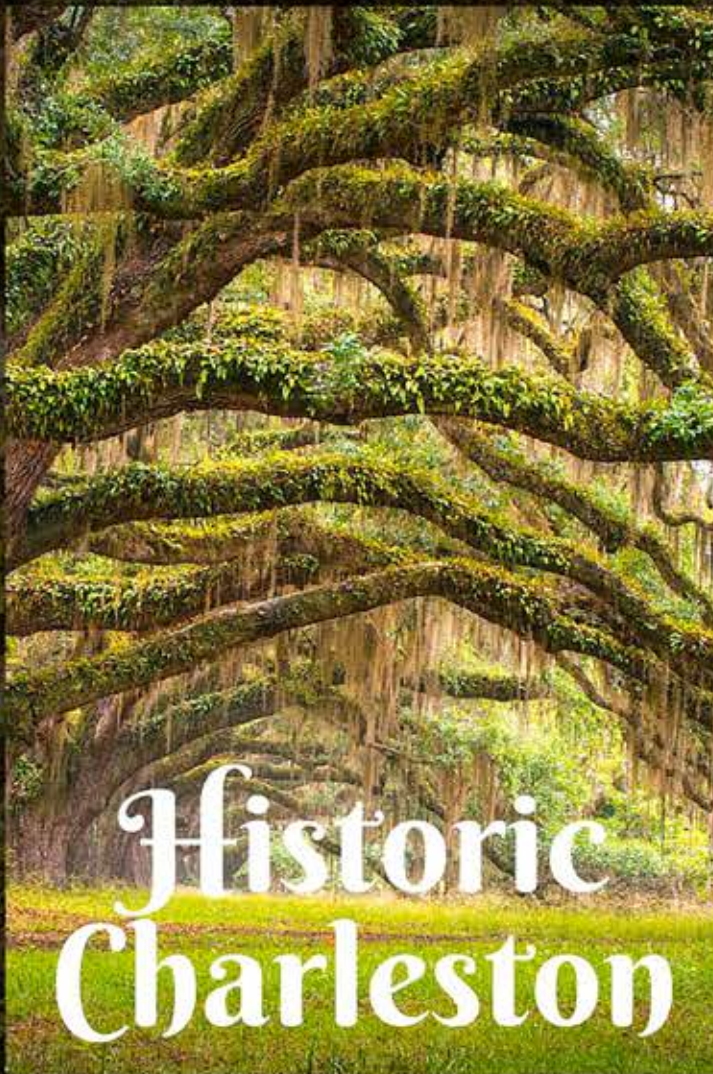


Join us in Historic Charleston, South Carolina  
for the MWSA 2018 Conference



# DISPATCHES

MILITARY  
WRITERS  
SOCIETY OF  
AMERICA

Rescuing History One Story at a Time

[www.militarywriters.com](http://www.militarywriters.com)



WINTER 2018



*Connections that Bind Us - Lindsay Strehl*

*The Teddy Bear Sisters - Pat McGrath Avery*

*Proofing Plus, Part I - Sandra Miller Linhart*

*The Big Screen Comes to Phu Cat - Joe Campolo Jr.*

*People I Meet - Pat McGrath Avery*

*Good-bye, Jerry Yellin - Joyce Faulkner*

*The Blue, The Grey, and The Red - Don Helin*

*Historical St. Charles, MO - Pat McGrath Avery*

*Leaving out the Parts that Readers Tend to Skip - Jack Woodville London*



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## Letter from the editor

### Pat McGrath Avery

**WITH THIS ISSUE**, I welcome Sandi Linhart as our new layout designer. She will bring her own creative style to future issues and maybe we'll even see some of the characters from her children's books. I look forward to working with her. The hours it takes for the creative design always amazes me. You're off to a great start, Sandi!

With the extreme temperatures and weather conditions across much of the US, it is time to curl up with your copy of Dispatches, read a couple of our authors' books, and think Spring.

This issue offers author interviews of members Frank Evans, Dennis Maulsby and Peter Margaritis. Also check out some new reads by Larry Carello, VG Gallagher and Bob Doerr's Reading List. If you're looking for an interesting town to visit, read about Historic St. Charles, Missouri.

Sandi Linhart, Jack London and Don Helin give us some great tips on writing and creative thinking. Bob Doerr already has us thinking about our fall conference, which will be held next November in Charleston, South Carolina.

Do we have any members close to Charleston who would like to write a travel article about things to do and see in this historic city? We would love to include it in the Spring issue.

Joyce Faulkner eulogizes Jerry Yellin and Joe Campolo brings us another Vietnam story. Dwight Zimmerman and John Cathcart keep us up to date on MWSA happenings. Book award submissions are now open so be sure to check out the guidelines if you are planning on submitting your work.

Feature articles include an interview with the "Teddy Bear Sisters" and *Connections That Bind Us* by Lindsay Strehl, United States Army Heritage and Education Center. You will hear more from Lindsay at our fall conference in Charleston.

Finally, check out some pictures that remind us of sunshine and springtime!





