



Gettysburg Hill at the Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond VA



***Congratulations,
Betsy Beard
Recipient
2016
MWSA President's
Award***

DISPATCHES

MILITARY
WRITERS
SOCIETY OF
AMERICA



Rescuing History One Story at a Time

www.militarywriters.com

WINTER 2017

MWSA 2016 Gold Award Winners



Conference 2017 Information

How to Submit Your Book for An Award

DISPATCHES

MILITARY
WRITERS
SOCIETY OF
AMERICA

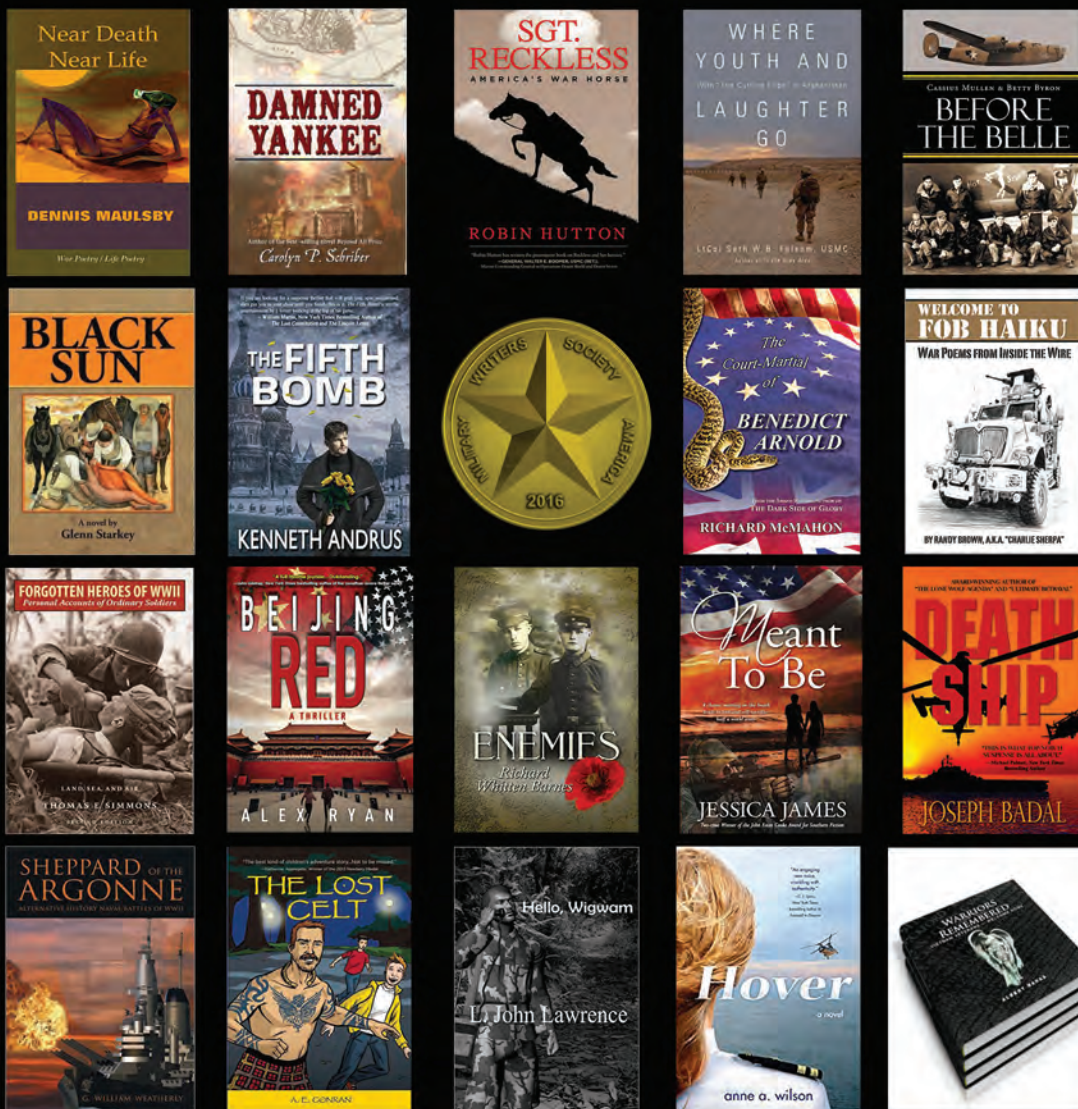
Rescuing History One Story at a Time

www.militarywriters.com

WINTER 2017



MWSA 2016 Gold Award Winners



Conference 2017 Information

How to Submit Your Book for An Award

Letter from the editor -Pat McGrath Avery

A new year and new opportunities await MWSA members. Plans are underway for an exciting fall conference in San Antonio. Be sure to put September 7-10 on your calendar.

The awards committee did a fabulous job in completing the 2015-2016 awards and completing the guidelines for 2017. MWSA will accept submissions from January 15 through June 15, so plan to get your book in early. The complete list of 2016 winners is posted in this issue. To better inform our membership, we have included several articles about the awards process. We hope this answers your questions.

Joyce Faulkner writes about the Confederate dead in the Battle of Gettysburg. In researching for her Gettysburg anthology submission, she visited Richmond and shares lots of photos with us. Tim Trudell takes us to the Ronald Reagan Minuteman Missile State Historic Site. Although the North Dakota facilities have been deactivated, one site is open for tours.

Joe Campolo shares a good Vietnam story and Chris Avery writes about his summer visit to a Civil War re-enactment in Pulaski County.

For those who participated in the Gettysburg Retreat and/or the Pulaski County History Crawl, we are busily working on the anthologies. Currently, we plan to finish the Gettysburg anthology by the end of January, and the Pulaski County book by the end of February. From the submissions we've reviewed, we anticipate two books you will definitely want to own.

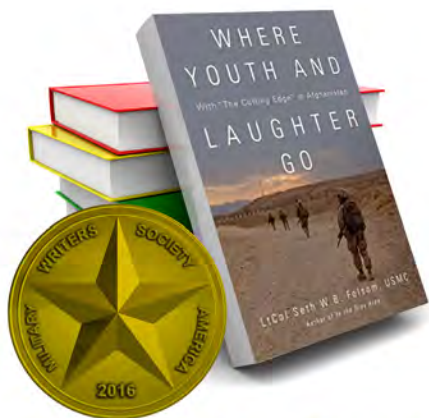
I hope you take time to peruse the list of award-winning books. We congratulate all the recipients and hope our members will continue to support each other's work.

Staff

Editor - Pat McGrath Avery
 Columnist - Dwight Jon Zimmerman
 Columnist - Bob Doerr
 Feature Writer - Christopher Avery
 Feature Writer - Joe Campolo, Jr.
 Feature Writer - Joyce Faulkner
 Feature Writer - Tim Trudell
 Layout and Design - Joyce Faulkner
 Photography - Pat McGrath Avery

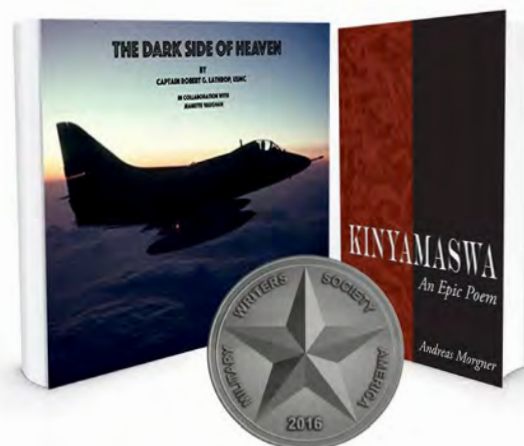
Contents

President's Message - Zimmerman 3
President's Award - 4-5
2016 Book Award Winners 6
Why Should I Submit My Book - Doerr 9
How To Submit a Book 10
Ethical Guidelines 13
Confederate Dead of Gettysburg - Faulkner 14
Old Settlers Day - Avery 20
Getting Most out of MWSA 24
A Well for Phu Cat - Campolo, Jr 26
2017 General Conference 28
Oscar Zero - Trudell 30
MWSA Awards Criteria 38



Gold Medal for Memoir

Poetry Silver Medal Winners



MWSA Leadership

Founder/Board Member - William McDonald

President - Dwight Jon Zimmerman

Vice President - Bob Doerr

Secretary - Joe Epley

Treasurer - Pat McGrath Avery

Board

Farrell Chiles

Mike Mullins

Valerie Ormond

Kathleen M. Rodgers

Committees

Programming

Bob Doerr - Chair

Pat Avery

Beth Underwood

Kathy Rodgers

Jack London

Don Helin

Joe Campolo, Jr.

Dale Throneberry

Mike Mullins

Review Process Audits

Betsy Beard - Chair

Joyce Faulkner

Carolyn Schriber

Bob Doerr

Sandra Linhart

Web Design Committee

Dwight Zimmerman

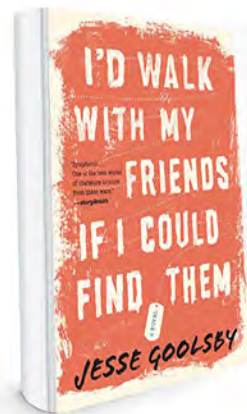
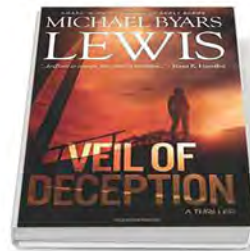
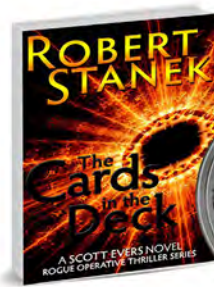
Joyce Faulkner

Daniel Murawsky

Membership

John Faulkner

Silver Medals in Mystery/Thriller



*Bronze Award for Literary Fiction
and
Bronze Award for Historical Fiction*

President's Message

Dwight Zimmerman

Happy 2017, everyone!

Let me begin by congratulating all of our 2016 MWSA Book Awards winners. All of us judges were once again impressed with the high quality of all the entries. You'll find a complete list of the winners later in this issue. I can't wait to see what entries we receive this year!

Also in this issue you'll find an update about our 2017 conference in San Antonio, Texas. Vice president Bob Doerr and his committee have done a great job getting things organized for the event. I encourage everyone to mark your calendar. Our conferences have always been a highlight and a great opportunity to meet old friends and make new ones.

Along with welcoming the new year, we're also welcoming a new organizational structure. To better serve our members and maintain our social media sites, at the last teleconference board meeting, we approved the hiring of Red Engine Press to manage day-to-day functions.

Red Engine Press is a high-quality small publisher and publishing services company run by past president Joyce Faulkner and treasurer Pat Avery. REP has been producing Dispatches for quite a while now, and we saw an opportunity to expand REP's duties. They will report to the board who continues to have ultimate responsibility. Given their long history of service to MWSA, I know the organization will be in good hands.

I know all of you are anxious to check out all that's in this issue, so I'll conclude by wishing all of you a prosperous and prolific 2017!



Awards for Romance



Literary Fiction Silver Awards



**2016 MILITARY WRITERS SOCIETY OF AMERICA
PRESIDENT’S AWARD
ELISABETH “BETSY” BEARD**

The MWSA President’s Award honors members for their outstanding service to the Military Writer’s Society of America. It is with great pride and pleasure that I present the 2016 MWSA President’s Award to Elisabeth “Betsy” Beard.

