



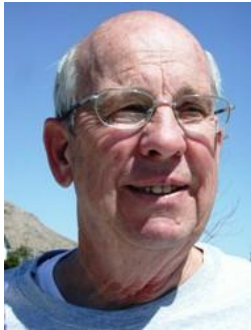
INKSLINGER

HIGH DESERT BRANCH CWC

SAIL ON

Vol 25. No. 11 February

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



The
President's
POV
Bob Isbill

BUYER BEWARE

I think General Colin Powell is one of the finest men in America. He and I had some of our military training in the sixties at Ft. Devens, Massachusetts. He is truly one of the most qualified, competent men living today.

Did you get the impression that I know or knew Colin Powell? I didn't and I don't. I've never had the pleasure of meeting him. However, as far as I know, every single word and sentence in that first paragraph is absolutely true.

Truth can be a misrepresentation when it is put into a statement that causes others to assume something to be true that is not really true at all.

As writers, we have an automatic target on our backs from those who would prey on our hopes and dreams and take money for services that may not be in our best interest. If you're looking for writing advice, beware.

We, as a group, are as eager to be recognized for our talent as an avid skier is dying to

Hit the snowy slopes, and he'll spare no expense doing it. I don't mean to be unkind to that species, but skiers are an avid group apart.

Whether you write or ski or both, we owe it to ourselves to do what Coach John Wooden said: "Be quick, but don't be in a hurry." If you're in a hurry, it can lead to mistakes. Take your time, be leery, investigate what's offered and proceed with caution.

In short, do due diligence. Touting a product is not a sin and it's not against the law. A car salesman can legitimately say, "The car runs great!" It could fall apart as soon as it leaves the car lot, but it's not fraudulent. They call it "puffery" and anybody can use that. It's wise to have your mechanic check out the car you're test driving before you buy it, and it's wise to investigate everything that seems just too good to be true.

There are lots of legitimate people in this business of writing—people who can genuinely help us. Those people will stand the test of taking it nice and easy. Don't rush. Buyer beware.

NEW MEMBERS THIS QUARTER:

Steven Marin , Vic McCain-Buzzelli, Andrea Willow Elizabeth Pye, June Langer , Barbara Tondro Tisa Garrison, Eryn Reddell , Michael Raff, and Nora Wood.

LUCINDA SUE CROSBY
January 8, 2011

by Frances Smith Savage

"I love the written word, and I like to talk to people who write." Lucinda Sue Crosby's first words as she gained our attention Saturday morning at the first HDCWC meeting of 2011. Her enthusiasm was catching as she continued. "I write because I can't help it." She tries to evoke emotions, and tell emotional things about herself.

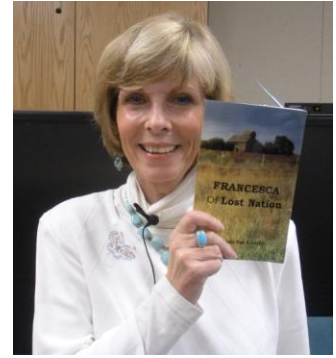
At ten years of age they introduced her to Shakespeare; reading already was ingrained in her life. Her mother read to her every day, and she taught herself to read at a very early age. Roy Rogers, her godfather, a great story teller, and her hero. She learned by listening to adults as a child, and learned to listen to other points of view, and that gave her inspiration for her life.

She started working on films and character development, and works to develop people who are memorable. In her book *Francesca of Lost Nation*, her grandmother was the central character. She was the first woman race driver, and she entered the race with her name Francis spelled with an I. It was much later when they learned that a woman won that race. At an air show she encountered men home from war (WWII), and found that their worst wounds were internal. The pilots were drawn to her and treated her as a peer.

"People don't talk in a monotone, everyone is different. . . Listen to conversations because you are going to be a writer." She continued explaining about her own experiences telling of the poem she wrote about Roy Rogers in 1989. The poem was published in several magazines and read at his funeral in 1998.

She read the Los Angeles Times since she was ten, and felt she knew a lot when she got a job at a newspaper. She had to learn the computer, and all that stuff. She thought the structure stupid, and always tried to sneak a lead in. She had a breezy style of writing, and she wrote on everything, even bowling which she knew nothing about. She wrote four articles every day five days a week and fifty-two weeks a year. She won ten journal awards that year.