# MWSA Leadership

Founder/Board Member - William McDonald

President - Dwight Jon Zimmerman

Vice President - Bob Doerr

Secretary - Joe Epley

Treasurer - Buddy Cox

## Board

Farrell Chiles

Valerie Ormond

Kathleen M. Rodgers

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### Programming

Bob Doerr - Chair

Pat Avery

Beth Underwood

Kathy Rodgers

Jack London

Don Helin

Joe Campolo, Jr.

Dale Throneberry

### Awards Director

John Cathcart

Rob Ballister

### Web Design Committee

Joyce Faulkner

Daniel Murawsky

### Membership

John Faulkner

*Winery; Washington State*



## President's Message:

### ***HAPPY 2018 TO MEMBERS and Your Loved Ones!***

2018 marks the last year of my second, and final, term as president of MWSA, and I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for all the support they've given me and especially to the organization. MWSA has grown in so many ways and that it was able to do so is because of your tremendous support.

We'll soon be announcing details about the election for new officers and board members. MWSA is only as strong as its membership, and we need people to step forward as candidates to continue our mission to help authors, particularly veterans and beginning writers, learn and develop their skills. I hope you will consider putting your names on the ballot. And, if you feel that such a move is too big a leap to make right now, I'm happy to say that there are many other ways you can contribute to MWSA.

One way is by submitting your book for review! Last year was a banner one for submissions (more than 70 if my 64-year-old memory serves). We are now accepting submissions for the 2018 book awards. Registration is done on our website: [www.mwsadispatches.com](http://www.mwsadispatches.com). I urge you to submit your book early so as to give us sufficient time to assign reviewers and get your book promptly read and reviewed. Also, remember that in addition to being a candidate for a medal, you will also receive a review that you can use to help promote your book.

And, that brings me to my next point about participation: we need more reviewers! A number of last year's submissions came in late--some even at the last minute--and our reviewers had to work overtime to make sure each book got the attention it deserved. Make no mistake, they were happy to do so, but we'd like to share the wealth and pleasure of reading good books with more people. I can speak from personal experience as one of the reviewers that it's fun reading a candidate's work. And, it's also rewarding, because first and foremost, you get a free book to read (and as a reader, that's a nice treat). More importantly, you carry the knowledge that your scores contribute to the reviewed book receiving a medal. And, finally, in gratitude MWSA will send you a gift!

There's another way you can participate: submitting articles, photographs, or artwork to Dispatches. We're all writers, and we love to discover what fellow members are doing! From reading past issues, you know the kind of material we publish and editor Pat Avery is ready to help you with any questions you might have. Drop her a line at [patavery@gmail.com](mailto:patavery@gmail.com).

And, finally, elsewhere in this issue you'll find news about our upcoming 2018 conference, which is where you have another opportunity to participate, through either working on the committee, conducting a workshop or program.

Enjoy! And thank you once again for the honor of being your president.

Dwight Jon Zimmerman

President; Military Writers Society of America





## CONNECTIONS THAT BIND US

*Lindsay Strehl, United States Army Heritage and Education Center*

IT WAS PURELY BY ACCIDENT that I met Mike Mullins in the middle of one of the largest Vietnam Veterans' gatherings in the country. An award-winning author and former vice president of the Military Writers Society of America (MWSA), Mike and I had a lot in common — a passion for military history, an interest in the stories of Veterans, and the fact that we both happened to be at one of the largest gatherings of Vietnam Veterans in the country in September of 2015. But we each were attending for different purposes: Mike as a Vet and me as a representative for the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center (USAHEC).

The Vietnam Veterans Reunion Gathering, held in Kokomo, Indiana, draws thousands of Veterans each year for a chance to salute their fellow Soldiers, remember those brothers and sisters they have lost, and to heal. I was their

representing the USAHEC, a place where Soldiers from all periods of Army history can tell and preserve their story.

Mike and I ended up talking each day about his interests in the Army, the military in general, Veterans, and the MWSA while I would share my own passion about the USAHEC's missions, projects, and resources available to Veterans.

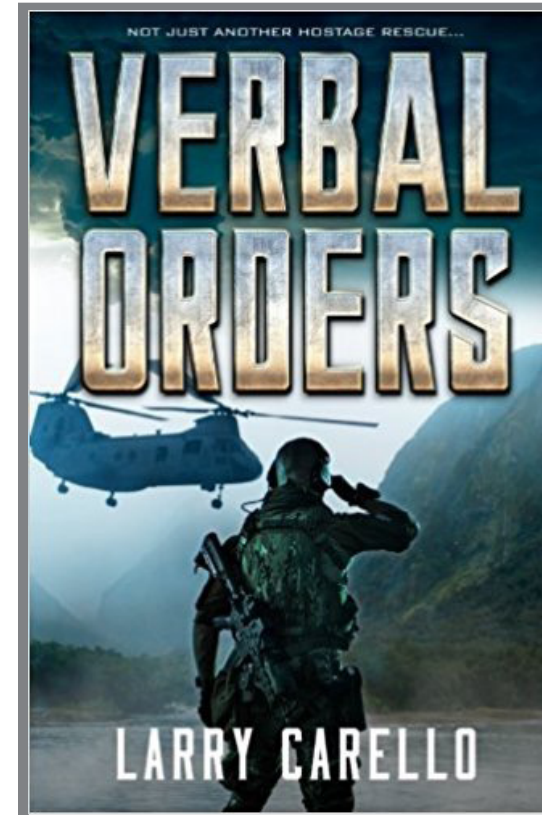
Fast forward two years. Those conversations with Mike about the MWSA and its mission have been on my mind ever since because of our organizations' shared interest in Veterans stories, but it was always a missed connection... until now.