Betsy has been a member since 2011. She is an intelligent, charming lady whose insight and support is an inspiration to all who meet her. She served as the MWSA Anthology editor from 2012-2015, and as vice president from 2013-2015. If that wasn’t enough, she also made numerous, important contributions to our conferences. Most recently, Betsy was the chairwoman for the Awards Committee and designed online collaborative tools to administer the program. As Awards Director for the 2016 season, she logged author submissions, assigned books to reviewer/judges, kept track of the results, and determined winners at the end of the season. In addition, she personally worked with authors to get their books into the system and with the reviewers to make sure that they were properly trained to use the MWSA judging system. She personally read and scored over forty books.

Betsy Beard’s writing career began on October 14, 2004, immediately after notification that her only son, Specialist Bradley Scott Beard, had been killed in action in Ar Ramadi, Iraq. Finding some solace in pouring her heartache into a journal, she called it “hemorrhaging on paper.”

Shortly thereafter, she discovered Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), a national nonprofit Veterans Service Organization providing compassionate care for families of America’s fallen. She began contributing articles about survivorship to TAPS Magazine, the national quarterly magazine for survivors.

Betsy became the editor for TAPS Magazine in 2008. In 2010, she wrote the award-winning children’s book, *Klinger, A Story of Honor and Hope*. The book earned gold medals from Moonbeam Children’s Book Awards, Young Voices Foundation, and Military Writers Society of America (MWSA).

Betsy has written articles for newspapers, TAPS Magazine, *Living with Loss Magazine*, and Hospice Foundation of America’s 2008 *Living with Grief*, 2012 *Journeys with Grief*, and 2013 *Living with Grief*. In addition to writing, Betsy has presented workshops on bereavement for the Department of Veterans Affairs’ Regional and National Trainings and participated in the Casualty Notification training for the United States Army Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Operation Center.

Betsy retired from TAPS in 2016 and is currently working as a freelance editor, book designer, writer, and ghost-writer in association with Red Engine Press.

Dwight Jon Zimmerman

President, MWSA



2016 President's Award Recipient

Betsy Beard

Military Writers Society of America 2016 Book Award Winners

NONFICTION

History

Stay the Rising Sun — Phil Keith — BRONZE

Forgotten Heroes of World War II — Tom Simmons — GOLD

Biography

Never Fear — Robert D'Angelo — BRONZE

Harnessing the Sky — Frederick Trapnell, Jr and Dana Trapnell Tibbits — SILVER

Sgt. Reckless — Robin Hutton — GOLD

Memoir

Clicking Mics — Bruce Hoffman — BRONZE

Dustoff 7-3 — Erik Sabiston — BRONZE

Dagger Four is OK — Bill Norris — BRONZE

Testimony of the Protected — Douglas Millikin — BRONZE

Vietnam Nurse — Louie Eisenbrandt — SILVER

Battle Rattle — Roger Boas — SILVER

15 Years of War — Kristine Schellhaas — SILVER

Where Youth and Laughter Go — Seth Folsom — GOLD

Creative Nonfiction

Gravity — Beth Underwood — SILVER

Before the Belle — Cassius Mullen — GOLD





Anthology

Currents 2015 — Jim Tritten — SILVER

Reference

Mataluna — Edward Zellem — SILVER

Warriors Remembered — Albert Nahas — GOLD

POETRY

Kinyamaswa — Andreas Morgner — SILVER

The Dark Side of Heaven — Jeanette Vaughan — SILVER

Near Death/Near Life — Dennis Maulsby — GOLD

Welcome to FOB Haiku — Randy Brown — GOLD

FICTION

Literary Fiction

I'd Walk with My Friends — Jesse Goolsby — BRONZE

Her Own Vietnam — Lynn Kanter — SILVER

Hookup: A Novel of Fort Bragg — William P. Singley — SILVER

Sheppard of the Argonne — G. William Weatherly — GOLD

Hover — Anne Wilson — GOLD

Historical Fiction

The Liberators — Jerri McCloud — BRONZE

One Stick and a Waco — J. M. Taylor — SILVER

The Quest of the Sultana — John Rothdiener — SILVER

The Court-Martial of Benedict Arnold — Richard McMahon — GOLD

Enemies — Richard Barnes — GOLD

Black Sun — Glenn Starkey — GOLD

Damned Yankee — Carolyn Schriber — GOLD



Mystery/Thriller

Cards in the Deck — Robert Stanek — SILVER

Chita Quest — Brinn Colenda — SILVER

Terror Cell — Joseph Badal — SILVER

Veil of Deception — Michael Lewis — SILVER

Beijing Red — Jeffrey Wilson — GOLD

Death Ship — Joseph Badal — GOLD

The Fifth Bomb — Kenneth Andrus — GOLD

Romance

Never Forget — Heather Ashby — SILVER

Meant To Be — Jessica James — GOLD

CHILDREN

Picture Book

Veteran Heroes in Our Neighborhood —Valerie Pfundstein —SILVER

Mark's Special Mission —Gregory Keeney —SILVER

Chapter Book

The Lost Celt —A. E. Conran —GOLD

Young Adult

Eugene Bullard —Larry Greenly —SILVER

Hello Wigwam —L. John Lawrence —GOLD

WHY SHOULD I SUBMIT MY BOOK FOR AN AWARD

Bob Doerr

I sometimes teach a beginning author's class. It's not a writing class, although I do touch on a lot of things to think about when one writes. One subtopic I discuss is the value of entering what you write into writing competitions. While I base my class on my own experiences and what I believe to be common sense, (I'm unaware of any real rules that tell one to do it or not to do it) I always recommend writers submit their work. This is especially important for new authors and writers who may not have made it into the "mainstream."

While I acknowledge that often a writer's work receives no award at all, the process is itself a learning experience. At least, it should be. Almost all writers are disappointed when they receive no award. Some are even disappointed when they "only" win a bronze medal. I know I was not thrilled when my first ever submission fell flat. However, like I said above, we should all take the disappointment as a learning experience. Try to find out why your book, poem, article, or whatever didn't score higher, and then work on those deficiencies.

If you win an award, find out what the reviewers liked and maybe didn't like. Use the information to improve your writing skills. We can all get better. More importantly, tell the world you are an award winning author!

MWSA's book awards program is an excellent one in which to participate. Your work is judged by a set criteria and not against others' books. By grading each book, MWSA can give you feedback on how to improve. Don't expect that feedback to come automatically, and don't expect to be told who evaluated your book or who gave you what score. More than one person reviews your work. Feedback is provided in some cases, but if requested, can normally be provided.

No one always receives an award, but persistence in writing and submitting usually results in improvement as a writer—and an award in the future.

Poetry Gold Medal Winners





How to Submit a Book for an Award for 2017

The MWSA Awards Program begins accepting submissions on January 15, 2017 and will continue until June 15. To submit your book, contact MWSAAwards-Directors@gmail.com. He or she will send you a submission package and invoice you for \$40. You can pay your fee online through Paypal or with a check. If you prefer to pay by debit or credit card, there will be a link on your invoice which will allow you to pay that way. If you prefer to pay with a check, make it out to MWSA and send to MWSA, PO Box 1768, Cranberry Township, PA 16066.

Fill out your submission form carefully. It will include your contact information: name and email address, your physical address and your phone number. It will also ask for your MWSA Member Number and ask you to confirm that you are an Active member, meaning, "are your dues up to date?"

Your book information will include the Title of your book, your name as author, the genre, and your ISBN/ASIN number. (We do not review/judge books that do not have one or the other of these numbers.)

Tell us the format of your book. Is it a traditional paperback? A hardcover with a jacket? A case cover? An ebook? Kindle? ePub? iBook?

Then give us a short synopsis.

At the bottom of the form, you will be asked if you

have read the MWSA review criteria and award guidelines. (See page 32 of this magazine for a preliminary peak at how books are judged.)

NOTE: Do NOT send your book to the MWSA address where you sent your check!

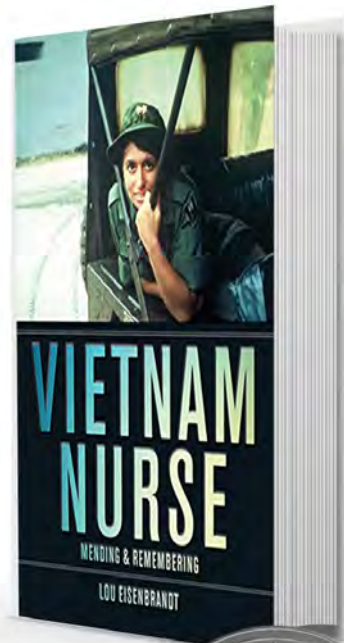
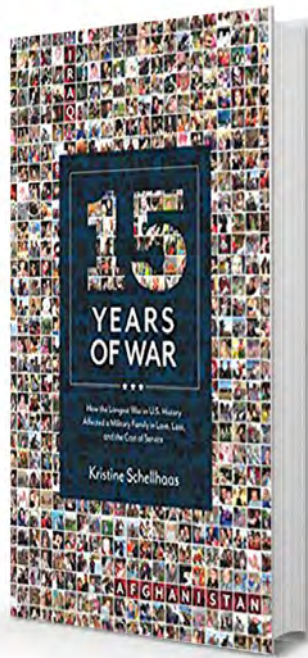
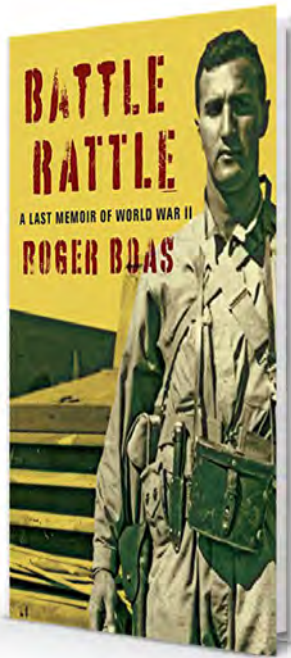
We will review/judge every book submitted between January 15 and June 15, 2017. Your book will be processed in the order of submission. Simply wait until the awards directors contact you. At that time, they will have assigned your book to three judges. They will ask you to send a copy of your book to MWSA Awards Judge and an address. If you prefer to send ebooks, the awards directors will give you instructions for that.

When you send your book, do not include any messages, gifts, or promotional materials in the package. Do not send any other mail or packages to these address.

Once you do that, just wait. Awards finalists will be announced in August. The winners will be announced during the Awards Ceremony in San Antonio at the 2017 MWSA General Awards Conference. Regardless of whether your book is a finalist, please consider joining us. There is much to be learned, good companionship and the excitement of the ceremony makes for a great event.

Good luck everyone.





Silver Medals for Memoir





Awards for Biography

Ethical Guidelines for MWSA Review/Award Process

These guidelines are to insure that MWSA reviews are standard, consistent, fair, and professional.

