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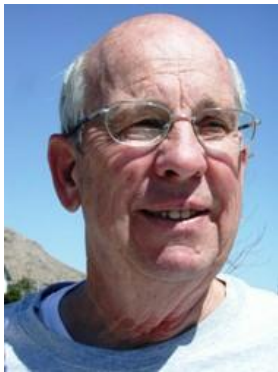
INKSLINGER

HIGH DESERT BRANCH CWC

SAIL ON

Vol. 26, No 16 July 2011

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

Like I knew! W. Somerset Maugham hadn't sent me a card or a letter from the Riviera in months. No phone calls, no invitations to lunch in Paris with Ian Fleming, Robert Benchley, Edna Ferber, maybe Scott and Zelda, or, of course, my new friend, Dorothy.

I didn't know whether to agree or disagree. I simply hadn't heard through my own inadequate grapevine that he was not feeling so hot. But the wonderful thing about that meeting, is that she, THE Dorothy Parker, had included me in that magical circle of literary giants! She was charming enough to make me think that she believed I may have actually known him, and was casually inquiring about old Bill's health.

I think back to that fond memory, recalling the treasure of that day, and the remarkable joy of owning a piece of her life, if only a moment, in my heart. To say nothing of having that well-read autographed trophy on my bookshelf all these years.

Somerset Maugham was right when he said, "Old age has its pleasures, which, though different, are not less than the pleasures of youth."

OPEN MIC 6/11/2011

By Frances Smith Savage

Congratulations to our new Vice President Freddi Gold. Freddi introduced the slate of readers at our June meeting on Saturday in Apple Valley.

SUZANNE HOLBROOK-BRUMBAUGH writes for children and teenagers. She read her

I once met Dorothy Parker.

You know, the one who said, "Men seldom make passes at girls who wear glasses" and "If you want to know what God thinks of money, take a look at the people He gave it to." More importantly, she was one of the greatest short-story writers of all time. She and W. Somerset Maugham remain my very favorites.

It was in the fifties and I was in college and when I found out she was going to speak on campus, I ran all the way to the college bookstore. I grabbed the first book of hers that I could find off the shelf, paid for it, and ran back to the place where she was scheduled to talk.

Afterwards, I had to go up and get my book signed and meet her. And of course, what does an 18 year-old have to say intelligently to the wit of the century?

All I could think to say was, "You know W. Somerset Maugham, don't you?" She looked up from her signing and straight into my eyes, and said, "He's not very well, is he?"

story about two sisters titled “The journal.” She said for those who had a little sister, and how quickly their attitudes toward one another changes from love all the way over to hate or at least dislike. How one can embarrass the other, then when things turned out all right, the younger grabbed her sister’s journal and saved it to read later. A very cute story, and surely that never happened in my house with my three older sisters. I wasn’t a tattletale even if they claim I was.



Open Mic-ers: Ann Heimback, Tom Kier; Suzanne Holbrook-Brumbaugh, and Diane Neil

DIANE NEIL read Grandmother’s reflections on Mother Day. It seems that day was set in stone by some loving past president honoring all mothers everywhere. Diane was surprised to learn that it was first started in 1855 to raise awareness of health in the community. The day died until 1870 it was raised again, but not until 1914 was Mother’s Day placed on our national calendars.

Commercial entities took over, and made it a ‘guilt day’ for all those who have a mother. Ma Bell has one of the busiest days of the year. “Nonsense,” Diane says, “Why wait around for One Day.” I must say Diane, I agree with you.

ANN HEIMBACK read her story “Polly Possum’s Winding Path”. I knew I had read this cute story by Ann Heimback for it ran in the August edition of the *Inkslinger*. In my notes on June 11, I wrote “Polly Possum’s Waddling Path”. Sorry, Ann, I’m not sure which is correct. The story was about Polly Possum and her hunger as she ate her way along the winding waddling path. We all had to at least try to repeat the ‘luscious leafy lettuce.’ Ann did a good job, and I didn’t repeat the words, I couldn’t even type them, that’s why I had to look them up. Good job Ann.

THOMAS KIER was a surprise reader, and Bob Isbill introduced him. Tom writes for Middle School and younger. He read his story about a boy who had two problems. He retreated into his fantasy world which was his first problem. His second problem sent him to the school nurse who treated his burned hand. She also understood his first problem because she had the same problem in her younger days. Confused? When Tom read his work, we weren’t confused; we enjoyed it because we could relate to it. Good job Thomas.

HDCWC has such a variety of writers who have a variety of genres. There was something Saturday for everyone, and if, like me, you enjoyed all of them. Hearing writers read their work gives us the encouragement that we can do the same. Thanks to all.

ATTENTION! NOTICE! ATTENTION!
TO ALL OF OUR PUBLISHED AUTHORS

Please bring a copy of your published work – your choice if you have more than one – to the August Branch meeting.

As was done, last year, pictures will be taken of the author and his/her work to record our members who have published for the first time or added to their titles. Aside from having them on our entry table to encourage our visitors, it will be prominently displayed at the Writers’ Conference in October. If you have published via “e-books”, please bring at least a faux cover to add to the picture. Remember, this is for the **AUGUST 13 MEETING!**

WANT TO PUBLISH YOUR WORK?
PATRICIA FRY TELLS US HOW

Patricia Fry has been writing for publication since 1973, having contributed over a thousand articles to about 300 different magazines. She has 34 books to her credit, including *The Right Way to Write, Publish and Sell Your Book, How to Write a Successful Book Proposal in 8 Days or Less, The Successful Author’s Handbook, A Writer’s Guide to Magazine Articles* and *The Author’s Repair Kit*.

Her articles have appeared in *Writer’s Digest Magazine, Entrepreneur, Woman’s Life, Authorship, Freelance Writer’s Report, Canadian Author, PMA Independent, Spannet, Writer’s Journal, Cat Fancy, Your Health* and many, many others.

Patricia is the Executive Director of SPAWN (Small Publishers, Artists and Writers Network), a 16 -year-old networking organization for anyone interested in the publishing business. (www.spawn.org). She also writes the popular monthly *SPAWN Market Update*.

On behalf of SPAWN and her own publishing pursuits, she attends approximately half dozen book festivals each year and she's guest speaker/workshop leader at anywhere from 5 to 10 writing/publishing-related conferences and other events annually.