A recent encounter with a local member of the MWSA at the USAHEC offered a renewed connection and a chance for an exciting new opportunity for the two organizations to work together with a common goal. The USAHEC is linking up with the MWSA to emphasize the importance of Soldiers sharing their story through the recently launched Veteran Ambassador Program (VAP). The VAP collects and preserves the stories of Soldiers from any era of U.S. Army history for future generations.

*A quick exit off of the Pennsylvania turnpike or Interstate 81 leads you to a free museum, library, and archival facility, equipped with a state of the art research collection, interactive museum exhibits, and a large conference facility for reunions and meetings. Outside, a one-mile trail with exhibits that represent major time periods in Army history invites visitors to experience Soldier life first-hand as they enter a World War I trench system, climb the guard tower of a Vietnam War Firebase, and view armored vehicles used by the U.S. Army from World War II, the Cold War, and today.*

The VAP uses Veteran Ambassadors to distribute Veteran Surveys to those interested in sharing their story. Once the Veteran Survey questionnaire is complete, Ambassadors use that information to conduct an oral history. The USAHEC trains all of our Veterans Ambassadors on how to conduct an oral history interview by holding a "conversation" with the Veterans based on the information they have filled out. Once the surveys and interviews are complete they are transcribed, cataloged, and housed in our research facility, which is free and open to the public. That information is open for family, visitors, researchers, students, future Army

*Continued on page 7*



**VERBAL ORDERS** by *Larry Carello*

Mystery/Thriller

Not just another hostage rescue...

U.S. Navy helicopter pilot Johnny Jack McGirt has always been a wildcard, but his superiors and fellow officers are stunned when he turns down Rear Admiral's stars to announce his retirement from active duty. The thought of sitting behind a desk holds no attraction for him, no matter *what* rank the position carries. So he's more than ready when his long-time friend and former squadronmate, Bud Lammers, calls for assistance.

Lammers, who left the Navy for the CIA, is trying to track down an American oil heiress held hostage in the volatile, Muslim-dominated southern Philippines. It's supposed to be a straightforward mission to negotiate the woman's release, but things take a deadly turn as McGirt and Lammers collide with an extremist rebel group known as *Abu Sayyaf*, Bearer of the Sword. Plenty of aviation adventure and political intrigue ensue.

*Verbal Orders* is available on Amazon in both paperback and Kindle formats.



### Call for Submissions

MWSA Anthology — *World War I*

MWSA will be publishing an anthology in early 2018 featuring the works of MWSA writers and illustrations. This year's topic will be *World War I*. You can submit fiction, nonfiction or poetry. Any aspect of this historical event is acceptable. Please keep your submissions to 3000 words or less, exclusive of your biography (250 words or less) and a high resolution headshot (300 dpi) of yourself. Illustrations maybe in any medium—paintings, drawings, photographs, etc. However, for purposes of publication they should be high resolution jpgs or pngs (300 dpi).

As with any submissions to MWSA, your work may be edited for quality or length. All participants will receive one free anthology and 40 percent off of list for any other copies you may want to purchase.

Please submit your work by January 31, 2018 to [joycekfaulkner@gmail.com](mailto:joycekfaulkner@gmail.com).





## REVIEW AND AWARDS INFORMATION

*John Cathcart*

**THE 2018 REVIEW AND AWARD CONSIDERATION** window is now open. All MWSA authors may submit their books until June 15. The cost is \$40 per book.

The process details are listed on the website at <http://www.mwsadispatches.com/awards>. To submit your book via our online request form, you must be a member in good standing. Be sure to read the "Fine Print" page before submitting your book. If you wish to submit an eBook, read the appropriate directions.

Make sure you check your submission and provide a working link to a website where visitors can purchase your book. We use this link to find your book's cover, which we'll use for our website listing. You choose the review genre, which determines the scoring criteria our reviewers use to evaluate your book.

It has taken a while, but we've finally uploaded all books and MWSA reviews for our 2015/2016 Season. As a reminder, books submitted for that period were combined into one awards season.

We're happy we were able to recognize many of the award winners from last season in a joint awards banquet, which was held in San Antonio, Texas this past September 2017.

A list of the award winners for this past season has been available on our website for some time. Now, you'll also be able to learn more about each book and read our MWSA review

for each one.

Also, if you have a book listed on our website, please be aware that we updated the website and some of the URLs (or link addresses) were inadvertently changed. If you've set up a link to your book on our site from some other website or location, you'll have to update your listing to reflect the change.

How do you do this?

