



How to Read Aloud

By Mike Apodaca

When I was a classroom teacher, every year we had Read Across America Day where people were invited to come to our classrooms and read to our students. For the most part, it was delightful. But there were a few readers that were just . . . well, terrible.

This led me to develop some rules for myself for public reading.

Rule 1: Never “Read” to a Group. No one wants to hear another person read. We can read for ourselves. We don’t need you to do it for us. But Mike, if we’re not to read, then what are we to do? PERFORM. Bring the text to life. Become the conduit for the ideas and emotion the author is trying to convey. Your audience wants to experience a text that comes alive in you.

Rule 2: Modulate your voice. Part of performing your text will be varying the volume, tone, and texture of your voice. Watch the best, most polished comedians. They use pauses. Sometimes they over-emphasize a word, drawing it out for emphasis. They strategically use their voice as a tool.

Rule 3: Speak loudly. Many of us suffer from hearing issues. We need you to speak up and annunciate. Those who drone on or speak quietly are simply not heard (which is why you are presenting text in the first place).

Rule 4: Use your whole body. Speak with your hands and fingers, your posture, and your head positions. If you stand still and stiff, you fade into the background. You’re just another plant—a part of the scenery. We are visual creatures. Give us something to watch as well as hear. The more you animate your presentation with your body, the more we are paying attention.

Rule 5: Use your face. Our faces tell the story of what we’re thinking. Even if you’ve read the text a million times, your face needs to show surprise and fear and anger and shame and love when it fits the text. Remember, you are performing the text, like an actor who has rehearsed her lines. When you tilt your head and roll your eyes with a text, the audience will howl with you.

Rule 6: Maintain eye contact with your listeners. This means flashing your eyes at the text, then facing the audience to express what was written. You may need to practice this. Good readers go back and forth, with the focus on their audience. If your eyes are on the text the whole time, no one is listening.

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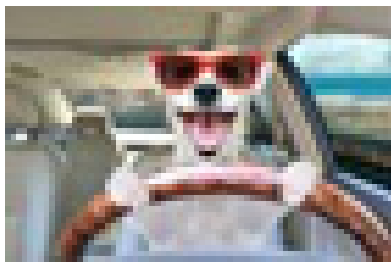
Rule 7: Pick your text purposefully. No one wants to hear a string of facts. We want to hear a story. We want to get emotionally involved with the drama. We want to feel what you are reading/performing. Touch our emotions with your reading and we will become your fans. Bore us with a boring text and we will avoid you.

In conversation about this topic, Jenny Margotta said she marks her text with stage directions: Pause here, emphasize this, etc. This way her text becomes a performance.

This is why our own Lynn Puckett started The Sounding Board, a meeting where we can read aloud our writing and get feedback. It is very helpful.

Do whatever works for you. But please, please, please perform your texts. Stop reading them.

Guilt and Trials of Motherhood



By Lynn Puckett

What makes dogs chase cars? Gator and I have been walking on an out-of-the-way acreage to avoid coyotes. Gator gets to run and explore off leash. This allows me to walk and not hurt my aging, frail body. Usually, there are no cars. But this morning was different. We were well into our walk when a Jeep came rolling through.

Gator decided to run and attack. His body slammed up against the passenger-side door. Bounced off and he once again attacked.

Needless to say, I ran over and commanded Gator to stay, which he did not do. Minutes into years, I finally leashed him. Three more cars came through the once-thought-to-be-safe area for our walks.

So this ended as a short-leashed-up walk.

I'm watching my Gator to make sure he doesn't have internal issues today. Gator just wants to protect. I love to watch him explore and run free. Hopefully, like raising our teenage children, my Gator dog will learn.

He pesters me to walk every morning by bringing my shoes and socks.

Note to self: Monday mornings at 7-9 may have more traffic on that secluded vacant land.

Guilt and trials of motherhood.

Photo Contemplation

By Joan Rudder-Ward



Seek Peace and Pursue It

from *Serene Moments: Capturing Peace Through Words and Images*

Peace is often something we must intentionally seek.

Amid life's busyness and endless to-do lists, give yourself the gift of stillness.

Picture yourself on a bench beneath the wide, sheltering branches of this majestic tree. Its cool shade wraps around you like a gentle embrace.

Close your eyes. Take a slow, deep breath. Feel peace settle within you, filling your soul with quiet serenity.



Peace

More This or That

By Jenny Margolla



Below are some of the word and punctuation issues I have recently run across in my editing efforts.

ALL, ENTIRE, or WHOLE: While these three words have the same general meaning, they are not necessarily interchangeable. Their usage depends on the type of noun they describe, i.e. singular or plural, countable or uncountable, and where they might appear in your writing.

ALL can generally be used with all types of nouns, as in “I worked all morning [singular, countable],” “I have all types of books on my shelves [plural, countable],” and “I have all the information you asked for [uncountable].”

ENTIRE: Like “whole,” “entire” can only be used with singular countable nouns. “We rented the entire building for our conference [singular, countable].” The difference is that “entire” is considered more formal so is the preferred word in formal writing. “I finished the entire book,” “My entire family went to the wedding.”

So, while “Jenny ate all the pizza,” and “Jenny ate the whole pizza,” are perfectly fine in dialogue, the preferred wording in the narrative portion of a story would be, “Jenny ate the entire pizza.”

In/On [date] or By [date]

I am surprised by how often I run across this error. If you say, “**In 2015**,” or “On Wednesday,” you are giving a specific time or day: the year 2015 or the specific day of Wednesday [with or without a specific date]. You would write, “In 2015, I started crocheting [specific year] or “On Wednesday, I went to lunch [specific day].” But if you say “By 2015,” the timeframe is not specific. “By” refers to *any time before* 2015. There is often a change in verb tense as well. “By 2015, I had started to crochet.” You cannot say, “In 2015, I had started to crochet,” or “By Wednesday, I went to lunch.”

Periods, spaces, or none? EX: W.T. Smith, W. T. Smith, W T Smith, or WT Smith:

CMOS (17th edition) states that the “no periods, no space” rule should apply when using initials. “WT Smith” is then the preferred way to write the name. This also applies to “Washington, DC” and “the US treaty with Spain.”

Hyphens in fractions: EX: One half or one-half. Whether or not to use a hyphen with a fraction depends on its usage. When the fraction is used as an adjective, it is hyphenated. “I walked one-half mile today.” One-half is a hyphenated adjective modifying the noun “mile.” But you would write, “I reduced the amount of liquid by one half. “One” is now a single-word adjective modifying the noun “half.”

Farther or further: This one is a very common error. I find the simple trick of thinking “how far?” to be the greatest help in determining which one of use. In the sentence, “It is farther than you think,” “farther” refers to a definite distance, as in “how far is it?” But in the sentence, “I need to think further about this,” you cannot apply the “how far” question. There is no determination of distance.

That should be enough to make your brain hurt for this time around. So go eat all the leftover pizza while you read the entire *Inkslinger* and think about further questions you may have in rules of editing.

The Most Famous Authors of all Time

By Michael Raff



Zane Grey – Part II

After he wrote and published *Riders of the Purple Sage*, Zane Grey became a household name. When he wasn't writing, he was almost always fishing. The sport had become a passion of his, and he often contributed articles about it to such magazines as *Outdoor Life*. He loved deep-sea fishing and being out in the ocean. Being out at sea eased his depression and inspired him. As much as he wanted to write a novel that took place on the open sea, however, he was unable to do so.

