



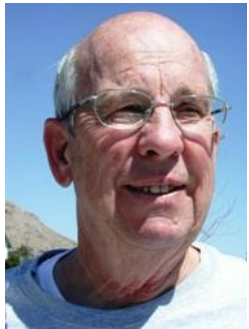
# INKSLINGER

HIGH DESERT BRANCH CWC

SAIL ON

OCTOBER 2011

The California Writers 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

**P O V**

**Bob Isbill**

Whenever you get out of your comfort zone. You don't know what to expect.

The third one written in prison was LONG WALK TO FREEDOM by Nelson Mandela who spent over 27 years in prison.

The writings of St. Paul were done by the apostle Paul of Tarsus after Jesus' death. Saint Paul is thought to have been arrested and imprisoned on more than one occasion and may have even been executed for preaching Christianity. The writings of St. Paul contain his letters and teachings.

Letters and papers from prison were done by Dietrich Bonhoeffer who is actually the peaceful counterpart of Adolf Hitler. He was one of those who were arrested in a plot to assassinate Hitler, and subsequently executed two years later. These and other works remain influential in the role against tyranny and genocide.

Oscar Wilde wrote DE PROFUNDIS, an influential book of poetry while he was in prison. Ezra Pound completed a work that would later win American prizes for its images of poetry.

Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote his LETTERS FROM BIRMINGHAM JAIL. King is one of the most influential civil rights leaders in modern history. He was arrested and imprisoned after planning a nonviolent protest against racial segregation.

Number nine is PILGRIM'S PROGRESS and is one of the most famous books written by John Bunyon in prison.

The tenth most famous book is called In the BELLY OF THE BEAST by Jack Henry Abbott, who was guilty of the murder that sent him to prison, but is famous because of his correspondence with writer

For one thing, you're entering brand-new territory and that is nothing to be solaced about. As we go into the Federal Prisons in the month of October, 2011, we will find out what is necessary and what is needed according to the prisoners themselves. We don't know what to expect yet, and we can only look at history and find out what has happened in prisons before with respect to literature. We know that many things have been written in prison.

When I Googled books that were written in prison, I was quite surprised to find what are the ten most famous books ever written in prison.

DON QUIXOTE was written there because Cervantes had returned home and was unable to find work and, as a result, he was sent to debtor's prison where he wrote most of his works including DON QUIXOTE, as well as other stories, poems and plays. Another book that was written in prison was The ESSENTIAL GANDHI written by Mahatma Gandhi when he was a peaceful Indian revolutionary who preached passive resistance and strongly believed in nonviolence. He was imprisoned several times. He was known to go on hunger strikes to support his cause.

Norman Mailer, which eventually led to his release. The book recounts a 25 year prison stay and what that can do to a person's mental state.

Do we expect to sponsor such important labors of art in our efforts to work with the Federal Prison inmates? We simply don't know. We only know that the HD CWC members who are preparing to participate in the project are willing to stretch themselves to respond to a community request, and volunteer to come to the prisoners to share their knowledge and skills with those who want to learn to write.

It is not our duty or our desire to rehabilitate the prisoners or to reform them or to judge them. It is only our purpose as members of a club whose Mission Statement it is to help those at any level of the craft to write and market their works.

Bob Isbill  
President/Publicity  
[www.hdcwc.org](http://www.hdcwc.org)

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## **INNER WORKINGS OF CRITIQUE GROUPS REVEALED IN SEPTEMBER MEETING**

**By Frances Smith Savage**

Saturday September 10, 2011 at the California Writers Club, High Desert Branch proved to us once again that our members know as much, maybe more, than many of our speakers over the last few years.

Roberta Smith and Holly LaPat were the lead presenters, and took us down the road of the critique groups in our Branch. Many came forward to voice their opinions, and not one had a negative thing to say about their group. Friendships have been formed and even more importantly, they have all become better writers through the process.

Comments from the audience were positive as well, and we had a good crowd. However when comparing how many first timers were there (over 20) it's always a bit of a disappointment that more of our members don't attend regularly. Hopefully our members will come out to support our upcoming writers' conference in October. The cost is the least expensive from other conferences that I've attended, especially for members, and that doesn't mean that it won't be a successful conference. The volunteers have done a

tremendous job in the planning stages, trying to solve any problems that might crop up.