- ✗ All authors will receive the same consideration and be held to the same standards regardless of method of publication.
- ✗ A book will go through the review/award process only once, regardless of year published or format (hardcover, soft cover, ebook). Subsequent editions will not be reviewed again (though new cover art may be submitted for display on the website). The only exception is when a book changes genre that will significantly impact the judging criteria—such as audio book or teleplay or screenplay.
- ✗ Authors may not contact reviewers (by message, phone, text, Twitter, Facebook, email, or any other method of communication) during the review/award process. If an author contacts a reviewer, the reviewer will report the incident to the Director of Awards and the book will be disqualified from the awards process. The book will still be eligible for review and posting on the MWSA website.
- ✗ Reviewers will score books based on the standard criteria defined by MWSA and published on the MWSA web site.
- ✗ Reviewers will recuse themselves from reviewing books written by family members or close associates.
- ✗ Reviewers will recuse themselves from reviewing books if they have submitted or will be submitting a book in the same Genre/Sub-Category in the current award cycle.
- ✗ Reviewers may not negotiate reviews or scores with authors, publicists, or publishers.
- ✗ The Director of Awards maintains the fairness of the review and scoring process, and is subject to removal by the board if conflicts of interest in the reviewing process arise.
- ✗ The Director of Awards is responsible for reviewer assignments.
- ✗ Final scores are determined by averaging the scores of three reviewers. The Director of Awards receives and averages scores and maintains a spreadsheet of all books and scores under consideration in a given award cycle.
- ✗ The Director of Awards will maintain the spreadsheet with the current years' book titles and scores in their appropriate categories and update it monthly.
- ✗ The Director of Awards will provide the score information to the president annually, in preparation for announcement of finalists.
- ✗ Officers, board members, and reviewers may not offer awards to authors, publishers, agents, or any other organizations in exchange for joining MWSA or in exchange for money or other favors.

THE CONFEDERATE DEAD OF GETTYSBURG

Joyce Faulkner

Those of you who attended the MWSA Gettysburg Writers Retreat last May will remember the Angle where Pickett's Charge failed. Some of you even walked across the fields that separate Seminary and Cemetery Ridges—climbing the fence and crossing Emmitsburg Pike. The experience is shattering for those of us who can imagine what it must have been like to face muskets and canister fire. And what writer can't imagine that?

Then, if you visited the National Cemetery a short walk away, where Lincoln spoke so movingly about those who fought to preserve the Union, you realized that those graves do not include everyone who fought there. And you probably wondered—as I did—about

the Confederate dead. What happened to them? This thought led me on an interesting post-Gettysburg journey that is still playing out as my research leads me from place to place.

After the battle ended on July 3, 1863, both sides hunkered down for a day—resting, contemplating the enormity of what had just happened, and mourning the dead. The next morning, July 4, it rained, soaking the living and thousands of corpses—men and horses—lying in and around Gettysburg. Finally, in late evening, General Robert E. Lee gathered up the battered remains of the Army of Northern Virginia and slipped away. The Union cavalry followed to be sure they left, but not really engaging them in major skirmishes.



*"The Harvest of Death"
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania
A few days after the battle, July 1-3, 1863
Taken by Timothy O'Sullivan*

On July 5, the summer heat returned to Pennsylvania. The stench was overwhelming. Insects, birds, and other critters feasted on both human and horse remains. Farmers quickly covered decomposing bodies on their properties. On country roads, passersby, horrified by the ghastly sights and smells, did too. Under these conditions, the identity of a dead person wasn't always recorded before someone shoveled dirt over him. Several citizens of Gettysburg, concerned that these soldiers would be lost to their families forever, took notes and mapped out where large groups were buried in common graves. Some of the information was from personal observation, some from community reports. For example, Dr. John W. C. O'Neal was a local physician. During the battle, he treated soldiers from both sides. During the ensuing months and years, as he visited his patients in the community, he recorded the location of Confederate graves, including names and regiments if that information was available. He performed this service to make it easier for the loved ones to find them.

A few months after the battle, Samuel Weaver, a local merchant, and a crew led by a free-black subcontractor named Basil Biggs, dug up 3,354 Northern soldiers, established identity (from clothing, unit, location, etc) and moved them to the new National Cemetery. It was a difficult job. Personal belongings might have been pilfered. Their fatal wounds might have rendered them unrecognizable. The two armies consisted of roughly 179,000 combatants. Not everyone was always where they were supposed to be.



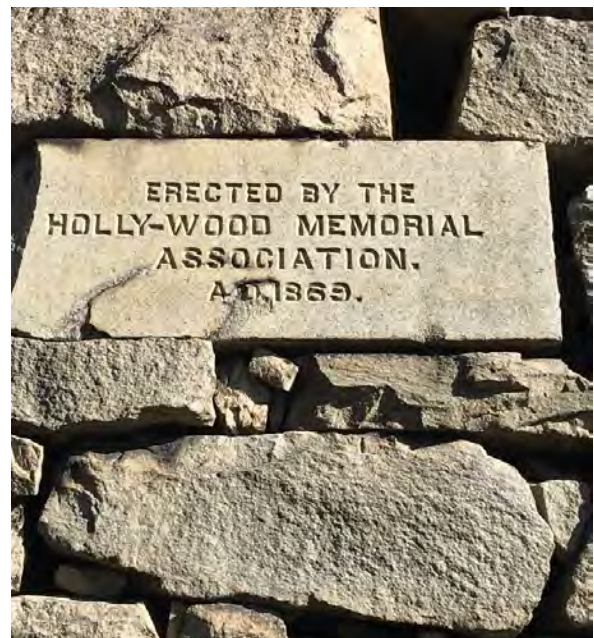
Samuel Weaver and Basil Biggs' Crew

Weaver maintained that he tackled the job with an inflexible rule. He was to be present at every grave that was opened — North or South—and they worked hard to find them all. Depending on when a body was buried, they were in all stages of decay. He went through pockets and documented what he could. Union soldiers

were placed in pine boxes provided by Washington and sent to the new cemetery where they were reinterred. Confederates were left where they were found. Weaver or Dr. O'Neal took notes of how many and where for the inevitable day when Southern families would come looking for their loved ones.

The Weaver/Biggs team received \$1.59 per body. Because of their care and attention to detail, the Union dead now lie in orderly rows with white headstones, yards from the battlefield where they died. And although Samuel and Basil were convinced that no rebels were mistakenly buried with defenders of the Union, historians now believe that there are at least seven.

The ongoing war prevented Southern families from retrieving their loved ones for some time. In 1866, a group of women living near the Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond, Virginia, founded the Hollywood Ladies Memorial Association. Their reason for being was to tend the graves of Confederates. However, their dream was to create an appropriate memorial and to bring home the men who had been left behind in Gettysburg. Both were ambitious projects. Bazaars and bake sales were their main fundraising tools and times were hard for Southern families during the Reconstruction period. However, in 1868, these determined women dedicated the "Pyramid," an imposing monument near the entrance of the Hollywood Cemetery, surrounded by the graves of Confederate soldiers.



The Hollywood Memorial Association Pyramid at the Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond, VA

Then the ladies turned their efforts to bringing home

the bodies still lying in shallow graves in Pennsylvania. By then, Samuel Weaver had been killed in an accident but his son, Rufus, who was a doctor living in Gettysburg, accepted the challenge. First, he had to find the bodies, disinter them, assemble the skeletons, and collect what belongings that might still remain six or seven years after their owners' hasty burials. Then, he had to try to figure out who they were. The corpses had been underground for so long by this point, that even determining if they were from the North or the South was difficult. Sometimes a rotting undergarment was the only clue—Federal soldiers were issued wool, Confederates generally wore cotton. But that wasn't a surefire method of identification since the fallen were often robbed by their comrades or soldiers from the opposite army or simply by someone in need.



Dr. Rufus Weaver recovered bodies of Confederates killed at Battle of Gettysburg and sent them south, mostly to the Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond, VA

It was tedious, grisly, heartbreaking work. By the time Rufus Weaver finished examining the bodies, placing them into a bag or box and shipping them first by wagon and then by steamship to Rockett's port on the James River in Richmond, the cost per body was \$3.25.

On June 15, 1872, 708 Confederate skeletons arrived

in Richmond. Over the next sixteen months, five more shipments arrived for a total of 2,935 bodies. The Hollywood Memorial Association set aside a special section for these men and it became known as Gettysburg Hill.

Rufus Weaver sent a total of over 3300 bodies south with the majority ending up on Gettysburg Hill in the shadow of the Pyramid. (Forty were left in the infamous Peach Orchard and he couldn't find hundreds more which had presumably been washed away or in other ways disturbed.) Most of Weaver's final bill of \$9,500 reflected his outlay for shipping costs and did not cover fees for his services. Also, the bill did not include money Gettysburg farmers charged him to open graves on their properties.



Tablet honoring Rufus Weaver for his work in returning the remains of southern soldiers killed at Gettysburg to the Hollywood Cemetery.

There were two major ironies associated with the project. The Hollywood Memorial Association never raised enough money to cover the costs, leaving Dr. Weaver to pay out of his own pocket as each shipment left Gettysburg. Although once the Confederate dead were buried in Southern cemeteries, the ladies found it much harder to raise funds. The ugly stories about Gettysburg farmers turning up skeletons with their ploughs were no longer incentives for donors. Over time, the Association made payments totaling \$2,800 with an additional sum of \$6000 eventually provided by a wealthy benefactor. Dr. Weaver absorbed the final \$1000 until near the time of his death in 1936.



The final irony was that, after all of Dr. Weaver’s hard work to separate the commingled remains into individual skeletons and send each man back home to be buried under his own stone, only 313 were identified. As a result, the majority of the bodies Rufus Weaver sent to the Hollywood Memorial Association ended up in another mass grave on Gettysburg Hill.

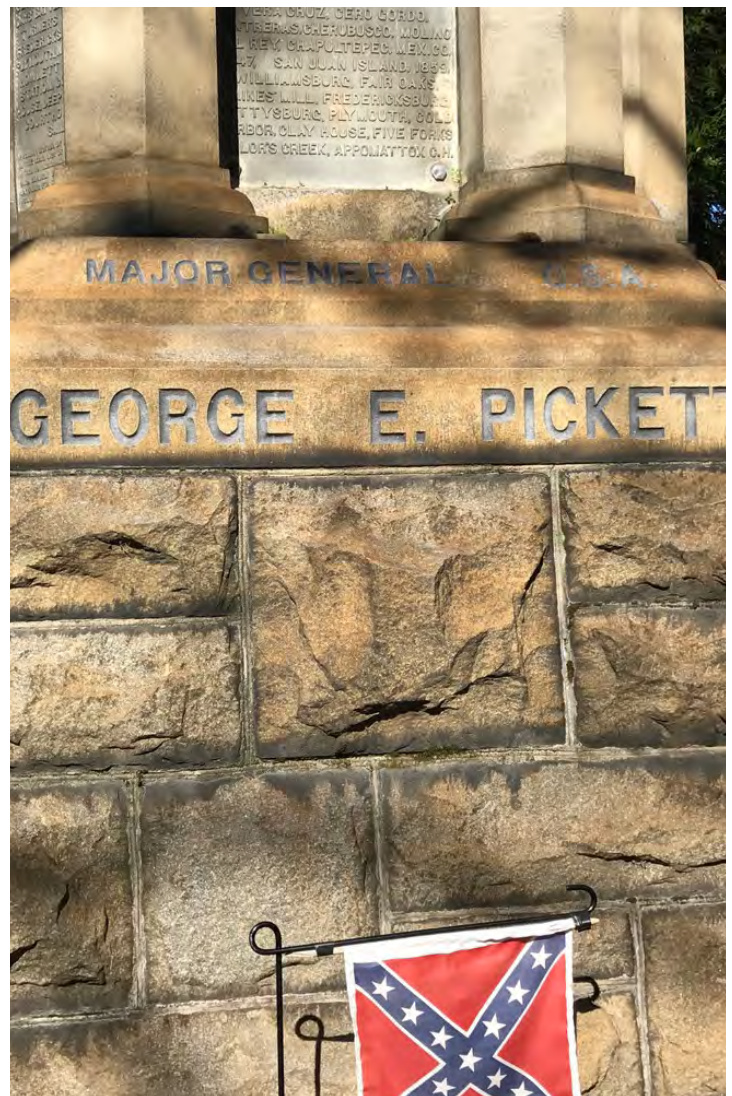
Having discovered this tale after the MWSA Gettysburg Writers Retreat in May, 2016, I began researching it in some detail. Finally, in November, on the way to a winter retreat in Wilmington, NC, we stopped at the Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond. It was a beautiful fall day with bright blue skies and yellow-leafed trees all around us. After a couple of missteps, we found Gettysburg Hill, identifiable from afar because of the immense Pyramid. While I had questioned the ladies’ decision to build a memorial rather than pay Dr. Weaver for his many months of hard work, I had to say that the monument broke my heart. As with so many

oddities associated with the Battle of Gettysburg, there are rumors that the Pyramid is haunted. Visitors have told tales of soft moans and cries coming from the giant monument, evidently from those lost souls who were never identified. At least, that’s what people say.