*Go to our online library*

*Find the search block near the top of the page, and enter your book title or author name to find your book.*

*Once your book comes up, click on the title, which will bring you to your book's individual listing on our website*

*The new address will be visible in your browser's address block... that's the new address*

*Copy and paste the new address wherever needed*

*Sorry for any inconvenience this update caused our members!*

*If you have any questions, please contact our Awards Directors.*

Thank you, and we look forward to your submissions in 2018.

### CONNECTIONS

*Continued from page 4*

leaders, and other veterans in that unit to be able access and utilize. The information collected also supports the many exhibits at the USAHEC that help visitors understand the Army through the eyes of individual Soldiers. The USAHEC is now looking to launch for the next phase of this program. Regional Ambassador training sessions across the United States will help the USAHEC collect Soldier's stories nationally.



we only accept Army stories into our collection, however we will interview other branches and transfer them to the proper service. Want to be an Ambassador, but don't have any military experience? That's ok, too! Anyone with an interest in military history and preserving Veterans stories is eligible to sign up to be trained as an Ambassador.

The MWSA has invited the USAHEC to be a part of the 2018 Conference in Charleston. We will be giving a presentation on our facility, but more importantly

We are looking for Veterans interested in sharing their story and learning to collect the stories of other Army Veterans as Ambassadors. Not an Army veteran, but interested in filling out a survey? That's ok! Since we are an Army facility

we hope to conduct a workshop to train those interested in learning how to conduct oral histories. We look forward to seeing you in South Carolina!



## THE TEDDY BEAR SISTERS

*Pat McGrath Avery*

**SERVICE COMES IN MANY FORMS** and shapes. Two sisters, Julia Lewis and Linda Lewis Lee, chose a unique path that springs from their creative minds. Fashioning teddy bears from veterans' uniforms has become a mission of love and joy for them.



I first met the sisters through Linda's husband, Roy Lee, who was a WWII veteran. Julia is a veteran of the Missouri National Guard. Over the years, they have shared their love of Branson (MO) Veterans Week, their creative spirits, love, laughter and lots of great gumbo. It's been my good fortune to share many good times with them.

Julia and Linda come from a family of 13 siblings—six girls and seven boys. Out of necessity, their mother made all of their clothes. The sisters learned sewing skills at a young age. Julia learned to embroider at the age of five.

Their love of the military comes from a family history of service. Julia spent 24 years in the Missouri National Guard. Two brothers served in Korea and two in Vietnam. Another joined the Air Force.

"I'd love to have a teddy bear made from my dad's

(husband's, wife's or mother's) uniform," became a comment they frequently heard. "To many, it's a way to hold a loved one close to their hearts and to remember the sacrifices he or she made," Julia said.

Julia and Linda have responded to these requests and to date, between the two of them, have made over 300 bears. Not all of them are made from military uniforms. Many times it's a favorite quilt that Grandma made or a special piece of clothing that a loved one wore.



Linda sold her first bear to an airman being deployed. He wanted Linda to make a bear so his three-year-old daughter wouldn't forget him while he was gone. Another customer asked her to make a bear out of her mother's 100-year-old blue fox coat.

For years, Julia has worked with a special needs camp in the St. Louis area. She has made dozens of bears and other articles for the kids involved. At



the Town & Country Fair in Washington, MO, she has taken home many blue ribbons and a "Best of Show" trophy.

The sisters' greatest sense of accomplishment comes from creating bears that keep memories alive for families of military personnel. They take pride in replicating a person's uniform, including pockets, patches and medals.

Julia lives in St. Louis, MO, and Linda in Shreveport, LA. Their "teddy bear" projects have brought them closer over the last few years, especially since Linda's husband, Roy Lee, passed. They talk almost daily, share ideas for bears and work together on projects. The bears give them a reason for frequent extended visits.

Not only do they make the bears, they also fall in love with every creation. Since each one is custom-made, Julia and Linda find that the bears

develop their own personalities.

Most of the bears are created from special orders and take anywhere from four days to a week to complete.

If you have a uniform or a piece of your family's history that you'd like to save and share with family members, the teddy bears provide an ideal way to do so. Julia and Linda would be happy to create a special bear for you or a loved one.

---

The sisters can be contacted via their facebook accounts:

[www.facebook.com/julia.lewis.52438174](http://www.facebook.com/julia.lewis.52438174)

[www.facebook.com/linda.l.lee.39](http://www.facebook.com/linda.l.lee.39)



