winston tries—and fails—to resist the oppressive power of the police state that controls his world's society.

Stories revolving around character vs. the supernatural have been popular since the beginning of time. The epic poem "Beowulf," which consists of 3,182 alliterative lines, was written sometime in the eighth century. There's also Joseph Campbell's "The Hero with a Thousand Faces." JRR Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* became a multi-billion-dollar box-office success, and there's the popular current Netflix series *The Haunting of Hill House*. Supernatural forces are defined as forces that operate outside the laws of nature, often having special powers or abilities normal humans do not. They can be witches or wizards, ghosts, werewolves, vampires, zombies, or other paranormal or magical creatures.

Character vs. technology conflict, which explores the problems that arise when technology grows beyond its intended use, is the hallmark of science fiction. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is a classic example. The Stanley Kubrick film *2001: A Space Odyssey* is another example. Who among us doesn't know something about the AI computer HAL 9000? And of course, there's Arnold Schwarzenegger's iconic role in *The Terminator*. Schwarzenegger is a cyborg assassin sent from the future by Skynet, an AI defense network that has achieved self-awareness. The winner of the conflict between the cyborg and the human soldier could determine what the future holds for both man and machine.

Jack London's short story "To Build A Fire" is an example of character vs. nature. The story is about a foolish man traveling alone through the extreme cold of an Alaskan winter. Wet and in danger of freezing to death, he manages to light a fire with his last remaining match. However, the heat from the fire leads to disaster.

Without a problem or conflict, most stories wouldn't go anywhere. They might achieve their goals without any challenges or struggles, but that would not make for an interesting read. Your character might win or lose the battle, but that struggle against another character or outside force is what ultimately makes the story worth telling. Conflict motivates characters to take action, and that's what keeps readers turning the pages. You want your readers to be eager to find out what happens next. Does the character they're rooting for win or lose? How will they overcome—or be defeated by—the problems they face? And why should your readers care? Those are the questions to ask yourself as you write your external conflict story or poem.

Now you have the key elements for either internal or external conflict in storytelling. So go forth and do battle against the evil force of writer's block. Triumph and write the story or poem that wins first place in this year's anthology contest. And take it from me, the prize money is worth winning—plus you get all those great bragging rights!



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WORD OF THE MONTH

Jenny Margotta


Continued from page 8

INTERNECINE: (IN-TƏR-'NE-SĒN) ADJECTIVE

1: of, relating to, or involving conflict within a group. (EX: bitter internecine feuds)

2: marked by slaughter; deadly, especially: mutually destructive

Internecine comes from the Latin *internecinus* ("fought to the death" or "destructive"), from the verb *necare* ("to kill") and the prefix *inter-*, usually meaning "between" or "mutual" (but it can also indicate the completion of an action.)

It first appeared in English in the early 17th century and meant "deadly." But nearly a century later, Samuel Johnson defined the word as "endeavoring mutual destruction." *Internecine* developed the association with internal group conflict in the 20th century, and that's the most common sense today. 

THE READING MOTHER

By Strickland Gillilan

I had a mother who read to me
Sagas of pirates who scoured the sea,
Cutlasses clenched in their yellow teeth,
"Blackbirds" stowed in the hold beneath

I had a Mother who read me lays
Of ancient and gallant and golden days;
Stories of Marmion and Ivanhoe,
Which every boy has a right to know.

I had a Mother who read me tales
Of Celert the hound of the hills of Wales,
True to his trust till his tragic death,
Faithfulness blent with his final breath.

I had a Mother who read me the things
That wholesome life to the boy heart brings-
Stories that stir with an upward touch,
Oh, that each mother of boys were such.

You may have tangible wealth untold;
Caskets of jewels and coffers of gold.
Richer than I you can never be —
I had a Mother who read to me.