While some of her books have been published by traditional publishers, Patricia established her own publishing company, Matilija Press, in 1983, before self-publishing was fashionable. Five of her self-published books have, later, been accepted by traditional publishing companies.

She is a full-time freelance writer and author and she also provides editorial services such as editing and help writing book proposals. She teaches 7 online courses for authors and writers: www.matilijapress.com/courses. Learn more about her books and services at www.patriciafry.com and www.matilijapress.com. Visit her informative publishing blog daily: www.matilijapress.com/publishingblog.

She will speak on the topic chosen by our branch, "Two Steps to Successful Publishing".

"REMEMBERING"
HDCWC MEMBER KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Phelan Library May 28, 2011

By Frances Smith Savage

We went to the Phelan Library Saturday morning to support a friend with his newly published book. What we found was a day remembering those who have served our country, especially those who paid the ultimate price. The event was sponsored by the Friends of the Phelan Memorial Library with members Ellen and Marianne in attendance.

Lisa Garcia made the introductions, and the day began with our pledge to America's flag led by Marianne Black. Phelan Community Christian Church Pastor Jim Highland spoke and helped us

remember why we were there. He ended with a prayer and an apology to Vietnam Veterans for their treatment when they returned home.

Two thoughtful poems "The Soldier", by Brenda Jean Baker, read by Vita Escalante, and "Freedom Isn't Free", author unknown, read by Florence Montgomery. The poems put the day on the right track as Lisa Garcia introduced other guests: Ellen Sullivan, Honorary Mayor of Pinon Hills; San Bernardino County 4th District supervisor Gary Ovitt who stated he is out of his district, but not after Brad Mitzelfelt's job, Ovitt is a retired teacher and taught history at Chaffey High School. Other guests present to honor the day were Judge Jules Fleuret; Hardy Black, HUSD Board Member; Lt. Col. Niles Bughman retired, who flew 240 combat missions in Vietnam; Vicki Kirk; and Mark Kirk with his six month old daughter Audrey.

Dr. Robert Kirk, the day's featured speaker, and author of the recently published book, **WARRIORS AT 500 KNOTS**, a book of fourteen short stories recounting a portion of his 197 combat missions in Vietnam. All the short stories are true and only the names have been changed to protect the innocent. Kirk took part in every thrilling story during those difficult times.

The book is in memory of the 50th Anniversary of the start of the Vietnam War in 1961. Kirk's vivid Power Point (Converted to QuickTime) presentation brought the war back to reality, and we weren't the only ones with tears in our eyes.

The Phelan Library promoted the event, and a good crowd turned out, and several purchased books. We were proud to be part of the Memorial Weekend Presentation.

GREETINGS TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Mea Culpa

*During the confusion of transferring Membership Chairman chores between the past and present people doing the job and Ye Olde Editor, I got caught up in the change over, though briefly, and failed to see and acknowledge the joining of **Ingrid Claus** and **Barbara Parish** who came on board in April. We're delighted to have you a part of our writers' community. Barbara has already become active as a member of the "Howl at the Moon Writers' Conference" Committee, and has a story in this month's "Inkslinger" - .*

*It's a real thrill every time I am able to welcome new members into HDCWC – we're growing so fast it is mind-blowing. Encouraging that event ("blown mind") are new members **Robert Foster, Bianca Reeves, Jan Terry, Jeanne Triska** and a "Welcome Home" to **Josie Sotomayer**, a former member who has rejoined after an extended absence. And away we go, together – Onward and Upward!*

THE YOUNG ONES DO US PROUD!

Sierra Knoch entered her short story "The Pink Trench Coat", in the San Bernardino County fair, and she was very pleased to have it win.

She entered it in category: *Youth Creative Writing, Class: Fiction*. The story took First Place, Best of Class, and finally Best of Show!

The story is a fast paced action mystery based on her actual experience of seeing Washington, DC in one day last fall.

She says, "The main character is someone I can admire, someone who acts confidently in accomplishing the goal or mission."

Sierra would like to write a sequel and develop the main character more. Sierra also wants to thank Carol Warren and her critique group for their critique and suggestions after reviewing parts of her story.

Needless to say, we're all very proud of you, Sierra, and hope you continue your great work!

Speaking of influence in the community...

(From Pres Isbill to Anne Marie Wentworth, Hesperia Librarian.)

This is to confirm that James Brown, author of *The L.A. Diaries*, will speak at the Community Room of the Hesperia Library on Monday, July 11, 2011 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm for a part of your summer reading program.

He will bring his own books for signing and selling during the intermission of the program, and the HD CWC will furnish coffee and refreshments.

James Brown's new memoir, "**This River**", is his most recent publication.

Mr. Brown is also the author of several novels, including "**Final Performance**" and "**Lucky Town**". He's received a National Endowment for

the Arts Fellowship in Fiction Writing and the Nelson Algren Award in Short Fiction. His personal stories have appeared in *GQ*, *Esquire*, *Ploughshares*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Los Angeles Times Magazine*, *The New England Quarterly*, anthologized in *Best American Sports Writing*, *Oral Interpretations* (college textbook), and *Fathers, Sons and Sports*. Brown teaches in the M.F.A. Program at Cal State San Bernardino, and can be contacted through his website at:

www.jamesbrownauthor.com
(<http://www.jamesbrownauthor.com>)

We've had this guest speaker at one of our regular meetings last year, and he was very popular with our members. I think he'll be a great addition to your summer program.

Thanks,
Bob Isbill
President/Publicity

THE FEDERAL PRISON TOUR

By Bob Isbill

There's no sound of steel slamming against steel, just the quiet closure of a tall door that separates us from the outside, and as soon as we enter, the door is locked from the inside.

"You are now inside the Federal Prison," our guide states.

Just words, softly spoken.

We look around at the immense yard the size of a couple football fields. The desert landscaped area spreads before several 3-story gray concrete buildings, each marked with a large letter of the alphabet.

On the area immediately before us, the cement is marked off with strips of yellow and red paint. The yellow areas, our guide explains, are denoted as permitted areas, as long as a guard is with the inmate. The red areas are off limits to inmates in any circumstance.

No one is on the grounds. We are alone.

There are 1700 inmates in this medium-high security institution, but they are busy elsewhere, and we will see most of those places as we go through the tour of the Federal Prison in Adelanto, California.