As we wandered through the stones, we found several interesting surprises, like a plaque about Dr. Weaver and a stone dedicated to Jewish Confederates. One of the most interesting side notes was General George Pickett’s monument near many of the men who participated in that final fatal charge on Cemetery Hill. Apparently, General Pickett wanted to be buried near his “boys” and of course that wish was granted. Then, his beloved Sallie wanted to be buried near her husband. That caused a bit of a hubbub given that there were no women on Gettysburg Hill. However, the story goes that her son threatened to move General Pickett if Sallie was refused burial near him and the Hollywood Cemetery decided to accept her too.



A color bearer killed on Culp’s Hill in Gettysburg.



General George E. Pickett’s monument although it isn’t exactly clear where he was buried.



*Sallie Pickett, wife of
General George Pickett*



*The ghostly image of the
Pyramid in late afternoon.*



Gettysburg Hill in the Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond, VA



OLD SETTLERS DAY

Christopher Avery

Last summer, I attended the Old Settlers and Civil War Reenactment Day in Waynesville, Missouri, a first for me. Old Settlers Day is a celebration of the history of Pulaski County. Before the reenactment even started, my trip included a tour down old Route 66, a tour of the old historic courthouse, an old hotel, and a visit to a stop along the Cherokee Trail of Tears.

First thing I did when I hopped into town, lunch at the Elbow Inn, of course. The Elbow Inn is located on the historic Route 66—it's been serving barbeque since the 1930s. It is a favorite of the many motorcycle enthusiasts who make road trips across the scenic Route 66. This route was the "main street of America" and connected the cities of Chicago, Illinois westward to Santa Monica, California. The highway was built in the late 1920s and over 300 miles of it ran through the state of Missouri. There are 33 miles of original surface still in Pulaski County.

We also toured the Pulaski County Courthouse. It is the fourth Pulaski County courthouse to be built. The previous one burned to the ground in 1903. Upstairs and down, the exhibits chronicle the history of the county. These include artifacts of the Civil War, as well as World Wars I and II. Pulaski County veterans donated most of the items. A roll call on the wall lists the county veterans who served and/or died during the wars. It is the actual courtroom, however, which offers a step back into time: a wooden jury box, law books and records too ponderous to lift, and a flag with "48" stars!

Next day, we toured the historic Old Stagecoach Stop. This building has served as a stagecoach stop, a civil war hospital, a primary residence, and a hotel. It is an amazing place as each portion of the building tries to replicate its former use. For instance, the first step through, we saw it as a primary residence, complete with an original bed, complete with a story, which gave new meaning to the phrase, "don't let the bedbugs bite." There was a kitchen with an "icebox"—ask your parents. The kitchen portrayed a later time when it became a motel to house workers. It was big and designed for some serious cooking. During the Civil War, the building had served as a hospital serving both sides as was common during the war. We went next into a room where we heard a lecture on Civil War medicine. It was my second lecture on the subject and I am amazed at what passed for medicine during that war. It was definitely a war where amputation was the first alternative. Walking away from that lecture, what intrigued me the most is that the greatest advance in medicine during the war, the elimination of germs through cleanliness, was achieved by accident rather than by design. The nurses, through their attempts to comfort the men, cleaned and cared for them, and the patients actually improved in health. The doctors then made the connection between health and cleanliness. Amazing! The boarding house period is an important aspect of the building's history as construction has always played a big part in the town.

The construction of the railroad after the Civil War was

followed by the highway construction beginning in late 1920s. Lastly, in 1941, another construction boom as workers rushed to build Fort Leonard Wood. One of the last rooms in the tour was a simple room with bed and stove from that era. This room was rented out—eight hours at a time! These rooms would be rotated around the clock as workers raced to meet the demands of wartime.

Lastly, Waynesville is home to a monument honoring the American Indians who died along the Trail of Tears, a forced march of the Cherokee Indian—men, women, and children—from Georgia to Oklahoma. Driven at bayonet point, from their homes, many died along the way. Chief John Ross petitioned the government for authorization to organize 1000-person detachments to march under their own command. It is two of these self-governed detachments that camped along the Roubidoux River in two separate instances over a year apart.

Then it was time for the Civil War reenactment, which was set to begin at the Old Stagecoach Stop. The cavalry would engage in front of the hotel, then fight a series of skirmishes leading to the final infantry battle in Waynesville Park. Not quite as planned though, as the reenactment started one block over and soon, I was racing to catch up. The two sides, would gallop, form, shoot, and retreat every 100 yards or so until they reached the park. Once, they reached the park, the infantry lines formed and the artillery, once it was set, got involved in the fray. It is important to note that historically there was no battle in Waynesville. This reenactment is a generic battle of all Civil War battles, meant to entertain. A little rain dampened the show temporarily but once restored, the battle was again on. Artillery roared, infantry advanced and retreated, and black powder filled the air; a fascinating sight to see. The rain did restrict what some could do, sharp horse movement (wet ground) and artillery (wet powder) but it was a worthwhile show.

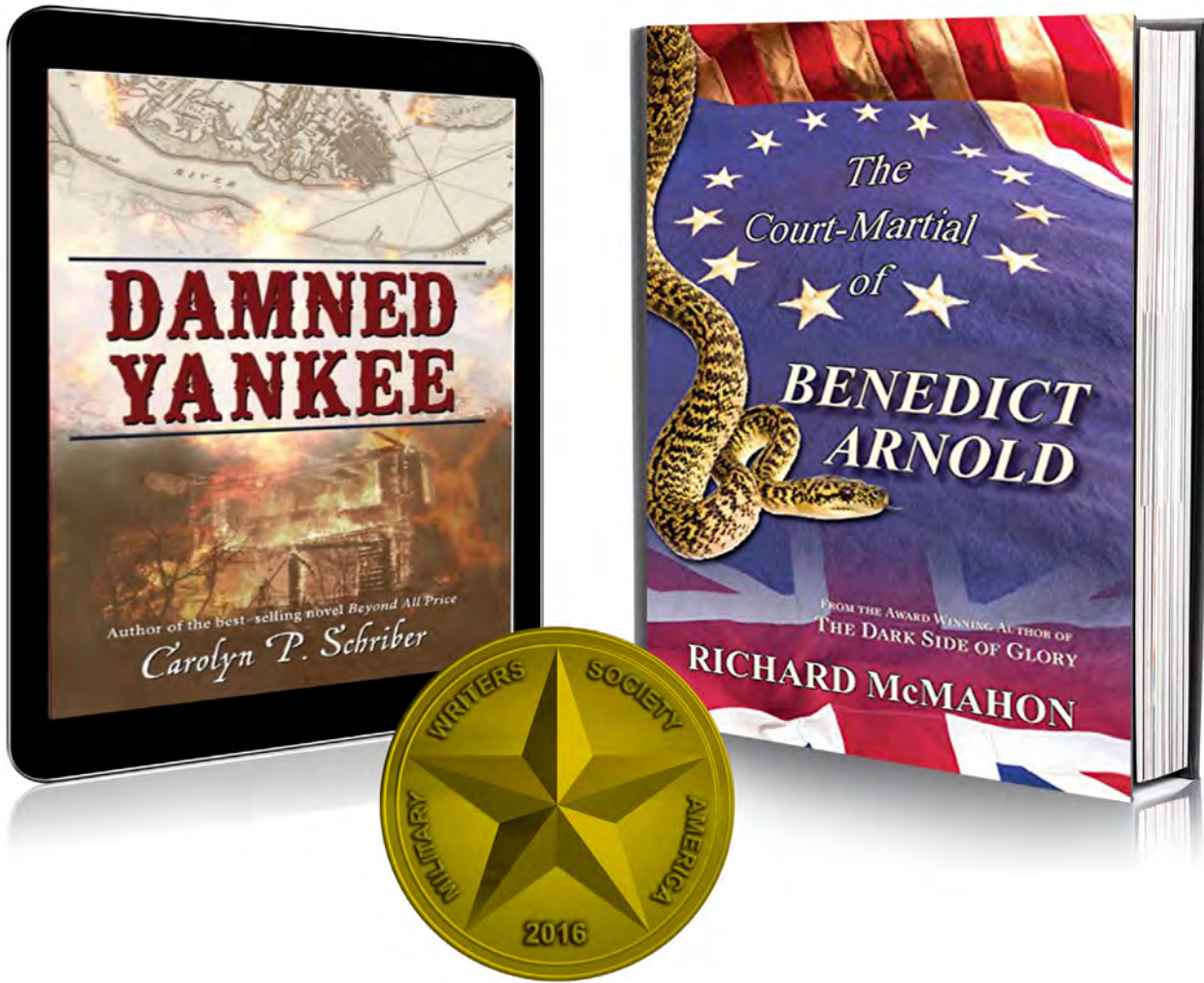
The weekend proved to be both educational and enjoyable. When I returned to Pulaski County for the MWSA History Crawl, I realized how much more depth there was in the history of each attraction.



Historical Fiction Gold Awards



Historical Fiction Gold Awards





GETTING THE MOST OUT OF MILITARY WRITERS SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Welcome to the Military Writers Society of America. For those of you who are old timers with MWSA, this will be a refresh of old ideas with a few new ones thrown in for good measure. For those of you who have only recently joined, you will notice a big change from last year to this one as we transit from old tools to new ones. The best way to maximize the value of your membership is to participate—and there are lots of ways to do that. Here are a few.

Dispatches.

Dispatches is a quarterly magazine designed to highlight your work whether it be poetry, photography, articles, cartoons, short fiction, creative nonfiction, etc. It also includes announcements, reflections on past MWSA events, the Quarterly Reading List, and book award announcements.

If you want to submit a feature article, MWSA pays \$25 per article for up to four per issue. Length should be 1200-1500 words plus illustrations. Images should be either png or jpg formats and be at least 300 dpi. Topics can include historical events, biographic profiles of military figures (they do not need to be famous to be interesting), locations or venues of interest to military/veteran audiences, military or military family oriented activities, etc. We do not publish overtly political rants or anything critical of the US military or the United States of America.