Strickland Gillilan (1869-1954)

ON COMEDY WRITING, T. FAYE GRIFFIN

By Mike Apodaca



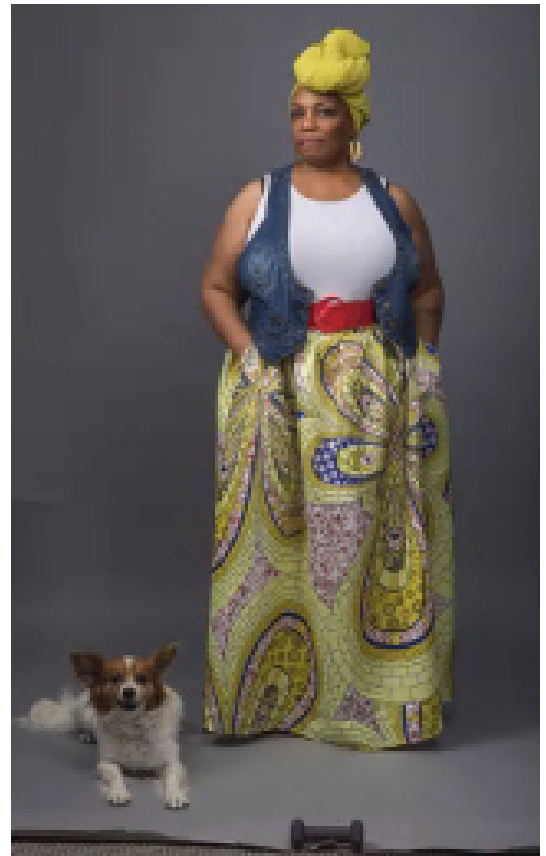
Saturday, February 11th, the High Desert Branch of the California Writers' Club was treated to the genius of T. Faye Griffin, 3X NAACP Award winner, Producer, Best Selling Author, Visual Artist, and Regional Programs Director for the Arts Connection of the High Desert.

Ms. Griffin shared with us about humor in a presentation called "On Comedy Writing." Ms. Griffin has a rich history. Ten years she did her own stand-up comedy, fifteen years she wrote for Steve Harvey, and for three years she worked with writers like Jim Carrey on *In Living Color*. With such a background, it wasn't surprising that Ms. Griffin seemed to know everything about comedy, past and present.

Much of this meeting was responsive, people in the audience sharing thoughts and questions and Ms. Griffin responding as only an insider can.

The take-away for me was something she said about writing humor into our stories and novels. She said that it should appear naturally, fitting the characters involved, and be short and sweet. She also said that comedy is very contextual and that not everything is funny to everyone.

Coming to meetings is great for connecting to our friends in our writing club. It allows us to meet new people and share about our writing. But it can also expose us to professionals who have learned the craft from a career in the trenches and who still are down-to-earth and approachable. 🚢



The High Desert Branch of the California Writers' Club meets on the second Saturday of every month at the Community Church in Jess Ranch on Apple Valley Road. You can learn more about the club at HDCWC.com.

*I do not over-intellectualise
the production process. I try
to keep it simple: Tell the
damned story.*

~Tom Clancy





THE MOST FAMOUS AUTHORS OF ALL TIME

By Michael Raff

SYLVIA PLATH

Although she possessed an IQ of about 160, and won countless awards, of all the writers I have researched, Sylvia Plath seems to be the most tormented. She was born on October 27, 1932, in Boston, Massachusetts. At eight years of age, the *Boston Herald* published one of her poems. Over the next few years, she published several more in regional magazines and newspapers. She also won a distinguished award for her paintings.

Her father died just after her eighth birthday, causing her a religious loss of faith for the rest of her life. A visit to his grave inspired her to write the poem "Electra on Azalea Path." Her family moved to Wellesley, Massachusetts in 1942. Plath commented in one of her final works that her first nine years "sealed themselves off like a ship in a bottle—beautiful, inaccessible, obsolete, a fine, white flying myth." Plath attended Bradford Senior High School, graduating in 1950. Shortly later, she had her first national publication in the *Christian Science Monitor*.

Plath excelled academically at Smith College. She edited *The Smith Review* and won all major prizes in writing. Additionally, she achieved an editor position at *Mademoiselle* magazine and won the Glascock Prize for "Two Lovers and a Beachcomber by the Real Sea."