One of our two guides is the Assistant Supervisor of Education in the Federal Prison Complex in this jurisdiction. She is our contact at the institution. The other is a teacher at the facility.

Both have come in on their day off to escort four members of the HD CWC, Mary Thompson, Rusty LaGrange, Ann Heimback and me around the prison to give us some insight of what goes on here. They have invited us to explore teaching writing-related workshops for the inmates.

One by one, we visit the various areas.

Recreation is clamoring with excited ping-pong players. There are several tables with inlaid checkerboard tops where the men play chess and checkers. We notice that no pool tables or dart boards are in sight.

A lone guard takes us inside his office where he has full view of the activities through the windows surrounding his room. The incessant, maddening noise subsides as he closes the door. He tells us the rec room is not very crowded today. He is confident and very much in control. We ask many questions about their craft tools, abuse of their privileges, and level of security. After our questions are answered, we are led to the special holding area which is the most secure section of the institution.

Most of the cells are made to hold one man; there are some that house two cellmates. A cot-sized bed is a built-in part of the wall in the room. There's a sink and a toilet. That's it.

It's not like in the movies or some TV shows. No one has a computer in their room, no one has mobile phones. The guards have walkie-talkie radios but no weapons of any kind. To one side, there's a secure law library where the inmates can do solitary study.

Outside, there are four or five exercise yards enclosed with high chain-link fencing that also serves as a roof. The prisoners have the option to go into those areas, one at a time, for an hour a day.

We are taken from place to place, including the large visiting room where families can have time with the inmates. In the chapel a Catholic retreat is going on with several circles of 8 to 10 convicts. The library has a row of individual TV sets where inmates can watch and listen with headphones.

The men are taught carpenter trades in the vocational training area, and they can learn restaurant standards and special food handling skills. They bake all their own bread.

Later, we sit down with seven inmates at a large rectangular table in the library. They have come to find out what sort of things the California Writers Club does, who we are and what we may offer.

The group is well-educated and respectful. One has written poetry since the age of 14, and one says he has recently told his wife that he wants to write a book but does not know where to start, and, he concludes, he is not there by accident. Another wants to hone his writing skills to compose a better appeal. One wants to write a memoir, and a couple others are interested in fiction and business writing. We sit with them for a while, but soon it is time for lockdown before the dinner meal, and they must go.

We have gone through the education center and seen the environs in which the workshops may be conducted. We have seen where they do leather and ceramic crafts, met some of the inmates there, and appreciated their skill and art involved in those projects.

We are told about other civilian groups who volunteer in different aspects to teach various things, or who volunteer just to visit those without families.

We are told about the inmates who make things for the children at Loma Linda, and about those inmates who donate their hair to the Locks of Love project for making wigs for cancer patients.

We are caught between the awe of the massive waste of human life that results from the conduct that has brought these men here, and the misery caused to others because of the crimes they have committed.

We know that the severity of this place is what is needed to protect us and our loved ones from their behavior. We know that.

But we came away feeling there are degrees of gentleness in this necessarily disciplined and strict prison, and that there are writers longing to learn their craft.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING ON AUGUST 13TH?

U.S. Bank has generously donated 24 tickets for the August 13, 2011 Mavericks game to the High Desert Branch of the California Writers Club!

How about spending an exciting evening with your writing friends at Stater Brothers' Stadium in Adelanto, the home of the High Desert Mavericks? Baseball, hot dogs, fireworks and publicity for our High Desert Branch of the California Writers Club... what could be better?

We'll have our own section reserved where our club members (and guests) are together to

cheer the night away with our Club advertised on the scoreboard!

How do we determine who gets the free tickets supplied by U.S. Bank? The same way we did it last year on July 4, 2010: Everybody buys the amount of tickets they need to go to the game with their family and friends by sending a check for \$7.50 per ticket to the HD CWC.

Then, for every ticket you purchase, you get a chance to draw a free one. For every free ticket you draw, you get your \$7.50 back in cash! It's that easy.

If there are only 24 people wanting to go and participating, do the math. EVERYBODY goes free. If there are 30 people, for example, 24 get free tickets and we have the cash to buy 6 more tickets so that you are guaranteed a seat within the HD CWC section.

So buy your tickets between now and July 9, 2011 at the latest and be in the pool for a refund. ***Only those people whose tickets have been paid for by July 9, 2011 will be in the drawing to be held on July 9, 2011 at our general membership meeting.***

Don't miss out on this really fun event. Talk to anyone who spent July 4th last year with the HD CWC at the Maverick's game. It was a blast! After July 9, you may still be able to buy tickets to that game on August 13th, but you are not guaranteed to be seated in our club's section and you will not be eligible for the refund drawing.

The drawing will be held at our July 9, 2011 meeting. For every ticket you buy, you get one chance to win a free ticket! Just mail a check for \$7.50 per ticket with "Baseball" in the memo to:

Baseball Tickets
20162 Hwy 18 Ste 430 PMB281
Apple Valley, CA 92307

ALL tickets must be paid for before the drawing at our July 2011 meeting. And again, thank you U.S. Bank!

Thank you to those who sent in their 150-word bio – we hope the rest of you will get it to us prior to the August issue to go with the July introduction of the Board, Committee Chairs and other leadership folk. Pictures will be taken during the meeting on July 9, so come with your best smile(s). We will feature our Club "doers" in the next issue of the *Inkslinger*. New members will then know who is doing what to make their Club membership and activities work!

MAKE IT EASIER ON YOURSELF

We realize that economic times are tough, and sometimes it's a stretch to do all the things we want to do. Our renewal fees are set at state level, and for what you get with your HD CWC membership, \$45.00 is an exceptionally good deal!

And we've made every effort to keep our "Howl at the Moon" Writers' Conference 2011 at a low price of \$35.00 for an extraordinary all-day event by and for writers!

If you are desiring to go to the conference, and would like to put a good faith (non-refundable) deposit of \$15 towards the \$35 admission, we will accept that as a reservation from all members ***in good standing**** through the month of July 2011.

All those wishing to take advantage of this offer must pay the \$15 deposit and complete the application on our web site prior to August 1, 2011.

The remaining \$20 of the deposit reservation will be due on September 1, 2011, and otherwise, you may forfeit your \$15 deposit.

We will be putting out our big advertising push on July 10, 2011 and we do not want any of our own branch members missing out on a chance to attend.