Back to Critique Groups. There are now four active groups that meet at different times. The only requirement to join is that they must be members of our club.

First Roberta sat at the head table, and four group members, and she along with Holly, Anne Fowler, and Marilyn Ramirez gave their opinions and offered suggestions to the writer Elizabeth (Liz) Pye. Each member had previously received two pages of a chapter from Liz's book she is currently writing.

They have a few rules that must be adhered to and the group is asked to use constructive criticism. At first the groups were limited to two hours, but in many instances they continue beyond that time frame. One person speaks at a time so it doesn't become an arguing match, and the writer has the last say.

After each member gave their personal opinion, Liz spoke up and told what their criticism meant to her. She had made mistakes that she was unaware of and through the constructive criticism, she easily corrected the errors. She said, "I think that I became a better writer through the process."

Next Holly took the mike and asked questions of members of other groups including: Marilyn Ramirez, Jim Elstad, Liz Pye, Tom Kier, Michael Raff, Rusty LaGrange, and Jenny Margotta. One of the things they all seemed to agree on was that they joined the Writers' Club to improve their own writing skills, but they also enjoyed helping others improve theirs. They also enjoyed being around other writers.

Friendship was listed among the most valued aspects of the groups, and inspiring them to keep writing a close second. Ginny said, "The group sent me back to my text books to make sure I understood grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure."

Tom said, "It made me take a closer look at my writing. I changed points of view too often, causing the reader to become confused." *No one said that readers are as smart as writers. Oops, there I go again, sorry! That's a joke folks!*

Jim said, "I've had too many characters in my story, and I learned when a person is only mentioned once in the story to just say a 'policeman' rather than the name. Good writing sometimes has to be cut."

Michael said, "I got my tenses mixed up." Before he critiques others work, he said, "I often

think ‘what would Ginny or Rusty say?’” He also feels that he is improving.

Anne said “Step number one in getting published is to join a critique group. In the group I tend to remember things that I learned in the past, but meeting new friends is number one.”

Marilyn said she saw her own weaknesses and started building on them. She also advised us to, “Visit a critique group to see how they work, and if you can’t take criticism you probably shouldn’t be in a critique group.”

Rusty is also leader of a group that writes both fiction and non-fiction, she said, “There are eight or nine in our group and we meet every three weeks. We don’t send anything on e-mail.”

Mary Thompson was not at the meeting Saturday, but she, along with Roberta Smith serves as co-chair of the Critique Groups.

*Author’s Note: For those who will question the ‘one quote within another’ refer to “Woe Is “, by Patricia T. O’Conner, page 155 (“?) is correct or should I say ‘are’?”*



## **BLOGS ARE STILL THE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM OF CHOICE FOR WRITERS**

*(Until we meet him, we’ll never know how accurate this sketch by his son is, but looks like Mr. Belew is our kinda guy!)*

### **DON’T MISS OUR OCTOBER MEETING ON THE 8th**

In this one hour presentation Bill Belew will cover:

1. 4 reasons why a blog is the social media platform of choice for writers
2. 4 biggest obstacles to getting a blog started
3. 4 key ingredients to attracting significant traffic to a blog/web site
4. 4 next steps every writer must take to bring attention to their work

Bill Belew is a pro-blogger - he pays his sizeable Silicon Valley mortgage with revenue from his blog. Bill has taken 10 different and unrelated blog topics to more than 1 million unique visitors EACH, and well over 50 million views overall. Bill has two published (not-self) books. He is an in-demand speaker – Mexico’s largest Writers Conference, Asia’s Largest Publishing Convention – Thailand, NYC, Indy ... as well as many of the CWC branches.



### **RECOGNITION AS JACK LONDON AWARD WINNER**

As writers, we often pride ourselves on the way we are able to use words to express our thoughts and feelings.

I was surprised, but also humbled, to be our branch Jack London winner. It made me feel like the Academy award winners when they are grateful to be among many others also deserving for their contributions. Although this example is referencing other actor/actresses, the sentiment is similar.

We have so much talent among our members and each person is an asset in their own way. It is indeed an honor to be among them.