While at Smith, Sylvia lived in Lawrence House. During this time, she received electroconvulsive therapy for depression and made her first suicide attempt in August 1953 by crawling under the front porch and taking sleeping pills. She wrote, "blissfully succumbed to the whirling blackness that I honestly believed was eternal oblivion." She spent the next six months in psychiatric care.

In January 1955, she completed her thesis, *The Magic Mirror: A Study of the Double in Two of Dostoyevsky's Novels*, and in June graduated with an B.A., *summa cum laude* and was a member of the Phi Beta Kappa honor society. She obtained a scholarship for Newnham College,

where she continued writing poetry and publishing her work in their newspaper. She spent her first holidays traveling Europe, where she met poet Ted Hughes. She described him as "a singer, story-teller, lion and world-wanderer with a voice like the thunder of God." The couple married on June 16, 1956. Plath returned to college in October. During this time, they both grew attracted to astrology, the supernatural, and Ouija boards.

In 1957, they moved to the United States, and Plath taught at Smith College, her alma mater. She found it difficult teaching *and* writing. In 1958, the couple moved to Boston. Plath took a job as a receptionist in a psychiatric unit and attended creative writing seminars given by poet Robert Lowell, who encouraged her to write from her experience. She discussed her depression with him and her suicide attempts, which led her to write from a more female perspective. She resumed psychoanalytic treatment in December.

Plath and Hughes stayed at the artist colony in Saratoga Springs, New York, in 1959. She said it was here that she learned to be true to her own "weirdness," but she remained anxious about writing from deeply personal and private material. The couple moved to England in December and lived in London. Their daughter, Frieda, was born on April 1, 1960, and in October, Plath published her first collection of poetry, *The Colossus*.

In February 1961, Plath's second pregnancy ended in a miscarriage. Several of her poems address this tragedy. In a letter to her therapist, Plath wrote that Hughes had beat her two days before losing the baby. In August she finished her semi-autobiographical novel, *The Bell Jar*, and then they moved to a small town in Devon.

In August 1961, Hughes fell in love with Assia Wevill, and Sylvia's life quickly unraveled. In June 1962, she crashed her car in yet another suicide attempt. Their second child, Nicholas, was born in January, 1962. Soon after Plath and Hughes separated.

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

SYLVIA PLATH

Beginning in October 1962, Plath wrote many of her most famous poems, at least 26 that are in of her posthumous collection, *Ariel*. In December 1962, she returned to London with her children and rented a flat that William Butler Yeats once lived in.

That winter was one of the harshest; the pipes froze, the children were sick, and they had no telephone. Her depression returned but she finished her poetry. Plath tried several times to take her life, including driving her car into a river.

In January 1963, she described her depression to John Horder, her friend and general practitioner, as being "marked by constant agitation, suicidal thoughts and inability to cope." Plath lost 30 pounds and struggled with insomnia. Horder prescribed her a monoamine oxidase inhibitor a few days before her suicide. Knowing she was at risk alone with two young children, he visited her daily, tried admitting her to a hospital, and even hired a live-in nurse. Because anti-depressants can take up to three weeks to take effect, her prescription proved too late.

On February 11, 1963, 30-year-old Plath was found dead with her head stuck in the kitchen oven, having sealed the rooms between her and her children with tape, towels, and cloths.

Plath had described her despair as "owl's talons clenching my heart." Artist Maxwell Gordon Lightfoot had killed himself in a nearby house on the same street in 1911.

To be continued next month.



A WORD

AFTER A WORD

AFTER A WORD

IS POWER.

~Margaret Atwood

TRANSFERRING YOUR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (COPYRIGHTS)

By Freddi Gold



As members of our writing club, we've enjoyed volumes of information that continues to guide and teach us in our endeavors to write, often culminating in being published. The delight and pleasure that ensues from this achievement often encourages us to publish again and again, resulting in a collection of works which eventually brings up the question of what will happen to these products of our imaginations or contributions to the world of learning should we leave them behind once we, ourselves, move on? How do we transfer our rights to someone else?