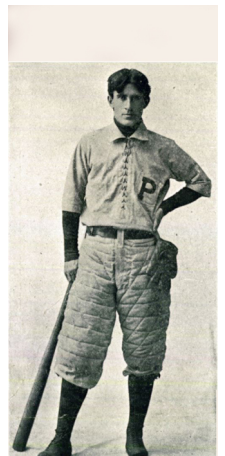
Grey did a lot of traveling, and during these trips, he wrote novels and articles. He was not a consistent writer and went through spells where he would not write. Other times, he would write up to 100,000 words in a month.

When the Great Depression struck, his sales dropped, but he had avoided investing in the stock market and wasn't as affected as most people.

Grey's novel *The Vanishing American* was published in 1925. Its Navajo protagonist was modeled after the athlete Jim Thorpe. He set out to portray the struggle of the Navajo people, preserve their culture, and identity despite the corruption of the US government and white missionaries, thereby infuriating a lot of religious groups. He responded to their criticisms by saying, "I have studied the Navaho Indians for twelve years. I know their wrongs. The missionaries sent out there are almost everyone (of them) mean, vicious, weak, immoral, useless men." In the end, however, Grey agreed to have some structural changes made to the novel.

One of Grey's later books, *Wanderer of the Wasteland*, was a thinly disguised autobiography.

In October 1939, Grey died of heart failure at his home in Altadena, CA. He was interred at the Lackawaxen and Union Cemetery, in Lackawaxen, Pennsylvania. He was sixty-seven years old.



Fun Facts About Zane Grey:

He was one of the first millionaire writers.

Grey became a major force in the myths of the Old West.

He wrote ninety books, many of them adapted into movies and TV productions. His book sales exceeded 40 million.

Other than novels about the Old West, Zane wrote six children's books, two hunting books, three baseball books, and eight fishing books. It's been said that he wrote more than 9 million words during his career.

Grey was on the top ten best-seller list nine times. After his death, his manuscripts continued to be published once a year for twenty-four years.

After his books started being adapted into films, the Grey family moved to California. He formed his own film production company and enjoyed full control of the adaptations.

After completing seven films, he sold his company to Jesse Lasky, a partner of the founder of Paramount Pictures. Paramount then started filming his books and hired him as an advisor. Some of the films were shot at the locations described in his books. Almost fifty of his novels were adapted into more than one hundred Western films.

Zane's novel *The Lone Star Ranger* was adapted into films four times. Later, it was adapted into *The Lone Ranger* TV series.

Zane's book *Challenge of the Yukon* became the *Sgt. Preston of the Yukon* TV series.

As a young boy, I remember watching a successful TV series based on his work called the Zane Grey Western Theatre, which had a five-year, 145-episode run.

Many movie stars started in films based on Grey's work, including Randolph Scott, William Powell, Gary Cooper, Fay Wray, Shirley Temple, and many more.

Zane was also an inventor and invented the teaser, a hookless bait that is still used today.

He built a home on Santa Catalina Island, which is now the Zane Grey Pueblo Hotel.

In 1977, Grey was inducted into the Hall of Great Westerners of the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum.

Until next month, keep writing, reading, and give one of Zane Grey's books a ride!



Members Get Ready to Ignite the High Desert

By Terry Saenz



Say What? Writers Club members are going to light the High Desert on fire? Absolutely! On April 10, our members are going to set the High Desert ablaze with their passions, stories, and ideas at the 9th Annual Ignite High Desert Event. This popular event is a forum to share ideas, information, passions, and stories with our community.

So, what is Ignite High Desert? I like to think of it as Ted Talks on steroids. Each presenter has 5 minutes exactly, with 20 slides that auto-advance every 15 seconds. Presentations must be focused, clear, and concise. Topics range from inspirational to informational, from daily hacks to how-tos, from funny to heartwarming, and many topics in between. Anything to do with promoting a business, selling, or asking for donations is not allowed. This year, the Writers Club has five members participating in the event: three speakers and two committee members.

As a first-time presenter, Richard Spencer's eyes will light up as he talks about AI. His presentation is titled "I Love Artificial Intelligence." It will be very informative for the audience to hear about the good, the bad, and the ugly of this innovative technology. Whether or not you are a fan of AI, you will definitely come away with information that makes you think.

C J Berry is also presenting for the first time. Her presentation is titled "A Love Note." We all enjoy receiving love notes, but have you ever written one to yourself? CJ will explore the importance of using love notes in the healing process.

Mike Apodaca is presenting for the second time. His presentation is titled "Why I'm a Christian." Mike will take the audience through his inspirational journey of becoming a Christian. This uplifting and heartwarming presentation shows what Mike truly values and why.

Presenting at Ignite is old hat to Joan Rudder-Ward. She is a four-time presenter, including being a speaker in the very first Ignite High Desert in 2015. This year her presentation is titled "Let's Reframe Beauty." Joan will explore the unrealistic beauty standards displayed on social media and how it negatively affects our young people. She will give practical tips on how we can all embrace our own unique beauty.

Four-time presenter, including a stint as emcee, and current speaker mentor Byron Ward's first Ignite speech on the controversial topic of supporting atheism is exactly the essence of an Ignite speech. Ignite High Desert is a forum to share content in a fun, quick format. The audience won't necessarily agree or even like all the topics being presented, but I guarantee they'll go away with something that makes them think, laugh, or maybe even shed a tear.

I have been involved with Ignite since its inception. I was a speaker at the 2015 event, but I wasn't necessarily jumping at the opportunity to participate. It took Ignite chair Sam Thatte bugging me for several weeks before I reluctantly agreed to speak, and I have been hooked ever since. My Ignite journey took me from presenter, to speaker mentor, to now being the event chair. It's an amazing experience to hear the speeches in their infancies at the speaker critique session and then hearing them come to life at the event.

This year's Ignite High Desert event will be held at the Victorville First Assembly of God Church at 15260 Nisqually Road. The event runs from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., and the admission price includes a food tasting. Tickets are \$30 until April 9 and \$35 the day of the event. Tickets can be purchased at ignitehighdesert.com.

I encourage all our members to come out and support Richard, Mike, and Joan. It's a fun evening of ideas and community. And who knows, maybe you'll be inspired to speak at next year's event.



Mike presenting at Ignite 2024

WRITERS ARE READERS

Book Reviews

By Mary Langer Thompson Lujan



Jack London in Boyhood Adventures

What would you do if you found out a relative was a close friend of a famous author? And what if your relative had written about growing up with this near celebrity whose stories you may have read in your high school English class or devoured on your own? That's exactly what happened when Diane Neil, a long-time member of our club—who moved to Northern California several years ago—found a manuscript in her home written in the 1930s by her grandfather Frank Atherton. As Diane examined her grandfather's writing, she realized that Frank had grown up with one of the very authors who started our club, Jack London, author of *Call of the Wild* and so many books and short stories known to the world.

When Diane made her discovery, she called our then-President Dwight Norris. Dwight, with the help of several High Desert California Writers Club members, including Diane, set about the task of fulfilling Frank's dream of his excellent writing coming into print. This now published book, available on Amazon, is a book not only for our members to enjoy but also one that London scholars and the general reader will want to make sure not to miss.

Here's a view of author Jack London you will never see anywhere else. Experience the author's life through the eyes and writing of Frank Irving Atherton, his childhood and lifelong friend. They met in elementary school, and both dropped in and out of school throughout their lives due to poverty and having to help their parents. Frank lived with the Londons for a time, and Jack and Frank had adventures together, such as hunting wild tigers and mud hens, rowing, and riding dilapidated bicycles. Find out how they escaped scrapes with bullies after school.

Jack was a voracious reader, and Frank was somewhat less adventurous, being more into music and opera. They encouraged each other through jobs that resembled slave labor for ten cents an hour, and even came up with some wild moneymaking schemes.