Our cut-off number is 150 attendees, and with the headliner guest speakers we have lined up, once we advertise the event, the tickets should go quickly.

(You may also pay the \$35.00 in full at this time!)

Either way, you will need to complete an application form (online as a pdf file) and mail it to the address on the form or bring it to the July 9 meeting.

This is going to be a really great day on Saturday, October 1, 2011. From 8:30 to 4:30 at the Lewis Center in Apple Valley. Lunch on your own anywhere in Apple Valley, or bring a "brown bag" lunch.

It's going to be another exciting "Howl at the Moon" conference!

*(Renewed membership fees for 2011-2012 paid in full.) Remember, to get the member price, your renewal fee or \$45.00 must be received by the HD CWC on or before your reservation deposit and/or purchase date is made. You can mail them both at the same time if you wish.

Hoping to see you at the HATM 2011 Conference on October 1, 2011!

Bob Isbill
President/Publicity
www.hdcwc.org

BALLGAME

by George Gracyk

Life is full of surprises, like that balmy mid-August evening at the old ballgame. Our local team is in a Class A rated professional league. This is an excellent level of talent for the fan. They play hard. Later, you can say, "I saw him when!" We have our same two seats along the third base line. There is no better place to watch the game. I have always enjoyed baseball. I played with gusto, if not finesse, in high school, college and Army ball. I am a fan.

Shame is, minor league baseball is an overlooked and under appreciated bit of Americana. It's perfectly affordable family entertainment. The pre-game activities included a High School girls' Pep Rally Unit. A minor dignitary threw out the first pitch; a young lady sang a decent version of the National Anthem. The umpire said, "Play Ball!"

Between innings, they bounce beach balls in the crowd; little kids race the team mascot and always win. Kit-Kat bars are thrown into the stands, I caught one. At the seventh inning stretch, we sing, "Take Me Out To The Ballgame." The fans do the "wave." And again, we didn't win the \$100 cash prize.

Baseball is not a contact sport, but it is not injury free. Their shortstop made a sprawling, diving effort to flag down a sharp grounder hit deep into hole. This is baseball lingo. Tumbling to the ground, he injured his arm to the extent he was forced to leave the field. Our pitcher, a skinny lefty, took a hard line drive off his shin and stopped another with his pitching hand.

It was an excellent game. The skinny lefty took us into the ninth inning with a comfortable three run lead. A relief pitcher came in to finish the last inning, but things soon got testy. Our reliever had nothing on the ball but the cover! After two walks, two hits and an error, our lead was cut to one run. We did manage two outs but the bases were loaded and yet another relief pitcher faced a pinch hitter.

The batter, trying to hit safely yet protecting against striking out, fouled off a couple of pitches back over the screen. He then fouled off a rocket line drive down the left side just over the dugout into the stands. The ball hit a ten-year-old boy

squarely in the face. The boy was not twenty seats away from us. I saw it happen. Two pitches later, an easy pop-up ended the game.

We left immediately. Driving from the parking lot, we heard the sirens, saw the flashing red lights. They almost always have a Medavac unit at the game, but not this night. Next day's paper said they landed a chopper on the field and air lifted the boy to a hospital. It's hard not to think about that boy. I hope he's all right. I whisper a little prayer for him. Baseball's a surprising game, so is life.

Fault Zone:

Stepping Up to the Edge

Short Story Contest

Call for Entries!

Fault Zone: Stepping Up to the Edge, an anthology of stories, will be published January 2012 by the San Francisco & Peninsula branch of the California Writers Club. We encourage you to submit your short stories to our 2nd annual contest. Your piece should relate to the anthology's theme in some way. Interpret as you wish and have fun. We can't wait to see it!

Word count should not exceed 2,500 words.

Entries will be read blind. Do not put your name anywhere on your manuscript. Put your title on every page of your manuscript, along with the page numbers.

Include two 3 x 5 cards with your name, address AND EMAIL. We might need to contact you!

Send to: CWC *Fault Zone* Contest, PO Box 853, Belmont, CA 94002-0853.

First Prize is \$300 and publication in *Fault Zone*.
Second Prize is \$100. Third Prize is \$50.

Postmark **deadline is September 30, 2011**. Entry fee is \$15. Previously published work will be considered. Novel excerpts must stand on their own.

REUNION

by
Mary Ruth Hughes

I was going to my class reunion
_____ years could it possibly be?
My class ring fits a bit snugger,
That's all that's changed about me.

How would my friends look?
Questions filled my mind,
I walked into the crowded room,
The place we were to dine.

The room will filled with strangers,
Who could these people be?
Did I have the wrong address?
Everyone's older than me.

Then someone next to me smiled,
I saw a vaguely familiar grin,
Could it be my childhood sweetheart?
No! Not with a double chin.

There was the homecoming queen in all her glory,
She was wearing her little gold crown,
The years added something to her,
I'd say bout fifty pounds.

The football star so masculine,
His hair has all turned gray,
I remember it as black,
But that was another day.

The guests were quietly seated,
The prophecies were read,
The room was filled with laughter,
And many tears were shed.

The girl most likely to succeed,
Has been home all these years,
Washing clothes and tending house,
For all her little dears.

The party was soon over,
From east and west we came,
To enjoy one another,
And share our thoughts the same.

Later our picture was in the news,
And for the very first time,
I noticed the wrinkles on their faces,
Looked just exactly like mine.

Hazel Stearns came across this gem....

The next time you want to use slang, or word something in everyday language, forget correct and just say what you mean. Look what I found--love that stink part!

... the esteemed critic James Wood reaches out to assure "the common reader" ... that his prose is as free as he can make it of what James Joyce termed "the true scholastic stink" of so much academic writing. —Walter Kirn,



Tellers' Committee: (L to R) Norm Goyer, Tom Kier, John Kizzair

OBJECT LESSON

Elections are over. Congratulations, Freddi and welcome aboard, Jenny – a more formal turn over of office will take place at our July meeting.

However, this picture of our Teller Committee is an object lesson I want to pass along.