*A Conversation with MWSA Member & Author*

## Dennis Maulsby

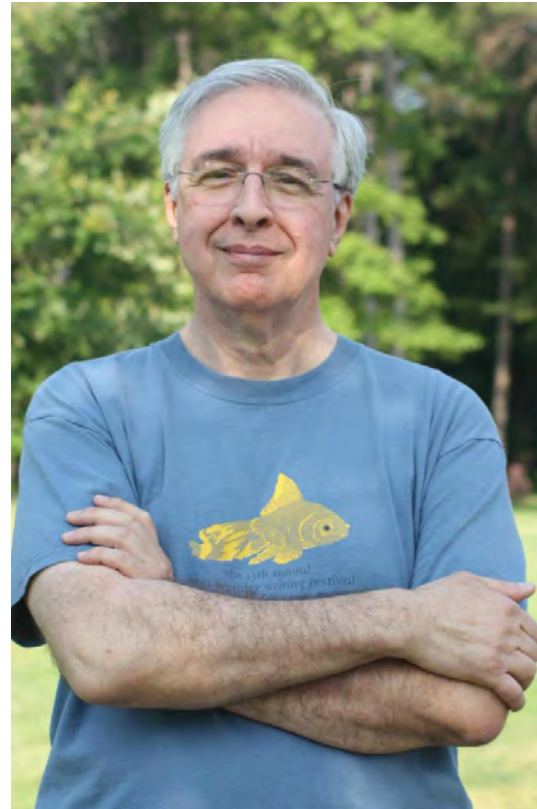
**DENNIS MAULSBY IS A RETIRED** bank president living in Ames, Iowa. His poems and short stories have appeared in *The North American Review*, *Mainstreet Rag*, *The Hawaii Pacific Review*, *The Briarcliff Review* (Pushcart nomination), on National Public Radio's *Themes & Variations*, and many other journals. Some of his poems have been set to music and may be heard at his website: [www.dennismaulsby.com](http://www.dennismaulsby.com).

As of November 2017, sixty-seven of his poems have been individually published in various journals, forty percent of which have won awards, ranging from honorable mentions to first place. Out of ten separate short stories published, five have won awards. Of his six books published, four have won awards. Maulsby is a past president (2012 – 2014) of the Iowa Poetry Association.

Six weeks before my 1964 graduation at Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa, I received a letter from my hometown Draft Board in Marshalltown, Iowa. They wanted to know what I would be doing after my student deferment expired.

Having no money to continue on to Grad school, and being prime draft material, they told me I should cut a deal with a recruiter. Therefore, I went the way of many of my hometown schoolmates and enlisted in Army Military Intelligence. They liked the fact that Iowa schools required language training.

I took basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. Then, true to their word, they send me to Monterey, California for language school. In spite of having a background in French, Spanish, and Latin, they assigned me to Russian. A year and a half later and twenty-two undergraduate credit hours in that language (credited through



Berkley) I was in Washington, D.C. taking Russian voice intercept on a modified court stenography machine. After making the rank of Specialist fifth class, I applied for Officer Candidate School and graduated a one hundred and eighty day wonder. After additional cryptographic training, I was sent to Vietnam, being present in that country for the Tet Offensive. We worked under cover as Radio Research units — first with the 25th Infantry at Cu Chi.

For the first six months, I led small units scattered over the countryside intercepting radio traffic and direction-finding enemy units. Our platoon base was centered in the village of Trang Bang. The few of us rapidly became part of village life. The seconds six months was spent with the 175th Radio Research Company at Bien Hoa, A company in name only, it soon swelled to over three times the size of a normal unit.

The real excitement started when we notified General Westmoreland's folks that the North Vietnamese were swarming down out of their Laotian and Cambodian camps to surround South Vietnamese cities. As frequently happens, we were not believed (see Custer's last stand, Pearl Harbor, the Battle of the Bulge, the Chinese army secret entry into North Korea, etc.).

**MWSA Dispatches:** Why did you become an author in the first place?

**Dennis Maulsby:** A Vietnam vet and a member of the MWSA once told me: "When we returned from Nam, we dealt with our problems with women, drugs, or creativity."

Finding the first two items too dangerous, I choose creativity. Tried many outlets: sculpture, painting, quilting, hooking rugs, and furniture design. They helped, but didn't last. Finally, I turned to writing, beginning that path almost twenty years ago. It has been very effective in releasing emotions and in creating worlds that you control. American English has over a million words — don't believe I will run out of them in my remaining lifetime.

**MWSA:** When and why did you join MWSA?

**DM:** Can't remember the exact date I joined MWSA, but it must have been around the turn of the century. It was wonderful to find a writing home, people who appreciated the experience I had gone through, and accepted me unconditionally. This was especially welcome after experiencing the prejudice and hate prevalent at the time against Vietnam veterans. Thank you MWSA for providing a safe place for us.

**MWSA:** Why did you choose to work in this genre?

**DM:** My plan was to develop my writing ability by beginning with poetry. Once comfortable with that medium, I would advance to short stories and then to novels. If I could only take the imagery, sensuality, and passion of poetry and bring it into prose... in effect creating a lyrical prose style.

My poetry concentrated initially on themes of war (any war) and after five years, of peace. My first full book of poetry published by Prolific Press entitled *Near Death/Near Life* takes the reader on the roller coaster ride of war and peace.

My prose is ninety per cent science fiction/fantasy and ten percent literary. I was the boy who read all the fifties pulp magazines and sci-fi books late into the night with a flashlight under the covers. Your imagination is the only limitation to the creation and fulfillment of these worlds.

**MWSA:** Will you briefly list your other books for us?

**DM:** A. *Remembering Willie*, and all the others, (war poetry chapbook), NSL Publishing, Second edition: 2005 Military Writers Society of America Silver Medal Award for Poetry; Silver Medal Award 2009 Branson Stars & Flags Award for Poetry.