Although the progress on my book, "The Caregivers Privilege" has been going very slow, the members of our branch keep me going. During the first sixteen months of my retirement, I took care of my mother in our home. The friendship and support offered by members, was often what kept me believing in the future of my writing. I continue to nurture, and be nurtured by the excitement, enthusiasm, and knowledge I receive by spending time among you. Give yourself a pat on the back as

. The friendship and support offered by members, was often what kept me believing in the future of my writing. I continue to nurture, and be nurtured by the excitement, enthusiasm, and knowledge I receive by spending time among you. Give yourself a pat on the back as well. Sometimes we are surprised at the effects we each have on one another. It is not often expressed, but it is there none the less.

I am so proud to be a member of High Desert California Writers Club and know you are too.

Thank you all for this great honor.

---Carol Warren



## THE LINE

by Thomas Kier

We stand in line  
Marking time.  
Just up there  
It's someone's turn.  
We all move up a spot.

At the front  
They've seen some sights.  
Here in the middle,  
We're not quite ready.  
Sometimes it doesn't matter.

Now appears a mirage  
Just for an instant;  
A tap on the shoulder.  
Ready or not,  
Another empty spot.

Alone in a crowd  
Of everyone born.  
The debt comes due,  
The collector appears.  
No more joy or fear.

We might think,  
How could you?  
Because we don't know  
What's next.  
We only know our loss.

Waiting for us.  
Waits for everyone.  
Always finds  
When it's time.  
No chance to refuse.

I miss you, Mother!  
14 October 1934 - 31 August 2011

*(Tom's Mother, Mary Kier, passed away on August 31, 2011. Our condolences to you and your family, Tom)*

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### TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Warmest welcomes go to our newest members: Reed Powell, Billie Ridgway, **Bobi Sullivan**; Rebecca Lang and Patricia Miller. If your name should be here and isn't, please contact Roberta Smith – we're in a period of transition and may have fumbled the ball!

## HOWL AT THE MOON 2011 SET TO GO!

The "Howl at the Moon" Writers' Conference 2011 offers four of the most in-demand speakers on the subject of writing, and they're going to be ours on Saturday, October 1, 2011 at the Lewis Center for Academic Excellence!

The HATM 2011 Conference is ready to go! Early Bird prices have been extended through the month of September 2011, but prices at the door will be \$45 for all who have not made their reservations.

This is going to be a great day for our members and the guests attending. Jen Grisanti, consultant, author, and NBC Writers on the Verge teacher presents "Finding Fiction in Your Truth"; Linda Cowgill, head of the Los Angeles Film School, author and teacher will discuss plotting; Deborah Cutler-Rubenstein and Marilyn R. Atlas, adjunct professors at U.S.C. are scheduled to talk about creating characters that are real to the reader, and then teach all you need to know about pitching your novel, screenplay or teleplay.

It's not too late to register for this awesome event! Don't miss it. Come on! Be a writer.

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### HDCWC OFFICERS

PRESIDENT – *Bob Isbill*  
[risbill@aol.com](mailto:risbill@aol.com)  
760-242-4148

VICE PRESIDENT – *Freddi Gold*  
[dcaurum@aol.com](mailto:dcaurum@aol.com)  
760 956-2727

SECRETARY – *Naomi Ward*  
[naomiwc@verizon.net](mailto:naomiwc@verizon.net)  
760- 241-9642

TREASURER – *Jenny Margotta*  
[jennyj821@yhahoo.com](mailto:jennyj821@yhahoo.com)  
760- 843-5448

MEMBER AT LARGE –  
*MaryThompson*  
[mh\\_thompson@hotmail.com](mailto:mh_thompson@hotmail.com)  
760- 553-1644

## **BOOK REVIEW: *Special***

**by Michael P. Raff**

The death of a young person is one of the greatest tragedies on earth. The death of a young person we deeply love is even more brutal a pain to bear. **Michael P. Raff**, a California author, convincingly and poignantly captures that pain in his biography, *Special* (Aventine Press, 2011), a tribute to the great love of his life, a radiant, beautiful young woman named Jill Adams, who died in a car accident at the age of 19.

This is not a spoiler alert. Michael's book starts with this sentence: "Three weeks after her funeral, I woke up and saw Jill standing by my bedroom doorway." Then, for the rest of his meticulously narrated book, he recreates the brief but glorious love he shared with Jill for the four years they knew one another. Their first meeting was inauspicious, she being a gawky, timid 15-year-old to his 19 years; but she quickly blossomed into a stunning woman whose overpowering beauty was as much internal as external: a devout Mormon who was virtuous, sensitive, compassionate, and insightful beyond her age.