We're talking about the transfer of Intellectual Property.

It can feel somewhat mind-boggling to contemplate doing this, considering that the intangible nature of the property is our written and published efforts. The assignment of intellectual property rights refers to the act of transferring ownership from the *assignor* to the *assignee*. The document that creates the transfer is often referred to as the "assignment."

The two parties entering into the agreement can either be legal entities or individuals. Copyrights are transferred this way. These rights can have limitations or be full rights to what the assignee is allowed to do or gain from the intellectual property. Usually, when intellectual property is transferred, it's done for one lump sum of the royalties. If for some reason you are transferring your rights outside of the United States, it's important to make sure you are meeting that country's national assignment requirements. Most intellectual property can be freely transferred by the assignor.

Be sure you own your copyright. You cannot transfer what you do not technically own. When you create an assignment, you are essentially promising to transfer your ownership rights of the intellectual property (copyright).

There are some basic rules and requirements when creating an intellectual property agreement. You should always:

- Put the assignment in writing
- Require both the signature of the assignor and assignee or authorized signer for either party
- Have it signed in ink
- Keep the originals stored in a safe place
- Get it notarized if the county requires it
- Use a specific form if the county dictates

If you want to pass your copyrights to someone else, it's important to ensure a timely recording and transfer of rights. It's essential for that person(s) in order to claim those priority rights.

There is more information available online. Here's an example of a form:

Assignment Form | Free Assignment of Contract (US) | LawDepot 

STRANGER THAN FICTION

STEPHEN KING HAS TRISKAIDEKAPHOBIA



The famed horror writer Stephen King has what is known as triskaidekaphobia, which is the irrational fear of number thirteen. In fact, he's so terrified of it that he wouldn't pause reading or writing if he's on page thirteen or its multiples until he reaches a number deemed safe for him. Ironical, considering his fiction is known to consist of some horribly disturbing aspects, none of which are a mere number. "The number thirteen never fails to trace that old icy finger up and down my spine," he said. "When I'm reading, I won't stop on page 94, 193, or 382, since the sums of these three numbers add up to thirteen".


“SPUNKY WOMEN” TO BE HONORED MARCH 21TH AT HESPERIA LIBRARY

By Bob Isbill

The High Desert Branch of the California Writers Club (HDCWC) will feature members of the club and the audience reading excerpts from women writers and talking about “Spunky” women they admire, past or present, living or dead. The event is scheduled for Monday, March 20, 2023, from 5p.m. to 7p.m. at the Hesperia Library Community Room 9760 Seventh Avenue in Hesperia. The public is invited and welcome to attend at no charge.

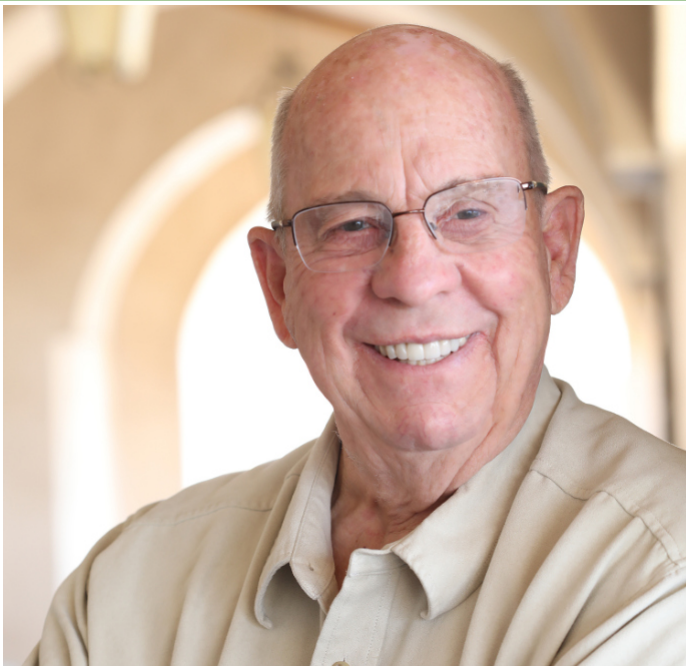
The local writers club has engaged in the spotlighting of women for several years in the month of March, which is designated for women’s history. Refreshments will be served. Those wishing to do a 3-to-5-minute reading, memory, or statement about a special spunky woman may sign up at the meeting.