You get a credit and an electronic tear sheet to prove to other publications and organizations that your work has appeared in our magazine. To submit an article or other material to *Dispatches*, send it to Pat Avery at patavery@gmail.com. Mark it clearly as a *Dispatches* submission. Like any other magazine, expect that your piece will be edited for length, spelling, and grammar.

An electronic version of *Dispatches* is included in your annual dues. If you want a printed version, they are

available for \$9.99 per issue. To get a print version, contact Pat Avery at patavery@gmail.com and she will invoice you.

Read MWSA eMail Blasts

This year, we will be sending out more email blasts than in the past—aiming at one a month. Most will be short. Some will be to send you the newest Dispatches, some will be announcements or requests for volunteers. Please make sure that you read them in a timely manner as there may be opportunities that have a time limit. If you don't want to receive them, please contact John Faulkner at jrrfaulkner@gmail.com.

Submit your book for awards

We revamped the MWSA awards program in 2016. See article on page 10 for how to submit your work. NOTE: We will no longer accept submissions year round, but will have six month submission period starting on January 15 of each year and ending June 15. This is to make sure that the reviewer/judges have plenty of time to read, score, and review your work. Although there was not an awards banquet for the 2016 winners, usually our general conference ends with one. Also, note on page 38, MWSA Awards Criteria focuses on how MWSA judges books. This information should be useful to you as you prepare your book for publication and submission to MWSA and to any number of other awards programs that rely on industry standards.

Reviewer/Judge

Our awards program would be impossible without our reviewer/judge volunteers. See how the award program works on page 38. You can choose to review as many books over the six month awards timeline as you wish. Training will be provided. If you want to volunteer, contact the Awards Directors at MWSAAwardsDirectors@gmail.com. Training for new reviewers will begin in February, 2017.

Program Committee

MWSA has at least one event per year. It can be the formal general conference which will be in San Antonio, Texas, this year or it can be smaller more intense activities like the MWSA Gettysburg Writers Retreat or the MWSA Pulaski County History Crawl in 2016. There could be smaller regional activities or larger ones depending on the goals of the committee for a given year and the number of volunteers available to plan, implement, and run the program. If you are interested in participating, contact Bob Doerr at rddoerr@cs.com.

MWSA Facebook Group

Participate in the MWSA Facebook Group. It is a closed group, meaning that you have to ask permission to join once you find us. However, it's a good place to discuss books, announce the publication of your work, talk about upcoming events, and enjoy the company of your fellow MWSA Members. It is a moderated group and there are rules posted. Generally, hostile postings, political rants, proselytizing, and negative comments on the US military or the United States of America will be deleted and you will be removed from the group if the rules aren't observed. While courtesy and respect should be the norm for any online interactions, this is especially so for our MWSA family given that we have military members focusing on stressful assignments and dangerous deployments, military spouses facing long periods of separation and related stresses—and veterans dealing with severe PTSD and physical repercussions as a result of their service. And finally, there are Gold Star families in our midst.

Social Media

Social media is a great way to make contacts or develop new friends with interests similar to yours. It's also a great way to get out the news about your new book, your award, appearances, etc. Whether on Facebook or Twitter or Instagram or Pinterest, look for other MWSA members and follow them. When they post about their books, share that information with your own followers. Given that there are so many of us out there, if we all took the time to do this for each other, our reach would expand significantly. To start, follow [@MWSAPresident](https://twitter.com/MWSAPresident), [@JoyceFaulkner](https://twitter.com/JoyceFaulkner) on Twitter and www.facebook.com/joycekfaulkner on Facebook. I'll be glad to share with my followers anything you want to announce. Currently, the 2016 Award winners are out there. Please share them with YOUR audience.

Volunteer

There will be many opportunities to volunteer over the coming year. From leadership roles like officers and boardmembers to committee work to projects that might come up from time to time. If you are a speaker and would like to volunteer to speak at conferences or live facebook events, contact Bob Doerr (rddoerr@cs.com).

Surveys

Periodically, the officers and board members of MWSA will reach out to the membership and ask for opinions on activities, services, goals, website, etc. Please take the time to give us your suggestions when we send out these surveys. The goal is to make MWSA better every year.

Elections

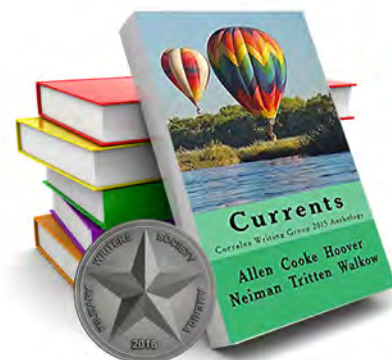
Every three years, we have elections for leadership positions. Please consider running—and please vote.

Pay Dues and Fees Promptly

Many things are included in your dues and all of them benefit you. We will be invoicing you for 2017 in January with instructions. When you submit your book for awards, it will not be added to our sizable queue until the fee has been paid. This is because we review in order of submission. It's the same for an event. Your fees are used to lock in venues, dinners, speakers, etc.

Keep Us Informed

We all move or change email services or telephone numbers. Our ability to serve your interests depend on our ability to get in touch with you. Please contact John Faulkner at jrrfaulkner@gmail.com if you need to change your information. Please put: MWSA Contact Info Changes in the subject line so that it gets his attention before the next email blast.



Silver Medal for an Anthology



A Well for Phu Cat

Joe Campolo, Jr.

I was a member of the United States Air Force from 1968 to 1972. I served at Phu Cat Airbase, Republic of Vietnam from January of 1970 to January of 1971.



Because I kept requesting a transfer out of supply into civil engineering, when I first arrived at Phu Cat I was assigned to a civil engineering detail headed by the Red Horse Squadron. The detail involved building a water pumping station by the river near Phu Cat so the villagers would not have to hand carry water from the river in buckets, as they had been doing. A dangerous endeavor, particularly after the sun went down. Unfortunately, because of Vietcong intervention that project ended in disaster and was subsequently canceled. The Civil Engineering squadron soon redeployed to Bien Hoa and as I had no acquired skills as of yet, I was transferred back to supply and remained at Phu Cat.

Within months of the incident, the Phu Cat village chief started pestering the base commander again. The village needed running water. In time, a solution was developed; a well would be drilled by the main gate at

the Phu Cat airbase which was on the northern edge of the village. Since the main gate was heavily guarded twenty four hours a day, the risk from Vietcong sabotage would be greatly reduced.

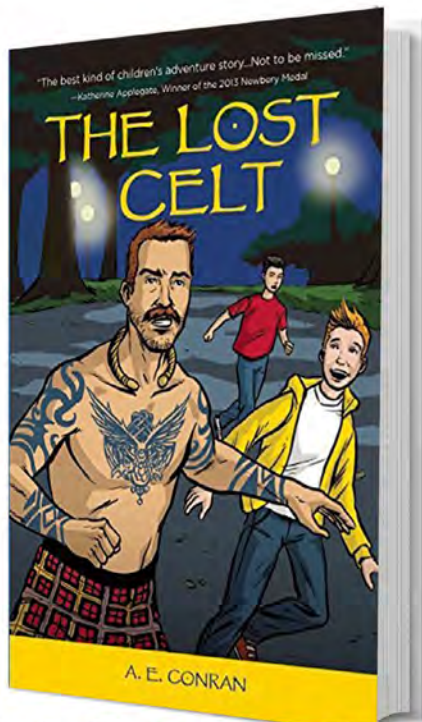
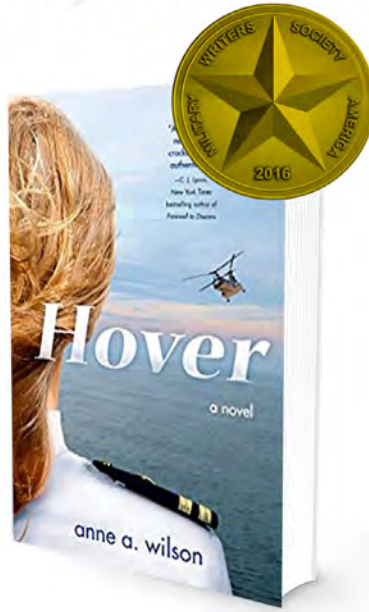
Soon U.S. Air Force maintenance teams were hard at work. They drilled the well, built an open-air shelter around it, tested it and released it for use. A formal dedication ceremony with base and village leaders was planned.

However the first morning after completion, before the dedication ceremony was to take place, an older village woman walked purposely out to the new well, with several younger women and children in tow. U.S.A.F. personnel on hand watched with curiosity, expecting her to be the first customer to collect a nice fresh bucket of water.

To their astonishment, the old woman entered the shelter, scooted her black pants down, hopped on the well and defecated. About half the men on hand started yelling, while the other half roared with laughter while cheering the old woman on. A call was placed to the engineering squadron, who immediately arranged a meeting with village elders. The elders were ordered to instruct all villagers what the well was intended for, and how to properly use it. A sign was put up with a picture of a person defecating in the well with a large black slash through it, intending to convey what NOT to do in the well.

After getting bleached out, the well was released to the village and soon villagers began using it for its intended purpose, although according to rumor the old mama-san would sneak in at night and use it as her private toilet. As for myself...I made it a point never to drink from it!

Awards for Literary Fiction



Gold Medalist for a Chapter Book



MWSA
2017
General
Membership
Conference
September 7-10
at
The Historic
Menger Hotel
on the
Riverwalk
in
San Antonio
Texas!



MWSA 2017 General Membership Conference

Bob Doerr

Attention all! Mark your calendars! This year our conference will be held at the Menger Hotel, San Antonio, TX, 7-10 September. We couldn't have picked a better place to hold it. Not only is San Antonio consistently rated as one of the top cities in the country to visit, the Menger Hotel is where Teddy Roosevelt recruited his Rough Riders and is the oldest continuously run hotel west of the Mississippi. And, of course, who doesn't like Mexican Food?

This convention is an important one as MWSA has been going through a number of changes and is in the process of making several significant improvements for our members. We need your input and support. Registration will begin soon and there will be early bird pricing through the end of March.

Convention topics will include how to improve your writing, networking, and marketing skills, along with briefings about San Antonio's significant military history. Did you know that concerns about Mexico led the Army to establish one of its first pilot training bases in San Antonio—years before WWI, or that Ft. Sam Houston is 150 years old. Besides, we can't forget the Alamo. If you have any interest in military history, you need to come to San Antonio!!

Watch for more information on the conference as pricing will be set shortly and reservations can be made online soon. Do come, get involved, and have a good time!





OSCAR ZERO

Tim Trudell

They once stood ready to launch the United States into nuclear war. They dotted the North Dakota plains like prairie dog villages. Only these prairie dogs could destroy the earth.

Today, all but one of the 150 Minuteman missile silos in eastern North Dakota have been imploded and now are part of the farm fields that once surrounded them. The 15 missile launch control facilities that housed launch and security crews are gone. The buildings that remain are nothing more than relics of a Cold War, won by the United States and its NATO allies without firing a shot.

The Eastern Bloc—communist and totalitarian countries led by the USSR—fell apart with the crumbling of the Berlin Wall. Former enemies are now counted among friends.

North Dakota has maintained the history of the missile

field assigned to Grand Forks Air Force Base. Oscar Zero is located a few miles north of Cooperstown. It's now known as the Ronald Reagan Minuteman Missile Site. Oscar Zero was the last of the 15-missile control sites in the 321st Strategic Missile Wing. The facility is teamed with a missile site to help tell its role during the Cold War.