Everything she has ever done has to do with words, from poetry, script writing, and recently song writing. She is also an expert in 'water' and takes technical facts and figures and makes them interesting. "I had no idea how different all this was, but ignorance was bliss for they had nothing in common."



It took her seventeen years to complete her book. Two months to write it down, and the remainder to develop it. "Some are afraid of blank pages, but I welcome them. And polish is more fun that rewrites."

"The idea of a writers club is fantastic, a great place to plant your seed." She suggested in our writings to "be brief, but livid in little space. Emotions are universal."

Then she said, "Start telling stories to your children and grandchildren."

She walked back and forth across the front, and needed no microphone. "I love it here, and being on Happy Trails again." She said, "I had a blast, thank you for asking me here."

Photo by Mary Scott

A REMINDER FROM PRESIDENT ISBILL

Excuse this reminder.....

However, if you are a writer or an aspiring writer or if you are already "on the road" promoting your book, we are so excited about this FREE presentation our High Desert Branch of the California Writers Club is putting on January 29th, we can't wait to tell you!

We have a lot of real talent in our club! No question. We have drawn on those talents to share them with our membership and it's going great!

On Saturday, January 29, 2011, our member Dr. Freddi Gold, is going to show you how to sell

yourself and your story through public speaking and PowePoint presentations. The real nuts and bolts of what you need to know to promote your book and yourself. (If you have any doubts about the qualifications of the presenter, take a look at her bio on the Events page of www.hdcwc.org.)

We all know that marketing is essential to the success of a book (script, DVD, story -- or even if you're selling toothpaste!). But where do you begin? What do you need to know? Who do you get to teach you those things? And above all, HOW MUCH would that information cost you?

Well, don't worry at all about the last part because this 90 minute seminar is absolutely free! The only thing you have to do is show up. Even the coffee and donuts are on us! 9650 7th Street, Hesperia, California. That's the address of the Hesperia Library Community Room. 10 a.m. to noon. Saturday, January 29, 2011.

Just remember, this is not the Rose Bowl. There IS limited seating. Sorry, no reserved seating.

Mark your calendar now, and don't miss out on this valuable and entertaining information.

(February's speaker is a man of many talents- writer, magician, director, teacher. Be sure to be on hand to greet our guest.....)

GERALD A. SCHILLER

Born in Philadelphia, Pa., Gerald Schiller received his B.S. in Education from Temple



University, then moved to California where he received his M.A. from UCLA in the Motion Picture Department. He went on to write and direct a number of award-winning educational and documentary films, several of which (*The Movies' Story*, *Chaplin-A Character is Born* and

Keaton-The Great Stone Face) continue to be shown on television throughout the world.

As a teacher, he taught classes in English, Creative Writing, and Cinema in the Los Angeles schools and retired from teaching in 1991.

Since his retirement he has written more than a hundred articles and reviews for such publications as *The Los Angeles Times*, *Ventura Star*, *Aviation History*, *The Fedco Reporter*, *Film News*, *Sightlines*, and others.

He is the author of nine books: the mystery novels, *Deadly Dreams*, *Death Underground*, and *The Man Who Defied Death*; the books for young readers *The Dog That Belonged to No One*; *Two Dogs*, *an Emperor and Me*; and *The Abracadabra Kid*; and the collections of historical articles, *True Stories of Old California*, *More True Stories of Old California*, and *It Happened in Hollywood*.

Mr. Schiller also performs regularly as a magician and is a performing member of the world famous Magic Castle in Hollywood and a member of The International Brotherhood of Magicians (IBM).

He and his wife Esther live in Ventura County, California, have two grown children and one grandchild.

MONTHLY PHOTO COVER QUEST

Each month the **HDCWC.org** website will feature a new photo taken by one of our members.