The book takes the reader through the highs and lows of their chaste love affair. As much an autobiography as a biography, we witness Michael's coming of age as he awkwardly but lovingly shepherds Jill into adulthood. Coming from a humble background, Michael faced rejection from some of Jill's family and friends, who felt Jill "deserved better" than what Michael as a financially struggling young man could offer. But Michael, buoyed by Jill's devotion to him and her faith in his devotion to her, persevered in his courtship of the only woman who had ever boosted him above his own relentless self-doubts. At the time of her death, they were engaged to be married a mere five months hence.

*Special* is punctuated throughout with Michael Raff's simple but deep ruminations on life. He writes, for example: "Isn't it strange how we can measure the miles around the equator, or the miles to the moon, but we can't measure something so simple as the pleasure of being kissed by the one we love?" There is a mystical quality to the book, as a Mormon elder had once prophesied to Jill that she would die an early death, and her belief of this runs like a knotty thread throughout the book. This prophecy haunts Jill and Michael, who hears the sad tale, and who, shortly before Jill's death, has a

### **ALL TOGETHER VS ALTOGETHER**

(OR)

#### ***Hazel's At It Again***

The terms *all together* and *altogether* can be confusing in English. Once you've read through this lesson, you'll have an altogether better understanding of them.

#### **All together**

**All together** means everyone or everything together.

It's time to sing. All together now!

The last time we were all together was in 1999

Put the bills all together on the desk

If the two terms can be separated, that's a dead giveaway that the term you want is *all together*.

It's time for all of us to sing together now!

The last time all of us were together was in 1999

Put all the bills together on the desk

#### **Altogether**

**Altogether** is an adverb and means "all in all," "all told," or "completely."

That was altogether too difficult

Altogether, not a bad day's work

It cost over a thousand dollars altogether

#### **The Bottom Line**

If you can replace the term with something like "completely" or "when all is said and done," you are altogether better off with *altogether*. If you can rewrite the sentence to use *all* and *together* separately, the term you want is *all together*.

*(E-mail from Dr. Thelma Reynes to Mike Raff. "Hi, Michael. I read your book all the way through last night, finishing around 3 am and am glad I did. I truly enjoyed it and was very moved by your gentle recounting, your authenticity, and devotion. I've written a book review of it and am attaching a rough draft here for your preview. I plan to post it on one of my blogs as well as on amazon.com and any other places you'd like me to post it. I'll let you know when it's up.)*

( NEXT COLUMN, PLEASE

vivid dream of her accident that turns out to be spot-on accurate.

Though we, the readers, know from the beginning that Jill died an untimely death, we still benefit from reading everything prior to and after this tragedy: learning about the graciousness and gentleness abiding in Jill, and of how her true love of Michael surmounted obstacles, and of how Michael learned to trust in his own worthiness. We can see ourselves in this story, because this couple's trials and tribulations mirror those many of us suffer in this life.

In short, this book reminds us all of the fleetingness of things, the transiency of life itself, and the huge importance of loving deeply, of appreciating simple events in the company of our beloveds, of not taking life for granted. Yes, we've heard these admonitions before, but we often forget. We can be grateful to Michael for sharing his grief and love with us, and for reminding us to be mindful of all this.

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**MORE GOOD NEWS \*\*\*\*\***

Good morning, Bob. Thought I'd share my win in the Inland Empire CWC contest with the theme "Lost and Found." I also received honorable mention for another poem in that contest. I'll be going to read it at their Montclair meeting on Sept. 24th.

Mary T. (*Mary Thompson is our Member-at-Large and continually makes us proud with her talent!*)

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Dear Mary,

It gives me great pleasure to tell you your poem, "The Empty Nest," received Third Prize in Poetry in the Inland Empire California Writers Club contest for 2011.

We would like to invite you, along with all the winners, to read your story to our IECWC meeting on September 24 at 10:10-12 AM at Barnes & Noble Booksellers in Montclair Plaza. Please let me know if you are able to attend and read your winning entry to us.

Sincere congratulations,

Laura Hoopes, President

**A CHALLENGE TO MEMBERS TO PUT CWC IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

Get rich. Get famous. Get us in the news. Perhaps I exaggerate. However, a contest and a cause have come up that could help us publicize the CWC while opening doors for our members.