Grand Forks' missile field ranged from just south of the Canadian border (near Langdon, ND) to just north of Valley City, ND—the geographical area covered was larger than the state of New Jersey. The missile field was divided into three five-control center areas—using the alphabet to identify regions Alpha–Oscar. Each area had crews assigned to it.

Grand Forks' role in providing support for the Minuteman Missile II program was eliminated as part of the START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) treaty

signed by President George H.W. Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev of the Russian Federation in 1991. The first Minuteman was removed from the Grand Forks area in 1999.



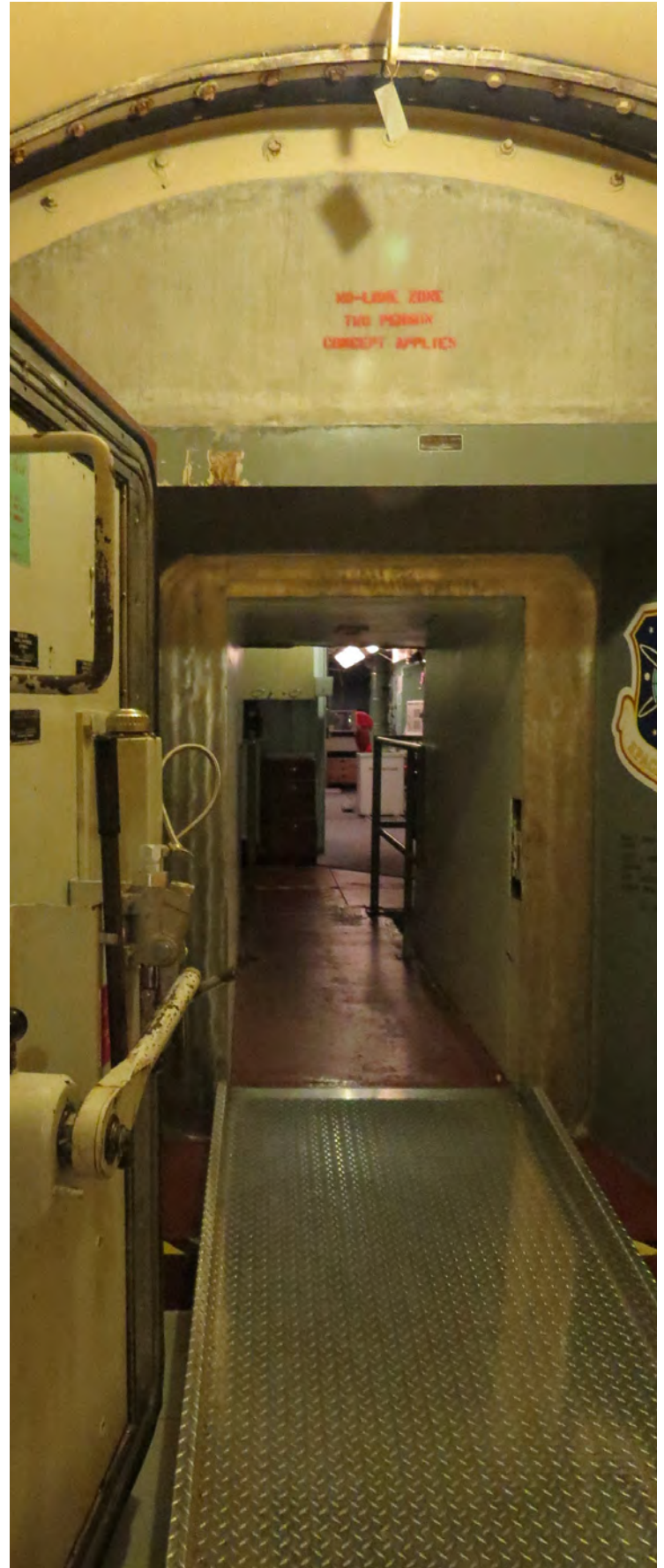
As missile launch facilities were deactivated and destroyed, along with the demise of the Launch Control Facilities (the security control sites), the North Dakota Historical Society stepped in and negotiated to keep one control center and one launch site for historical value. Oscar Zero opened to public tours in 2008.

Crews had to deal with all types of weather. Summer thunderstorms could set off missile site alarms. Two-person security teams would be dispatched to investigate the alarms. Mostly, the culprit they'd encounter would be the wind or small animals, such as rabbits. Winter created different challenges driving snow-packed or icy country roads. Blowing snow that could cause white-outs awaited the teams.

Working on the site wasn't bad. Ground-level teams worked 12-hour shifts. The launch control officers were locked in the underground center for 24 hours, until their relief showed up.

The support center (LCF) was laid out for the people on site to be comfortable. Ten people were assigned to the site daily—six security staff (for two shifts), a two-man launch control officer team (officers who would launch missiles), a facility manager and a cook.

The front of the building had the security control center. The Non-Commissioned Officer in this role controlled entry to the site and handled dispatching the security patrol team to respond to missile site alarms, as advised by the launch control team.



Blast Door

During off hours, they'd relax in the living room area and watch TV. Each site had a pool table, which helped pass time.

The back of the building was for the sleeping quarters. Each shift had their own room — the day shift Security Police (now called Security Forces) had one room and the night shift had another. The facility manager had his own room, where he could work at a desk, etc.

The cook also had his or her own room. The cook, as well as the security teams, had to pass time during their three-day assignment, so catching ground squirrels and keeping them as pets during tours was common.

The Launch Control Center was located 60 feet below ground and housed the two officers working a 24-hour shift. Crews changed daily.

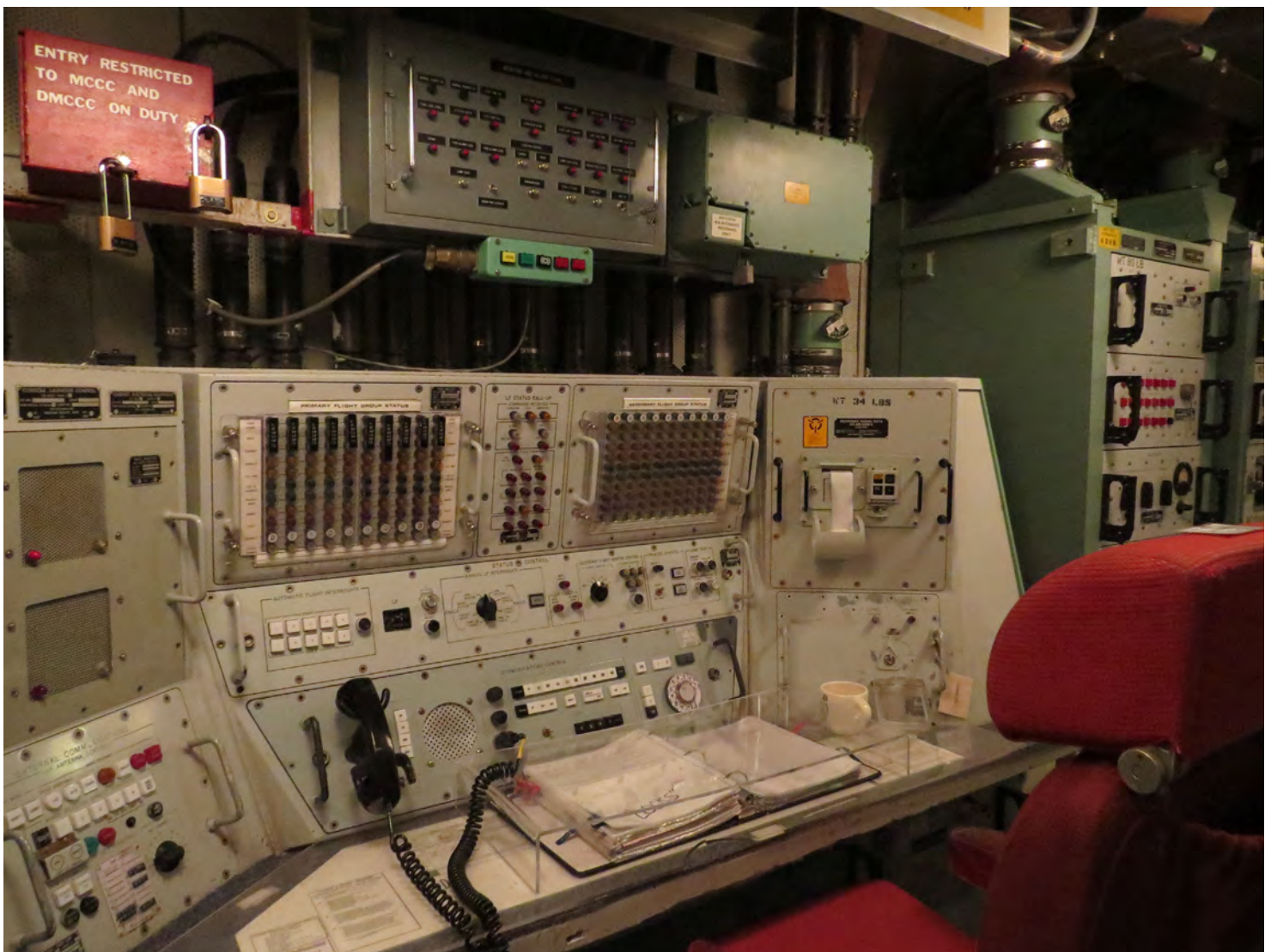
The launch control team had two rooms in the lower level—the equipment building, which housed the heating and cooling systems (referred to as the “heart” of

the set-up) and the launch control center, where the officers worked (the “brains”).

Once they inspected the Launch Control Equipment Building, the blast door was shut and wouldn't be opened again until their relief crew arrived, or if there was a system issue.

The Launch Control Center (LCC) also had a blast door. Once the door was closed, no one could get in from outside. It had to be opened by the officers from the inside. The LCC was a No Lone Zone, which meant that two officers had to be in it together.

The LCC controlled the missile launches, if so ordered. Each officer had a key assigned to him or her. It was in a secured box. Each of them had their own personalized lock, which only they knew the combination to. If the order came down to launch, they would unlock the box, grab the launch key and put it in place. If they agreed to launch, they still had to get another launch team in a different area to agree.



Launch Control Center



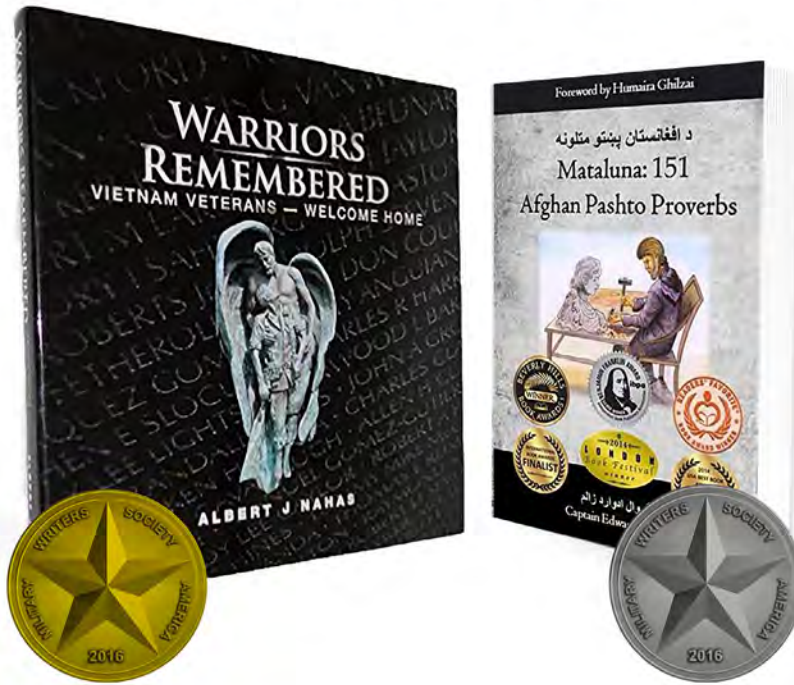
The launch officers would also advise the security team of any alarms going off at one of the 10-missile sites assigned to the unit. In example, missiles in the Oscar zone were identified as Oscar 41, Oscar 42, etc., through Oscar-50.