Here we have three good, staunch Branch members who agreed to take on the task of passing out ballots, collecting and counting them. And they did a stellar job,

Your editor was providing the paperwork (i.e. ballots and pads for them to write on,) and it suddenly dawned on her that here was a good picture showing member participation and cooperation! Unfortunately, our photog Norm Goyer was to be in the picture. Well, like any good reporter, I grabbed Norm's camera and jumped into the breach! Unfortunately, when I left off doing news photography, more years ago than I care to mention, the 4 x 5 Speed Graphic was the camera

30TH WEDDING CELEBRATION – JUNE 4-5, 2011

By Rusty LaGrange

of choice and Norm's camera is light years ahead of that in sophistication, and obviously above my rusty talents. So, to John Kizziar, my deepest apologies – I left you in the dark and fuzzy, but not intentionally. My fault!!

In the "olden days" I was doing my own processing and printing in a darkroom where film could be manipulated to a certain extent but don't think this shot could have been helped. And it was interesting when Norm sent the picture to Pres Bob along with two good ones he'd taken of others, he mentioned "And don't forget to credit Naomi for the pic of the Teller Committee"! I don't really want the credit, either, Norm, and promise I'll keep my hands off your camera in the future.

HOPEFULLY, YOU ARE WORKING ON

SOME GEM TO HELP STOCK THE

PANTRY! Just remember, your submission should be:

. 300 to a max of 800 words

. Single spaced

. Arial, 11 point, font

. Titled and attributed properly

And no political or religious stories or articles, please.

And, PLEASE NOTE: Effective with the August issue, items received for publication in the *Inkslinger* which do not adhere to these guidelines will be returned to the sender with a request to reformat it and resubmit. This is not punitive – it's to remind us that every publication and publisher has it's own guidelines and requires a degree of conformance by the writer. It is a constant source of amazement how our members, for whatever reason, feel this does not apply to them – or else they don't think the *Inkslinger* deserves that consideration. I can assure you, if you were sending your book MS in to a publisher, or an article to the *New Yorker*, there would be zero tolerance for the concept that an editor at that business firm will sit down and massage your offering into shape to fit their standards. Hopefully, this will be a beneficial practice for us. Exceptions will be made on the length factor, depending on subject

When I fly my broom into the monthly meetings and nag you for items for the *Inkslinger* it will be a great treat to know that what you provide will be in proper order.

I wanted to do something special for our 30th anniversary but it wasn't until we saw a TV episode of "Huell Houser's California Gold" that we decided to follow an old stage route near Santa Ynez, CA. The highlight of the weekend would be eating at Cold Spring Tavern, a stage stop still serving guests since the establishment opened in 1888.

Jeff and I followed the route from Santa Barbara through San Marcos Pass and ending in Solvang. The road was paved and served as access points to private ranches. The old stage route climbs the treacherous broken mountains of the Coastal Range, where large riffs in the ground lifted and twisted by earthquake activity, made travel difficult for cars at the turn of the 20th century, and even more difficult for wagon and stage deliveries. One story was told that two merchants were driving up the Pass from opposite sides; they saw that the summit was washed out. Being clever and not wanting to slow their deliveries, they each agreed to swap loads and continue down the route using each other's vehicles. By the end of the day, each had made his deliveries on time and drove up the pass to swap vehicles once more. Mountain ingenuity.

We had made dinner reservations at Cold Spring Tavern, one of the few remaining stage stops. The grounds perch right along the pavement and are covered in dense trees and foliage. Cars squeeze among the trees for limited parking, and a creek and seeping springs keep the soil moist. Two main original buildings made of heavy timbers and shake siding sit low along the muddy roadway. Other small outbuildings hang on the hillside. Most are giving way to old age and the damp climate.

We enjoyed our early dinner inside the tavern-restaurant with décor reflecting the 1880 era. Oil lamps, sideboards, bare wood-plank floors, and rough-hewn rafters keep the tavern quaint and shadowed in history. The past owners have never brought electricity into the main buildings where dinner guests are served. In the back room, you can hear the cooks and waiters preparing to serve. The menu is rich and extensive for such a small place.

Enjoying our historic dinner fare in a stage way station was not the only reason to be in the region. I'm an Old West history buff and love to follow stage line trails and routes whenever I get the chance. The region is heavy in transportation history. And Santa Ynez houses one of the most complete collections at The Parks-Janeway Carriage House in the Santa Ynez Valley Historical Museum. Besides displays of local Indian settler artifacts, pioneer families who farmed and ranched, and extensive saddles and bridles collections, you'll find two rooms dedicated to Ronald Reagan during his ranching years. However the main interest for us were the stagecoaches, wagons, surreys, and specialty vehicles used to transport people and goods within the valley. I lingered along the stages, taking photos of each, and getting to touch the leather, the doors, and undercarriage, studying the brakes and axles.

To add to the historic interest, our museum curator was John Crockett, a third cousin of Davy Crockett related through several past grandfathers. John is also an avid carriage and stage driver, owns a stage and team, and helps run symposiums on Horse-Drawn Vehicles. He attends parades and special events with his double-team stage. He also provided me with a stage route printout for the San Marcos Pass, purported to be one of the most dangerous routes in the state.

ANOTHER LIFE CHAPTER BEGINS

By Barbara Parish

My pride and joy - a blue-eyed five year old boy who would start kindergarten next week. I giggled at the thought of having a couple of hours for myself.

The week went by with the normal daily activities plus the needs of an active five year old. Monday, the first day of school, we walked timidly down the street, across the neighborhood park, and onto the school grounds.

With new clothes, and lunch in hand my brave little boy was heading for a new adventure. In a single moment I knew my son was no longer a baby. My baby, my companion, my total responsibility, everything in his life and mine changed.

We stood in the mass of delivery, the hustle of parents all saying goodbye to their young for the first time. The school bell rang and the parents left the school grounds. My heart dropped in my chest, my feeling of loss overwhelmed me with emotion. I leaned down to kiss my little son, my friend, my

buddy. My tears flowed down my cheek and onto my blouse. I could not speak. I tried to conceal my emotions so my son would not get scared; I was not successful. Bud looked up at me and said "Mommy, this is a good thing". At that point I laughed and gave him a gentle kiss on the mouth. He walked up the stairs and into the school corridor with confidence; this was his first experience away from home and without me.

Turning away I felt confused and empty. A man sporting a camera and notebook stepped towards me. He stated he wrote for the Register Newspaper and took a picture of us as we kissed goodbye. He asked my name, we exchanged nervous laughs about the first day of school and who was more nervous the kid or parent.

