

# DISPATCHES

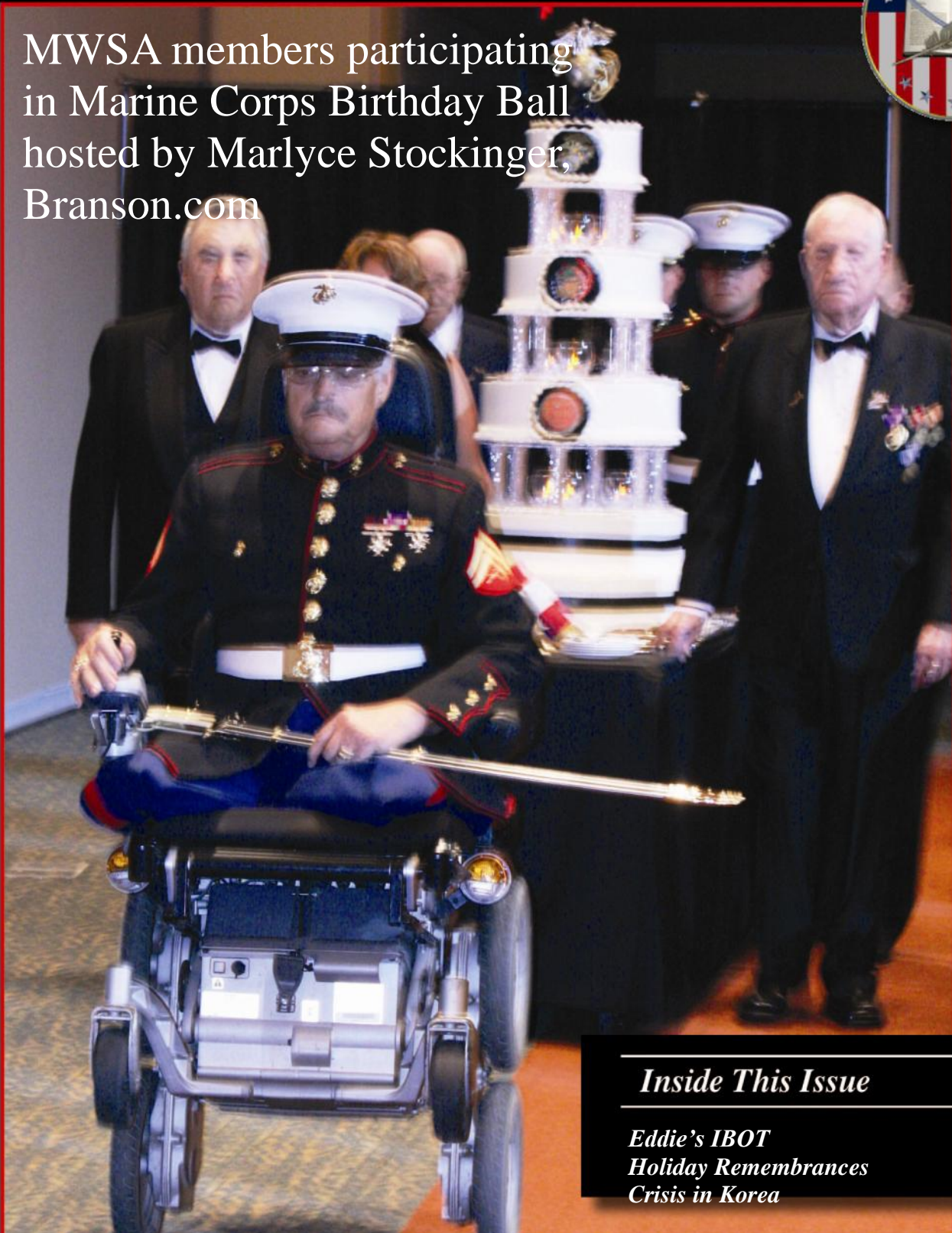
Monthly Magazine

MILITARY  
WRITERS  
SOCIETY  
OF AMERICA

DECEMBER 2010



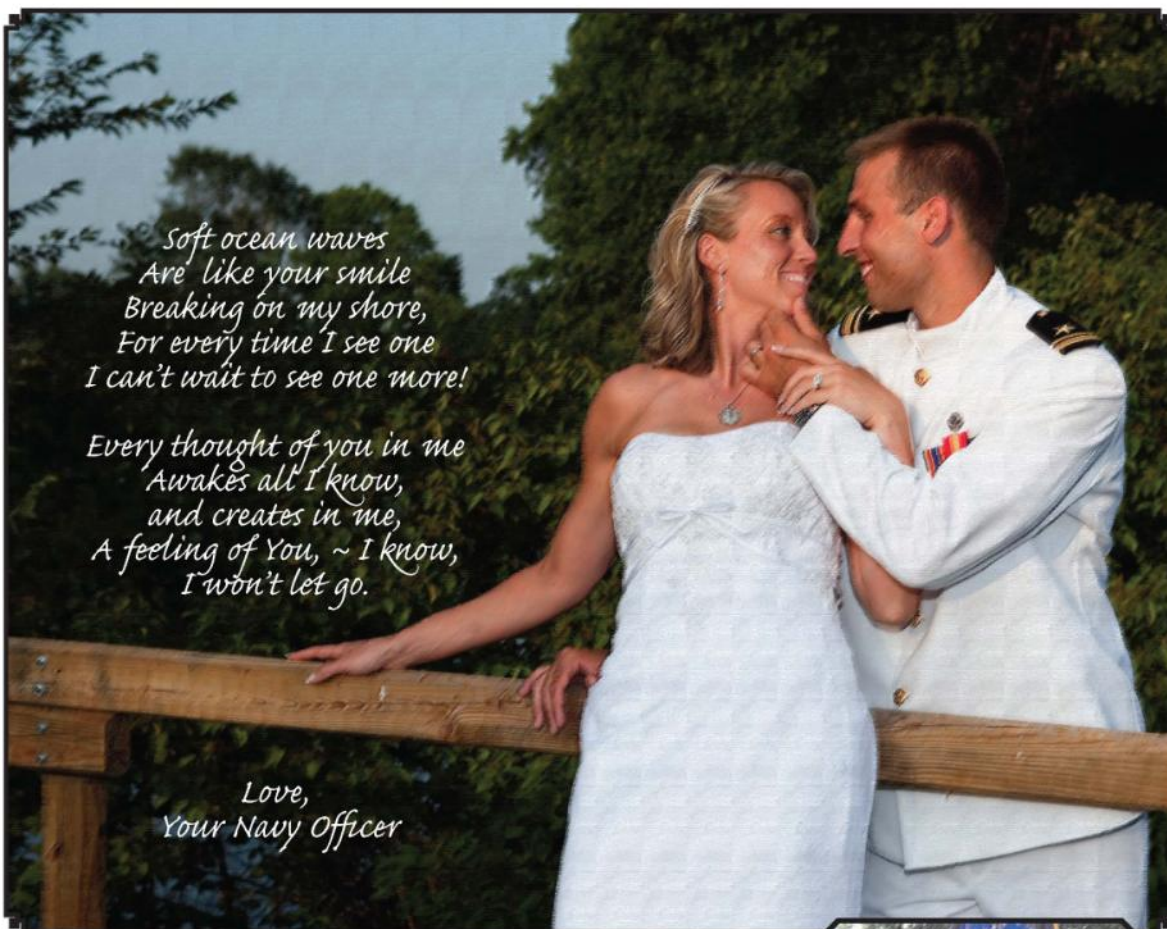
MWSA members participating  
in Marine Corps Birthday Ball  
hosted by Marlyce Stockinger,  
[Branson.com](http://Branson.com)



## *Inside This Issue*

*Eddie's IBOT*  
*Holiday Remembrances*  
*Crisis in Korea*





*Soft ocean waves  
Are like your smile  
Breaking on my shore,  
For every time I see one  
I can't wait to see one more!*

*Every thought of you in me  
Awakes all I know,  
and creates in me,  
A feeling of You, ~ I know,  
I won't let go.*

*Love,  
Your Navy Officer*

Introducing a unique series of original artwork by Kate Dunn of The Creative Cabin, an award-winning graphic designer and fine artist.

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#### The "Photo Paint" Process

Kate Dunn's beautiful images are multi-media in nature, and her technique demands raw talent as well as a multiplicity of advanced technical skills. She begins by using her trained eye to capture exciting original images using a state-of-the-art digital camera. Next, she transfers the image to her computer, where she uses a combination of software packages to artistically enhance the images. Finally, she produces an original print on the finest quality Strathmore acid-free cotton fiber paper, or Canvas. The result is a stunning original piece of art, some of which are sold in numbered series and others of which are available as originals only.

#### Commissioned Pieces

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## *From the Editor...*

Hi everyone,

I hope that everyone will be enjoying the holidays. However, this particular issue of *Dispatches* is dedicated to those who are far from home this year—and to those who wait for them, for those who will never return—and to those who hold them in their hearts forever.

Next year's Conference will be in Pittsburgh, September 29 through October 2, 2011—at the Airport Marriott where some of you stayed this year. There are many advantages—including more space, free parking, free shuttles to and from the airport, and your internet service will be included in your nightly rate. We will be away from downtown Pittsburgh traffic. The hotel is donating a free night to our buckaroo auction that can be applied to your stay—and will be giving us discount coupons for their restaurant. I encourage you to make your reservations early. Call 1-800-328-9297 and ask for the MWSA block. For those who make your reservations by April 30, the nightly rate will be \$109. For those who wait until May 1, the price will be \$119/night. After September 6, the price per night will be market value. More details will be posted as soon as they are available.

There was no winner for this month's William E. Mayer contest.

***Joyce Faulkner, President of MWSA***

**The William E. Mayer Prize for Literary and Artistic Excellence phrase for December is "Deceit."**

***Cover Photo: Marine Corps Ball, November 10, 2010 in Branson, MO. Hosted by MWSA's Marlyce Stockinger of Branson.com. Featuring MWSA members Eddie Beesley up front and Tom McGraham in cake detail.***

## **Dispatches Staff**

**Joyce Faulkner — Editor**  
**Mike Mullins — Columnist**  
**Pat Avery — Columnist**  
**Bill McDonald — Columnist**  
**Dwight Jon Zimmerman—Columnist**  
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**Nancy Smith — Photographer**  
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**This publication includes works of perspective, reflection, fiction, and poetry.**



# MWSA Authors Speak to Students at Pittsburgh Schools During 2010 Conference



MWSA author volunteers spent a day speaking to high school students at Bethel Park High School in Bethel Park, PA—a suburb of Pittsburgh. Hosted by Charles Youngs, the head of the English Department, and xxxx DiPremparo, the head of the Social Studies Department, MWSA members were first treated to breakfast pastries, coffee and tea in the Student Center. Then they were each introduced to a personal student ambassador who spent the day making sure that everyone got to their assigned classes on time.