The first-ever Ladies Home Journal Personal Essay Contest has a call out for first-person narratives of personal growth "interpreted as broadly as you like." You could win \$3000, see yourself published in LHJ and mention if there is an accompanying bio that you belong to the CWC. To read official rules and enter, visit [LHJ.com/essaycontest](http://LHJ.com/essaycontest).

For a chance to return a favor to one of our earliest guiding lights, consider getting something published in support of saving Jack London State Park, site of his Cottage, Wolf House ruins, museum and grave. California has put this wonderful place on the list of 70 state parks scheduled for permanent closure. Champion it in an article, a column, a blog, a letter to the editor. Let's aim for at least 100 "publishes" and please let us know what you manage to have published or posted.

Good luck and sail on!

- Donna McCrohan Rosenthal, PR chair,  
[pr@calwriters.org](mailto:pr@calwriters.org)

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**TIPS FOR CHILDREN'S BOOK AUTHORS: HOW TO SELL IDEAS**

Ann Heimbeck

Take an ad out in your local newspaper that you will read for sleepovers, family picnics and children's events. (Don't forget Museums, Zoo's and Parks)

Purchase an "Easy up tent" for local farm markets and festivals. Sign & sell!

Contact your local schools and ask if they would like you to come in and to do a reading. Contact your local library as well.

Contact local children's hospitals to see if they would like you to do readings for Holiday or Birthday parties.

Prior to these events always state the price of your book to purchase with your signature.

**HEADS UP! VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**  
**HEADS UP!**

**It's that time of year, again! First the turkey, then the presents and once again HDCWC members will be wrapping gifts at Barnes & Noble to help usher in the holiday season!**

**WHEN: Sunday, November 27**

**TIME: 10:00 A.M – 3:00 P.M.**

**Contact Bob Isbill: 1-760-242-4248**

**9-1-1- STATE THE NATURE OF YOUR EMERGENCY**

By James Elstad

“Sergeant, tell me what happened.”

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“I looked at my watch. I've been on the road for 22 hours now, that's over 1,600 miles, must be averaging 70 mph, haven't seen a single cop.

“I pushed the radar detector's reset button, still no cops. I was starting to get tired, took another pill and an energy drink, tossed the can on top of the empty beer cans.

“Gotta get to Hayward as soon as possible. As I came around a bend I saw bodies laying in the right lane of the highway, a sixth was laying in both lanes with my right front tire headed toward his head.

The speedometer was pegged at 135; I swerved onto the shoulder to miss him. When I looked back but couldn't see anything.

Can't stop now, gotta do something. I pushed the blue tooth button on my steering wheel”. An operator came on the line.

“911, state the nature of your emergency?”

“I'd like to report six bodies on northbound 101 by the Camp Roberts Rest Stop.”

“Yes sir, I have officers enroute, will an ambulance be required?”

“Don't know, don't have time.”

“Sir, California has a Good Samaritan law; you can't be liable if someone dies while you're rendering assistance, go back.”

“No, I can't.”

“Sir,” the firm, calm voice of the dispatcher said, “I insist that you return.”

“I can't, good bye.” As I started to cut her off the dispatcher called out, “Sir, officers have just arrived and don't see any bodies on the road, describe them for me?”

“Listen lady, I was going fast, I saw them for a moment. They were wearing army uniforms.”

“Sir, we dispatched a helicopter with the patrol cars, while the pilot was enroute to the scene he noticed a blue corvette heading north. Is that you? He says right now that vehicle's almost to King City.”

“Yeah, so you see I can't go back.”

“Sir, we received a notice from Texas to be on the lookout for a blue corvette, seems you're a person of interest in a killing of six soldiers on Ft Hood.”

“Don't know anything about that; I only had problems with my chain of command.”

“At that point I came around a corner and there was a road block across the highway. I slammed on the brakes, turned the wheel sharply; I lost control of the car and flipped it.

“Well, that's all I have to say.”

Sergeant Billings pulled a fax from a folder, “Are you Jeremy Minor, and were you assigned to an infantry unit at Ft. Hood, TX?”

I nodded my head.

“It seems Captain Clemson, your company commander, and First Sergeant Peterson gave you an article 15, confined you to the base, and assigned you to staff duty. Is that true?”

“You don't understand, Cindy's having our baby and I have to be there.”

Billings shook his head, “You're AWOL from Ft. Hood, a vehicle matching yours struck a formation of six soldiers on Ft. Hood two days ago.”