I walked home, noticing the flowers along the walkway, and breathed in deeply the brisk fall air of morning. I opened the front door to an empty house, sat in the living room on a chair meant for guests, and started to cry. The loss I felt in a single moment caused a reaction of void; my heart cracked with separation. The sensation of deep black terror was overpowering my logic. A river of tears I could not stop.

The grandfather clock ticking the time away, with each tick of the clock and swing of the pendulum I felt the urgency to get ready to retrieve my son.

I walked to school smile on my face, a flood of happy baby memories playing like a movie in my head. Bud's cute little personality, the sparkle in his eyes when he flashed a smile shined through my thoughts. I waited.

The bell sounded and the children ran out of the school building, laughter and commotion was in the parking lot. My spirit soared with excitement as my handsome son had a big smile on his face and lots to tell me about his first day at school.

How excited he was to tell me every detail, how eager I was to hear every detail!

The next day we walked to school like old pros, self-confident with lunch in hand. I kissed Bud goodbye with a traditional statement, "Listen to your teacher, I love you, and I will be here waiting for you after school".

That morning I sat at the kitchen table with my coffee in hand, my first morning of quiet time. I opened the newspaper, to my surprise; Bud and I were on the front page, a photo of our goodbye kiss. My emotions welled again with love.

Another life chapter had begun, my little boy had grown and his Mom stepped back to give him the freedom to grow.

MARY LANGER THOMPSON ~ POET/WRITER

by Barbara Parish

Did you miss the Poetry Workshop June 4th?

Mary had us up on our feet animating the steps to writing a story or poem. We waived our arms up and around to remember that **IDEAS** come from everywhere. We moved right hand over left hand again and again to remember **ORGANIZATION**. We cupped our hands over our heart to remember our **VOICE**. We connected fingers rolling them like a wave to remember **WORD FLOW**. We made a chopping motion with our hands up and down to remember **EDITING**. That is how we started the workshop, laughing, talking and dancing with out hands. Now that Mary had everyone's attention we got down to the business of writing stories and poetry

What is your Genre? (A kind, or type, as of words of literature) Mary talked about a new genre called Flash Fiction, a short story with 300 words or less. Check out web sites hosting Flash Fiction stories and competition.

Mary says "Song lyrics are poetry set to music" Writing Poetry is using words that give a mental picture, rhyme and rhythm that describe an experience or expresses emotion.

Acrostic Poems ~ word letters start each line

Color Poems ~ choose color to write about

Free Verse HAIKU ~ short one thought 17 syllables total, un-rhymed 5 7 5 - end with contrast.

I am Poems ~ about you, specific moments part
Poems for Two Voices ~ two people read their responsive lines

Tips on Poem Writing

Don't use the same word twice in a poem
Stay away from adjectives
Midway through change attitude
End with strong verb in your life

Tips on Story Line

Eavesdrop on conversations to get phrase

Don't need to write only what you know

Think outside the box

Mary Langer Thompson has published over 100 articles, poems, and short stories in various journals and anthologies.

Mary likes this quote "Words are sacred. They deserve respect. "If you get the right ones in the right order, you can nudge the world a little"
Carl Gustav Jung

Mary is a graduate of California State University Northridge and University of California Los Angeles She worked in the education field as an English teacher, professor, and school principal.

She is a member of the High Desert California Writers Club crediting her bi-weekly critique group with helping her to transition into writing fiction and children's stories. She is working on her first book of poetry, a young adult novel, and a children's book.

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It was extremely interesting to receive these two items independent of each other in response to Mary Langer Thompson's Poetry Workshop!

A VALID RESULT OF THE POETRY WORKSHOP

This poem was created as a response to an exercise led by Club member Mary Langer Thompson during her poetry workshop June 4, 2011, at the Hesperia Library. The exercise was called "What a Cut-Up!" and similar forms of "constrained writing" have also sometimes been referred to as "found poems." Each student was provided with a blank sheet of paper, a glue stick and approximately three dozen words or phrases clipped from magazines; poems could be created only using the materials provided.

JUNE RESOLUTION - by Judith Pfeffer

Summer
We need your plan
Up to the measure
Time to find your center
Without all the Greek tragedy
Enter all new
You'll witness the beauty and power
Helpless never ever ever

MY ANGELS,

by Debbie Weltin

One month and three days after I retired from Pacific Bell I had an incident which was so shocking and unsettling that I didn't think I could get through the hardship. It seemed that all was "dark and gloomy".

I had been stressed the past few days and hadn't been sleeping very well. I decided that warm summer night to take a tranquilizer to insure a better night's sleep. I was in my bedroom with my slider open, wrapping a gift for the next day. I was planning to attend the retirement of another coworker. I used butcher paper to wrap the gift; then I used my acrylic paints and painted on the wrapping designs. As I was finishing, the lights started flickering. At first my heart leapt in my chest with the thought someone was messing with me. I quickly decided this wasn't the case. I went back to the gift wrapping. The lights began to flicker much more. I went to my breaker box; the breakers were rather old, and checked them out. I turned them off and back on. I smelled smoke and thought I'd better stop before I created a fire. I closed the kitchen sliders and was ready for bed. I was quite drowsy by that time.

I proceeded to my T-shaped hallway and instead of turning toward my bedroom on the right; I went left to the garage door. To this day I don't know why I went to that direction. I opened the door to the garage and found it fully engulfed in flames. My car was also on fire. I quickly closed the door, walked past my purse on the washer, and returned to the kitchen. I felt there might be an explosion at any moment. I tried to call 911. The phone was dead. I ran out the back door in my night shirt and panties around to the front and stood in the street yelling, "Help, help, help me someone, call 911. Fire, fire, fire, call 911, help, help, help," for what seemed like 20 minutes before I was able to rouse anyone. Finally neighbors started coming out, calling 911 then turning their hoses on my house. The roof was now engulfed with flames. God it seemed like an hour before the fire department arrived.

As I stood in the front yard, someone brought me some sweatpants, a jacket and a chair. I knew I was in shock. Two young red-haired girls came and asked if there was anything they could do for me. I said I would like a glass of water. I

never saw those two young women before or after. I thought about that quite a bit in the days that followed. A neighbor across the street offered me a place to rest in her house. By this time it was near midnight. During the confusion I called my son and told him I needed him. He arrived with his sleeping kids and they too were offered to rest in my neighbor's house.