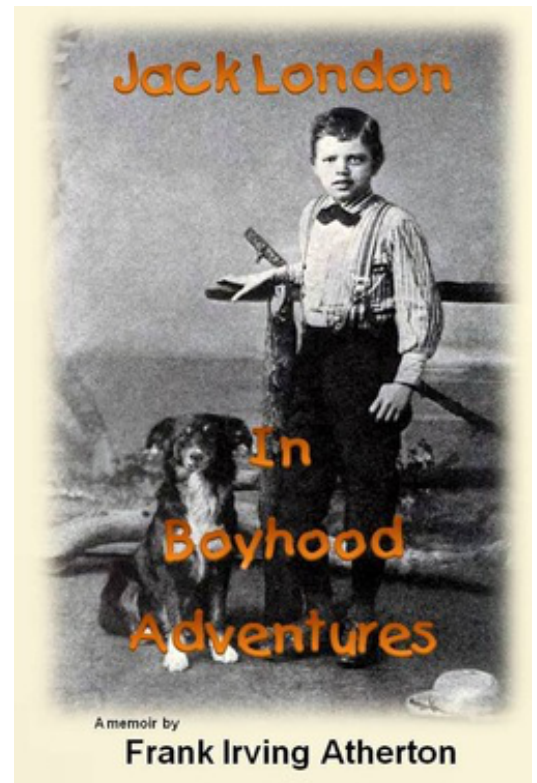
Jack persevered in his writing, encouraged by Frank, even after Jack once contemplated suicide. Jack was the best man in Frank's wedding, even after Jack tried to talk him out of getting married at all. Frank saw Jack off to Alaska and to other adventures. Their love for each other shines through the book, and the reader will be fascinated by the late nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century views of Oakland and the San Francisco area.

Frank Atherton and his granddaughter Diane, and then our writers club, wanted Frank and Jack's story to be told. Even though Jack's daughter, Joan London, used the manuscript as a resource for her published works, it was never published on its own.

That is, until 2014, when Diane and our club got a hold of it and made this page-turner of a memoir available to the public. *Jack London in Boyhood Adventures* is another reason to be proud of our membership in The High Desert California Writers Club. Buy a copy for yourself or a friend and help spread the news of this wonderful story.

When Harry Golden, a newspaper publisher was asked how to become a writer, his advice was simple: *read!*

In This Country, by Chris Matthews



WHY I WILL NEVER WRITE A MEMOIR

By Byron Ward



In June 1978, during summer leave from West Point, I was out and about in Maryland with my girlfriend at the time. I was from Bel Air, north of Baltimore, and she lived in Columbia, south of Baltimore, and after some sightseeing in DC, I decided to visit my brother at his place in nearby Rockville. Eventually, my brother would rise to become CEO of an engineering and architectural firm, but in 1978, he was in his nomad hippie phase, something that lasted for about six of the nine years it took him to get his college degree. In addition to seeing my brother's new digs, I thought a visit might allow me to experience smoking marijuana, something I was curious about, but had never even come close to trying before.

Sure enough, when we arrived at his place in a low-rent apartment complex where he lived with about six other hippies, smoking weed was the activity du jour, and the centerpiece of the living room was an enormous, three-foot-plus bong standing in the middle of the floor. I was confused and a little intimidated by this odd and unfamiliar contraption, but I thought I had it figured out after I observed a couple of the hippies partake. I reasoned that the bubbles in the water chamber were created by blowing into the device, and that this built up pressure that, when released, forced the cannabis smoke up the pipe and into the mouthpiece. I immediately found out that was a big mistake, because when I blew into the thing, the flaming bud popped out of its cup and dropped onto the dirty shag carpet. No serious fire ensued, but the hippies went a little crazy, berating me and yelling at my brother for allowing such an idiot to enter their abode. I was done; my girlfriend and I beat a hasty retreat.

So if what Bill Clinton said about his marijuana use was a lie—and I believe it was—I am the original guy who didn't inhale. Decades later, in 2013, I finally got a medical marijuana recommendation. I remember the year because, shortly after I started, the kid delivering to me asked me how old I was when I first used. When I replied, "Fifty-eight," he looked astonished, then, in an attempt to get an answer he considered more believable, asked, "1958?"

From such scribblings above sprout reasons why I will never write a memoir. Is it the showcasing of my idiocy, the mediocre writing, the insipid anecdotes, or my current marijuana use? After some consideration, I believe it's a combination of them all.



Who Is This Guy?

Richard Spencer Teaches How to Develop a Character

By Mike Apodaca



Who is this guy? Is he a vet? Is he an orphan? Was he raised by loving parents, or did his alcoholic father send him into foster care after his mother died? Is he looking for vengeance? Or to prove himself?

Richard Spencer was right when he said that having ten tables of writers creating a backstory for this character would result in ten different interpretations. What I found intriguing is that each interpretation would have made a decent novel. As Richard said, it's better to start with a character than with a plot.

Richard encouraged us to consider what the character's goals were, what was standing in the way, and how these obstacles changed the character. (Good novels are all about the changes in the protagonist.) He had us create the backstory, motivation, flaws and strengths, and mannerisms that made this character come to life. He also encouraged us to make the character sympathetic—to give the reader a reason to care about what happens to him.

Antagonists and supporting characters also must have depth and should never be wooden or one-dimensional. I thought it was great when Richard said, "Supporting characters should feel like they have their own life outside the story being told." I'm still unpacking that sentence.

Finally, Richard emphasized the importance of the characters' relationships with each other and how these can be used to tell the story. In the end, it's all about relationships.

So how was the meeting? I overheard a woman saying, "I've been stuck forever trying to figure out how to write my novels. Now I know exactly what I'm going to do." I think that tells it all.



A soldier experiencing PTSD?
A guy whose sister was killed?
A rogue who fell to alcohol?

HDCWC GOES TO READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY

By Mary Langer-Thompson Luhan



As an educator, I've participated in many Read Across America Days at various schools. So when HDCWC President Mike Apodaca invited us to celebrate at Topaz Elementary School in Hesperia on February 28, I was pleased. I did not expect, however, the extraordinary welcome readers Rita Wells, Mike Apodaca, Debbie Walker, and I received.

Student escorts awaited us in the front office, some in literary costume, and led us through the multi-purpose room to the library. Playing in the entrance of the library was "The Beauty and the Beast" song and there was Belle in her bright yellow dress to greet us. Students had us follow them around the library filled with characters and objects from movies like *Toy Story* and *Frozen*. The chef from *Ratatouille* was cooking and offered coffee and cookies and announced that lunch would be served later. And just when we thought we were safe, there appeared the Blue Monster and his one-eyed partner and we were in Monstropolis.

At the end of the circle tour were cameras to take our photos. Later, they would be printed out for us in color to keep as a souvenir of the day. After our photos, we were free to sit and visit while we waited for our scheduled times to read. The students and the librarian, whose brainchild all of this was, were friendly and chatty. They were so proud of their school and this special day's events that were so brilliantly created and coordinated.

Students came to get us when it was time to read in a classroom. Having written two children's books, *How the Blue-Tongued Skink got His Blue Tongue* and *The Gull Who Thought He Was Dull*, I had time to read one and talk about the other in my second- and third-grade classrooms. After reading, I took some questions, and what questions they were! "How long did it take you to write your book?" "What is the message of your story?" That one I threw back to them. "What do you do when you can't write?" And the best one—"Can I have your autograph?" To top it off, one teacher hugged me and whispered, "Thank you for talking to them about writing."

I hope more of us can join Mike Apodaca next year if we're invited to return. If too many want to come, we can spill over into other schools who have hosted HDCWC readers in the past.