“You don't understand anymore than they did, I have to be there for Cindy.”

“Look son, you went AWOL, someone else had to take your place, is that fair to them? You have to pay for your crime.”

Jeremy tried to raise himself and fell back, “They let others get away with missing formation, they give me an Article 15. Where's the justice in that? Cindy's my priority.”

Just then the door opened, a King City Policeman handed Billings a fax. Billings looked at Jeremy. “Just received a fax from Hayward, they tested the DNA we sent. It's a match for blood

found at Cindy's apartment the night she was murdered."

Billings stood up, pulled his handcuffs out and said: "Jeremy Minor, you have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to speak to an attorney, and to have an attorney present during any questioning. If you cannot afford a lawyer, one will be provided for you at government expense. Do you understand?"

He picked up Jeremy's wrist and fastened the cuffs. "I'm arresting you for the murder of Cindy Harrison and her fetus three years ago." He turned to the Policeman and whispered, "We need to have a suicide watch."

Officer Pholeman, nodded, "Yes sir."

When Billings left Pholeman checked the handcuffs and sat on the chair outside the door.

Jeremy looked around the room, "What can I do?" Then he looked overhead, "That's it!"

He reached up to the IV with the morphine drip. He grabbed the knob, opened the drip so the drug flowed as fast as possible, he lay back down and looked at the officer reading his magazine, "Good, I should be gone soon.".....

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## JOHNNY

by John Margotta writing as John Ferrara © 2011

Inspired by "The Mysterious Flame of Queen Loana" by Umberto Eco

"Can you hear me, Johnny?"

*Geez, get off my ear, will ya? Of course I can hear you. You're blowing in my ear and I don't like it.*

"Oh, Johnny, please come back to us."

*What in God's name is this broad talking about? I'm right here.*

Unchecked sounds of whispering and shuffling drift into my consciousness. *Who the hell glued my eyes shut? Damn, I can't open my eyes.*

A warm hand on my forehead. Another voice, "He may be like this for a long time."

*Get your hand off me, you lunatic.*

Some other voice. "Let's leave him now. He should rest."

*Rest, I don't need rest. I need to know what the hell is going on.*

A blanket of silence, a door softly closing. *What's that beep, beep beeping? It's coming from over my right shoulder. Beep, beep, beep.*

*Wait, I've heard that sound before. On television. What's that program? Some hospital show. . . ?*

A fog-like quiet silence spills over me. Now the beep, beep is joined by a soft hum. . . a motor. Cool air enters my nose, wrapping its way down my throat. A strange, sweet smell encases me. I've smelled that before. . . oxygen.

*Now, Johnny, don't panic. This is probably only a bad dream. In a moment I'll wake up and be in my bed with my wife at my side. She must be snoring again.*

The screeching of brakes, twisting rending steel, tumbling over and over.

*Is that a big truck beside me? Watch out, he's coming into my lane. . . this is my lane, stupid. . . doesn't he know I'm here? I better turn the wheel. Why don't my arms move?*

Floating along looking up at white, bright white. Looks like a ceiling, a white ceiling. Beep, beep, beep. *Damn, I'm in a hospital bed. I'm on General Hospital, I'm a TV actor. See, Johnny, you panicked for nothing.*

*Who's that next to the bed? Is that you, Marie? I thought you moved to California right after High School. You know you broke my heart. You didn't even say goodbye.*

*Yes, Marie, but it's OK. I forgive you. Wow, you sure look good. Did you know I always worshiped you from afar. How many times did I try to talk to you, only to get cold feet and turn away? Did you know? I often wondered if you knew. Everyone else knew, After all I was wearing my heart outside my chest.*

*Marie. I can't see you very well, please come closer. Why is there such a big space between us? There's no need to make believe anymore. I even drem't of moving to California. I didn't know where you were in California, but I figured if I wandered*

around enough, I'd find you. Yes, I'm sure of it, I would have found you.

Now you're here, so I don't have to go to California. You haven't changed at all. How many years has it been. . . twenty, thirty? You still look like a high school girl, just the same. Sorry, Marie, I'm very tired and must close my eyes for a while. Will you stay until I wake up?

The ceiling is back. The whiteness is overwhelming. Where are my sunglasses? This sunshine on the desert is strong and all-encompassing. Who's this near me? What's she doing? Sticking a needle into my arm? Wait a minute. . . I know TV has to be realistic, but does it have to be this real? Where's Marie, I want Marie.