MWSA authors discussed a wide range of topics with the classes that they visited. For younger students, Tom McGraham's story about his twelve days on Iwo Jima was fascinating because it was new. Seniors were intrigued because they had already been introduced to the Battle of Iwo Jima. Mystery/Thriller novelist and former OSI officer,

Mike Angley fended off a variety of questions from imaginative youngsters raised on NCIS. Pat Avery shared information about perspective with a group of young journalists. Leila Levinson spoke about her father's experiences as Doctor taking care of victims of the Holocaust. Carmen Stenholm described how she and her mother escaped from East Germany when she was only ten years old. Sandra Linhart talked about writing children's books. Dwight Zimmerman's history with Marvel Comics was a hit. Also at the school was Kathy Rodgers, John and Sandi Cathcart, and Bruce Gambel. Fr. Ron Camarda and Richard Lowry joined members at Bethel Park High School after making a presentation at Central Catholic High.

After the end of the day, students, teachers, administrators, and school board members gathered at the Student Center to socialize with MWSA members and thank us for our time. Bob Calvert interviewed several of the participants and those videos will soon be posted on You Tube.



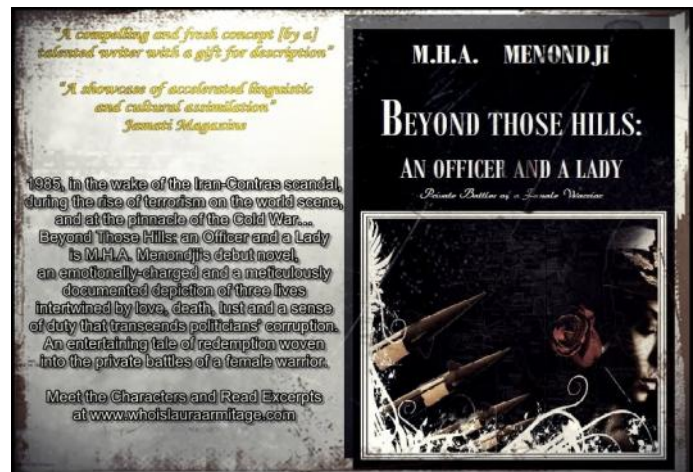
*MWSA authors at Bethel Park High School, Bethel Park, PA, chatting with each other and with Bethel Park teachers and school administrators. Pictures l-r: Sandra Linhart, Pat Avery, Nate Faulkner, Tom McGraham, School Administrator-Name Unknown, Kathy Rodgers, Teacher-Name Unknown, Bruce Gambel. Photos courtesy of Bob Calvert*



*MWSA member and Talking with Heroes Director Bob Calvert interviews Charles Youngs, English Teacher at Bethel Park Senior High School about MWSA authors speaking to students prior to the 2010 Conference in Pittsburgh, PA.*



*John Cathcart, xxxx, Principle of Bethel Park School, Dwight Zimmerman, and Sandi Cathcart*



**William E. Mayer Inspiration Word for  
December**

**DECEIT**



## MWSA 2011 Conference September 29–October 2, 2011

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**More Details coming in  
January Dispatches!**

### Seeking Volunteers

MWSA is a volunteer-based organization. The more resources at our disposal, the more and better the services we can provide. With our MWSA buckaroo program, you have a measure of the value of your participation. More importantly, the more that you put into MWSA, the more you will take away from it.

- We need someone to help our beleaguered Webmaster, John Cathcart, with our web-site.
- We need someone to convert *Dispatches* to a format which will support our Social Networking Strategy.
- All of the committees listed on page 36 need volunteers.
- We need someone to help us find sponsors and to sell ads for our program, *Dispatches*, and *Anthology*.
- We need volunteers to help with the 2011 Conference activities.

If you are willing to help out, contact  
[MWSAPresident@gmail.com](mailto:MWSAPresident@gmail.com) for details.

### Award Winning *Clash-of-Civilizations Trilogy*

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- *Behold, an Ashen Horse* (Gold Medal)
- *America Reborn*

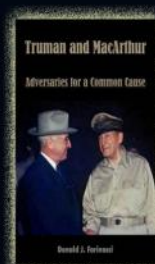
After Islamic terrorists destroy five U.S. cities with nuclear devices, a strong leader emerges and leads the nation back from the abyss to the Founding Father's wisdom and the Constitution.

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### TRUMAN AND MACARTHUR

**Adversaries For A Common Cause**

by Donald J. Farinacci

(Merriam Press; [merriam-press.com](http://merriam-press.com))

Recipient of Silver Star Award - 2010 - for non-fiction history, from the Military Writers Society of America.

"One of the best books on Truman and MacArthur"  
Bill McDonald, Founder of MWSA

"...an exceptional and timely book...an elegant political biography...well written." Jack London Reviews

Sets "the brilliant new standard on Truman-MacArthur relationship." Steven George Bustin, BustinMedia



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# Crisis in the Koreas: Chilling Parallels Between 2010 and 1950

By

Donald J. Farinacci

The killing of 46 South Korean sailors by North Korea in its March 2010 torpedo attack upon the Cheonan and four more South Koreans in its recent artillery attack upon Yeonpyeong Island, evokes a sense of déjà vu each time I speak in public about my book, *Truman and MacArthur, Adversaries for a Common Cause* (Merriam Press, April 2010). Some of the parallels between North Korea's aggression of 1950 and that of 2010 are striking. The following are most notable:



## 1. MOTIVATION:

- **1950**—Kim Il-sung, the Soviet puppet dictator installed in North Korea by Stalin in 1945, was consumed by the desire to unite the two Koreas by force of arms. In 1949, he told his patron, Joseph Stalin, that he wanted “to touch the South with the point of a bayonet.”
- **2010**—Current North Korean dictator, Kim Jong-il, son of Kim Il-sung, is also publicly committed to reuniting the North and the South by force. His regime's popular slogan is “Reunification is at the ends of our bayonets.”

## 2. INTEREST IN AMERICA:

- **1950**—In 1950, prior to North Korea's invasion of South Korea, there was virtually no connection between the American psyche and Korea. In post-World War II America, politicians and public alike were concerned about the Soviet threat to Western Europe, the loss of China to the Communists, the development of the atomic bomb by the Russians and alleged internal subversion by the American Communist Party and its “fellow-travelers.”

- **2010**—There is still little connection between the Koreas and the American psyche. Today, the overwhelming foreign policy and national security concerns of Americans are Islamic Jihadism, including al Qaeda and the threat of Islamic terrorist attacks upon the United States.

## 3. MILITARISM:

- **1950**—By the beginning of the Korean War, June 25, 1950, Kim Il-sung had consolidated his power in North Korea by the use of police power and fear—and had turned North Korea into a militaristic, totalitarian state.
- **2010**—North Korea is still a warlike, militaristic state governed by a hard-line Communist regime. Kim Jong-il is a Communist dictator like his father, Kim Il-sung—and the absolutist dynasty will continue with Kim Jong-il's anointed successor, his son, Kim Jong-un.

## 4. ORIGINS OF HOSTILITIES:

- **1950**—Kim Il-sung organized and supported a communist-dominated insurgency that started a guerilla war in South Korea in April 1948, more than two years before the actual invasion. Also, in the years leading up to the outbreak of full-scale war, North Korea made numerous aggressive incursions across the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel into the South—and multiple border skirmishes ensued.
- **2010**—Similarly, in recent years, Kim Jong-il has incrementally escalated North Korea's aggressions against the South. North Korea initiated a naval skirmish with the South in the

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7) **Farinacci**

Yellow Sea, near Yeonpyeong Island in 1999. It again engaged South Korea in a naval skirmish in 2002, killing at least four South Korean sailors. In 2006, it conducted an underground nuclear test, after an elaborate program of producing plutonium for nuclear weapons. Previously, it had shot down a South Korean airliner, killing all on board. In 2009, it fired missiles over the Sea of Japan. That same year, it conducted another nuclear test and declared the 1953 Korean War armistice invalid. Very recently, it put on display its modern, state of the art, uranium enrichment centrifuges. And 2010 has seen its attacks upon the South Korean naval vessel, the Cheonan, and upon Yeonpyeong Island.

## 5. ECONOMIC COMPARISONS:

- **1950**—South Korea had a largely agrarian economy but the stark poverty from which the nation suffered under Japanese rule until August of 1945, had been significantly diminished during its five years under U.S. influence. North Korea on the other hand was destitute and impoverished.
- **2010**—South Korea, with vast assistance and support from the United States, has become a thriving capitalistic nation with a robust economy. North Korea's economy is crippled by its xenophobia, isolationism and the vast expense of building a military state. Its people are still impoverished. It would like to solve its economic problems by reunifying the two Koreas under North Korean rule.

## 6. INFLUENCE OF COMMUNIST CHINA:

- **1950**—Although North Korea was a satellite of the Soviet Union, China wished to protect North Korea as a vital buffer which would keep the U.S. and its allies away from China's borders—and to gain favor with the Soviet Union, in the hopes of securing its assistance in defeating Formosa (now Taiwan) and thereby unifying all of China under communist rule.
- **2010**—China's main interest is in maintaining

the viability of North Korea as a nation to prevent its economic collapse. It is only by maintaining the stability of North Korea that China believes it will have the necessary buffer against U.S. troops stationed in South Korea. It believes such a buffer to be necessary to protect its borders and its position in the Yellow Sea, where China wishes to maintain a 200-mile offshore trade and shipping monopoly.

In summary, the disturbing parallels between the two Koreas then and now should dispel the notion that North Korea's steadily escalating provocations are designed merely to gain economic concessions from the South and diplomatic concessions from other world powers. The conditions which led to all-out war on the Korean peninsula in 1950 are still extant and unmitigated.

**Franklin Evans**

Author of

**"Stand To...A Journey to Manhood"**

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New Book Review: [www.TheNewBookReview.blogspot.com](http://www.TheNewBookReview.blogspot.com)

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**Shirley Douglas & Joyce Faulkner**  
**The Shirley Douglas Show**



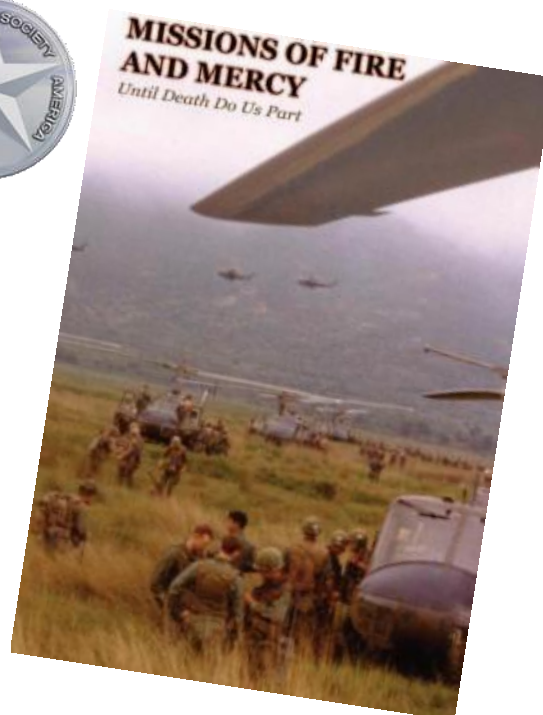
## Introducing 2010 MWSA Silver Medalist Bill Peterson



William Peterson grew up in a rural small town in Upper Michigan. He has been a flight instructor in both airplanes and helicopters—and a corporate pilot for 18 years. He

was a log home builder, a taxidermist, owned and operated a trucking company, and the list goes on.