Rita Wells, also a retired teacher, and I carpooled, and she related how much she loved reading her children's book, *Janie Plants a Tree*, as a guest in her assigned classrooms. Mike and Debbie announced they are writing children's books in Richard Zone's group, so I know they will be finished by the next Read Across America Day. But even if you haven't written a children's book, you can read a beloved story of your choice, and the kids love talking to adult writers. You'll be inspired and see how smart and thoughtful this next generation is and the good things going on in our High Desert schools to encourage literacy.

Our magical morning had me humming the rest of the day: "Tale as old as time/true as it can be . . ."



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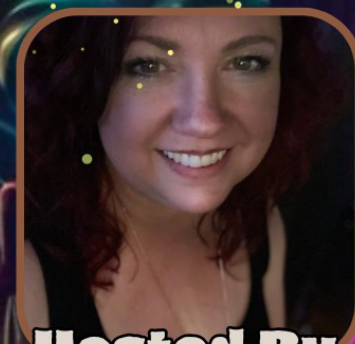
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TUESDAY, APRIL 22ND



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**DELIVERY BY: PIZZA
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**HAPPY HOUR DRINK
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This Will Help you Get Dialogue Right

By Mike Apodaca



Poor dialogue will sink your writing. When characters speak in long, well-crafted sentences, they come off as stilted and inauthentic. In such situations I find myself saying, “Real people just don’t talk like this.”

I recently discovered something that’s helped me make the dialogue in my writing more authentic.

A couple of years ago, I experienced a weird problem with my left ear. Certain tones were interpreted by my brain as loud beeps and boops. Listening to music was especially difficult. The songs were overlaid with BEEP! BEEP! BOOP! BEEP! BOOP! I’m not kidding!

My doctor came up with a therapy that helped, but I have been left with severe tinnitus in both ears—worse on the left side. Unfortunately, this means I miss some of what people say, and often have to ask them to repeat themselves. I’m sure you have noticed this.

While watching TV, I began using the closed caption feature, which brought about some fascinating discoveries.

I learned that I was not hearing many of the things mumbled or whispered in movies—which is a lot! Sometimes, when a character was walking away, they would say something important under their breath. I never heard it (even when my hearing was good). But if it’s in the script, it’s in the closed captions. Suddenly, I knew everything that was said—even if it wasn’t.

The best thing, however, was that closed captioning showed me how to write more authentic dialogue. There are a considerable number of ums and uhs and ellipses in closed captions. Characters often don’t finish their sentences. They get cut off by other characters or by some big event. They often repeat key words in the same sentence.

Screenwriters have to get dialogue just right. Our ears easily catch conversations that don’t sound authentic.

I recommend you try this when you watch your next movie on television. Don’t only watch the movie for enjoyment. Don’t only use the captions to better understand what’s being said. Try scrutinizing the verbal interactions to learn how to make the dialogue in your stories sing. You may find closed captions to be another tool for your writing tool belt.

How are Your Submissions for the Anthology Coming Along?

Just a reminder that the window for submitting to HDCWC’s 2015 anthology, *Anything Goes*, has been open since February 15, and you have until June 15 to submit your latest creative gems. The title says it all: anything goes. Poetry, short stories, flash fiction, memoirs, excerpts from your latest novel, non-fiction, etc. Literally, anything—with the exception of overtly proselytizing or political pieces or submissions not suitable for a “G” rating.

You may submit up to three pieces, 5,000 maximum word count per piece. Submissions should be sent as Word document attachments (poets, please include a PDF version, too) to Michael Raff at mprseven@aol.com. He will need your short (150 word +/-) bio—headshot optional—too.

Happy writing, everyone.



Pens

By Janice Dugle



I am a shameless thief. I will steal your pen. I will look you right in the eye and thank you as I put your pen in my purse or pocket. I love a “good” pen.

I am a hawk watching my pen if you borrow it. I will chase you down to get it back, be it a fancy pen or a cheap freebie I picked up along the way. I know it is a double standard and I do not care. (Insert evil laughter here).

I cannot tell you what defines a good pen. I only know it when I feel it. I feel it glide across the paper, bringing to life my thoughts, ideas, and even my grocery list.

I have a pen holder on my desk. It is not the standard size; I needed a bigger one. I had to get a pretty flower pot. It fits me. It suits me. I love the white flower pattern.

There is a piece of felt in the bottom to act as a blotter and a cushion. I am careful to make sure the gel pens are closed so as to not leak/spill out all of their gloriously gooey contents before they are used to carry my love to someone in a letter.

I love a handwritten postcard or letter, and they are made even better with a good pen. The way the pen connects with the paper is the way I feel connected to the recipient.

I will take any promotional pen offered to me. I will treat it as if I am a child at Halloween, “Trick or Treat.” The sweetness of a new pen being better than any candy. I have even been the greedy child asking for more.

What is a “good” pen today may be an “okay” pen tomorrow, ever changing the meaning and requirements of the word good.

I have a plastic shoebox full of all the extras, and I often rotate them through my pen holder. I have a basket of rejects that have been forgotten and discarded long ago, much like a toy on the island of misfit toys from Rudolph. They are sometimes gone through to find a long-forgotten treasure. I rarely throw a pen away. I could write something longhand every day for the rest of my life and still not use up all my pens; yet, I continue to collect more.

I think there is hope and promise in a pen. All the love letters, all the ideas for new stories, all the schematics, all the history, and even all the illegible doctor’s notes. Significant parts of life have all been written and kept with the simple use of a pen. The pen has proven again and again to be far mightier than the sword. I have in fact used more than one pen in life to wound another. (I am not always the good guy.)

It is such a simple little tool first used as early as 3200 BC by Egyptians. We only know this because someone wrote it down. The ballpoint came to us in AD 1888. I am thankful because I know that, with a quill pen, I would have made one big mess of the Constitution. (Think of all that dipping of the nib.)

I press too hard on the nib to use a fountain pen, but I do love the way they flow in someone else’s hand.

I have been known to smear a gel pen, but I do love their flow and grace as they dance my words onto the page. Spinning and twirling like a professional ballarina or a small child dancing in the sunlight. My mood influencing the formation of the letters on the paper; like a choreographer, I watch my dance come to life.

I am a shameless thief and I *will* steal your pen. I will say thank you, and it will come home with me to rest among the many other pens in my collection, possession, no . . . *obsession*. Yep, it’s an obsession. I love a good pen.

102 Years Later: Part 3

*By JP Garner and
Mary Langer-Thompson Luhan*



The '60s rocked. We landed a man on the moon and Marines in Vietnam which, when I listened to my father's recollection of the experience, was like landing on an alien planet. Back then, too, a president was assassinated, people were protesting in the street about almost anything from the dropping of acid to the dropping of bombs, and among the many #1 songs hitting the air waves were Chubby Checker's true classic, "The Twist," and The Monkees, "I'm a Believer." Mini-skirts and bell bottoms were a fashion craze, the minimum wage started out at a \$1.00 per hour, and, about halfway through the decade, increased to a whopping \$1.25, and the average cost of a house in 1965 was \$20,000.

According to CAR—the California Association of Realtors—the median price of a home in California in 2024 was around \$860,300. It's little wonder that people are leaving California.

But \$16,000 is what June Langer paid for a new home in Glendale, California, after she and husband, Herbie, and their two children, David and Mary, departed Chicago for the sunshine state in 1958 because "that's where my parents retired," she explained. Her parents drove to Chicago in their 1958 Crown Victoria to pick the family up and then drove back the entire 2,014 miles along Route 66 to get here. They stopped to see all the sights they could, including Lincoln's tomb.

The house on Bel Aire Drive was "close to my father and mother, so I could walk to them. My mother promised me she would drive me anywhere I needed to go. I never learned to drive in Chicago because we had plenty of good city transportation, and Herbie said, 'What do we need a car for?'"