The winning entry will be chosen by Norm Goyer. Our first theme will be, **The Beauty of Our Valley**. Eligible photos are those taken with a digital camera, slide film camera or a minimum 5 X 7 color or black and white print. Commercial photos, copy write protected photos and screen printed photos will not be accepted. We prefer digital photos using the **.JPEG** protocol but can also accept **.BMP**, **TIF**. I am able to scan 35 mm slides and photos but digital is preferred. We will use **Adobe Photoshop** to make any changes needed for best reproduction. Originals will not be altered. We can adapt any format, portrait or landscape, to the needs of the website. Medium to high resolution digital files will look the best and pixilation problems (low resolution) cannot be solved.

Entries: Pick out your best or your favorite picture

you have taken over the years, and submit only one per month. You can send an email attachment of files to normgoyer@verizon.net or slides and photos to **Norm Goyer, 21416 Ramona Ave. Apple Valley, CA 92307**. Do not send irreplaceable prints or slides, we cannot guarantee their safety. If you do not want your photo copied by viewers of the website, please don't submit it; it is impossible to prevent anyone from downloading the file.

Captions: Include brand of camera, type SLR or Point and Shoot or even cell phone, the approximate date of photo and where and what the photo represents. Much of our desert flora is quite exotic and names will help describe it.

Here is a **sample caption:** *This view from Bell Mountain was taken with a Canon SLR during the winter of 2010. The flooded areas provided very unusual reflective images. Photo by _____ . Member since _____ .*

Locations for great beauty and varied images of our desert home: **Mojave Narrows Park**, animals, water scenes, old buildings and birds galore, love those attack geese. **Apple Valley Library and adjacent county and town buildings**. Great architectural shots, some of the best in the valley. **Victor Valley College** also has some new buildings that offer photo possibilities. The raw desert is loaded with flowers, plants and shrubs of vast differences, use your macro lens for ultra close-ups of flowers and cacti. Take a walk along the **Mojave river bed**, don't step on one of our natives sleeping under a pucker bush. The small dry lake behind the **Fairview Mountains** adjacent to the **Apple Valley Airport** is loaded with great rock formations and vistas. In other words, beauty in our valley is everywhere, go out and find it.. The winning entry will be featured on our website for the month. A certificate of winning will also be presented to each winner. Norm 1-760-247-6739

“Only in books has mankind known perfect love, truth and beauty.” – G.B. Shaw

Two trucks loaded with thousands of Roget's Thesaurus collided as they left a New York publisher's warehouse last week. According to news reports, witnesses were stunned, startled, aghast, taken aback, amazed, stupefied.....



Hey! Look who's back – it's our good friend and supporter, Clark Fowler!. Clark has been ill but is recovering. It's great to see him in his usual spot presiding at the back table! **Someone** has to supervise the coffee making! Individually and collectively we welcome

you “home”, Clark, and offer all best wishes for a continued and swift recovery...ncw

SOUTH BAY WRITERS PRESENTS:

The Long and Short of Writing Great Fiction

March 19, 2010

9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m

The Lookout Restaurant, 605 Macara Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94085

Registration at 9:00 a.m.; workshop begins promptly at 9:30 a.m; continental breakfast and lunch included.

Early Bird (before March 4, 2010): CWC members: \$45; Non-members: \$55
Students w/ID (up to age 25), anytime \$25

After March 4 and at the door: CWC members: \$55; Non-members: \$65 *Cancellation Policy:* \$5 fee through midnight 2/26; \$15 fee 2/27 through midnight 2/13; no refunds after midnight 2/13. Register and pay by credit card (Paypal) at www.southbaywriters.com

Want to write a novel? Do you prefer short stories? Whatever its length, a well-written story is a joy for both writer and reader. But what defines a great story, and how do you craft one? What, besides length, are the differences between the two forms?

Discover the answers to these questions at "The Long and Short of Writing Great Fiction." This workshop is a chance to explore the challenges and rewards of writing both long and short fiction, from the first inspiration to the final polished draft. Margaret Lucke will give you tips, tricks, and

techniques for artfully weaving characters, plot, and setting into a strong and compelling story. Whether you are new to fiction writing or have lots of writing experience, you'll receive encouragement and practical help as well as useful tips and strategies.