B. *Frissons*, first edition 2011 (haiku/senryu chapbook), NSL Publishing.

C. *Near Death/Near Life*, Prolific Press, May 2015. (Full-size poetry book commercially published). 2016 Finalist Best Book Award sponsored by USA Book News and i310 Media Group in the Poetry category; 2016 Gold medal winner, Military Writers Society of America; Finalist for the da Vinci Eye cover art award, 2017 Eric Hoffman Contest; Finalist International Book Awards 2017 in the poetry category.

D. *Free Fire Zone*, Prolific Press, December 2016 (Seventeen linked Sci-fi short stories, commercially published). Finalist International Book Awards 2017 in the Sci-fi category; 2017 Silver medal winner by The Military Writers Society of America.

E. *Heptadecagon*, November 2017, (haiku/senryu with a bonus tanka chapbook), NSL Publishing.

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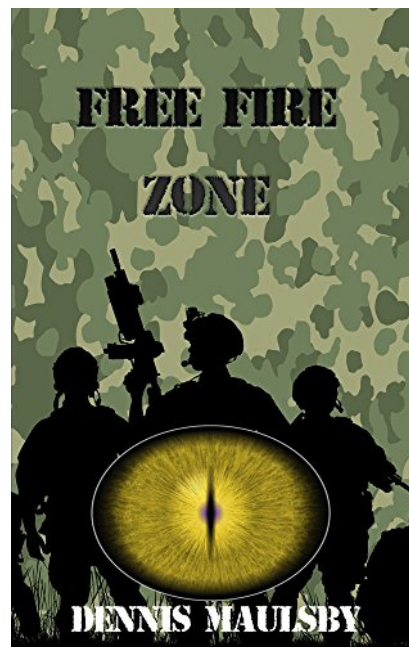
MAULSBY

Continued from page 11

F. Other manuscripts in various stages of completion include another book of linked short stories and five novels.

**MWSA:** Tell us a little bit about the latest book.

**DM:** Welcome to *Free Fire Zone*. In Vietnam, anyone found in such an area was considered hostile, a legitimate target that could be killed on sight. Each of the seventeen stories in this book originate from this zone, any subject, any genre fair game.



*Free Fire Zone* is a book of linked short stories, each introduced by a mood poem. The stories follow the life of Lieutenant Rod Teigler, from his combat experience in Vietnam through a civilian life plagued with a re-wired brain. A mind now shared with an alternate berserker personality struggling to become dominant.

The protagonist, Lieutenant Teigler, links each story but they also cross genres. There is a murder mystery, Gothic horror, war, crime, western, romance, psychological thriller, H.P. Lovecraft monster, kidnapping, and more. I think Mike Mullins, bless him, summed it up best in his review:

*Maulsby addresses the demons created by PTSD, but he brings his demon to life, imbuing it with personality and power beyond any description I've read before. One does what one must in war in order to survive and support his warrior brothers. There is heart-rending, heart-changing danger in doing that. Maulsby tackles the topic head on, breathes life into it, even if it makes a reader uncomfortable.*

By Mike Mullins, MWSA Reviewer

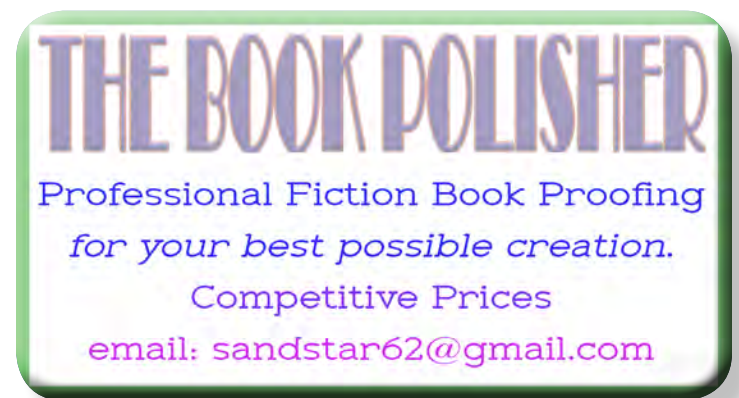
**MWSA:** What made you interested in writing a book on this particular topic?

**DM:** Short stories were the next step in my writing career. Their use as a collection allowed me to experience and learn about the various genres of popular literature.

**MWSA:** What makes this particular book special to you?

**DM:** This book allowed me to cut my literary teeth on prose. It took seven years to write and three years after to be published.

Also, a dominant theme peppered throughout the book deals with veterans and how they adapted both to war and the society, loved ones, and friends to which they returned afterwards. War rewired our brains. I wanted to tell our story from the different angles multiple genres allow.



## Proofing Plus: Top Three Errors I See When Proofing an Artist's Work Part I: Copyrights and Wrongs

Sandra Miller Linhart

**MOST OF US ARE MOVED** by song lyrics, poems, or quotable quotes – they sometimes speak to our innermost thoughts and dreams. Some can even compel us to be or do better. Who doesn't love a good chorus or a line that sings to their soul? Also, a well-written thought can enhance your book. Stephen King does it, as well as myriad other writers, so why can't you?