But Glendale wasn't Chicago, and June eventually decided she would learn to drive. On one particularly pleasant Sunday afternoon, when she and Herbie went walking down Brand Boulevard, they bought a car. They paid \$3,000. "It was one of those new ones," she said of the purchase. "A Chevy Corvair with the engine in the back. My father took me to the DMV to get my license. My mother wouldn't go. She was too chicken. But my father did. He took me down there because he didn't want me to drive alone."

When her son, Dave—or "Davey"—graduated from high school in 1961, she and Herbie and daughter, Mary, were in the audience. Inspired by the event, she thought, It's been exactly 18 years since I quit school. I'm going back. "When Davey went to Glendale College, I was going too," she recalled. "So, I signed up. When I started, I was thirty-seven. I took history and music—harmony and voice—a full sixteen units.



"Davey and I went together. He drove because he had an early class, so I did homework for an hour. And then he waited for me an hour after he was finished. Going to community college cost nothing. Tuition was free for us both. My son pretended he didn't know me on campus, however. I guess he was embarrassed to go to college with his mom. But I knew all his friends and they liked me. One Thanksgiving he brought my future daughter-in-law home. Years later, we laughed, remembering how Conny said, "June!" at the same time I said, "Conny!" when I saw her. We had a class together. I came to love her very much. She was good for my son. They were married nearly fifty years, although both are gone now."

(Continued on next page)

102 Years Later: Part 3 Continued

Unencumbered by exorbitant costs, she didn't work and just took classes. "I thought, well, as long as I'm in this far, I may as well get my AA. It took me a year," she said with pride. Then she pauses to think back. In a matter of seconds, she's laughing lightly when she adds, "And the only reason Davey came to my graduation was because the man who invented geodesic domes, Buckminster Fuller, was the speaker.

"It was so much fun going to school that I decided I was going to get my teaching certificate. So, I signed up at Cal State LA."

Women going to college seems like no big thing nowadays. Even for women in their mid-thirties. But in the '60s, it was like a continental shift or a time distortion for a woman not to work and to embark upon a career. The expectation back then was that women stay at home and take care of the family. Remember the home economic classes taught in high school? Women were groomed for obscurity. But June Langer was different. Never defiant or even rebellious but independent. More modern than what was allowed in those days.

After skipping a half year in high school and beginning teacher's college in Chicago, June dropped out of teacher's college at 18 and went to work in a war factory. She married a man everyone thought was too old for her. And then she left the only home she had ever known and traveled by car halfway across the country to start a new life. If told today, her story might be more commonplace. But set against a background of cultural biases and society's narrow view of a woman's role back then, she emerges as a trailblazer.

At 37 in the '60s, June Langer was too old. At 37 in 2025, she'd just be beginning.

When later she arrived at Cal State, Los Angeles, she majored in education and minored in music. She graduated in 1965 and taught elementary education in one of the poorest school districts in the state, Garvey School District, for 23 years. She had done her student teaching in Glendale, but when she finished, there were 16 applicants for one job opening. The district superintendent thought her too old, which was made more evident than it could be now.

"I applied in Alhambra and I applied in Pasadena," she recalls. "Pasadena wouldn't have anything to do with me, and Alhambra wasn't hiring older women. I mean, I was only in my early forties. But the lady in Alhambra said, 'Go back to your school. They put jobs on the bulletin board.' So I did, and I was sent to Garvey and I had a real nice interview and they hired me."

Curious, I asked, "How much were you paid?"

She hesitated, then laughed. "Fifty-five hundred dollars a year. Garbage collectors made more money than me."

Fifty-five hundred dollars to teach? Nowadays, that's what many veteran teachers in California make in a month. In looking back, however, she laments that, "It seems a travesty to have gotten paid so much for doing what was so much fun."

June was the first teacher to wear a pantsuit at her school. The other teachers followed her style. She never asked permission of her principal.

It should be noted that age discrimination reared its ugly head as well with her husband, Herbie, when they first arrived in California. Despite his training and experience as a machinist, he was not hired by anyone because of his age. He was in his sixties. The general thinking was that he'd work for a few years then retire. He ended up working for their church until he was 85 and was forced to step down because insurance companies would not cover him.

"I retired on my birthday at sixty-five years old in 1988." What was retirement like? "I was sent a postcard that said I was entitled to two free dance lessons. I wanted to go, but my husband said no because he was much shorter than I was. So I didn't go, but they called several times after that, and said, 'Come by yourself.' So I did. I went one Saturday, and I got hooked. They kept telling me how wonderful I was, and how I was a born dancer. I started doing exhibitions and I came home with a lot of gold medals. I even went to Las Vegas.

(Continued on next page)

102 Years Later: Part 3 Continued

“That was my first airplane trip.”

Sounds strange, doesn't it? Maybe even laughable that she would find an everyday event in our lives like flying in a plane so significant. Especially now that women routinely orbit the earth. But give Michelangelo or Leonardo Da Vinci a blank canvas and tell them to design a woman and they could not have imagined a better creation than that fashioned by the Creator of All Things.

Change is inevitable. In everything except the tilt of the earth. So, it is not too surprising that things have changed dramatically for women in the time that June Langer went to work in a war factory at 18 and retired at 65 after carving out a life for herself and her family, which, since moving to the High Desert in 2006, includes painting watercolors, writing for the *Sun City View* and stories for the anthologies produced by the High Desert Branch of the California Writers Club, where she's a long-time member. She's also a member of Jess Ranch Community Church, California Retired Teachers, Delta Kappa Gamma, High Desert Artists, and a Life Member of the Mohave Historical Society.

Women have run for president and even been vice president. They've flown jets in combat and been in firefights alongside men, and they're no longer stay-at-home moms but major players in the work force . . . and they go back to school in their sixties and seventies. They're doctors, lawyers, and CEOs and presidents of major universities and, at the same time, still manage to raise a family.

June Langer was part of that change. She just wasn't aware of it. She was a “doer of deeds” and not a braggart. She was just being June. And she still is at 102 (on June 21). When asked the secret of her longevity, she replies, “There is none. Keep busy, keep learning. The first hundred years are the hardest.”



The Alex Theater



Bob's Big Boy 1970



Glendale late '60s



June smiling;



Route 66



Glendale College

April Meeting: I Know This Guy!

By Mike Apodaca

My background is in theater. I started doing plays in sixth grade and continued throughout college. This is a picture of me playing Charlie Brown in high school.

This foundation has made an enormous difference in my life. It helped me serve as a pastor for nine years. I used my acting skills daily as a public school teacher for thirty years. It is now the basis of my writing. I imagine every scene before I write it. In fact, recently I had a friend come to my house and we mapped out a location in my backyard and choreographed a fight scene for a book I was finishing, so the scene would be accurately described.



Bob Isbill, before he left us, blessed me with a link to an article on the importance for writers to be actors. I put the link at the bottom of this page.

This led me to ask my son, Jeremy Apodaca, a man who's coached Hollywood actors for years and directed many productions, to be our speaker for our April meeting and to show us how to use acting to improve our writing.



This is Jeremy performing The Pirate of Penzance in college. Jeremy started his drama career playing Hamlet in junior high (he played Hamlet again in college). Godsend, my YA series of books, were first conceived of by Jeremy. We collaborated on the first book and I have continued the series.

Come expecting to be stretched and to learn. This meeting might change the way you visualize the scenes in your books and greatly improve your writing.



This is Jeremy doing Cosplay characters

(https://blog.finaldraft.com/5-reasons-writers-should-take-an-acting-class?utm_campaign=Corporate%20Newsletter&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-66wNM-rmii3V_0rQIBPdHX13CDomy6rCPSC7dUZe0ugudmt-pPKcl_rXn7DTs9qXkiAoM51ZUlnfscS8EulJFm6X1A&_hsmi=286296755&utm_content=286296755&utm_source=hs_email).