Margaret Lucke flings words around as a writer and editorial consultant in the San Francisco Bay Area. One of her novels, *A Relative Stranger*, was nominated for an Anthony Award for Best First Mystery. She has published more than 60 short stories, feature articles, and book reviews, along with two how-to books on writing, *Writing Mysteries* and *Schaum's Quick Guide to Writing Great Short Stories*. Since 1994 she has taught fiction writing classes for University of California, Berkeley Extension and other venues, most recently for the Frank Bette Center for the Arts in Alameda, CA. She has conducted writing workshops for elementary schools, libraries, teachers organizations, and writers groups. As an editorial consultant to fiction writers, she has helped numerous individuals to reach their writing goals. She also produces marketing and management materials for businesses and organizations. Visit her at www.margaretlucke.com.

OUT WITH THE OLD -- NOT!

By Diane Neil

We did the usual end-of-the-year cleaning out. First were the obvious things. We replaced the smudged 2010 calendars with shiny 2011 issues with their blank, hopeful squares. We shredded old receipts -- house payments, auto insurance, utility bills. Our skinny files are ready for their gradual engorgement of the new year's gleanings.

We purged cupboards, medicine cabinets and even the back of the refrigerator for outdated goods. Some stuff that still looked good hit the garbage bin. Closets and drawers got their annual cursory cleaning. Boxes and bags stacked up for the Salvation Army.

But wait! How long do you keep receipts for big things -- a house, a car, a major appliance? We've always thought "When in doubt, DON'T throw it out" and that seemed to be the philosophy of the woman who occupied our house long before we bought

it. I'm sure her ghost still inhabits the place and probably led us to buy it eleven years ago even though we were considering many houses more modern and in better shape.

Let's face it. We live in a hovel. Ah, but such a quirky, one-of-a-kind hovel with such unique charm we couldn't pass it up. Florence Belknap had been dead for four years when we purchased the house from her daughter. The place was cluttered with her junk and perhaps a thousand books. Two storage sheds and the garage were packed to the rafters. The fact we were willing and able to tackle the cleaning figured into the bargain purchase price.

The first few months we lived here were filled with discoveries. We felt like archeologists digging down through layers of ancient history. (Well, at least the forty years since Florence took up residence.)

One thing we love about the house is the storage! There's more cupboards, closets and cubbyholes than we've had in much larger houses. The way we manage to fill them up, you'd never know we spent seven years shoeholed into an RV!

I digress. I've already admitted we're hoarders. But Florence was the champ. Months and even years later we're still discovering her stuff. We had trouble closing a bottom kitchen drawer. Harry finally pulled it out, and we found six pot holders, some recipes and an unopened package of cute little plant gremlins. Gremlins, indeed! Same story with a bathroom drawer. We pulled it out and found square dance skirts stuffed behind it -- size six. Florence was a tiny, lively lady. Our archeological digs revealed a lot about the former occupants. We learned from sheets of humorous, hand-written square dance music that the husband was a caller, and we found evidence of sign making and health food businesses. A huge stash of keys with different address tags indicated they might have had some sort of home care business.

Or maybe they were just collectors. The garage and sheds had brass plaques, signs and various tools, the value of which we're still ebbing. There's a big drawer stuffed with receipts and warranties we've always been hesitant to discard. We looked through them a few times and always put them back. You never know when you might need a

proof of purchase.

Right after New Year's our water heater went out. Harry is a do-it-yourselfer, but asked me to heck in Florence's drawer for anything related to the water heater.

Fat chance, I thought, after all these years. Guess what? I pulled open the drawer, and there on the very top of the pile was the water heater manual and receipts!

The 50 Gallon Craftmaster Residential Water Heater, purchased on June 17, 1992 at Homebase on Valley Center Drive in Victorville for \$218.69, has lasted for over eighteen years.

I swear we never noticed that warranty before. I put it right back with Florence's other receipts and carefully put them all in a labeled bag to store in her drawer. We know our friendly ghost is still around, and we'll never ditch her papers.

We still think she led us to the Treasure in the Attic. But that's another story.