In addition, Bill has written a couple of magazine articles prior to writing about his Vietnam tour in 67-68. Forty plus years of writing has finally made it seem okay to release his book, **Missions of Fire and Mercy~Until Death Do Us Part**. The author is currently a home inspector residing in NE Tennessee with Cindi, his beautiful wife of 42 years.



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# Eddie's iBOT

By Pat Avery

MWSA member and Silver Medalist Eddie Beesley's story of how he went to Vietnam as an enthusiastic young Marine in 1965 and came home three months later, severely disabled, is chronicled in his book, *Lucky Enough*. In November 2009 during Veterans Week in Branson, entertainer Tony Orlando promised Eddie that he'd have a new state-of-the-art wheelchair before Veterans Week 2010. The audience was moved and eager veterans opened their wallets at that event and again at the Tony Orlando Show, raising more than \$10,000 for Eddie.



*Eddie Beesley & Tony Orlando, November 2009*

The wheelchair in question is a \$25,000 iBOT. Invented by Dean Kamen, the creator of the Segway—a personal transportation device, the iBOT was designed to significantly expand the reach of people who are confined to a wheel chair. For example, users can climb stairs, jump curbs, travel in sand or gravel, and rise up to six feet. It seemed the perfect solution for Eddie who is a double amputee with a history of heart problems. Although \$10,000 is a lot of money, it wasn't enough by half to buy Eddie an iBOT.

Enter the Huey 091 Foundation which had worked with corporate sponsors to deliver Vietnam Era Huey Helicopter, tail number 65-10091, across country to the Smithsonian National Museum of American History where it became part of a 30-year exhibit called "The Price of Freedom, Americans at War." After this amazing achievement, the Huey 091 Foundation took on a new mission—providing assistive mobility devices to seriously wounded service members and veterans. With the help of American Airlines, they raised nearly \$750,000, much of which was provided by private citizens who were determined to make a difference in the lives of those who serve.

Johnson and Johnson was the original manufacturer. Sadly, the product never received approval for Medicare/VA funding—and so, unable to make a viable business, the company discontinued iBOT production in 2009.

That there would be no more new high tech wheelchairs available was unwelcome news to Tony Orlando. Unwilling to give up, Tony along with long-time friend Mary Eisenhower (granddaughter of President Eisenhower) went to the Huey 091

Foundation and told them about Eddie and the donations from Branson audiences.

There were two problems. First, the Huey 091 Foundation had been donating iBOTs to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom veterans. Second, there were no new iBOTs.

However, there was a glimmer of hope. Months earlier, a private owner who had purchased two of the computerized chairs contacted the Foundation to see if they wanted a used one to donate to a deserving veteran. The Foundation acquired it and now it was the last one available.

When the Huey 091 Foundation heard Eddie's story from Tony Orlando and Mary Eisenhower, they unanimously voted to provide their last remaining iBOT to Eddie as a symbolic gesture of appreciation to all Vietnam veterans and in keeping with the original mission of Huey 091.

So, Gary Lawson, representing the Foundation, picked up the chair and took it to Eddie to see if it would indeed meet his needs. Eddie and his wife Connie were thrilled with the device. Once it was clear that the iBOT would service Eddie well, the Foundation decided to officially present the chair to Eddie at the NCOA Convention in Las Vegas

*(Continued on page 11)*



(Continued from page 10) **Avery**

where Tony Orlando and his band would be playing.

American Airlines agreed to fly the Beesleys to the Convention where they were treated to a helicopter tour of the Grand Canyon. The experience brought back memories of Eddie's last flight on a helicopter—August 31, 1965 when he was medivac'd from the battlefield where he lost his legs.

At the Banquet, as the flag of the United States Marine Corps was presented, Eddie maneuvered the iBOT away from the table and raised the chair to its full height. It was the first time in 45 years, the he was able to "stand" in respect—first for the USMC flag and then to Old Glory.

Later, Tony Orlando, Mary Eisenhower, and Jim Palmersheim of American Airlines spoke briefly about the iBOT—and presented a check for the funds raised at Orlando's Branson Show to Mike Jackson of the Huey 091 Foundation. Eddie then told the audience the impact of this gift would have on his life.



*Eddie Beesley & his iBOT in Las Vegas*

"Tony Orlando's promise to provide me with an iBOT wheelchair became a reality in Las Vegas. It is great to be at eye and-ear level when talking with others," Eddie says of the event.



*Tony Orlando and Dean Kamen, the inventor of the iBOT at Branson, 2011.*



*Eddie hugging iBOT inventor, Dean Kamen, Branson, 2011*

This year—as usual, Eddie participated in the Marine Corps Birthday Ball put on by Marlyce Stockinger and Branson.com. This time, he used his iBOT.





## Moon's Mutterings—Mike Mullins

My mutterings have meandered mindlessly for a month, bouncing around between my ears like an echo that cannot escape a canyon's walls. Thinking about Veterans

Day drove home these ideas for my December article. Actually it is the season of the year that inspired these thoughts. I love the Christmas holidays more than I dread them. Yes, I do dread them. I would not miss them for the world either.

November was an emotional month for me. From preparation for Branson's Veterans Week, to being part of it, through all that happened during Thanksgiving, my nerves were on the outside of their epidermal protective layer. This time of year is crammed full of things both serious and joyful. It is the perfect condensed version of life. The calendar includes some of the most monumental moments in an American Christian's life. When I toss in the taters of my personal life I have an emotional stew that is a life-long boiling pot that will never cool.

Focus and I are fighting. Since we are one and the same, I suppose that classifies as an internal battle.

One day I decided I was not even going to write a column this month, the next I decided that my topic was entirely appropriate. The third day I changed again. The fourth day, I started the cycle anew. I have no clue where I am in that process, but I am who I am and I do what I do, come hell or high water as the saying goes. The month was action-packed to say the least, which explains why I have not done my article until now. I thought about it every day, but unlike most times, I did not take a moment to capture those inglorious one-liners that I love to rope and

hog-tie.

*I hope I have not driven any of you away already. If you are still with me jump in the cart and see if you can stand a bumpy ride.*

My daughter-in-law was the host for my church's Veterans Day event. She is a vet herself, having served in Afghanistan. She and my son were there in '04 while my wife and I spent extra time worrying. She included an MIA (Missing in Action) display at the front of the church. Each piece in the display has meaning. It includes a table with one chair—a remembrance chair. It symbolizes the frailty of one versus his/her oppressors. The table is covered with a white cloth—the purity of intent when responding to a call to arms. There is a red rose—the blood of sacrifice. A yellow ribbon lies on the table, a call for an accounting of the missing. There is a single plate. A slice of lemon is placed on it to indicate the taste of a bitter fate. There is salt on that plate too, the sign of a family's tears. An inverted glass stands beside the plate—he who is missing cannot join in the family toast. A single candle sits in the middle of the table. It represents the light of hope that resides in the hearts of those waiting...



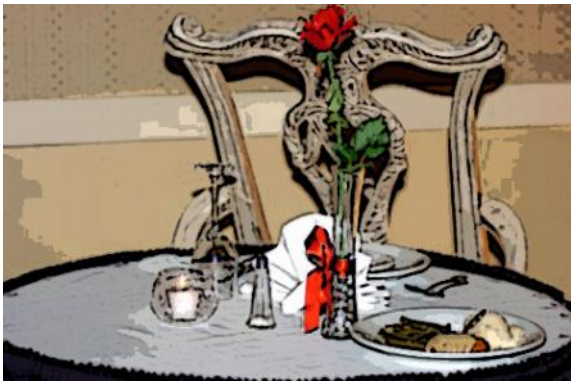
Why do I mention this sort of thing here and now? It is a holiday season, a season of giving and sharing—a season of children laughing and anticipating a jolly red elf. It is all of that and I cherish it with all my being. I am blessed. In spite of all the serious things that have happened to my family at this time of year, I still laugh and enjoy the moments we share. The joy does not prevent me from thinking

*(Continued on page 13)*



(Continued from page 12) **Mullins**

of those who have less than I have—or have greater obstacles to overcome. Quite the contrary, I may be more obligated to keep them in my heart now than any other time of year. I cannot pretend to feel what people who have the reality of that empty table and tilted chair in their lives do. They have an inexplicable black hole which cannot be filled—a living nightmare beyond my overheated imagination. I dare not compare anyone or anything to the anguish they feel, unspoken or not, as they gather around a Thanksgiving table or a Christmas tree. Most have things that bring them some joy at this time of year—yet there is that nagging specter of “what if” lingering somewhere in the backs of their minds. I do want to remind them that a few have a modicum of understanding as we pass some of those days and approach even more.



Many historians consider the beginning of modern warfare to be World War One. Using that yardstick, America has approximately 91,500 warriors who never returned home from foreign lands, including 124 from the Cold War era. Considering the normal life expectancy, more than 88,000 can never expect to fill those chairs. Many who waited by lit candles are gone as well. All that remain are the stories.

The people yet waiting stare at the flickering flame of hope. I offer a Christmas prayer for the greatest gift that could ever be delivered to them now. I think of a host of others who need a prayer as the season grows closer and the Christmas sales scream at me from the speakers in my television. Is it easier remembering those who were killed in action fighting for our country? It may be, if

knowing their fate is solace. Their chairs are still empty.



What about celebrating with the maimed? When their loved ones hold them close do they forget that part of them is missing? I know they are thankful they are there, but is there a tear behind the smile? What about those who have *serious* issues with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) or TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury)? They may be fine during a day or celebration. Or they may not be—and totally destroy the day for those near them. Is that better or worse than an empty chair?

Then there are those who are serving and are perfectly healthy...at the moment. They are gone and the chair is empty, but the candle is lit. People are waiting, not knowing, wondering. Their time may be shorter, their questions may get answered someday, but for a time many of the emotions can be just as intense, just as bothersome. They will not be as destructive and as long-term if they are blessed by the safe return of those for whom they wait. For a time, they will share some very similar anguish and know what the families of the MIAs feel.