Just a Few Experiences Working with David Lynch Part 2

by Paul Sebastian



My boss left me a list of props and set dressings to pick up, and I usually spent most of my day driving around town from store to store picking them up and delivering these items to the sets and then putting them in place according to the blueprints and notes that were in my script. On one of these trips back to the office, I ran into my and the production designer as they were discussing *Prizzi's Honor*, which had just been released. David walked in just at that moment and said, "Yeah, I have been to see that, does anyone know where it is playing?"

I passed that theater nearly every day and without thinking said, "I know where the theater is." As every person turned to me, every thought that had ever existed vacated my head like a sink draining of water. My memory went blank and seconds were like the slow-motion drilling of rusty screws into my head. I could feel their eyes penetrating the back of my skull and rivers of sweat running down every inch of my body, leaving me with the look of goldfish in front of the piranha. The only

words that came out sounded more like gorilla grunts from an imbecile as I attempted the human verbal response, "I can't remember."

David said, "Well, I'm sure I can find it in a newspaper."

Embarrassed and sliding into the ground, I could hear my boss laughing and I went home crushed.

The next week I had been assigned to our truck driver to help him get some beat-up furniture and junk and take it to the vacant lot where the opening scene of the movie would take place. He told us that we needed to make it look as if it was a hangout for degenerates and drug addicts and that it had to have a decaying look with the appearance that it was a camp for bums. On the way over my buddy stopped and bought a case of Budweiser beer in long-neck bottles and another case of cans. When we pulled into the lot my friend said, "If we are to employ our artistic talents, we must get into the state of mind of the subject we are representing."

We popped our bottle tops, clanked the bottles with the gusto of two artists in the heat of creativity, and proceeded to dress the set as the spirit of the brew directed.

The next day I dreaded the director's opinion of our inebriated vision and fully expected that we would be told to redo the entire thing. When David walked into the lot, he put his hands in the air and said, "Don't change a thing, it's perfect." This was typical of David's way of doing things on set where he took advantage of his crew's ingenuity.

I was on set several times during the shooting and watched him calmly, but with assuredness, take an obstacle that would have dimmed his outlook of the film and blend his view with a crewman's input and build these two together to have an organic narrative. His guidance with the actors worked in exactly the same fashion. He expertly guided the younger actors while supporting and taking advice from the older actors, who respected his ability.

Production wrapped approximately after three months and then David's monumental task of editing and putting the finishing touches on the film began. It was released in 1986 after additional editing was required to get the time around two hours and get an R rating because of the graphic scenes and the violence.

My personal view of him was definitely influenced by the way I witnessed this talented director treat his people and how his movie gained strength and impact from his ability to get all of us working for the same idea that he had. I will leave with this one memory. It's not the last one I have of him but one that I think says volumes. I was in line at Burger King and saw that he was in line a few people ahead of me, getting his usual, and as he turned to leave, he noticed me and waved my way in recognition. He smiled and turned to leave the building, and I thought he probably still remembers me as the kid who was dumbstruck, but now I was one of his crew.



Publishing My Children's Book

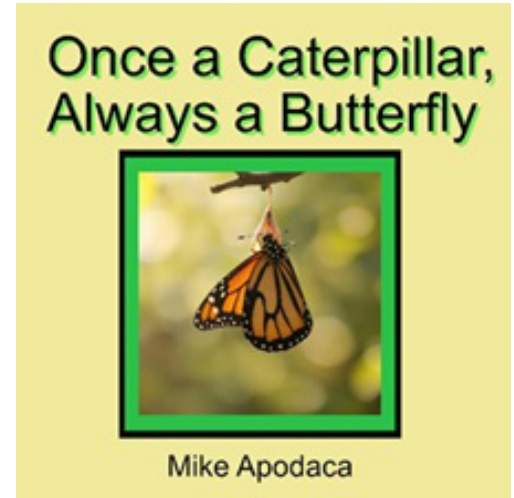
Rolling Up My Sleeves with Jenny Margotta

By Mike Apodaca



"We should start a group to write children's books," Richard Zone proclaimed to our Sounding Board group.

I thought it was a great idea, so now, because of Richard's vision and the support of my writing friends, I have a new children's book up on Amazon.



Here's how it happened.

1. I came up with a short story and typed it out.
2. I read the story to The Sounding Board and received feedback.
3. I polished the story, making it sound better.
4. I divided the book into bite-sized chunks.
5. Next came the pictures. I used AI to generate pictures for each page in the book.
6. I used Affinity Designer (you can also use Photoshop or another comparable program) to put my pictures and text together, strategizing the placement of each for optimum effect.
7. I downloaded the book from my Google Drive onto my I-Pad and read it to different groups, including classrooms for the Read Across America and our local retired teachers group (three people there wanted to buy the book!).
8. I polished the book just a little more.
9. I spent time with Jenny Margotta (who found more mistakes in my manuscript—yikes!). We strategized for five hours: adjusting images, sizing pages, and getting everything to work with Amazon. What an amazing partner Jenny is! This is not the kind of work I like, but Jenny made it fun. We laughed, swapped stories, and put our noses to the grindstone. In the end, we posted the book on Amazon. I cannot recommend Jenny enough at this stage of your writing adventure.
10. I got the message from Amazon that my book is ready to be sold.

I'm sharing this to inspire you to take this plunge. Bob Isbill used to say that every writer should have a children's book to sell because they sell so well. Now I have one! It wouldn't have happened without the wonderful support I have receive from all of you! Thank you so much!

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH REMEMBERS THE LADIES

By Mary Langer-Thompson Lujan



Our 7th Women's History Month celebration at the Apple Valley Library on March 5, 2025, remembered First Ladies this year. Roberta Smith began with a wonderful PowerPoint presentation on the independent Abigail Adams, who constantly reminded her husband, John, not to forget the women. Janice Dugle followed with a presentation on the infamous Dolly Madison, who wore low-cut gowns and used snuff tobacco. Meera Maheswaran actually dressed like a woman of the mid-to-late 1800s as she described how Eliza Johnson bought cows to graze on the White House lawn for fresh milk and how her daughter, Martha Patterson, refurbished the White House. Bob Keith Young discussed how Ida McKinley, despite having "falling sickness," most likely epilepsy, still outlived her husband. Alicia Hoy covered Betty Ford, whose candor, some of us might remember, resulted in her admitting, "I take a Valium every day." She founded the now famous Betty Ford Center for drug and alcohol rehabilitation in Rancho Mirage, California.