I HEAR WINTER COMING

by Sierra Knoch

I hear winter coming
Snap, crackle, pop goes the fire on the hearth
Clink, clink go the ornaments on the tree
Sprinkle, sprinkle goes the sugar on the cookies
Crinkle, crinkle goes the wrapping paper on the presents

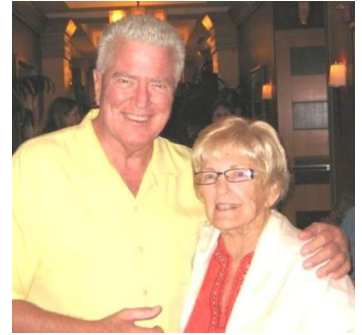
Outside my door, jingle, jingle goes Kris Kringle
Whoosh, whoosh goes the snow
Blink, blink go the lights
Rustle, rustle go the pine needles
Splat, splat goes the snowball
I hear winter

Ernest Hemingway says, "The discipline of the written word punishes both stupidity and dishonesty."

A VISIT WITH HUELL HOWSER

By Bonnie Souleles

Huell Howser, an icon of KCET Public Television, brought his boyish sense of humor to the Del Web Sun City Community in Apple Valley, recently. Standing on an outdoor stage, he regaled his audience with story after story without the benefit of notes or reference material of any kind.



Mr. Howser was born and raised in Gallatin, Tennessee in what he refers to as Jack Daniel's country. His hometown is a short distance from where the popular drink is produced. However the county is dry and it is illegal for the golden nectar to be sold or consumed there. Howser adds with a twinkle "Of course everyone there obeys the law."

After a broadcasting career in Nashville and later, New York, he came to California to work at KCBS. Later, having moved to KCET, he began hosting CALIFORNIA'S GOLD, his ever popular series on the treasures to be found in out of the way places in California. Now in production for over nineteen years, he does not anticipate ever running out of material. "Everyone has a story", he likes to say. He also does a number of other shows including ROAD TRIP.

Of his many claims to fame are a doughnut named after him at Stan's Donuts in Westwood, and the Huell Howser Dog at Pinks Hot Dogs in Los Angeles, That familiar face shows up around the holidays on a Broguiere's milk bottle. His fans, he says are all Californians, most of whom came from somewhere else, just as he did.

Huell says he has no plans to retire. He jokes that he will fall over dead on camera, in the desert and the camera shot will show sand blowing over his body as the credits begin their crawl. "Well golly. Now isn't that amazing? Get a shot of that Cameron."

LIFE

by Thomas Kier

“What are we doing here?” she asked.

“Working,” I replied. “After our meeting, I’ll be filling orders out of the racks.”

I hung the last of the dayshift girl’s stuffed rabbits by the neck from the ceiling, and this girl on the nightshift whose name I did not know, giggled. “You’re so mean!”

I winked, and walked out.

* * *

“What are we doing here?” she asked.

Dinner and a movie,” I replied. “Do you get grossed out easily?”

“Not that I’ll let you see.”

She handled *Starship Troopers* very well. I was impressed. We went back to the parking lot at our job, from which we had played hooky, so that if her husband was watching for her car, he wouldn’t be suspicious.

She played me a song she had picked out for me. I hadn’t heard it before. I still remember it now.

* * *

“What are we doing here?” she asked.

“Picking out rings,” I replied. “Isn’t this the engagement ring store?”

She gave me a secret look, full of love and promise. It is still stored in my heart. I made my promise with my lips on hers.

They are beautiful rings, but the strength of our bonding is in our hearts.

* * *

“What are we doing here?” she asked.

“Having a baby,” I replied. “They gave you

a shot to make it a little easier. The doctor is ready, but it will be me holding your hand all the way through.”

I watched my brave girl go through a lot of stress and pain, and I watched a miracle I will not forget.

We both still think it was worth it--twice.

* * *

“What are we doing here?” she asked.

“Helping our youngest leave the nest,” I replied, “and hoping he packs a little less.”

“Is he ready?”

“Are we?”

We returned to a quiet house. No TV or radio or neighbor’s visit could fill that silence. But when either of the kids visit, there is a world of bright sound, and loneliness goes begging.

* * *

“What are we doing here?” she asked.

It’s our first grandchild’s first birthday,” I replied. “Doesn’t she look cute in that hat?”

“I have to put my glasses on. Where did I leave them this time?”

The day flew, the year flew, more grandkids grew. Someone keeps flipping the hourglass faster and faster. We have many pictures to look at, but for some reason they are getting harder to see. Are they fading, or am I?

* * *

“What are we doing here?” she asked.