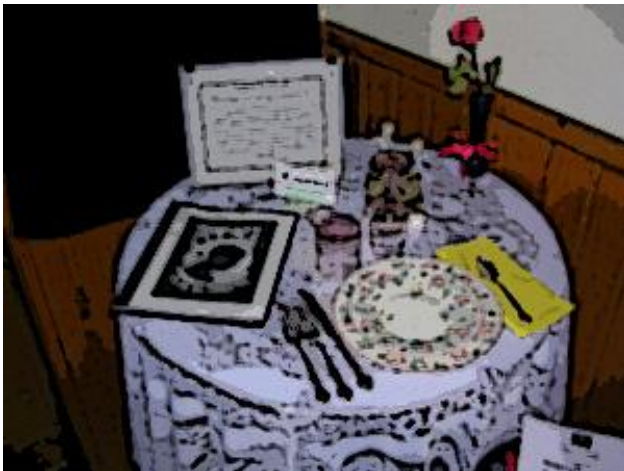
I offer a prayer for all of them. The faith, the commitment, the service they offer, each and every one, is a gift to us, wrapped in Red, White, and Blue. It is under the wings of an eagle, at the top of the highest mountain, and under our feet every waking moment as well as every night while we

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13) **Mullins**

sleep. I thank them for what they did, do, and will do. There is a chair at my table for them as well. If it not visible in the room the image is in my mind. But there is another level as well.

Life is complex. Many more people, people who are part of MWSA, know the feeling of emptiness as well. People involved in what we do as an organization are directly involved in protecting the country themselves or have family serving. We have reservists who may be activated or away on weekends that sometimes fall during a holiday celebration. We have active pilots who fly Americans to important destinations, which take them away from their own families. We have writers who are working hard to spread the story of our heroes to a public which is ignorant of all that was done for it. That takes them away. We have police



and fireman, doctors, lawyers—any number of public servants who can be called away at a moment's notice. Yes, they chose a profession and make a living at it perhaps, but they were called to do it in their hearts and souls. When they are doing it, their families have an empty chair. There is a sacrifice. Granted, I do not compare that to the anguish of the MIA or the KIA or the WIA. Please don't misunderstand. I do not minimize that debilitating kind of pain and sacrifice, nor do I elevate the kind of giving which emanates from doing something that one loves. But those who are left behind do have a greater understanding, a greater empathy for the serious loss of the former

pain-filled souls at this time of year than most. They too sit in a room with someone missing in their lives. It is temporary unless some unforeseen tragedy strikes, but the odds are greater depending on the public service they perform. I recall those who responded to a fateful call on September eleventh.

The public servants I mention here I think of as members of the DTJ (Doing Their Jobs) list and it is much different. The candle burns brighter and the celebration is only postponed. The calendar day may pass but the joy is still there. It is merely delayed. We have a better understanding of those about whom I so sadly think during these holidays. They have no answers. The flame of hope flickers ever more weakly as the years pass. It is not such a long reach for us to comprehend the agony that fills that chair or understand the salt in that plate. I offer them the idea that they are not alone and hope that knowledge can help them find a little joy. Their children and grandchildren are the primary source of the greatest pleasure life gives. Outside of that circle, on a distant horizon the families of the DTJers share a distant kinship.

We cannot forget the people who have to work as we play either. They are not as fortunate as we quite often. When we sit down to eat many of them have no choice except work at whatever jobs they can find. Their homes have an empty chair too.

As we wrap our gifts and decorate for Christmas, we will remember Pearl Harbor too—a somber day of recollection which is part of our rollercoaster ride during this “life-compression” season. I am not sending my annual poem about that this year. I could not get this out of my mind.

My Christmas prayer is: “May all of our soldiers and public servants rest in God's hands. I ask that God's angels wrap their wings around them as well. Protect them wherever they are and give them the comfort that only He can provide. Breathe the spirit of joy into those who have less than we who are more fortunate as well. Amen.”

Moon



# Those Who Wait...

*It's mid-February, 1945.*

*I imagine her—sitting in a chair by the window.*

*The cold sun sinks behind the trees outside but she does not turn on the lights. The dark holds no comfort, but it does hide her icy tears. In the gloaming, pictures of her two oldest sons sit on top of the console radio a few feet away. She leans forward and twists one of the knobs. The tubes glow. Before the announcer can say much, she turns it off again. She covers her face and rocks back and forth in her seat. Life was never easy for her—but it had been fun. Now fun tastes wrong. So does love. So does hate, for that matter. They told her to keep her routine—but that doesn't seem right either. So she sits in that chair every day—waiting.*

The condolence letter from President Roosevelt made my uncle DG's death official—but not real. He didn't die in battle—he was run over by a truck somewhere far away with an unpronounceable name. They buried him where he died. There was a war to win before they could send him back to my grandmother.

Nanny's grief was still new, when her second son, my eighteen-year-old father, entered the war. All she knew was that he was with the Fifth Marine Division—and the Fifth Marines were engaged in a fierce fight with the Japanese on a little island known as Iwo Jima. Newspapers reported heavy losses—thousands killed—many more thousands wounded. With one child dead and another in harm's way, all Nanny could do was wait—and fret.

So it is again. Anxious families display blue star flags in their windows. They check computers for emails from children who are half-a-world away in towns with unpronounceable names. They program cell phones with ringtones—and leap to answer that special one or swallow back tears when an unfamiliar tune sounds.

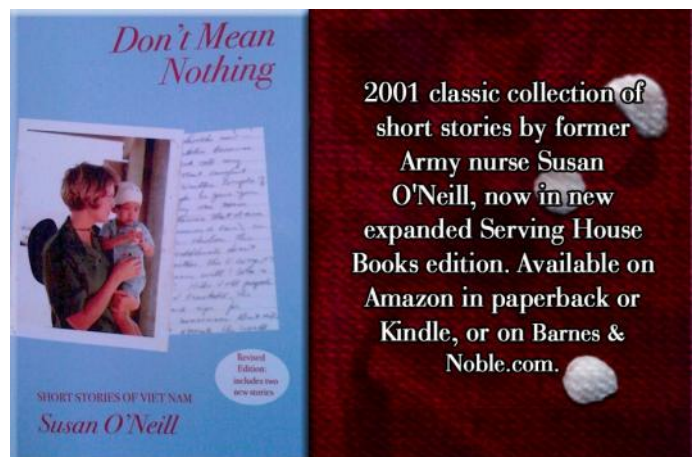
They remember cuddling apple-cheeked babies

with gummy smiles—or chasing wobbly bicycles on first-day-without-training-wheels rides. They touch prom night pictures with the tips of their fingers and tell stories about the day their children graduated from high school or college. But, sometimes, fear taints the best memories like snow obliterating tender shoots. Will their precious boys and girls be the same when they return? Will the darkness of war blunt their sparkle? Will they come home at all? Torn between devouring and ignoring the news, they wait and wait—and wait.

Not long ago, a man who I have never met messaged to say that his son had died in Iraq. For him, the wait was over. I stared at the IM, wondering what to say. Whatever the reason, however it happens—to lose a child is to lose a dream. I wanted to reach out to him, but sensed comfort wasn't appropriate. His agony was a bonfire that needed to burn itself out. He just didn't want to be alone. I waited—an anonymous node on the internet—thinking about my grandmother, sitting in her chair—waiting for her boys to come home.

Joyce Faulkner

NOTE: I usually print this piece in February—when I remember the battle that changed my life forever—before I was even born. I know I have brothers and sisters in sorrow out there and it seems appropriate to touch on this familial story once in a while. However, with Mike's beautiful column this month, I thought it might be an appropriate complement to his thoughts—to remember with reverence those who have left us and to reach out to those who grieve.



## Pat's Ponderings — Pat McGrath Avery

*Last month during Veterans Week in Branson, I met a Korean War veteran and wrote about the encounter in the Branson Veterans Task Force blog. As December brings the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Korean War to a close, I'd like to share that day with all the Dispatches readers.*

### Korean War Veteran Hears 'Thank You' Sixty Years Later

Veterans Week in Branson was in full swing. I'd just attended the Korean War Mini-reunion. Spending the week with three of the survivors of the Sunchon Tunnel Massacre and talking to other Korean War veterans kept my focus on the Korean War sixty years ago.

That morning I'd seen Billy Jo Harris, a POW who spent over three years at a camp on the Yalu River as a prisoner of the North Koreans. (I had written his story in a book called *They Came Home: Korean War POWs Tell Their Stories*). Joe Bryant and other members of the Harry S Truman Korean War Veterans chapter had presented a program that brought to mind Korea then and now—the success of South Korea today and the tensions that still exist with North Korea. My husband, Everett, and I stopped at McDonald's to grab a quick bite before our next scheduled event. I walked in and spied 'Korean War' blazoned across the front of a gentleman's hat. I stopped to say hello.

"Yes, I'm a Korean War veteran," he told me. "I was at the mini-reunion this morning."

"I was there, too," I replied. "It was a big crowd..."

"You know, I almost stood up and told everyone about a recent experience I had."

"Okay, so tell me now," I instantly liked this guy.

"It happened right here in town," he said. "I was at an ice cream place up near the Jim Stafford Theatre. I sat down on a bench to eat my ice cream cone. I was looking around, watching traffic, and

didn't pay any attention to the person who sat down beside me. I'm not sure who spoke first, but when I looked at her, I noticed she was young and she was Oriental. She noticed my hat and asked about it. I told her I fought in the war."

He paused a minute. The way he told the story made me realize the impact it had on him. "She thanked me." Emotion crossed his face. "She said that the Americans and Allied soldiers made her life what it is today. She told me the South Korea she grew up in was possible because of what we did."

"Wow," It was the first word that came to my mind.

"She said she's a college student here. Her life is good." The gentleman stopped and thought.

"Sir, what's your name?" I asked.

"Warren. Warren Amundsen," he replied. "It's the Forgotten War, you know. It was sixty years ago."

"I know, but maybe not. It's remembered by the South Koreans. They've obviously raised their children and grandchildren to remember."

"Yeah. I couldn't believe that sixty years later I'd be sitting on a bench and listening to a young Korean girl say 'Thank You.' It's the kind of thing that gives you hope."

I smiled at him with thoughts racing through my head. I wished I'd heard his story before the mini-reunion, or that he would have shared it. "Warren, you know what. Other Korean veterans need to hear that 'Thank You.' I'll write about it and share it."

He just smiled.





# Introducing MWSA member Robert Beeman

A member of Species **Homo Sapiens**, Genus **WASP-MOFUB**: *White Anglo Saxon Protestant Male — Old Fat Ugly and Badtempered*, Dr. Beeman holds advanced degrees in American Studies and History of Technology, and a tractor-trailer license certified for HAZMAT, nuclear warheads, live ammunition, and dead irradiated monkeys. He's logged a quarter-million miles on motorcycles and flies as a private pilot about whose competency there are opinions....

He takes himself seriously in only one respect: he's an American and proud of it. Otherwise, he looks at his life and his desires with tongue firmly in cheek.