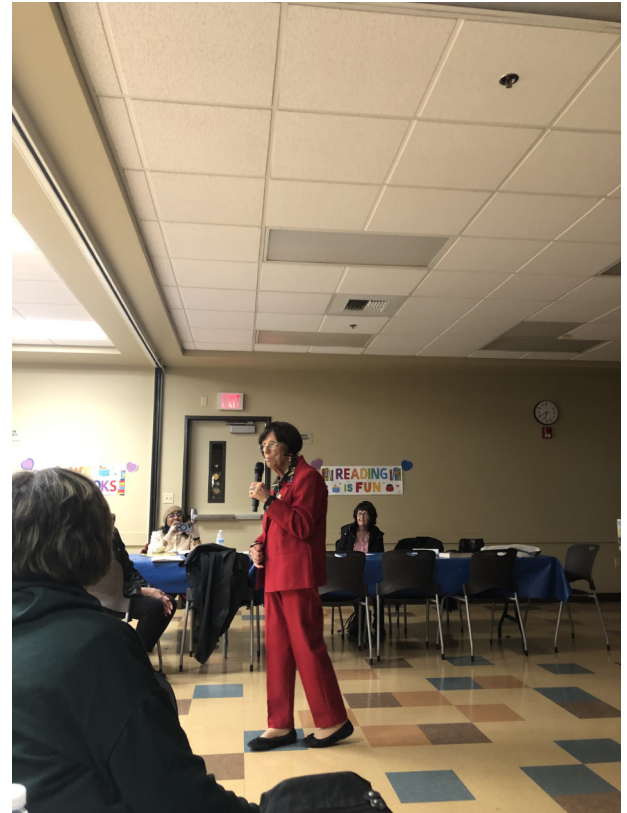
Near the end of our enjoyable and informative evening, Rosanne Smith, our guest presenter, dressed as Laura Bush, re-enacted Laura's life and times in the first person. She made us feel like we were right there, immersed in Laura's life, which was not free of problems. If you missed Rosanne's presentation this year and last, you'll have to read Laura Bush's biography to find out her involvement in a car accident that took a classmate's life. Laura Bush was a great choice for Rosanne to present to us, since First Lady Bush had a love for the written word, having been a librarian.

There were too many ladies to cover them all in one evening. Sam Lujan graciously said he would save his report on Jacqueline Kennedy for another time. June Langer too has some information on Michelle Obama from her autobiography *Becoming*. We covered some of the other ladies with the fun game, Two Truths and a Lie.

Thank you to all the participants, including Mike Apodaca, who brought bottled water to accompany the Girl Scout Cookies, and Jim and Barbara Grayson and Sam Lujan for helping to set up and take down.

We had a night to remember remembering the First Ladies.

Those interested in being on a committee in early 2026 to plan next March's event, please let me know. We can either explore the First Ladies more or focus on other special, brave, talented women.



"I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is: I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat." — Rebecca West

Well, Ain't That Sump'tin'!

By Fumi-Tome Ohla



I was looking out my patio slider when I saw a sparrow busy at work hopping and looking for food on the concrete floor. He looked here and there but found nothing. Then he gazed up to the patio ledge. What he did next surprised me. He hopped closer, then he sprang up and over the ledge in one bound without batting his wings to fly down to the ground on the other side. The way he executed this feat reminded me of a pole vaulter going over the bar but without twisting his body to go over the bar on his back.

A few days later, my dogs and I were out for a walk when I saw a small bird pecking the ground, sipping rainwater on the blacktop, then hopping toward a hedge and surveying the height with his eyes. Then, without a running start like we humans need, the sparrow zinged up and over without flapping his wings. In fact, what he did looked like he spread his wings as if to unkink them, then slapped his wings twice to his body, then sailed up and over the hedge in one

whoosh as if this technique gave him a jet-like thrust up and over!

A few days later, as my dogs and I were out and about again, I saw three young sparrows twittering and fluttering on the roadway. As we were heading in toward them, I saw one sparrow flutter up into the air then hover awkwardly in place. He was a young fledgling, as were his playmates. I had never seen a sparrow hover, so it was a fascinating sight. What was he doing? After a while it was obvious to me that he was hovering, waiting for his friends to get themselves together. Within seconds, his two friends fluttered up then all three chirped, giggled, then fluttered away high-flying their skills. Three Amigos! Boasting their friendship, We The Man!

Well, ain't that sump'tin'!



JUNE “MEET THE EXPERTS AND LOCAL AUTHORS” EVENT

You Need a Seller's Permit

By Jenny Margotta



In lieu of our regular Saturday meeting in June this year, HDCWC will hold a “Meet the Experts and Local Authors” event that will be open to the public. You’ll hear more about this in the coming weeks and months.

However, this is one thing—among several, I’m sure—that every author planning to sell their books at the event must do. As branch treasurer, I am required to have a copy of every author’s current California Seller’s Certificate if they participate in any sales event sponsored by HDCWC. If you don’t already have one, you can obtain one through the California State Board of Equalization. Start at <https://www.cdtfa.ca.gov/taxes-and-fees/faqseller.htm>. Make sure you go to the

above site. There are a number of sites out there that will try to “hijack” you and then charge you a fee for the permit. It’s free through the ca.gov site.

Also, when the form asks you what your estimated monthly/annual sales will be, pick a relatively low amount—like \$100 a month or \$500 a year, something like that. If you set your estimated sales too high, you’ll be required to file a quarterly return rather than the standard annual return. (Due each July 15th for the previous July 1 through June 30 fiscal year.)

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at jennymargotta@mail.com.

**It's time to think
of yourself as a
business person**

From Gunsmoke to Gold Medal



By J P Garner



She ran track in high school. The 50-yard dash and the 440 relay. She was really fast and could beat most boys in a 100-yard race. She didn't join any clubs but she was good at English, especially, spelling. She always got A's in that class, but her favorite class was PE because she got to play multiple sports. Most of the time, though, she hung out with friends and, when she watched TV, it was the old stuff on the off-channels like *Gunsmoke*.

Gunsmoke . . . really?

In her defense, she also watched *The Dukes of Hazard* and *I Dream of Jeanie* but you'd think that an exceptional romance writer like Laura Mills would have binged-watched *Peyton Place* or something like it . . . a heart-tugging day-time soap maybe, but it was a book her mother bought her when she was eleven that got her started.

"It was called *The Silver Kiss* by Lynn Erickson," Laura explains, "and it's about mining silver in a Colorado town. I never forgot it and I actually ordered it again because I had lost it a long time ago but I have it now. And that was the first [romance] I ever read. When I got older, I started reading more."

She started writing when she was eleven years old. "Stories would pop up in my head. I'd see a woman in a magazine and think of her as a female character for a story scene playing in my head. My first story was a hundred and twenty thousand words. Over a couple years span. It was about horse racing. I've always loved horse racing and at the time it was more popular in England so [the story] takes place in England.

"I watched *Pride and Prejudice* to get the language to use for the characters. That was really helpful. And it's about a girl who wanted to horse race even though it wasn't allowed. The hero was a trainer and a lord. I sent it to *Writers Digest* to be judged, and I never won but Jane Friedman from *Writers Digest* said [the book had] excellent characterization and an excellent plot."

She admits she's not a "school" person, so she never went to college for writing, but she always has liked to write. Her husband had a machine shop and she helped him full-time, so it wasn't until 2015 that she wrote a second book. And now, she laughs. "I'm on a writing spree. I've written five books, and when I submitted book number three, *A Brother's Promise*, to the Global E-Book Awards competition, I won Gold for best historical romance. That was in 2018."

A Global Ebook Award is more than an honor for the best ebooks published. It is high recognition and high-profile publicity for ebook authors. The ebooks are evaluated by judges who are experts in their category and who love their genre. The Gold Medal is the highest of the awards offered.

A member of the High Desert Branch of the California Writers Club, Laura says, "I'm very motivated right now and have a lot of stories I've written ideas down for. I write [mostly] from inspiration. *A Brother's Promise* came from a Bible verse in Deuteronomy regarding the Levite law. The hero's brother died and he basically asked him to marry his wife to take care of her. And I went from there.

"Instead of getting an agent, I have decided to self-publish. I'm kind of a control freak as far as I want to be in control of every aspect [of my book.] Right now, I'm writing my sixth historical romance, and I'm a quarter of the way through. I also have one contemporary romance in mind. I also [want to write] an action-adventure romance-fantasy series. It includes five books and I have about fifteen thousand words written in book one so far."

When asked who her favorite author is, Laura said Catherine Anderson. Then she added Samantha James. But the thing that will surprise—and please—any reader of Laura's books is not only the elegance of her writing and attention to detail, but her skill at storytelling. She has learned it is one thing to write a story, but it's something else entirely to tell a story.