November-33, a missile site a few miles from the Oscar Zero facility, stands empty. Visitors can walk around the site, getting an upclose look into history.

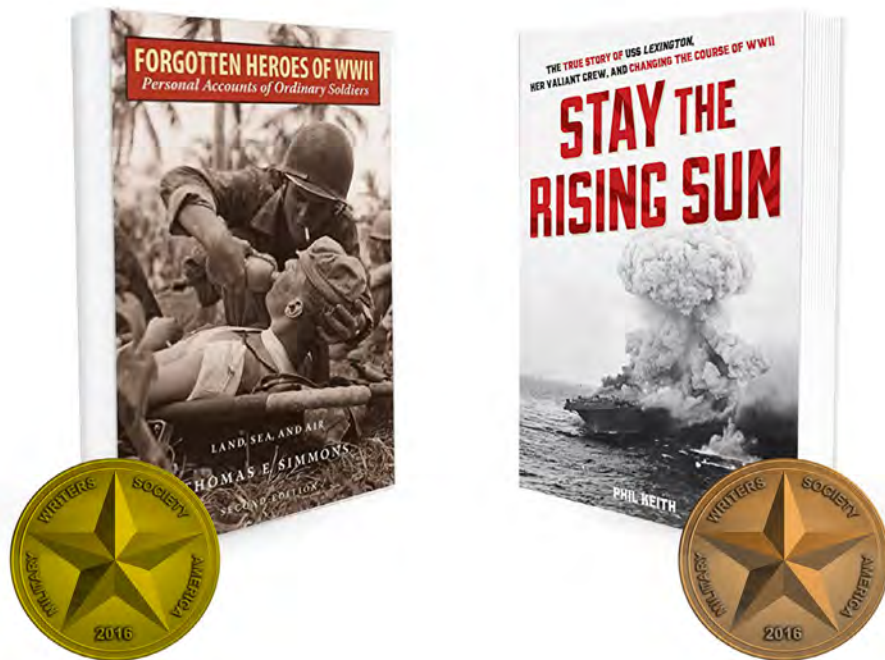
The Reagan missile site provides an opportunity to look at America's nuclear past and learn about the men and women who worked the missile fields. Missile veterans are proud of their service, which helped win the Cold War. While the Reagan site tells the history of the missile, the Minuteman remains part of the nation's military force, calling upper Midwestern states home.



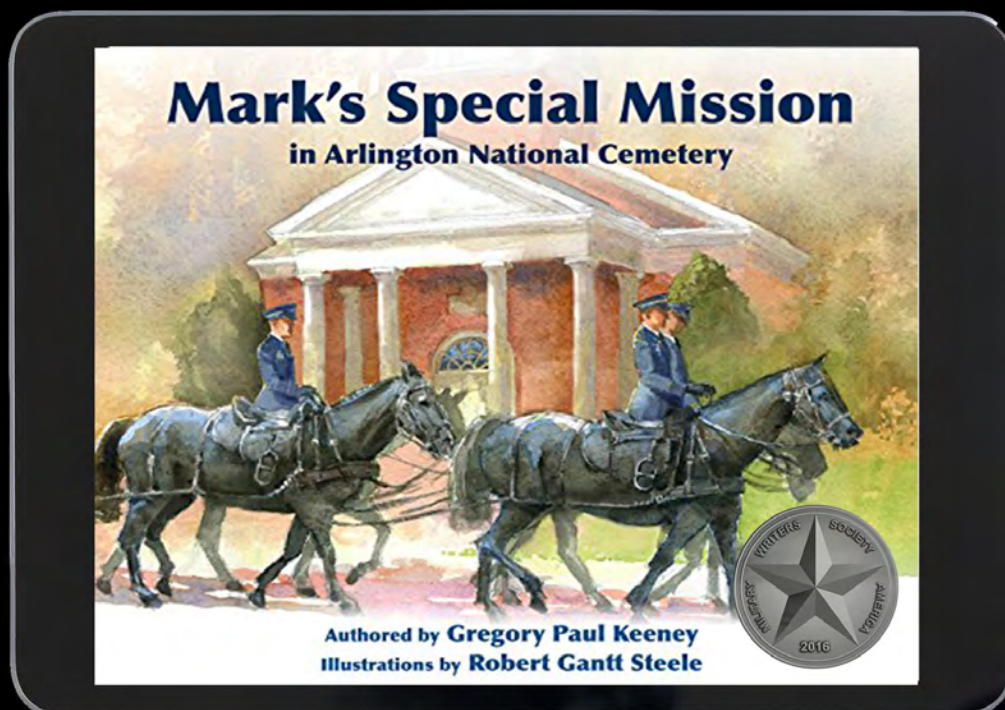
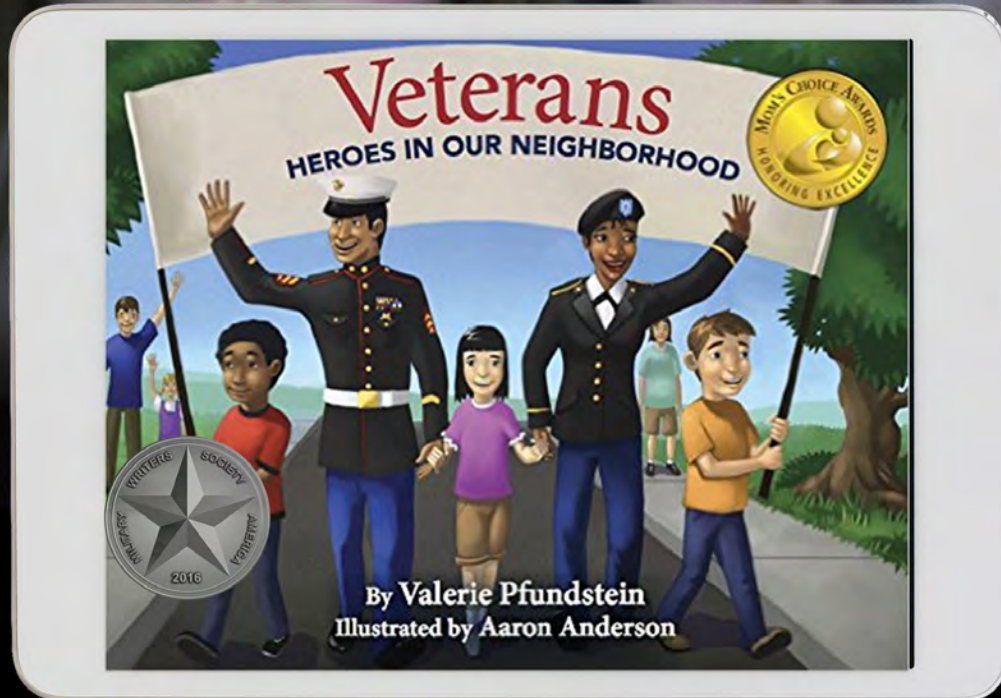
Awards for Reference