I'll tell you why – any work written after 1923 is more than likely still copyrighted by the publisher or artist. The publishing company or artist (or heirs) own the rights

to artistic works until they don't. If I wanted to put a particular song lyric which describes how a man disregards any words he doesn't want to hear, and hears only that which he wants anywhere in my book, I'd have to research who owns the particular rights to the song, *The Boxer* by Simon and Garfunkel, send them a letter, and wait for their response... which may or may not come. The copyright holder is entitled (by law) to either deny you the right to use the quote, grant you permission (and perhaps charge you whatever they deem as fair – to them) or ignore you. If they choose the latter, you still cannot print their intellectual property in your book. Sorry. Them's the breaks.

Authors like Stephen King – an author who is known to use song lyrics at the beginning of his books – have big-house publishers who more than likely have copyright owners on speed-dial and have a standard contract to use and pay as needed. Most independent traditional publishers do not. Most POD publishers do not. And, be warned – most POD publishers will print whatever you give them without a care to copyright issues. Somewhere within their contract (most likely in legalese or small print) resides a clause wherein you, the author, swear the work you're publishing with them is entirely of your own creation. That signed confession right there

lets them off the legal hook. Just because they have no qualms printing your book with Simon's lyrics don't for a second believe you've checked all the blocks and are therefore scot-free.

You may think (as a self-published or POD author) your work will fly under the radar, ergo safe. I get it. You like to live dangerously. It spices up your life and thrills you. Great. But before you throw caution to the wind, consider why you're writing in the first place. Do you put pen to paper, or fingertip to keyboard with a desire that no one read you? Do you really pour your heart and soul in black and white to go unnoticed? The internet is full of stories about people who write a self-published book and it takes off like wildfire. That could be you. The next thing you know you're showcased on your favorite talk-show and the host mentions the quoted lyric or line... and you sit there like a deer in the water (or a fish in the headlights) hoping no one is watching. Yeah. Too late.

If you really gotta have that particular quote in your book, research and get the copyright holder's permission to print long before your book goes to the presses. Get the permission and stipulations in writing and keep the email or letter, like, forever – don't expect your independent or POD publisher to do it for you. If you just want 'a' quote – write your own snazzy lyric and pass it off as a fictitious person – creative license as it were – or use content written before 1923, and most likely in the public domain. One caveat though, some copyright holders renew the license regularly on popular or significant songs or performers or authors, so the age test doesn't necessarily hold true. Your best bet is to forgo the quote and sleep easily.

Bottom line: Publish your book without borrowing anyone else's ideas, hope for the best, and maybe someday you'll be in the position to sue someone for using your copyrighted intellectual property without permission. Check this out for more information: <https://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ15a.pdf> and keep an eye out for the next installments of Proofing Plus - Part II – Who Said That? (Problems with Your POV); and Part III – Wait, what? (Continuity Errors). Enjoy & In Joy!



*A Conversation with MWSA Member & Author*

## E. FRANKLIN EVANS

**E. FRANKLIN EVANS IS A DECORATED**, retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel who fought as an infantry platoon leader in Vietnam and served in the United States Army for over twenty-six years. Following a tour with the Ranger Department at Fort Benning, Georgia, he departed for Vietnam in 1968.

He also served as a Special Agent of Counter-Intelligence for the US Army. Frank has a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Columbus State University, a Master of Arts in Management and a Master of Arts in Computer Resources Management from Webster University in Saint Louis.

As an adjunct college professor, he taught college courses in Microcomputer Applications for eleven years.

His first book, *Stand To... A Journey to Manhood*, was published in January 2008. It won MWSA's Founder's Award. He has published two additional books in 2017: *Read My Shorts* and *The Lost Estate: Insurgency in Alabama*.

He is married to Pamela Evans and is the father of three

grown children, two sons and a daughter.

**MWSA:** Why did you become an author in the first place?

**E. Franklin Evans:** I've always been interested in writing. My desire began in high school where my English and Drama teachers encouraged me to pursue writing. I wrote many contract offers and training manuals while in the army.

Upon my entry into college, my English teacher, who was a successful published author, Dr. Virginia Spencer Carr; *The Lonely Hunter: A Biography of Carson McCullers* encouraged me to write, and thus began my writing career. My membership with the MWSA jump-started my desire and off I went.

**MWSA:** When and why did you join MWSA?

**EFE:** Looking for a respected organization to market my first book in 2008, I discovered The MWSA through a friend. Once I joined, I was thoroughly impressed with the wide range of writers; some were published authors and others were beginning to write. I felt at home.



I have developed many friendships within the membership. In the MWSA, I found professional editors, reviewers, and seasoned assistance in reaching my goal to become a better writer. By reviewing other's works, I developed a sense of what worked and what did not. I learned what a necessity a professional editor is. My first published book won the distinguished Founder's Award in 2009.

**MWSA:** Why did you choose to work in this genre?

**EFE:** Through my contributions to several MWSA anthologies, I began to develop my own style. Fiction will be my future. I will publish an historical fiction next. Several ideas keep asking me to write about them. My stories seem to write themselves as the words flow.