Forget About Him

Forget about him, they say
Get over it.
Move on.

Almost daily on my way to feed horses, I drive the road that he first took me down.
Ironically, the customer lives right across the street from where we spent 7 years of
our lives.

Forget about him.

I can't count how many times I have driven this road to get home to him.

The day he badly burned his hand on the wood stove.

Although, I was no where near the house, I felt in my soul that he was in danger.

Our souls were literally connected.

Forget about him.

The mall where we met.

The abandoned Tony's Romas where we got to know each other.

It was his break room.

He was Santa.

Forget about him.

Every year that Christmas comes around again but he is not here.

Forget about him.

The constant photo memories that pop up on my phone.

Forget about him.

Every yard sale or Estate Sale sign.

He couldn't pass up a good sale.

I hated it.

I was always in a hurry to get wherever we were going.

Now I would give anything to go to a yard sale with him.

Forget about him.

He is forever with me.

A ghost from the past but ever so present.

Forget about him.

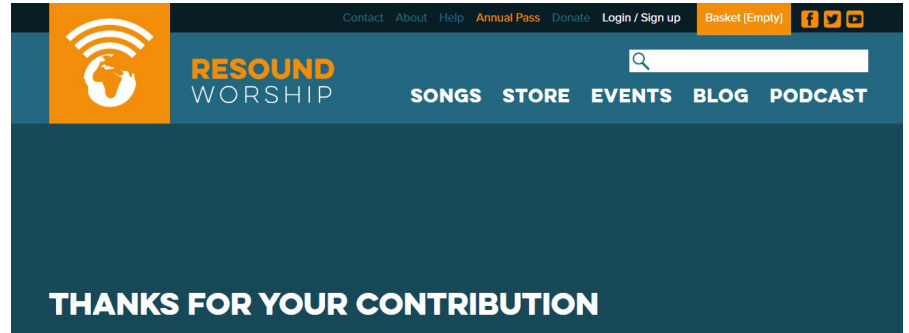
NEVER!

By Debbie Walker



A Fitting Remembrance

By Mike Apodaca



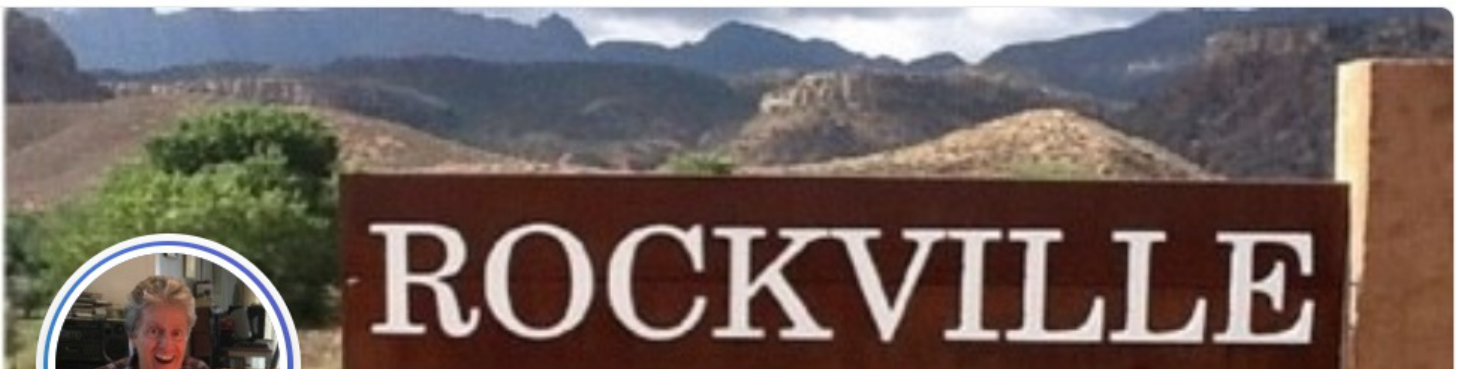
I still can't believe that Bill Lopez has left us, that I won't see his smiling eyes again on this side of eternity.

The board wants to honor Bill. We thought of sending flowers for his memorial, but that didn't seem quite right. So we did something far more fitting for Bill, something he would have been excited about.

Anyone who listened to Bill's music over the years will recognize a central theme. Bill wrote Christian music. Sometimes he retold Bible stories. Sometimes he sang of the glories of his God. He was a Christian song writer.

Therefore, we have decided to make a hundred dollar donation to the Song and Hymn Writers Foundation (Resound Worship) in Bill's name. This foundation supports Christian song writers, like Bill. I mentioned this to his sister at his memorial and she loved the idea.

I miss Bill, as I miss the many of our friends we have lost these last few years. I am glad we are doing something that honors him and that his life's mission will continue.



Bill's Podcast

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Print this to keep track of our events this month. We hope to see you there.

April 2025							Notes:
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
		1	2 8:00 Zoom On Topic	3 Children's Poemsmiths	4 Corky;s	5	8:00 Zoom. Hang out with writing friends Link: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/98570816164?pd=VE50RIVodGILMFVKc0RKcEJ3bVJQQT09
6	7	8	9 8:00 Zoom	10 Corky's Sounding	11 XN Sub	12 Club Mtg Jeremy Apodaca	Corky's 9:00 Good chow and conversation ACT II Zoom. Learn how to use Scriveners
13	14	15 Salon	16 8:00 Zoom	17 Corky's Children's Poemsmiths	18	19	Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87834851042?pwd=g8SVJOYXmBYdwf05ZwCzUagNrMa0GP.1
20	21	22	23	24 Corky's Sounding	25 XN Sub	26	XN Sub: This is our Christian Subgroup 2;00 at Lillian Brown's house. Contact: mrdaca.ma@gmail
27	28	29 ACT II Scriveners	30				Sounding Board: Come and read your writing and get a review. Richard Zone's House. Children's: Come and work on a children's book. On-Topic: Come listen to our speakers at the Apple Valley Library. 5:30 Poemsmiths: At Mary Thompson-Lujan's house mh_thompson@hotmail.com

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DID YOU KNOW?

Soldiers in the American Civil War needed at least two opposing front teeth to rip open gunpowder envelopes. Some men called up had their front teeth extracted to avoid military service. Also, drafted men could hire a replacement or, failing that, could buy their way out for \$600 (about \$22,000 today).



High desert Branch Of the
California writers Club
Board of Directors



The following officers And
appointed positions are current
until the end of the fiscal year
ending in July 2025.

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Member-at-Large

Richard Zone

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Membership

Critique Chair

Michael Raff

mprseven@aol.com

Salon Coordinator

Lorelei Kay

LoreleiKay7@gmail.com

Webmaster

Roberta Smith

hdcwc_web@aol.com

Quote of the Month

By Michael Raff

"I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead; I lift my eyes and all is born again."

Sylvia Plath, poet

October 27, 1932 – February 11, 1963

Members Only

Take advantage of your membership benefits

- Free advertising and free posting of your book titles and latest projects.
- Free PR author's webpage
- To find out more, contact a board member or Roberta Smith, our webmaster.

You can also review your Benefits Booklet online at: **www.HDCWC.com**

HDCWC'S YouTube Channel

Catch the latest happenings at:
[youtube.com/@HDCWC](https://www.youtube.com/@HDCWC)

Free Advertising

Do you provide a service that could benefit other writers?

Send a JPEG file of your business card or ad to

retiredzone@gmail.com

We'll advertise it free of charge!

Submitting to The Inkslinger

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

retiredzone@gmail.com.

Call Richard if you would

like to discuss an article or idea.

909-222-8812