The next morning, at about 6:00 a.m., there were cars all over the place and photographers and people rushing to my attention. Each one wanted a word in before the others. They were the various adjustor leeches. The firemen were still around and rescued me from the hordes. They asked if I would like to see the house. I said I would and followed them. The place was such a mess. It was rather interesting to find everything I had on walls or table tops or desks that were of spiritual nature were not touched. A cross on one wall was not touched. The fire, I know, has a mind of its own; but all spiritual matter and anything that mattered to me in the way of photos and important papers (including my PC) were not damaged. I couldn't get over that.

I knew at that time my angels were with me. I knew I was protected. Remember, I was under the influence of a tranquilizer. My slider in my bedroom was open and so was the slider off the kitchen. Once the door had been opened in the garage the fire was sucked through the rest of the roof. I could have gone back in the direction of my bedroom; instead I went to the garage. I believe my angels were with me then. If I had once laid my head on the pillow I'm sure I would have died. I would have been so out of it that I never would have felt anything.

"Yes", I believe the young girls who brought me water and the instinct I had to go in the opposite direction down the hall was due to angels guiding me. I believe all my spiritual items and valued items were protected by my angels. That is why I truly believe that no matter how bad things are there is always something good that comes out of it. The good that came from the fire itself was a brand new home.

Winner of the free ticket to the October 1,
2011 "Howl at the Moon" Writers'
Conference is WINNIE RUEFF!!

MRS. REDHEN AND THE GREEN REVOLUTION

by Diane Neil

Sunny Acres Middle School was in the midst of a food revolution. Jamie Oliver, the famous celebrity chef, was scheduled to make a guest appearance at their assembly next month. Mrs. Redhen, the teacher in charge of recycling, was positively beaming in anticipation since Mr. Oliver had accepted her hand written, spur-of-the-moment invitation.

In fact, Mr. Oliver had called her when he received her note. "It just so happens I'll be in your area that week, and I do have Friday free. If you could put me up for the weekend, I'd be happy to present my Green Revolution program to your students."

Mrs. Redhen and her husband Big Red had an ever-ready guest room and no plans for that weekend, so she quickly agreed.

It wasn't until the next morning when Mrs. Redhen eagerly shared her news with the Principal, Mr. Buzzard, that the revolution began.

"What were you thinking" Mr. Buzzard demanded "to schedule an assembly without consulting the Assembly Scheduling Committee?"

Mrs. Redhen looked down at her neatly polished toes. It wasn't the first time she'd been called on an administrative carpet.

"The last I knew, the Assembly Scheduling Committee was disbanded, and we haven't had a Friday assembly since Thanksgiving, when the pilgrims got arrested for an inappropriate religious observance."

"Harrumph!" Mr. Buzzard muttered, fingering through his big Rules and Regulations book. "Guest Speakers," he read aloud "shall be invited by a committee at the district office after a thorough background check, including scholastic, financial and employment records, a psychiatric evaluation and a weapons screening."

"Oh, for heaven's sake!" Mrs. Redhen fumed. "Everyone knows who Mr. Oliver is!"

"We can't be too careful." Mr. Buzzard snapped the book shut. "Rules are rules."

Mrs. Redhen decided she wasn't going to give up without a fight. Her recycling club students were meeting after school, and she asked a few faculty members to join them.

"I'm too busy," Mrs. ElsieCow said. "I have to go home and feed my twins."

"I can't make it," said Mr. Hamm. "I'm putting on a barbecue."

One by one, all of the other faculty members turned her down.

"Well," thought Mrs. Redhen. "My recyclers and I will do it ourselves."

Mrs. Redhen was not without her resources. She called her husband, Big Red. "Do you think you could call your friend at Channel 2?" she asked. "There's going to be a demonstration here after school."

Then she called one reliable, involved parent, explained the situation and asked her to set up a phone tree.

She went to the janitor and requested the two dozen placards confiscated in a gay student rights rally. The placards proclaimed Gay Revolution! in bright DayGlo.

When the student recycling committee assembled, Mrs. Redhen filled the kids in, gave them some paint, and in fifteen minutes all the placards said !!Green Revolution!! (Suzie Sweetie insisted on the extra exclamation points.)

The recyclers were in the midst of their regular duties -- scraping spaghetti off plastic trays, rescuing plastic bottles from the garbage bins -- when the supportive parents and friends showed up with placards of their own and took up the chant.

"Green Revolution!" they shouted. "Jamie Oliver! We want Jamie!"

Curious neighbors wandered over, and by the time the Channel 2 news team arrived, there was also a news helicopter from Channel 4.

Mrs. Redhen was in her element. She couldn't recall what she said when the microphones were pushed at her, but when she saw the newsfeeds later that evening, she dared hope that Mr. Buzzard would find a way to make the assembly happen.

Ah, and so it did. Miraculously, the Assembly Scheduling Committee materialized, and Mr. Oliver's thorough background check, including scholastic, financial and employment records, a psychiatric evaluation and a weapons screening, was completed in record time.

Although there was one sticking point just before the Friday Green Revolution assembly, when Mr. Oliver insisted on bringing his chef's knife.

REMEMBER, DUES ARE DUE. SEE ROBERTA SMITH OR JENNY MARGOTTA (OR ANNE FOWLER) AT THE NEXT MEETING, TO KEEP YOUR MEMBERSHIP CURRENT!!!

OH, MY

By James Elstad

"I'm really sorry honey, my boss says I have to work overtime tonight, I can't take you to the drive-in like we planned."

"Ah, sweetheart, I was really looking forward to seeing the show," said Michelle.

"Look Honey, I'll get off at 11, I'll pick you up and then we can grab a bite to eat, okay?"

"Yeah, all right, I guess so, but I really wanted to see that new Star Wars movie with you. Then she hung up.

As soon as she hung up I handed the phone to my best friend Buck. "Okay, you're on."

Chuckling like he was up to something Buck took the phone and called Michelle.

"Hello".

"Michelle, this is Buck, Padgett told me he has to work tonight, why I don't pick you up and we can catch the first show? I'll have you home by the time he gets off work, and he'll never be the wiser."

"Oooh," she squealed that sounds like fun.

Well I really want to see that picture, I guess it won't hurt, you are his best friend, you wouldn't do him wrong."