He lives on eighty acres behind a half-mile driveway with a herd of deer, six motorcycles, the occasional bear, three tuxedos one of which almost still fits, an English car that is British revenge for the Battle of Trenton from the people who gave us Stonehenge, a 1500-volume library, six computers occasionally networked, a depressingly ordinary wine cellar and Ernie the Rabbit who lives under the deck and has thus far eluded the mated pair of redtail hawks that works his valley.

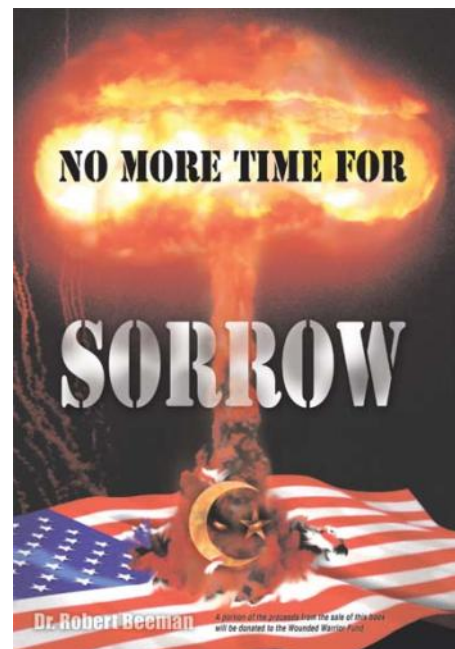
He cuts firewood, paddles a canoe, vacuums rugs, builds buildings, reads The Bible, attends concerts (Mozart, The Stones), wages a losing battle with his reading backlog, writes technical articles that bore even him, programs computers, does laundry and takes from the grill a meatlike substance that guests occasionally eat. He believes all learning is learning and all data are data.

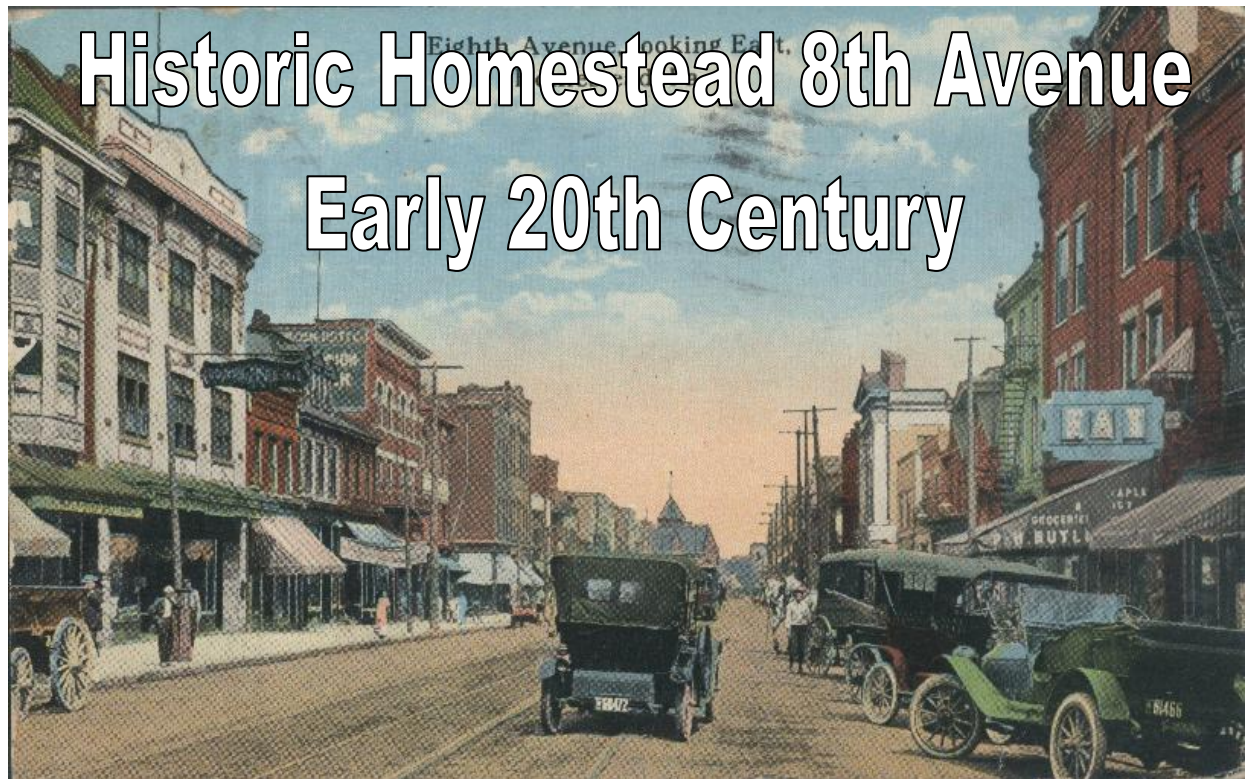
Widowed due to cancer five years ago after thirty wonderful years of marriage, his current search for a friend, a companion, a partner in adventure, and most assuredly an eager, ardent lover has so far produced offers of marriage from one hundred eighty-two 32-year-old ladies from the Georgian Republic, Caracas, Venezuela, eastern Zimbabwe, and the Chechen Republic. In addition, there has been made available to him at a limited time only for ninety-nine ninety-five a simple

home-surgical procedure to enlarge his penis [scalpel and disinfectant included in the kit], and, for four hundred dollars, a degree in neurosurgery from the University of Nairobi.

While not currently under indictment, he admits to being sought by postal authorities for questioning in connection with a scheme to sell off the residents of Lompoc, California, as mail-order experimental monkeys.

Long ago when dinosaurs roamed the earth, Dr. Beeman served as an officer, United States Air Force. Today when his country is at war, he finds himself too old to fight and too slow to run away. This book is all he can do, and he hopes his reader will find it in himself to do more.







## The Tin Front Café Homestead, PA

During the Pittsburgh Conference in October, MWSA poets gathered at the *Tin Front Café* in Homestead, PA. It was a special event where members of the group shared their work and their ideas about their work. Those who attended are still talking about the connections that they made that day.

What they might not have realized is that the place itself is special and historic too. Up until the 1980s, Homestead, PA, was the home of one of the largest steel mills in the world. It lined the Monongahela River and the workers lived in the neighborhoods dotting the steep hills rising from the banks. Separating the homes on the hills and the mills on the river was the town's commercial area centered on Eighth Avenue—now dwindled to small businesses struggling to survive.

In the past, Eighth Avenue bustled with life, business, and creativity. In the 1770s, people trudged along what was then a highway heading west. The building that now houses the *Tin Front Café* was a carriage house in the early 1800s. The patio marks where the horse-drawn wagons turned around in the back of the establishment. By 1880, Homestead was chartered as a town that featured a railroad, glass factory, and iron mill. In 1883, Andrew Carnegie purchased the iron mill. In 1893, the road witnessed the infamous Homestead Steel Strike. In 1898, the Carnegie Library of opened three blocks from Eight Avenue.

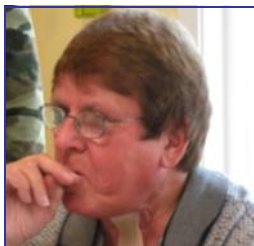
Supported by the enormous power of the steel mill that employed most of the inhabitants, the community thrived. In the early part of the 20th century, African-American baseball players formed the

Homestead Grays. In 1929, they joined the American Negro Baseball league—eventually disbanding in 1950. During World War II, the mills almost doubled in size so as to create steel for the war effort. In 1956, a B25, now known as “The Ghost Bomber,” crashed into the river and disappeared. In the 60s, boat-sized cars floated up and down Eighth Avenue, stopping at Isaly's for chipped ham and ice cream. Throughout the 70s, life continued as it always had with the fortunes of the town rising and falling with the ups and downs of the steel industry.

Then, in 1984, US Steel's Homestead Works was closed permanently and then demolished. The loss impacted the businesses on Eighth Avenue. When a huge shopping mall called “The Waterfront” was built on the site of the mill along the river, many of the shops on Eighth Avenue had to close their doors. Many beautiful old buildings were boarded up and left to be inhabited by ghosts.

In recent years, South African Architect David Lewis and other investors began refurbishing the historic buildings along Eighth Avenue. In particular, he noticed the tin front of one of the empty establishments and decided to purchase it.

There are many ghosts on Eighth Avenue where MWSA poets gathered in October 2010. They have now left their special imprint on the place...remembering the ways that small towns like Homestead traditionally supported the goals of the United States—by sending their sons when asked and by working to provide their country with the resources it needs.



*Jim Greenwald*



*Joyce Gilmour*



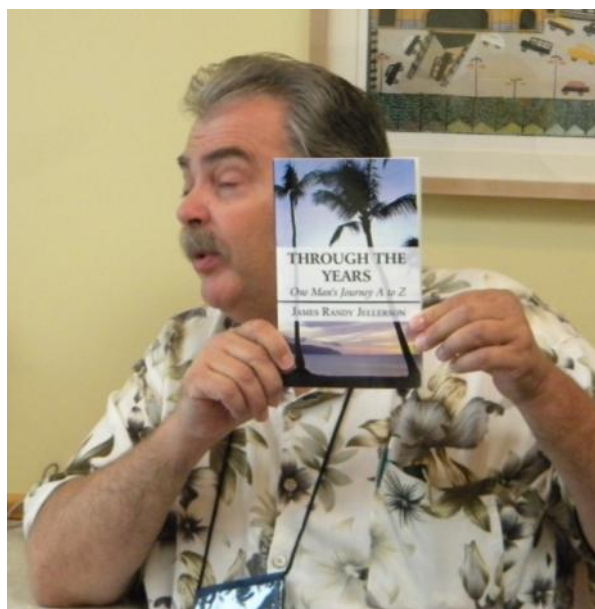
*Marlyce Stockinger*



*MWSA VP & Poet, Mike Mullins, insert l-r: Members of Poetry Corner*



*Poet Nancy Arbuthnot*



*Poet and Songwriter, James Jellerson*





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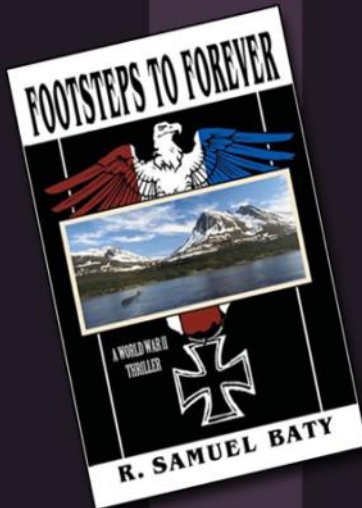




*The Shirley Douglas Show — PCTV21.org*  
*L-R: MWSA members Lynn Salsi, Carmen Stenholm, Joyce Faulkner, Franque Coleman, & Shirley Douglas*

# FOOTSTEPS TO FOREVER

by R. Samuel Baty  
 A World War II Historical Thriller



*Footsteps to Forever* is a riveting World War II historical thriller. Like Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and Wouk's *The Winds of War*, *Footsteps* is a story filled with suspense, romance, and danger. It is 1941, and the devastating attack at Pearl Harbor thrusts the United States into the war. Two uniquely qualified American lieutenants, a young man and beautiful nurse, are sent by President Roosevelt to Norway. Their mission is to rescue a renowned atomic physicist from behind German lines. Chased by the enemy, hampered by the physicist's deteriorating health, impacted by a blossoming romance, and faced with harsh winter conditions, the two young Americans and their allies struggle to avoid disaster. An epic battle occurs, and survivors – enemies as well as friends – are destined to meet again, some shockingly, as the explosive action of *Footsteps* expands to include the failed raid at Dieppe, the Russian Front, the Normandy D-Day invasion, and ferocious air battles in the Pacific

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## Word 2007 and Up

### Basics

Some authors use their computers like a fancy typewriter. For example, how many of you indent your paragraphs by hitting the space bar five times? How many create tables or lists using spaces? Do you center titles this way too? How about outlines?