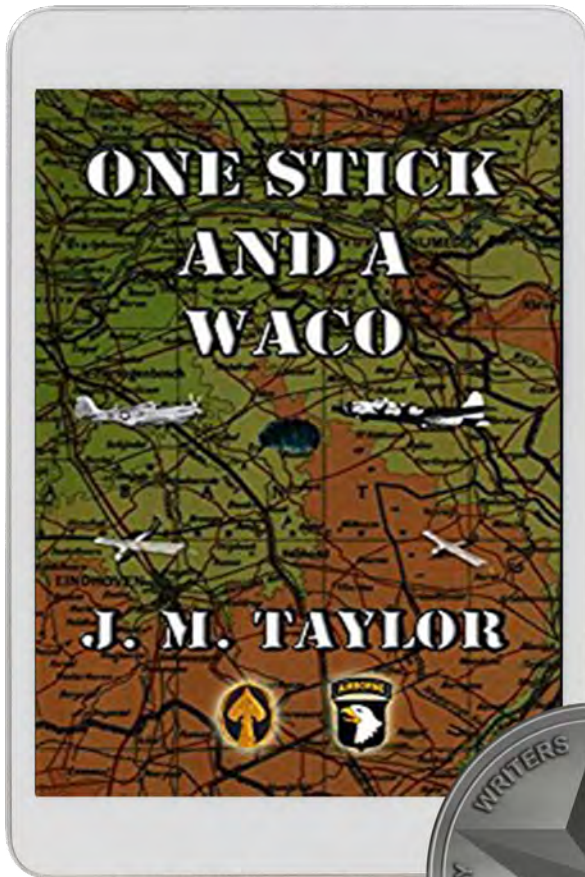
Awards for History



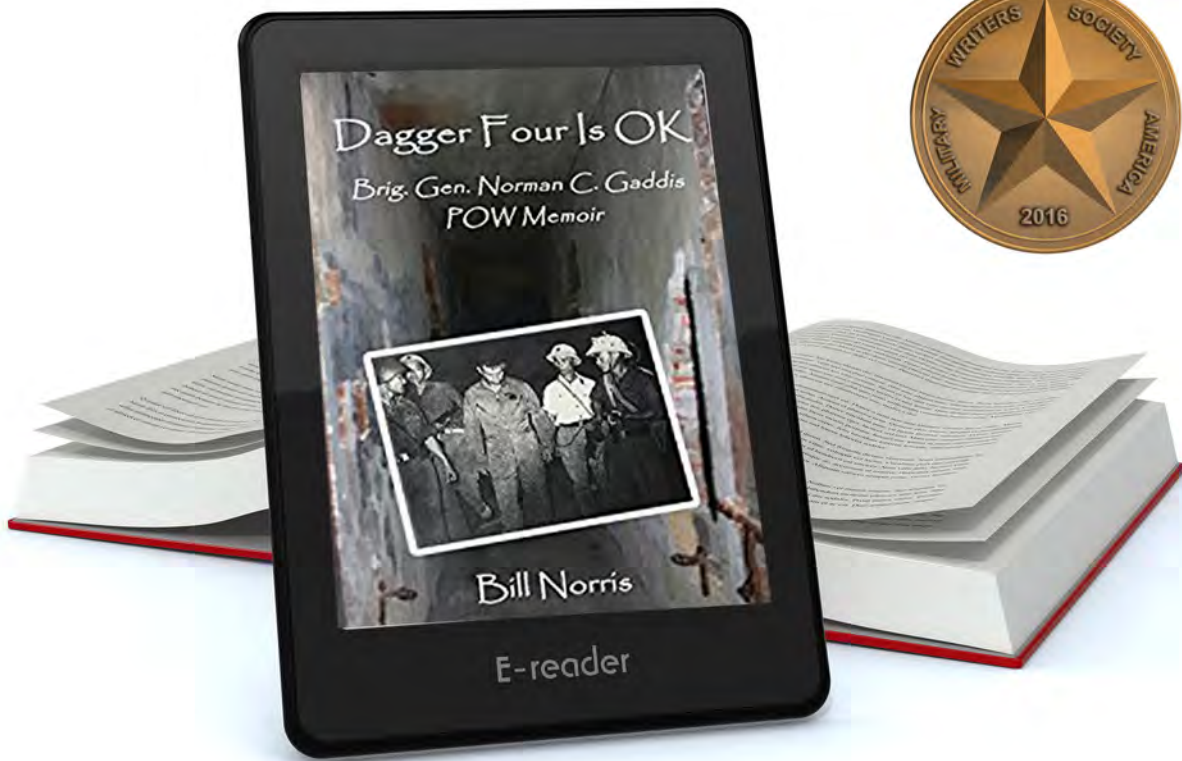
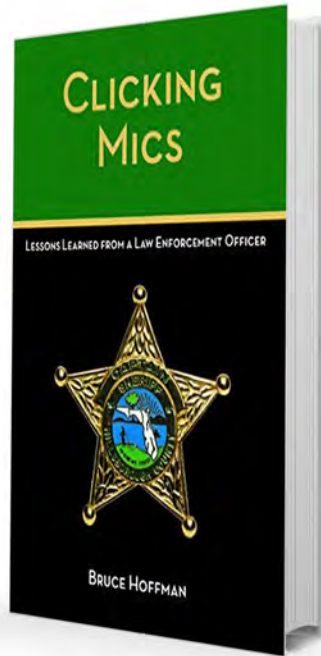
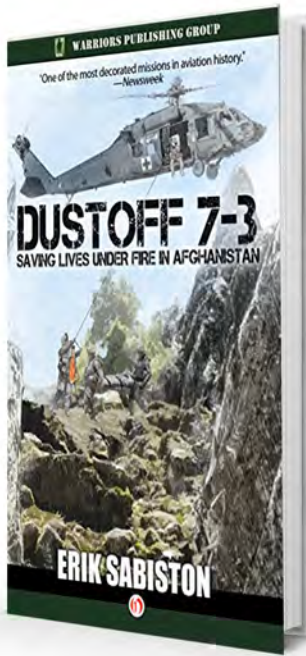
Children's Picture Book Awards



Historical Fiction Silver Awards



Bronze Awards for Memoir



MWSA Awards Criteria

Joyce Faulkner

The Military Writers Society of America Awards Program is a stringent one. You don't win just because you are published by a large, well-known house. You might not win even if you are the only author with a book in a given category. You definitely won't win by knowing someone. You win through excellence as defined by Military Writers Society of America based on industry standards.

In December 2015 and January 2016, an Awards Committee consisting of multi-award winning authors Betsy Beard (chair), Carolyn Schriber, Bob Doerr, Sandi Linhart, and Joyce Faulkner reevaluated the whole process and made changes to streamline it and make it more transparent and fair. Here is how the program works:

- ✎ There is no longer a “Lead Reviewer” position. In its place, there is a two person team with the title “MWSA Awards Directors” who work together and can be contacted through MWSAAwardsDirectors@gmail.com.
 - ✎ The committee firmly restated the ethic that books receive a medal based on how well they meet the standard. They do not compete against each other. If an author makes the score, he/she receives the medal.
 - ✎ Book submissions will be accepted starting on January 15 of each year and end on June 15.
 - ✎ Books will be assigned to reviewers in order of submission dates.
 - There will be three judges for every book. All three will score each submission using the standards for that genre/category.
 - One of the reviewers will also write a marketing review.
 - If the scores diverge, the three reviewers will meet with a moderator to discuss the book's qualities as they relate to MWSA standards.
 - ✎ In order to minimize natural human biases we all have, we use a spreadsheet with specific questions to calculate a value that represents how well a given book meets a specific criteria.
 - Each criteria is weighted differently based on relative importance. MWSA believes that the technical score is the most reliable indicator of competence. Therefore it is weighted heavier than other criteria, for example.
 - Authors do not see the scores.
- ✎ A score is determined by four criteria: Content, Visual, Style, and Technical.
- The total of these scores is the overall assessment from each judge.
 - The average of the scores given by the three judges determine if a book will receive an award.
 - However, a book also must reach a certain level in the technical in order to receive a medal. Example, even if a book's averaged total is in the GOLD range, if the averaged technical score is in the SILVER, the book will receive a SILVER.

So what are these criteria and how do you maximize your chances of winning an award when you are writing your book?

Content

The questions used by judges for content focus on plot, characterization, message or theme, believability, intent of book, storytelling, and construction.

For example, the first question on Content tests how well a given book appeals to the declared audience. This declared audience is defined by industry standards based on genre. Is it more or less likely that a picture book about dinosaurs will appeal to audiences interested in spy thrillers? Probably not. This is why when you fill out your submission form you must make sure to give us the correct genre. Often, as in this example, we find books that are in the wrong category and thus the score sheet is asking the judge to evaluate the wrong qualities. However, if the genre is correct, this is an important concept—are you writing what your audience wants to read?

The second question for Content also depends on the genre or sub-category. For example, if your book is a biography or memoir, the options explore historical significance. If it's Literary Fiction, the questions focus on traditional literary techniques like metaphor or theme.

A book that is poorly researched, disorganized, inadequately developed, or inappropriate for its genre will score lower than one that is easy to follow, understandable, creative, and tells a significant story.

Style

These criteria evaluate readability, book structure, language, percentage of dialogue to narration, percentage of description to action, percentage active to passive voice.

These techniques are the basic tools an author uses to make the language he/she uses acceptable and understandable for today's audiences. What was common even twenty years ago—like ten pages describing a swamp—drives readers who were brought up on the forty-minute CSI format mad with impatience. They want the story—not a word-painting without a point. Our current standard is the “show, don't tell” approach to storytelling.

However, these questions do vary depending on the genre. Poetry can be and usually is much more focused on imagery as are children's books. Thrillers and historical fiction use action or pacing to move the story forward.

A book that is inappropriate for the declared audience, or has a high percentage of passive voice sentences, or has pages and pages of narration, will score lower. One that lets characters tell their own stories through dialogue or behavior, or has a higher percentage of active sentences, will score higher.

Visual

Visual questions evaluate cover art, cover design, book block layout, font size and serif, and use of illustration. Your novel's appearance and how easy it is to read and understand will determine how likely your audience will read it from beginning to end. These qualities can enhance the message of your book or ensure that it's never noticed on a shelf amongst better designed books.

In short, how your book looks is part of the ultimate artistic statement that you are making. If presentation is poorly conceived or executed, your story may never have an audience. Book blocks with multiple fonts or narrow margins are marked down. Images that are too faded or “dirty” to see well or newspaper clippings that are smeared and unreadable are too. Covers that are busy, or use colors that clash, or are hard to read, tend to score lower than those that are well-designed, artistic, color coordinated, wider-margined, etc. Woe betide

a cover with misspellings or grammatical mistakes.

Technical

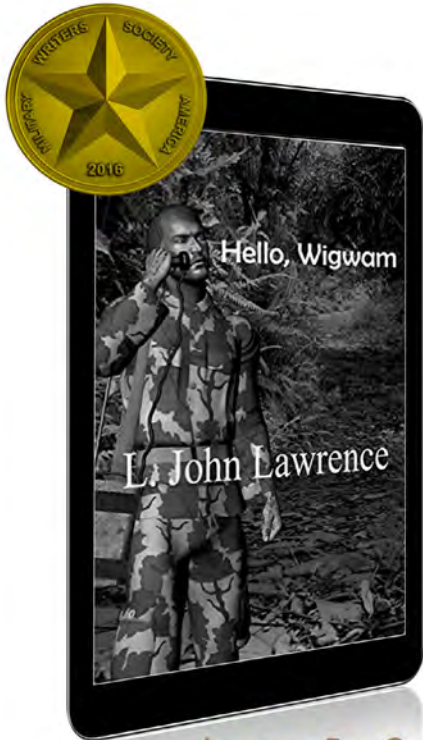
The technical section of the score sheet focuses on spelling, grammar, sentence structure, word choice, excessive use of adverbs, verb tense usage, and organization. In other words, does the author use proper English?

If a book uses too many adverbs or perhaps the same word too many times in the same paragraph, it will be scored lower. If it doesn't observe the standards like Chicago Manual of Style or AP—or mixes them, it will be marked down. An author is only allowed so many grammatical or spelling mistakes before the score is affected. The more unique spelling errors, the lower the score. These are the issues that a professional editor can help you avoid. They make the difference between a well-crafted, impactful memoir and an amateurish difficult-to-read one.

We use spreadsheets for these criteria so that all judges are looking at the same issues. This is important for our authors because it reduces the chance that the same error won't be counted heavier or lighter depending on who is assigned your book to evaluate. Having three judges and a mechanism for discussion if there is disagreement helps to minimize this possibility as well.

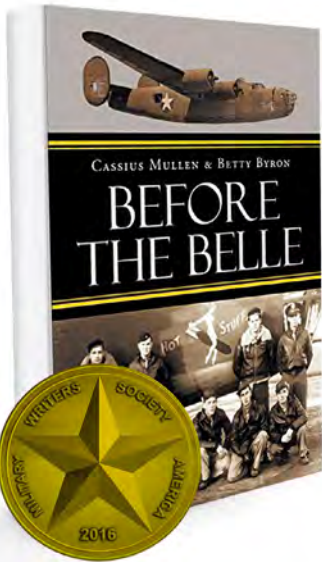
Spreadsheets also insure a more objective accounting of issues. The judge is asked to keep track of the number of mistakes in the book. The multiple choice question offers him five options: 1) Has no noticeable misspellings and/or grammatical errors; 2) Has less than five misspellings and/or grammatical errors; 3) Has many misspellings and grammatical errors but they are the same ones repeated consistently throughout the book; 4) Has more than 10 unique misspellings and/or grammatical errors; 5) Has numerous misspellings and grammatical errors. These mistakes are either there or they aren't.

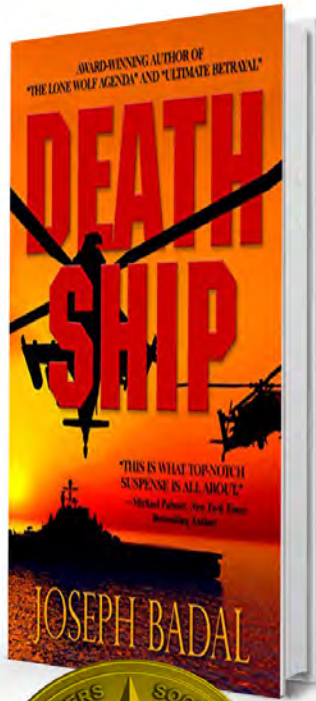
In future issues of Dispatches, we will focus on the standards more and have guest writers discuss things like using Chicago Manual of Style or AP or other standards as your go-to references. We'll cover the various types of editing and how to find a good editor. We'll also spend time talking about cover design and the principles of good book-block layout and the use of color and how to use design to enhance your work.



Awards for Young Adult

Creative Nonfiction Awards





Gold Medals for Mystery/Thriller



Trench warfare at Petersburg, VA