Examples of some who have been honored in the past are Amelia Earhart, Rosa Parks, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Oprah Winfrey.

The California Writers Club meets monthly. Its mission is to assist writers at all levels of the craft to write, publish, and market their work. For more information, visit www.hdcwc.com or call 760.221.6367. 



HDCWC NOMINATING CHAIRMAN SELECTED



Bob Isbill was selected to be the 2023 Election Nominating Committee Chairman by the board of directors of the club.

The elections for president, vice president, secretary and treasurer will be conducted at the June 2023 meeting.

Those wishing to participate as candidates for any of those offices may contact Bob Isbill via email at:

risbill@aol.com or phone 760.221.6367. 

WE ARE ALL COUSINS BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION *By Mike Apodaca*

On Monday, February 27th, at the Hesperia Library, our club hosted a night of diversity and the unity of the human family.

Our keynote speaker was Dr. Tayari Kuanda, a professor at Victor Valley College and teacher at Apple Valley High School. He is also the CEO of the SCORE program (Secure Communities Of Racial Equality), an organization created to help young people find their way in life. He also runs a weekly podcast called, *Let's Chew the Gum*. Dr. Kuanda pulled no punches. He described what it was like to grow up during the time of bussing (he was nine-years-old when he was bussed to an all-white school). He shared the importance of breaking down walls which separate the races.

When Dr. Kuanda finished, he brought up his beautiful talented daughter who shared her evocative paintings.

Readings followed this inspiring presentation. Judith Pfeffer shared with us from the book, *All That She Carried: The Journey of Ashley's Sack, A Black Family Keepsake*. Joan Rudder Ward shared about the exciting things happening with her program, *Inspiring a Girl to Greatness*. Dwight Norris shared from the book, *Bloodbath in Jasper County, Mississippi* by Matthew Cruise. In a conversation he had with the author about race relations, the author quipped, "After all, we are all cousins." Mary Langer Thompson and I both read black poetry.

The state-wide CWC has recently shown a sincere desire to embrace the diversity of the human family. Our branch is ahead of the curve, celebrating the rich history and vibrant life of all people. 🚢



**HIGH DESERT BRANCH OF THE
CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS AND
APPOINTED POSITIONS ARE CURRENT
UNTIL THE END OF THE FISCAL YEAR
ENDING IN JULY 2023.

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

By *Michael Raff*

The lights of stars that were extinguished ages ago still reach us. So it is with great men who died centuries ago, but still reach us with the radiations of their personalities.

-Kahlil Gibran, poet and artist (1883-1931)

MEMBERS ONLY

Take advantage of your membership benefits

- Free advertising and free posting of your book titles and latest project,
 - Free PR author's webpage
 - To find out more, contact a board member or Roberta Smith, our webmaster.
- You can also review your Benefits Booklet online at: www.HDCWC.com

HDWC'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Catch the latest happenings at:

youtube.com/@HDCWC

FREE ADVERTISING

Do you provide a service that could benefit other writers?

Send a JPEG file of your business card or ad to

retiredzone@gmail.com

We'll advertise it free of charge!

SUBMITTING TO THE INKSLINGER

- We seek articles and stories of between **200 to 500** words.
- Poetry submissions are welcome as are photos and illustrations accompanying submissions.
- Please avoid sending items that are embedded in other media (like Word files). Simply attach items to email.
- Submit in Microsoft Word.
- Send submissions to Richard Zone:
retiredzone@gmail.com.

Call Richard if you would

like to discuss an article or idea

909-222-8812