You might say, “I’ve done it this way for years, why should I change?” Well, there are several reasons for taking the time to learn how to use your word processing programs better.

- Your document is probably difficult for others to edit and format. Publishers pay to have someone rework manuscripts for even the simplest-looking layouts. This adds time and cost to your project.
- Word processors were designed to minimize tedious procedures and to allow just about anyone to create professional looking documents. You are working harder than is necessary.
- If you decide to change your font or the size of your font—or if you want to reformat a table or an outline, you could be looking at hours of rework.
- Copy/Paste functions from one document to another can result in a chaotic mess in the second file.

Here’s how to achieve the same things using the power of your word processing program.

#### Indent:

- Default tabs are set at one-half inch. To indent, simply hit the “Tab” key on your keyboard. Each time you hit “Tab,” you will advance a

half inch across the page. You can also go to “Home” and on the “Paragraph” segment of your menu bar at the top of the page, you can increase or decrease the indent by one-half inch by highlighting pertinent text and clicking on these icons.



- To set indents, go to “Page Layout.” On the top menu, look for the following box. Under the word “Indent,” you can set the left or right indents by clicking on the up or down arrows.



#### Justify:

To justify text, there are four icons under “Home” on the “Paragraph” box. They include:

- Left Justify — highlight the text to be justified and click on this icon:



- Center— highlight the text to be centered and click on this icon:



- Right Justify — highlight the text to be right justified and click on this icon:



- Full Justify — highlight the text to be full justified and click on this icon:



# Obediently Yours, Orson Welles by Ulman Bray

## Reviewed by Bob Ruehrdanz

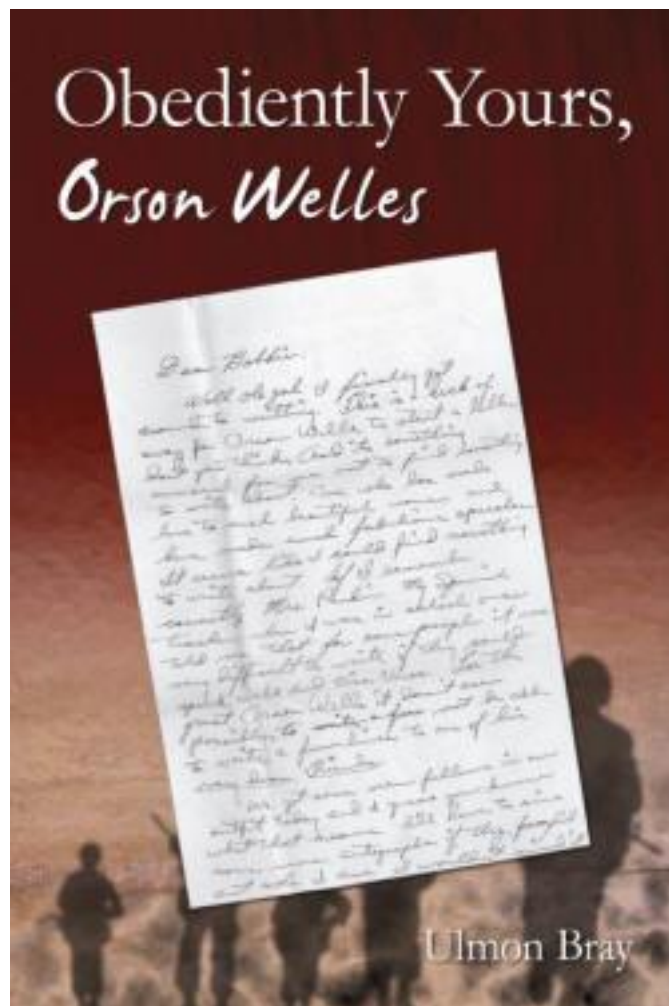
This is a fine story of a young man's struggle with of the Great Depression in the thirties and then the consequences of his enlistment in the Marines in time for the early fighting on several South Pacific Islands. The author, Ulmon Bray, describes his brother, Buel, and his adventures with a mix of fact from Marine records, and his letters to Bobbie, that described his inner most feelings about war, love, and despair.

The author, Ulmon, received almost all of the fifty-seven letters Buel wrote to Bobbie and was able to resurrect his brother's experiences during the war. Reading this book takes the reader through the

same battles Buel fought and his ability to follow censorship rules that made it all but impossible to tell Bobbie what he was experiencing. Friends and family members gave their accounts to this wonderful story of love and the ugly costs of war.



**Author of the Month for December**  
**Ulmon Bray**



*To purchase a hard copy of Dispatches or to download an iPad version for free, go to [Magcloud.com](http://Magcloud.com) and search on "Military Writers Society of America" or "MWSA." Pricing varies by month based on number of pages. MWSA receives \$2 of the proceeds.*



# CONNECTIONS

## Joyce Gilmour, MWSA Book Reviewer & Editor

Over the last ten years or so, I have become more cognizant of how I think God “connects the dots” between people, and the way that He goes about it still amazes me. Seeing the impact that people have in my life, I want to share a DIVINE CONNECTION that was made at the Pittsburgh MWSA Conference. The funny thing is that this connection was made because of a frustration of one of the participants. Really, you say? Well, having served on the board for Marine Parents United for six years, and having planned many conferences, I know that “glitches” can happen and thus my “meeting” Navy Chaplain Father Ron Moses Camarda. He actually had a concern for someone else at that moment. Go figure—this is the essence of this man—reaching out to and for others. At this point in time, I had no idea who this man was—none at all.

Father Ron was feeling a bit of frustration due to a scheduling glitch and was trying to share his concerns—I can remember reaching out and touching his arm and saying “I get it. I get your frustration.” At that point, we left the room together and were standing out by the elevator, and then because of all of the commotion and the dinging of the elevators, we moved over a ways, and I think we talked for about half an hour. That time spent together was nothing less than a DIVINE CONNECTION. Here was a man who ended up in the Battle for Fallujah, being recalled into the chaplain service of the USMC. He shares about his experiences in his book *Tear in the Desert*.

If you are not familiar with Father Ron’s book *Tear in the Desert*, please visit [www.tearinthedesert.com](http://www.tearinthedesert.com) today. It is a MWSA Silver Medal Award Winner (please check out the review on the MWSA website). Father Camarda has also done readings from his book for You Tube. I can’t put into words the impact that this man had on me that day: God is using him to bless our military families. The subtitle of

the book is “A Journey into the Heart of the Iraq War.” Here is a quote from the jacket of the book: “I must pilot the ship of my soul with precision and great trust in God. Mother Theresa of Calcutta taught me to celebrate every Mass as if it were my first Mass, my only Mass, and my last Mass. It serves me well with the real possibility of death always a few yards away.” – Father Ron

I cannot do justice with my words in this column. There is no way that I can share the impact of my two conversations and the interview with Father Ron that happened at the conference. I just can’t. He shared with me some of his experiences as I stood with tears in my eyes. This man experienced the death of many of our service members, but more than that, he experienced seeing souls enter eternity. This man shares his humanity, his doubts, his fears—his tears.

Let me quote from Father Ron’s introduction of *Tear in the Desert*:

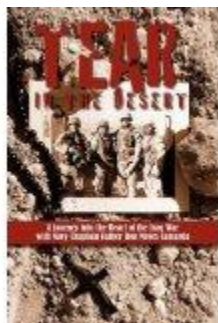
“Jesus used stories. This is a book of stories. Part of the book is my story, but it is also the story of how millions of people had their lives changed forever.

“This story is everyone’s story. All of us are born from a man and a woman. All of us are in need of abundant love and joy and sorrow. We need food and shelter and peace. O yes, we need peace. And this may sound even more incredible. We all need war.

“This is a story about journeying into war and coming home to realize that we must be rescued from the war within. The story begins in the desert amidst the mystery and marvel of a single solitary tear. The tear has been tearing me apart and drowning me. The tear will also make me whole and call me to an authentic life.

“A very weak and unworthy person

(Continued on page 26)



(Continued from page 25) *Gilmour*

tells this story. I tell it with feelings of love and fear, but mostly of love. I am continually transformed and transfigured by this story. I am filled with gratitude beyond all telling for the tear that *is* this story.

*"Tear in the Desert"* is my journey. I share it with all of my idiosyncrasies and biases. I share it with love. I pray and hope you will find comfort in it and not terror or despair. It is probably a story told since the beginning of the human race, whenever that was. I hope we all grow and benefit from tears shared by those who died for a worthy cause, one they believed to be closer to the divine, the spirit of love.

"God bless you and thank you for taking this journey. I dedicate this story to your heart and your capacity to love. For without love, there would be no tear."

When I had my second conversation with Father Ron at the conference, I was trying to share with him about my feelings of how God connects people. I couldn't find the right words—and it was he who said, "It was a divine connection." And he was right. Father Ron's sharing of his journey and his book has impacted my life. For that, I want to publicly thank him. I truly hope that each of you will invest the time that it takes to go to his website and investigate *Tear in the Desert*. Take the time to CONNECT with Father Ron Moses Camarda. Your heart and soul will be glad you did.

Thank you, Father Ron, for your ministry.  
Sincerely,  
Joyce



*Fr. Ron Moses Camarda*

## IN THE RANKS...

NOW see here lieutenant, when the colonel gives you orders, don't pass them on by saying "A little bird told me."

Oops...

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# December Notes By jim greenwald



Tis the season as they say so let me be first to wish everyone 'niibaa anami egiizhigad aabita biboo.' What better way to celebrate the season than with a copy of Twisted Tongues by well, Me!

**Volunteers Needed!** As follows, if you are willing to volunteer please email me.

- Auctioneer
- One Reviewer to serve as a Judge for the Awards process,
- Cashier
- Ten Members to serve as Judges for the Awards. Judges cannot be Officer/Board Members or Committee Chairpersons. I need the volunteers soon, to enable me to plan ahead.