Buck drove up to Michelle's front door, I was in the trunk. "Be back soon buddy," he said.

Five minutes later I heard the front passenger door open, I could smell Michelle's perfume wafting through the car. I heard her nylons sliding across the bench seat, I could picture her sitting with her legs on either side of the stick shifter.

I was glad I hid in the trunk rather than the back seat, I had more room to stretch, and I could get a better view from a hole in the back seat than if I'd been crouched down on the back floor board.

Buck drove over to the drive-thru restaurant and ordered my favorite: "I'd like 3 cheeseburgers, 1 pastrami, 3 tacos, 2 orders of rings, 1 chocolate shake, 1 strawberry shake, and 2 large cokes please."

After getting the food Buck drove to the drive-in and paid for their admission, "Michelle where do you want me to park?"

I saw her scoot closer to Buck, "oh let's park closer to the rear, we'll have more privacy." Then she put her left arm around his neck and played with his hair.

"Sure, anything for you." Then he dimmed the headlights and pulled into the most deserted spot he could find. "Is this okay?"

While they waited for the movie to start I could hear them eating and drinking. Boy, he really knows how to make it hard on me, cheeseburgers, rings, tacos, and pastrami. He knows that's my favorite!

They chatted about school, church, and made small talk. Mid-way through the movie I must've dozed off when Buck's deep voice woke me up. I peeked through the hole and saw him stroking Michelle's cheek.

"I wish I'd met you before Padgett, things would've been so different."

Michelle took his fingertips and rubbed her lips with them. "His only problem is he works so much. A girl can get real lonely you know." Then she opened her mouth and leaned forward.

Buck slid his hand behind her head and pulled it toward him. They kissed for what seemed to be forever. When their lips parted Michelle kissed Buck's cheek and nose. "Oh my," she sighed, "you kiss so much better than he does, let's move into the back seat."

He gazed at her, lifted her chin, and kissed her softly as he opened the car door.

The rest of the movie seemed to drag on, my girl and my best friend were in the back seat just inches away from my head, and I couldn't do anything about it. After an eternity they drove back to her house, I could hear them on her front porch as they kissed goodnight.

"Oh, Buck when will I see you again? I mean, like tonight."

"Soon, Sugar, real soon." He said, and then the key turned in the lock, the door opened and closed. I heard Buck's boots along the sidewalk and the jingle of his keys in the trunk lock.

I was ready; I bolted out of my prison and was ready to punch him out when I noticed Michelle standing there.

She clenched her fist and punched me right in the nose. "That's the last time you do that to me. Buck was man enough to tell me of your cruel joke when he first picked me up." She fumbled with the clasp on the necklace that held my class ring around her neck. Finally she ripped it off her neck and threw it at me." Then she stormed into her house.

Buck spread his hands out and said: "Sorry, Guy – it was your idea!

SOME MAY HAVE SEEN THIS BEFORE. . . .

Subject: A language reminder worth noting

ASYLUM FOR THE VERBALLY INSANE

We'll begin with a box, and the plural is boxes,
But the plural of ox becomes oxen, not oxes.
One fowl is a goose, but two are called geese,
Yet the plural of moose should never be meese.
You may find a lone mouse or a nest full of mice,
Yet the plural of house is houses, not hice.
If the plural of man is always called men,
Why shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen?

If I speak of my foot and show you my feet,
And I give you a boot, would a pair be called beet?
If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth,
Why shouldn't the plural of booth be called beeth?
Then one may be that, and three would be those,
Yet hat in the plural would never be hose,
And the plural of cat is cats, not cose.
We speak of a brother and also of brethren,
But though we say mother, we never say methren.

Then the masculine pronouns are he, his and him,
But imagine the feminine: she, shis and shim!

Let's face it - English is a crazy language.

There is no egg in eggplant nor ham in hamburger;
neither apple nor pine in pineapple.
English muffins weren't invented in England.
We take English for granted, but if we explore its
paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly,
boxing rings are square, and a guinea pig is neither
from Guinea nor is it a pig.

And why is it that writers write but fingers don't
fing, grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham.
Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends
but not one amend.?

If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid
of all but one of them, what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught?
If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a
humanitarian eat?

Sometimes I think all the folks who grew up
speaking English should be committed to an
asylum for the verbally insane.

In what other language do people recite at a play
and play at a recital?

We ship by truck but send cargo by ship.

We have noses that run and feet that smell.

We park in a driveway and drive in a parkway.
And how can a slim chance and a fat chance be the
same, while a wise man and a wise guy are
opposites?

You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a
language in which your house can burn up as it
burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it
out, and in which an alarm goes off by going on.

So if Father is Pop, how come Mother isn't Mop?

LIVING

By Linda Bowden

Living with a schizophrenic isn't easy,
as you might well imagine

One day he likes you,

Without warning he doesn't.

One morning he likes his eggs, over easy.

The next morning he deplores,

Anything less than scrambled.

My friends ask, "How can you live with a crazy, like
him?"

I answer, "Here's the secret; I'm just a little
schizophrenic too.

If he steps over the line, I jump right over on the
other side,

Scream my lungs out and this tends to woo him into
subdue."

REMEMBER, DUES ARE DUE!

See Jenny Margotta or Roberta
Smith at the July meeting to
update and be eligible for pre-
registration for the Howl at the
Moon Conference.

DATES TO REMEMBER.....

HDCWC Monthly **Meeting: July 9.** Come and bring a friend.

July 9, last date to purchase ticket for the August 13 Ballgame and qualify for the free ticket drawing

July 11: Jim Brown speaks at the Hesperia Library from 5:30 to 7:30 as part of the Library's Summer Reading Program., Another good time to invite a friend.

July 31: Last date to qualify for pre-registration for the Howl at the Moon Writers' Conference.

August 13: Monthly meeting AND Baseball Game

August 13 : Bring a copy of one of your published works for the group photo.

September 30: Final date for entry in the Short Story Contest (see article elsewhere in this issue)



Effective with the July meeting, the following persons are your elected Board of Officers. If any of them can be of help to you, please feel free to call.

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PLUS – Appointed Stalwarts!

Membership Chairman – Roberta Smith

Carol Warren – HDCWC Rep to the SoCal CWC

Historian – Marilyn Ramirez

All items in this newsletter are the opinions of the author(s) and do not in any way present the views or official position of CWC