“What?”

“I said what . . . I can’t remember.”

“What was I supposed to remember?”

“Stop shouting! I’m not deaf!”

“Of course I’m not!”

We sit and hold hands in our rocking chairs. We face the TV, but never turn it on these days. If the movies playing in our memories are the same, we don’t know it. But they are the bright points in the gray sameness of our twilight lives.

We hold hands.

We rock.

We remember.



TEE PEES

For many years, along the old Route 66 was a group on Tee Pees one could stay in for the night. They were one of the original ideas by an enterprising man or woman for a motel theme.

Today the Indians have an idea for the modern Tee Pee.

It is called a "Casino."

Winnie Rueff



MUSIC REVIEW: “THE HOUSE RULES” DESERVES A LONG, PROUD REIGN

By Judith Pfeffer

One of the best things that happened for me in 2010 was getting, as a Hanukkah gift, the first full-length real-label recording of Christian Kane, whose careers (that’s plural) I’ve followed for more than a decade, making me a vintage “Kaniac.” He’s put out a few independent/short CDs since 2000; I’ve attended his concerts at small nightclubs in Los Angeles and have met him many times.

But “The House Rules,” on Bigger Picture/Outlaw Saints, available at Target, Wal-Mart and perhaps elsewhere, is a leap into what I hope will be a musical career at least as successful as Kane’s acting endeavors. (His latest success is as a regular on Leverage on basic-cable television’s TNT; Leverage is best described as Ocean’s Eleven

meets Robin Hood with much of the structure/sensibility of Firefly/Serenity.)

The music on the 11-song release is country rock aka Southern rock aka folk-rock with a touch of blues and blue-eyed soul. It’s worth your money and time even if that’s not your cuppa; the tunes, the writing, the musicianship and the voice are really that good. The years Kane has spent being bi-coastal – Los Angeles for acting, Nashville for music – seem to have finally paid off in a big way. The recording is utterly professional without selling out to the country-pop homogenizing machine. The House Rules recognizably retains Kane’s category-crossing musical style and warm, humorous personality. His vocal quality, power, control and expression have never been better. His wide range of acting parts – often the villain, occasionally the hero and most often a sidekick of sorts – apparently continue to inform his writing.

There’s not a loser in the bunch.

My favorite is “Seven Days,” one of the three most strongly uptempo numbers and the only one written by Kane and his long-time musical associate Steven Carlson, who sings backup here. “Seven Days” is one of Kane’s signature story-telling songs, capturing a moment, or, more accurately, the moment-immediately-before-the-moment. In this case, it ends just as a desperate young man wagers his last dime on a single throw of the dice in Las Vegas.

A happier scenario – perhaps – is the equally fast-paced “Whisky in Mind,” set in the midst of an intoxicating encounter with an alluring stranger at a neighborhood watering hole.

Is the CD perfect? Of course not. There are at least a couple of logic breakdowns in the otherwise vivid, descriptive lyrics. For instance, in “Seven Days,” if indeed the narrator has sold his “Chevy for a couple of hundred bucks,” then how is he making the long trip to Las Vegas “burning gasoline,” pray tell? A bigger slip is in the first line of the chorus of “Thinking of You,” when the spurned lover tells his ex-girlfriend to watch for “when the new moon shines through your window” -- an astronomical impossibility. And, call me a raging feminist, but I detest the tagline of “American Made” with the ideal lover described as having “a tattoo on her (derrière) that says USDA.” (I can’t imagine that line coming

from the mind of Kane, Southern gentleman that he is.)

The title track, the third hard-charging one, is a standout, with an equally fun music video shot by Leverage castmate Timothy Hutton and recently running on cable television's CMT. It perfectly captures the sheer delight of a typical Kane concert. (For any other Kaniacs who may be reading this, "House Rules" is essentially an updated, more accessible version of "Oklahoma State of Mind.")

The gutsiest effort is the final cut, a surprising yet lovely cover of Tracy Chapman's "Fast Car." It has Kane singing in his highest register with the requisite restraint on this sad story of a hard-working youth who despite years of trying cannot escape the same plight as the parent. I would have liked it even more had Kane retained the original gender of the narrator. That would have made him possibly the best man-singing-as-a-woman since the equally harrowing "Ballad of Mary Foster," an obscure gem by English singer-songwriter Al Stewart from some four decades ago.