Oh, there you are. Is that chair ok? If you don't like it, I'll have the prop men bring another. I like that chair, though. It suits your color. . . and the sweater. . . I just noticed the sweater says NY High School. Are you still a cheerleader? Now that I've found you, we can be together. I'll come to all the games and watch you dance and jump high into the air. Please be modest with your short skirt, you know how the guys are.

. . . Dancing, I always loved to dance, remember? No, how could you know? I went to every dance hoping you'd be there. . . but. . . you never were. Were you avoiding me? It doesn't matter now. You're here now and I'll never let you go. No, no not by force, by love and devotion.

Marie, the room is getting dark, so I'll just close my eyes for a while. At least that infernal beeping has stopped. I'll see you soon Marie. Marie? . . .

### A LITTLE SOMETHING FOR THE PANTRY?

Okay, so you want to help replenish our "Pantry" shelf 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.

**DON' T FORGET:** PICTURES FOR NORM GOYER AND THE WEBSITE (your truly great pictures delight the eye) AND fodder is needed for the pantry – more poetry, more prose, more "product", more, more!

## DISREGARD THE STATEMENT

By Linda Bowden

Disregard the statement,  
Now what does that really mean?  
We hear it in the courtroom,  
As the judge reigns over his scene.  
Can you disregard any words,  
Once they enter in your brain?  
I don't think it can be done,  
Unless perhaps you are insane.  
Can you forget your teachings,  
Those words implanted in your soul?  
Can you forget what was paid before,  
And how the meaning took its toll?  
I don't think you can,  
I don't think you can,  
I don't think you can disregard,  
The words wrapped around the golden band.  
Don't you love it when a mate,  
Or a parent or a friend,  
Says disregard the statement,  
I really didn't mean it.  
If they said it,  
They meant it,  
If even one split second,  
You can't disregard it.  
It's there beside you,  
Waiting to remind you,  
It lurks around each corner,  
And locks itself deep, within your brain.  
Now, you'll never really disregard it,  
You'll never let it go.  
For a word that's spoken,  
Lies, smoldering below.  
So don't pierce me with your words,  
If you want me to forget.  
Cause I'll never really disregard it,  
Just save it, and save it and save it.

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### SUCCESS

by Martin Buxbaum

You can use most any measure  
When you're speaking of success.  
You can measure it in fancy home,  
Expensive car or dress.

But the measure of your real success  
Is the one you cannot spend.  
It's the way your kids describe you  
When they're talking to a friend.

## **DOES YOUR HOUSEHOLD NEED A THUNDER JACKET?**

If you have a dog household like ours, you may be interested in this story.

We have had the privilege of loving four dogs in our adult lives. Our earlier set of two dogs included a full grown Doberman (as opposed to our current Miniature Pinscher) and a mixed breed dog named Patches.

Patches was the one with many noise fears, firecrackers, earth tremors (even when we didn't feel anything), but worst of all was thunderstorms. She was quite pathetic with her reaction of agitation, anxiety and behavior during thunder. She would tremble uncontrollably while trying to find some small confined area. All our beds have built in frames so she was unable to get under them. One time she even scaled our six foot chain link fence, breaking two toenails right down to the skin, and ended up on Apple Valley Road. It seemed a miracle she had escaped being hit by a car. The use of tranquilizers helped, but did not relieve her distress during the 16 ½ years with our family.

Fast forward to present day and we have two dogs again, both shelter rescues. Foxy Lady joined our household in April 2009 and is a Miniature Pinscher. The above described noises do not seem to affect her. If she is sleeping and an especially loud clap of thunder should occur, she might raise her head, give a couple of barks and then will promptly go back to sleep or lie quietly and listen.

Our most recent dog is Scout, mostly Beagle who has quite a story of her own. Staff at the animal shelter told us she had been abandoned in an open field with her puppies. She was pretty chewed up trying to fight off coyotes from her babies. Another neighbor was feeding and giving her water for a few days when they realized she wasn't eating. Staff reported she had been bit by a snake and was near death when they brought her in. Her puppies were promptly adopted but she had been at the shelter for six weeks recovering. My husband found her and it seemed to be "love at first sight". She was still incredibly thin and obviously a recent mother when my husband arrived home carrying her in his arms. She was named for a character in one of his favorite novels, To Kill A Mockingbird.