Recently in emails and in Dispatches I mentioned that award winners that did not attend the conference needed to send a check (\$5.00) to cover postage for their certificate, medal and book seals. I went ahead and mailed them out and I am still waiting for a few of you to mail your checks, please do so promptly. Some individuals because of the mailing received stickers and they had already picked them up at the conference, the list that was kept was lost so we rely on your honesty, you can keep the extra stickers if you wish to pay for them, they are (.15 each) or you may return them.

## AOM/BOM Recognition and Annual Awards (the process)

I would also like to take some time and explain the methodology behind how these are selected as a number of members seem to either not know or misunderstand how the process works.

AOM & BOM recognitions are selected each month from the books reviewed that month. The two books selected must meet a minimum total score as well as a minimum technical score, all books meeting those minimums are considered and the two with the highest scores are recognized. The scores used are provided solely by the reviewers no

other input is used or considered. They are then printed in the following months Dispatches.

As to Award Selection for Medals! The process is as follows:

- Officers cannot and will not serve as judges.
- If a judge has submitted a book for evaluation, he/she may not judge books in the same genre and category.
- If a reviewer has submitted a book for evaluation, he/she may not review a book in the same genre and category.
- A reviewer scores each submitted book.
- At the end of the review cycle, those books that do not meet the minimum overall scores and the minimum technical scores are removed from consideration.
- The remaining books are sorted by genre and category.
- The books with the top four total scores in each genre are nominated for the annual awards.
- Nominees will be notified and asked to send copies of their nominated books to two separate judges who also score the books. (The nominees will only know that they are sending a package addressed to MWSA. They will not know who their judge is.)
- Each judge will work from a copy of the book they are scoring. They will not have access to the reviewer's score of the book, nor will the two judges have contact with each other or the reviewer.
- The judges' scores are averaged and added to the reviewer's score. The final total score is then ranked with other books in that genre to determine the winners in order (Gold, Silver, Bronze & Honorable Mention).

If anyone has a question please feel free to email

*(Continued on page 28)*

(Continued from page 27) **greenwald**

me concerning the process.

We feel that this adjustment to our system advances our efforts to judge consistently because every reviewer/judge will be required to answer the exact same questions about each book and the answers generate the scores automatically.

Awards are decided by three people who will work independently of each other and from the officers/board members. The core purpose of this adjustment is to make sure that judging is fair, standardized, and consistent.

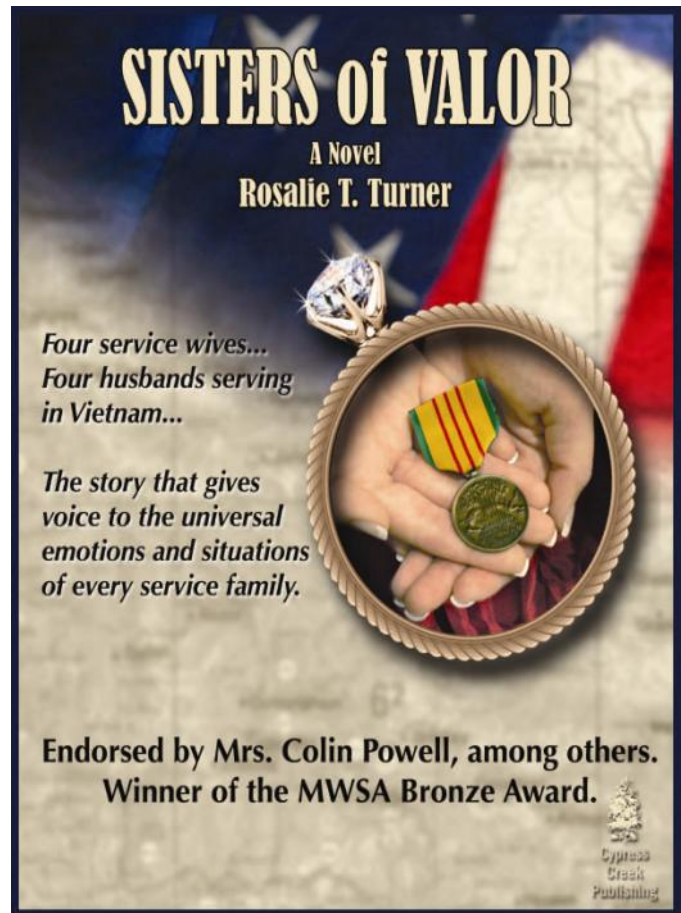
#### Announcement:

The end of this year's award review period is July 15<sup>th</sup>. Nominees will be notified to send copies of their books to judges. An announcement of the nominees will be made on Veterans Radio Network and in Dispatches.

**In past, award winners were announced as soon as they were selected. However, we have decided to add a little Oscar thrill and mystery to the mix by not doing so until the evening of the banquet! If you are nominated, you won't know which medal you will receive until the Awards Ceremony when your name is called.**

If you do not attend the conference you will need to email the Lead Reviewer a request that he/she send your medal, certificate and seals to you, and send \$5.00 to cover postage fees to: MWSA, P.O. Box 264, Bridgeville, PA 15017. Your package will be mailed upon receipt of your payment.

If you paid for an anthology and wish it to be mailed please forward a check for \$7.00 to cover postage. If you wish to order a copy or extras contact me well in advance and I will provide you with postage costs if you want more than one copy.



*To purchase a hard copy of Dispatches or to download an iPad version for free, go to [Magcloud.com](http://Magcloud.com) and search on "Military Writers Society of America" or "MWSA." Pricing varies by month based on number of pages. MWSA receives \$2 of the proceeds.*

**William E. Mayer word for December is "Deceit"**

**MWSA 2011 Conference &  
Awards Conference  
September 29–October 2, 2011**







## **toggle**

[jim greenwald]

switch on switch off, life – death a dash of in between  
safety and warmth traded for cold and fear ending in cold  
as a child I did not know of life or death, the struggle to survive  
did not know the difference of love ~ no love, full hearts, empty hearts  
I have floated on top of the water of love sunk to the sand filled with life's detritus  
lasting this long through reconstruction  
I have reached the end and gone on, while clinging to the past as I grasp the future,  
collapsing in the unknown...toggle off

## **In The Woods**

[Bob Flourney]

God was fooling around with me today,  
with a smile on his lips as he lingered just out of sight  
in the forest shadows, in the leaves, the fragrance of honeysuckle,  
surprising me with a steaming heap of deer scat,  
just out of reach, shy and demure,  
catch me if you can, sprites and fairies,  
sunbeams changing shape, mostly something in my heart,  
twinkling bird song, and the quick shadow of a barely glimpsed owl,  
fast and away, into the deep woods, He was done with me, for now.

## Shore Life

*La Jolla, California, 1963*

[Nancy Arbuthnot]

Sailors at the San Diego Zoo  
bend over the alligator pit, eyes dark  
with the jungle of their last port.  
Mangoes drop ripe from trees  
and night-moving monkeys  
rustle the leaves over their beds.  
Blue tattoos ripple their arms.

## Navy Wives

[Nancy Arbuthnot]

Sometimes now when I ask about Navy life, my mother sighs.  
*I thought you were a tumor, your brother not even four  
months old. . . .* Dad was around for daughters three through six, though gone again  
for number seven. At his whistle we'd run to formation, count off wherever we went  
as he handed out rations of peanut butter sandwiches. *Goddammit, where's what's  
her name?* Number four, third daughter, sobbing room to room in the empty house. The  
two-year-old,  
number six, we kept on a leash. Even with Dad home, life wasn't always  
a bed of roses. I'll get mad all over again if I think too much about those days!  
my mother confesses. Storming bathroom to bathroom (in the pink house we had  
six), Dad would roar, *Wiped out of TP again? What will I do with all you women?*  
*Why is the toilet seat never left up?*--food for the ears of Navy wives  
at bridge games hosted by my mother, husbands deployed, Navy slogans, jokes, stories  
filtering through my cracked-open door mornings I stayed home sick from school,  
voices lowered in imitation, *my wife always there. . . incredible, fantastic. . .*  
*caring for the children all by herself. . . waiting faithfully for my return,*  
the spurt-out laughter of Navy wives.



## Introducing MWSA Member Billy Templeton —Joyce Faulkner

Billy Templeton launched *Manila Bay Sunset* in Branson during the 2006 Veterans Week. He was growing frail at the time, but his eyes sparkled with the joy of being with friends and family to celebrate the miracle of his life. He'd finally put together all of his World War II memories in one place—the good ones and the bad—for his children, for the world and to please his beloved wife Lou.

In his book, he described what it felt like to be a radio operator on a B-17. He talked about leaving San Francisco in the fall of 1941 on a historic flight of twenty-six aircraft headed to some mysterious destination in the Pacific. He remembered his pride in the shiny new planes and the excitement of his first big adventure.

He remembered the strange food, the ever-changing landscapes and weather-patterns—and the friendly faces he met on that trip. Sometimes the crew, cooped up for hours in the noisy plane, talked about their families and their girls and baseball and the Army. Sometimes, they stared out the windows and dreamed about what might be on the other side of the dusky blue horizon.

On November 3, 1941, they reached their destination—Clark Field in the Philippines. On December 8, a few hours after World War II began, Japanese bombers destroyed all those beautiful planes on the ground. In a few horrific minutes, Billy's exotic new paradise became a flaming nightmare. By Christmas, 1941, Billy was beginning to know hunger as he retreated with MacArthur's Army into the Bataan Peninsula. He worked with the Signal Corps until the Japanese invaders captured him in April 1942. They herded him together with other American and Philippine defenders on the infamous Bataan Death March. He survived Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan. With a host of skinny POWs, he sweltered and then shivered in the hold of the *Totori Maru*, a Japanese "Hell" ship that took him from tropical Luzon to frosty Korea.

Far away from home and surrounded by enemies, he worked three years as a slave laborer in Muk-

den, Manchuria. Then, with freedom fresh in his nostrils, the ship carrying him home after liberation hit a mine. It was an incredible, amazing, terrifying story of loss and courage, enmity and friendship, horror and hope.

However, in 2006, Billy laughed merrily when Branson entertainer Sharon Robinson surprised him with a tender rendition of *I Don't Want to Set The World on Fire*, a special song that he'd only heard once before—back in the Bataan jungle before he'd seen beheadings and beatings. He smiled broadly when young Soldiers and Marines crowded around to shake his hand, thank him for his sacrifices and pose for a picture with him. At a banquet for POWs, he trembled and wiped away tears as he remembered buddies killed when bombs turned the parked B-17s into burning debris.

On Veterans' Day, he grinned with delight as he climbed into a World War II jeep for the parade, explaining that he'd never seen a jeep in World War II. He'd been a prisoner long before they appeared on the battlefields. He waved to the cheering crowd, bundled up against the chilly Missouri wind, as the convoy of Ducks and trucks and marching bands wound through Branson.

I always remember him that way—cheeks ruddy, enjoying the ride, the love of his countrymen—and freedom.

He'd like that.