What can we expect from Kane in the future? As the old saying goes, "You have your whole life to make your first album – and six months to make your next one." Well, what I personally would like underneath my menorah by this coming December would be a sophomore CD containing solid versions of some of Kane's strongest early work. I would especially like "Spirit Boy," which I view as a re-boot of the century-old tragic true tale of the Inland Empire Indian anti-hero Willie Boy, and "Mary Can You Come Outside," inspired by a true incident, in which the narrator agonizes on how to combat the escalating domestic violence next door.

For more information on the album or the artist, visit www.christiankane.com

THIS 'N THAT

HD CWC WEBSITE: www.hdcwc.org
Pres. Bob Isbill: 760-242-4148
VP Curt James: 760-881-9231
Treasurer: Anne Fowler: 760-247-2082
Secretary: Naomi Ward: 760-241-9642
Inkslinger: naomiwc@verizon.net

TRAVELING FIRST CLASS

By Carol Warren

I had a recent trip to spend the weekend with my brother and family in Houston, Texas. I had been planning to go for some time, but finally had accumulated enough frequent flyer miles to redeem two free tickets. One I used for a trip to Delaware to spend Thanksgiving with my daughter and her family later this year. The other was supposed to be for travel from July 15th – 19th.

Imagine my shock when I got my e-mail confirmation and it said I was going to Texas from June 15th – July 19th. I called the airlines right away and wanted them to correct "their error". I was sure it had to be theirs because I would never have confirmed a trip of more than a month's duration. Unfortunately, they did not have any available "free tickets" in that time frame. The best they could do was to get me on a red-eye leaving Ontario at 1:05 a.m. on July 17th and returning home on the 19th so I took it; somewhat begrudgingly, but they would not give me my dividend miles back so felt I had to use them.

The first problem occurred, which was my fault, in that I was about 15 minutes later leaving home than I planned. Then I either missed the usual turn off or it was closed for construction so had to go the 60 freeway and then back track, causing me another 15 minutes. Then I went into the wrong terminal parking lot as this was not the airline I was accustomed to flying, and had to backtrack again. By this time, it was 12:15 a.m. and I knew they started boarding at 1:30. I had my cell phone on my car charger and in my rush to get to this point I forgot to grab it and put it back in my purse. I was already through the security check when I realized it, but there wasn't enough time to go back.

I made it to the proper gate with 10 minutes to spare and was surprised when I saw my boarding pass showed seat 1B so I was able to board almost immediately. They were serving complimentary beverage and snacks before we even taxied down the runway.

I had been up 18 hours by now so thought I would surely sleep on the flight, but that only lasted about 30 minutes. I awakened when the gentleman next to me was arranging his tray and they were

-serving a light snack. I still hadn't realized yet that I was in first class. The stewardess brought us hot washcloths, and I do mean hot! She was handling them with tongs and I had to wait for it to cool off a bit before I could open it up and use it. The snack was actually quite nice; a couple slices of cold cuts, fresh fruit cup, salad, cookies and crackers and another complimentary beverage. I hoped to doze off again, but it was not to be, so we arrived on time.

Although I had never flown first class before, and probably never will again, it did give me an appreciation for why people would want to do so if they could.

I will share the next part of my journey in a future *Inkslinger*.

RED MORNING

The sun wakes up the sleepy clouds

Parts them softly with her light

Colors glistening beaming through

A red morning, new for you.

Linda Bowden

REMINISCING

By Ann Heimback

When I fixed breakfast for my grown daughter that morning, memories from another life, long ago, came gently floating through the kitchen. I was cooking for three young children and my husband. They gathered around the kitchen table wiggling and giggling in anticipation, as the wonderful fragrance of bacon and pancakes filled the room.

Bacon, crisp and lots of it, was always a treat. If I wanted my share, I had to put a couple of slices aside for myself. Pancakes in those days still required my making a mess of the first two or three,

until I got the grill temperature just right.

I wonder if I appreciated the experience in those days as much as I would appreciate it today. How I miss it. The laughter, the teasing, the requests for "more? Yes, please." My eyes moisten as I remember, realizing how time skitters away while we aren't watching.