She was very sweet and affectionate to us from the very beginning, but also nervous, easily startled and frightened often. Fortunately, fireworks occur infrequently around here and we were careful to be at home during that time. Thunderstorms are more unpredictable; her reaction was severe and prolonged. We were helpless to comfort her. She would tremble for hours, refuse to eat or drink, pacing and obviously in distress.

My husband had heard about these special jackets or shirts and we decided to give it a try. So many products that are advertised, often do not live up to their hype. We still thought it was worth a chance.

I was in Oakland for the Central Board meeting the weekend of July 30 and 31. We had just received the jacket three days before. My husband reported he put it on Scout as soon as the thunder started. Scout had begun severe trembling and shaking at the first signs of the storm. It took ten to fifteen minutes and then she became totally calm. She would lie at his feet or follow him from room to room but no further trembling. She wore it most of the day.

He was so impressed with the effectiveness of this non medical intervention that we wanted to share it with other dog lovers whose pets suffer from noise related anxiety. We are going to try it next for riding in the car.

The theory behind it's effectiveness is due to the pressure created around their torso. It is similar to "swaddling a baby". The pressure on the torso reduces anxiety for other uses as well. Like squeeze chutes for cattle, think Dr. Temple Grandin; and has helped people with autism and persistent anxiety. If interested in more information, go to [www.thundershirt.com](http://www.thundershirt.com).

Thank you for letting us share this experience.

### **FLASH! HOLD THE PRESSES!!**

Congratulations to Anne B. Fowler who entered her screenplay in the "Just Effing Entertain Me" contest, and out of more than 600 scripts came in as a quarter-finalist.

HDCWC is cookin' with gas! *(For you youngsters out there, that means we're doing pretty darn good!)*

All CWC Lit-Review Submitters

Some of you have asked, others no doubt wonder about the status of the Review; and you are owed an answer. You may be assured, from your editor's view, it is still underway. Yes, there have been delays – life has a way with obstacles, but we continue.

Concerns over budget, disagreements regarding format, external interruptions, and time, have all played their part. Predictions here, I have found, go wanting. What I can say with confidence is that there will be a Review at some time in our future.

I understand your anxiety and appreciate your patience. This is a wonderful idea and it will yet see the light of reality. Stay tuned.

**Dave LaRoche**  
**Editor, CWC Lit-Review**

The HATM Writers' Conference is only days away! When you meet a non-member guest with a colored nametag, take a moment to say "HI" and "Welcome"! Each guest is a potential member who will gain from being a member of the HDCWC, and a friendly greeting and face will go a long way toward bringing that person in to the Branch.

**REMEMBER – DUES ARE DUE.** AFTER 9/30/11, IT WILL COST \$20 MORE TO REUP FOR ANOTHER YEAR. (AFTER THAT DATE, THE MEMBER WILL BECOME A NEW MEMBER AND THE HEADQUARTERS "NEW MEMBER" FEES WILL APPLY.)

A reminder that Alan Watt, author of "The 90-Day Novel" will be at the Victor Valley Barnes and Noble Booksellers today (Sunday 9/18/11) at 2:00 PM so go out, have a Starbucks and give him a listen all you writers!

And tell them you're from the California Writers Club, High Desert Branch!

**(Obviously, this came too late to remind our readers in this issue. However, look what happened when Mary Thompson and friends attended the event!)**

We (Mary T. and June Langer, Suzanne & Willard, and Lorelei (new member and in our critique group) went! He was wonderful. All of us bought his book and in a raffle, Lorelei won an online UCLA class from him that is worth nearly \$500.00. Lorelei, who is writing a memoir, is ecstatic. We told Alan Watt about our club, I gave him a card with our website, and he said he'd love to come and talk to our group! I also told him about the conference. His book has exercises and is so practical, I think our group would love him. Sorry you couldn't make it.

On the same note, yesterday I went to 3 writing seminars (\$5.00 each--I'm serious) at the Big Bear International film center. One had Anne Beatts, two time emmy-award winner, who talked about humor, and one had Christopher Vogler, author of The Hero's Journey, which was the best. Mark your calendar for next year: September 13-16, 2012.

Mary T.

Correction: Although Watt taught at UCLA, he started his own on-line courses and the la writer's lab, and that's the course I believe Lorelei won.

Mary T