*Billy Templeton passed away on December 22, 2009.*

## The Founder's Thoughts — Bill McDonald

It is already Christmas time and that means the New Year is not far off. It is normally a good time to look forward and plan for the months ahead of us. I could not be more pleased with how the MWSA has grown and how my dream for a society of military writers has taken form. The MWSA is recognized around the world as a class organization. Much of that success goes to the present leadership we have. The officers and the board and the active membership have made us a strong community of like-minded souls. It is my honor to have 'dreamed' this society into existence.

Since it is the holiday season I thought I would share a holiday story from my own life. The following is from my first book *A Spiritual Warrior's Journey*. I hope it inspires you.

### The Prodigal Son (A Christmas story)

Several years ago my son, Josh, who is a police officer, gave me a most wonderful gift. I had asked him to do a kind deed for the Christmas holidays; then, tell me about it, if he could, and that would be his gift to me. I really did not want anything that he could buy me. I wanted him to experience the gift that comes from giving of one's self. Let me tell you what happened one cold, wet December 25<sup>th</sup>.

My son had been patrolling in his squad car along U.S. Highway 101, just up from the Golden Gate Bridge. It was raining and fairly cold outside as he cruised along looking for any signs of trouble on this Christmas morning. He was not really that happy about working the holidays, but it went with the territory. He noticed a young man walking along the side of the freeway. Not only was it dangerous but also illegal.

He pulled over, put on his lights, and called the young man over to the car. When the man stood close to him, he could see they were about the same age. When he checked his identification and had the dispatcher run a check on him, he found out he was only 22 years old and was on parole. The report said that he had been out of prison for a

couple of months.

Upon questioning, the young man stated that he had no place

to go. He had been living along the freeway, sleeping under overpasses. He was all wet and very dirty. My son did not want to cite him or gave him a bad time, especially since it was Christmas morning. He took the guy a short distance off the freeway so that he might not be in as much danger of getting hit by passing cars.

He again looked at the report and noticed that the address listed was no more than two or three miles from where he had been sleeping on the freeway. The young man told him that it was his parent's house, but they had no idea where he was or what had happened to him for the last four years. He said he was afraid to go home and see them since he had been in so much trouble and had been in prison. He felt much shame and guilt about it. He would rather live on the streets alone than be rejected by his parents.

My son was not going to let the possibility of a reunion on Christmas Day slip away. So, he had the man sit in the back of the squad car, and off they drove. The address was in an upscale Mill Valley neighborhood where million-dollar homes were the norm. My son located the address of record and stopped in front of an expensive home. The nervous young man wanted to leave. My son left him in the back seat and went to knock on the door.

He was not sure what type of reception he might receive. He had dealt with cases where the parents had thrown out their son and did not want anything to do with him ever again. He also thought about the possibility that these people could get upset with him for attempting the reunion. If they called his sergeant, he could be written up for not following policy and procedures. He kept telling himself that it was, after all, Christmas Day. He had to at least attempt to drop off this young man here. He

(Continued on page 33)





(Continued from page 32) **McDonald**

could not bear thinking that this guy who was about his own age would be sleeping out in the rain on the most holy of holidays. He knocked on the front door and put his faith and the outcome in the hands of God.

It was about 7 a.m., and lights came on inside the house a few seconds after he knocked. The door latches clicked, and an older man stood there looking at my son in his police uniform. My son quickly got to the point of the visit. He told the man that he had found his son wandering along the highway and asked him if it was all right to leave him there.

The man's eyes grew wet as he yelled for his wife to come to the door. The man shook his head to affirm that it was okay to leave his son. The parents stood in the doorway, looking at the young man who was looking out from the back seat of the police car. Everyone was visibly shaken by the turn of events. They had been sad on this Christmas morning, as they had been for the past four years, not knowing if their son were alive or dead. They did not care about gifts or money; they missed their son. Now their prayer for the holidays was actually coming true.

My son walked back and opened the door to let out the young man. He walked slowly toward the house. My son watched from the curb as they joined together in a hug. He could see the love and joy as the three of them cried, then disappeared inside. He stood there wondering at how it had all turned out. He got back in his patrol car and sat there for a few minutes. He drove off knowing that he was going to have that gift of a good deed to tell his dad.

**MWSA member Lee Kelley says  
“Check out a new blog for Veterans: ‘Veterans Transition Headquarters’**

<http://veteranstransitionhq.wordpress.com/>

# Open Source

A ship is hijacked.  
Russia wants it back.  
A simple question.

"What if...?"

The answer will affect  
the balance of power  
in the Middle East  
and change the world...  
**FOREVER.**



**Open Source**  
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**Managing Editor of Vetrepreneur, Matthew Pavalek, encourages members to watch this video:**

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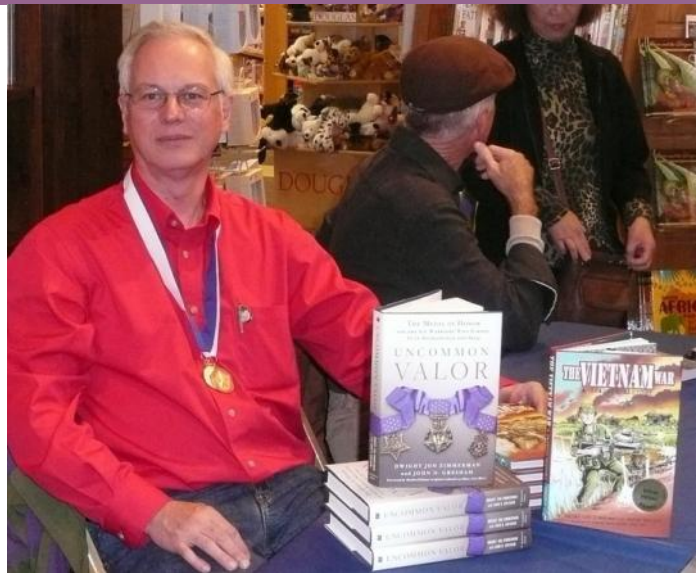


## December, 2010 by Dwight Zimmerman

This month I begin with a huge thank you to the dozens of members who participated in a wide variety of military and veterans-themed events in more than fifteen states across the country during the Veterans Day week. These events included lectures at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, honoring veterans at the Branson Veterans Week celebration in Branson, MO, celebrating the Marine Corps' birthday, parades, dedications, reunions, lectures at schools, fundraisers, radio and television interviews, newspaper articles, book signings, book festivals, and book giveaways to veterans. MWSA members attended events honored veterans and their contributions to our nation's freedom and helped raise awareness to important veterans' issues, particularly health care such as PTSD treatment. Again, many thanks.

Right now I'm in the middle of going over the copy edits of my manuscript, *SAGA OF THE SIOUX*, which is a young adult adaptation of Dee Brown's *BURY MY HEART AT WOUNDED KNEE*. (An experience that is both happy and annoying—happy because it means we're in the home stretch, and annoying because there are some damned weird queries and changes that I have to answer and fix.) This was a project two years in the making, with one of those years being the contract negotiations (and making me four months late). A variety of factors created that situation. The two biggest were an economy that tanked and the rise of ebooks.

Ebooks have created a revolution that, depending on how enthusiastic or alarmist the speaker, is comparable to Gutenberg's invention of movable type, the creation of the mass market paperback, or the coming of the print publishing apocalypse. As I learned throughout the contract negotiating process, publishers are taking ebooks *very* seriously. The upside contribution ebooks make for publishing is one I find both profound and fascinating—and applaud. It begins with the groundbreaking fact that more and more publishers now simultaneously release new titles in two formats—print and ebook. This is unprecedented.



Typically a publisher would publish a new title one of two ways: begin with a hardcover edition, followed a year later by a trade paperback edition, and then in the third year a mass-market paperback edition—or the publisher would go straight to a mass-market edition and simply keep reprinting it. There's only one reason publishers are doing this—they're getting more sales. And they're right.

In the past, subway commuters here in New York City would often have their faces buried in a hardcover or a paperback. Now I also see a lot of people with kindles and nooks reading away. With everyone so used to having computers of one type or another in their lives, this is a lateral move that has expanded the market, as I discovered for myself with *Uncommon Valor*, my first book to be available in both hardcover and ebook form.

Until an author gets a royalty statement from a publisher, the only way an author can get any sense of sales is by checking the ranking on Amazon or at Barnes & Noble's website. Amazon has roughly ten percent of the market, and it's growing, and sales ranking doesn't necessarily indicate number of copies sold. However, as imperfect as Amazon's ranking is, it's the only thing we have to go on until the royalty statement arrives. Of course, daily tracking of your book on Amazon is time consuming and frustrating. Fortunately

(Continued on page 35)



(Continued from page 34) **Zimmerman**

there's a website—a free service site—that does the heavy lifting for you. It's called NovelRank—Amazon Sales Rank Tracker ([www.novelrank.com](http://www.novelrank.com)). I want to thank MWSA member Donna McAleer who alerted me to this site. It's not perfect, but it is easy to use. After the home page comes up, you click on the "Track Your Book" icon and then you'll find yourself on a page that has two key word boxes. The top one is "Add your Book to Novelrank" and the bottom one is "Search the Books Already Tracked on NovelRank." This is where the weakness in the system exists. The site does not begin tracking your book until you enter it into their system. So, if your book has been in print for any length of time, all prior sales data is not available. This negatively impacts any book that's been on sale for more than a month. But, once your book's in the system, you're getting sales information on every available edition, print and ebook. To register your book you copy the book url on Amazon (this means you have to open a new window, go to your book in Amazon's electronic catalog, copy the url and then paste it into the box). Then you click on the "Track Book" icon and you're in business. From that point on, when you go to the site, you simply type in your name or the book's title in the Search box and you get the latest information regarding your book. If it exists in more than one edition, you have to click on each edition separately to obtain that edition's sales.

By moving your icon on the sales graph, you can get ranking by day and hour. You'll also get updates regarding how many sales were made during the month and other useful items.

You still won't know how many books were actually sold, but you can definitely track sales patterns—for instance, if there's a sudden spike, and you don't know why, you can then to a search to see if a new review was posted, or if there was some other news that might have prompted an increased sale.

I'm tracking the two different editions of *Uncommon Valor* and I'm finding that on average the Kindle edition is posting a higher sales ranking than

the hardcover edition. I won't be so rash as to believe I'm selling more electronic versions—at least not until I get my *printed* royalty statement, but I'm definitely seeing the contribution ebooks are making. As for the concerns that this will cause people to buy fewer print copies, the same concerns were voiced when paperbacks hit the market—the belief was that the cheap editions would eliminate altogether the hardcovers. Instead what publishers discovered that there were separate markets: those who bought hardcovers and those who bought paperbacks. To that, we can now add those who buy ebooks.

In closing, I'd like to wish a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to everyone at MWSA, your loved ones, and all of our service personnel—particularly those stationed overseas and far from their loved ones. May all of you have a great and bountiful 2011!



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