I long for such a time again. I want "do-overs." I want to make it better for everyone. To raise my children right this time, to love them more softly, with a gentler voice and kinder words.

Maybe that's why God made grandparents.

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

By Linda Bowden

Marsha heard the sounds of nightfall as she swung back and forth on the porch swing. The air was poignant with the orange blossoms and she could hear her father snoring on the sofa in the front room. Marsha kept swinging, back and forth, thinking of all the day's activities, her mind drifting from one activity to another.

She looked up into the sky, lit with the stars that can't be seen on any city sidewalk and she felt safe. There was a time when she hated the sounds of the night, here on her parent's front porch, but this evening she felt safe. If only her parents knew what she had been going through those five years away from home. But then, she was glad they didn't know. Some of those memories tried to flood her mind but she didn't want to let go of the stillness that surrounded her, the peace that enveloped her, and the serenity she felt in her heart. Marsha sighed with a kind of contentment that can only be felt at home. She felt a little guilty for the past, but as usual her parents had not asked questions, and just like the prodigal son in the Bible, she had been welcomed with open arms.

Her thoughts were interrupted by the sound of her mother, calling from the kitchen, "Marsha, I could use some help in here." "Coming," Marsha answered. All those years in New York she thought about the sound of her mother's voice, soft yet somehow firm and she was happy to hear her now.

The past five years were surprisingly lonely, even if she was in a crowded room. She had longed to feel the closeness she felt today and now that she thought about it, she didn't know what took her so long to come back. Pride she guessed, not wanting to say that she needed her family, not wanting to admit that she was lonely. Well, she wouldn't dwell on it now because she was home; comforted in her father's snoring, her mother's voice and stars that filled the night with light.

This feeling was close to what heaven must feel like, complete peace.

MY TURN (or, your editor vents)

Okay, so those of you who have cut their teeth in a newsroom know the editor always has something to say – at least mine did even if it was “Rewrite this mess!” On the other hand, they usually have a pulse on their community and can be quite positive. This membership is my “Community” and I want to say something:

.. First, a heartfelt “thank you” to those who respond to my pleas to restock the HD Pantry. I know, it's a monthly sob story, but darn it, newsletters have a horrendous appetite for new copy. Submissions did come in and I truly thank you. You will see some of them here. But you know how it is when you give a child a treat, you get that “more, more, more” response – and I'm just a kid at heart – more, more, more, please?! I'm not greedy but as a child of the Depression, I learned that the more we had squirreled away, the better we ate, even though some of the combinations were “interesting” to say the least. So, my e-mail is always open and accepting. Please, keep it busy...

Secondly, there has been an ongoing problem with a very basic situation: When we are all well and healthy, you have four officers, two of whom are females. We arrive, plus an occasional member, at the Library for our meeting, and whoopee, there's been a meeting there the day before. Nothing is where we need it -, tables have to be moved, heavy chairs lifted off of chair stacks, coffee pots, sound equipment, and heavy boxes of other supplies hauled in from trucks and car trunks. We do it, but it takes its toll. Would it be possible for some of you to come in at 9 or 9:15 a.m., help us rearrange our “world”, for the meeting and to remain

for an extra 15-30 minutes after the meeting and help the officers clean up? We have to keep the landlord(s) happy. Male-type muscle would be much appreciated. And we do thank those who do arrive early and pitch in. And, quite frankly in a world I believe in as a female, there are things men can do better, faster, and with less strain than can be accomplished by a female.

So sue me...

Now, gotta show you this: Was wandering around during our last break and came across a group that intrigued me. Quickly borrowed a camera and finally managed to get this shot. (actually, she was facing off with the guys, when I first saw them) All kinds of smart aleck thoughts went thru my mind: “*the long and the short of it*” – “*quality and quantity*” you know – just noodling - then I realized how the group so represented our membership – it takes all kinds of parts make the perfect whole. VP Curt, Steven and Jason were all party to a four-way conversation involving petite Judith and no one noticed any discrepancy, except me seeing her head tilted way back in order to make eye contact! In the long run, it just shows there is a need for variety, and conversation, to keep us vital and growing.