**MWSA:** Will you briefly list your other books for us?

**EFE:** *Stand To...A Journey to Manhood* (2009); *Read My Shorts*, several short stories in *Dispatches* and *MWSA Anthologies*.

**MWSA:** Tell us a little bit about your new book, *The Lost Estate*.

**EFE:** This is the story of a man trying to fight his demons while personal tragedies keep pummeling him. The one-two punch of horrifying news nearly devastated New York City detective lieutenant, Mark Saunders. Under investigation by internal affairs for his recent shooting

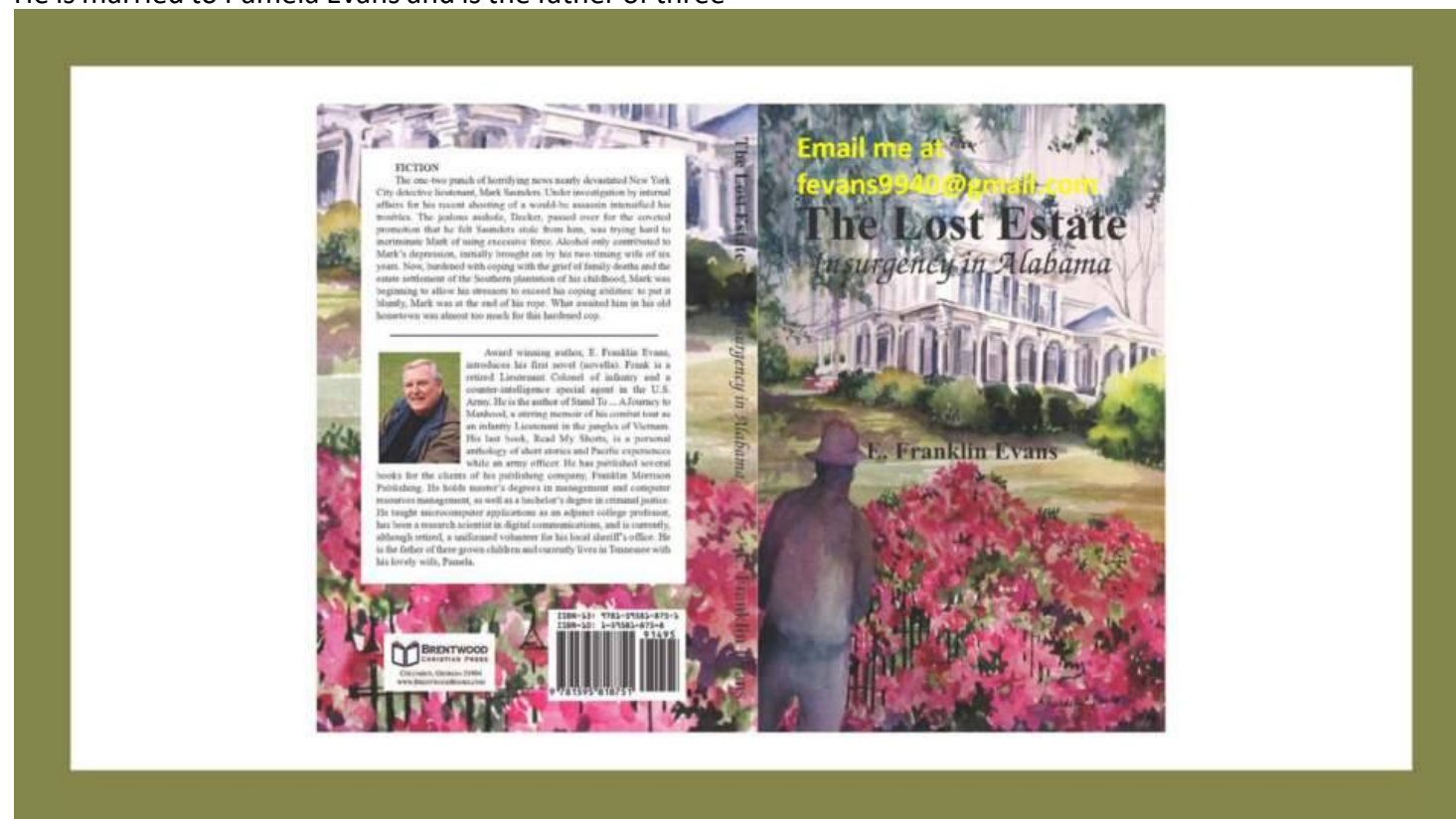
of a would-be assassin intensified his troubles. The jealous asshole, Decker, passed over for the coveted promotion that he felt Saunders stole from him, was trying hard to incriminate Mark of using excessive force. Alcohol only contributed to Mark's depression, initially brought on by his two-timing wife of six years. Now, burdened with coping with the grief of family deaths and the estate settlement of the Southern plantation of his childhood, Mark was beginning to allow his stressors to exceed his coping abilities: to put it bluntly, Mark was at the end of his rope. What awaited him in his old hometown was almost too much for this hardened cop.

**MWSA:** What made you interested in writing a book on this particular topic?

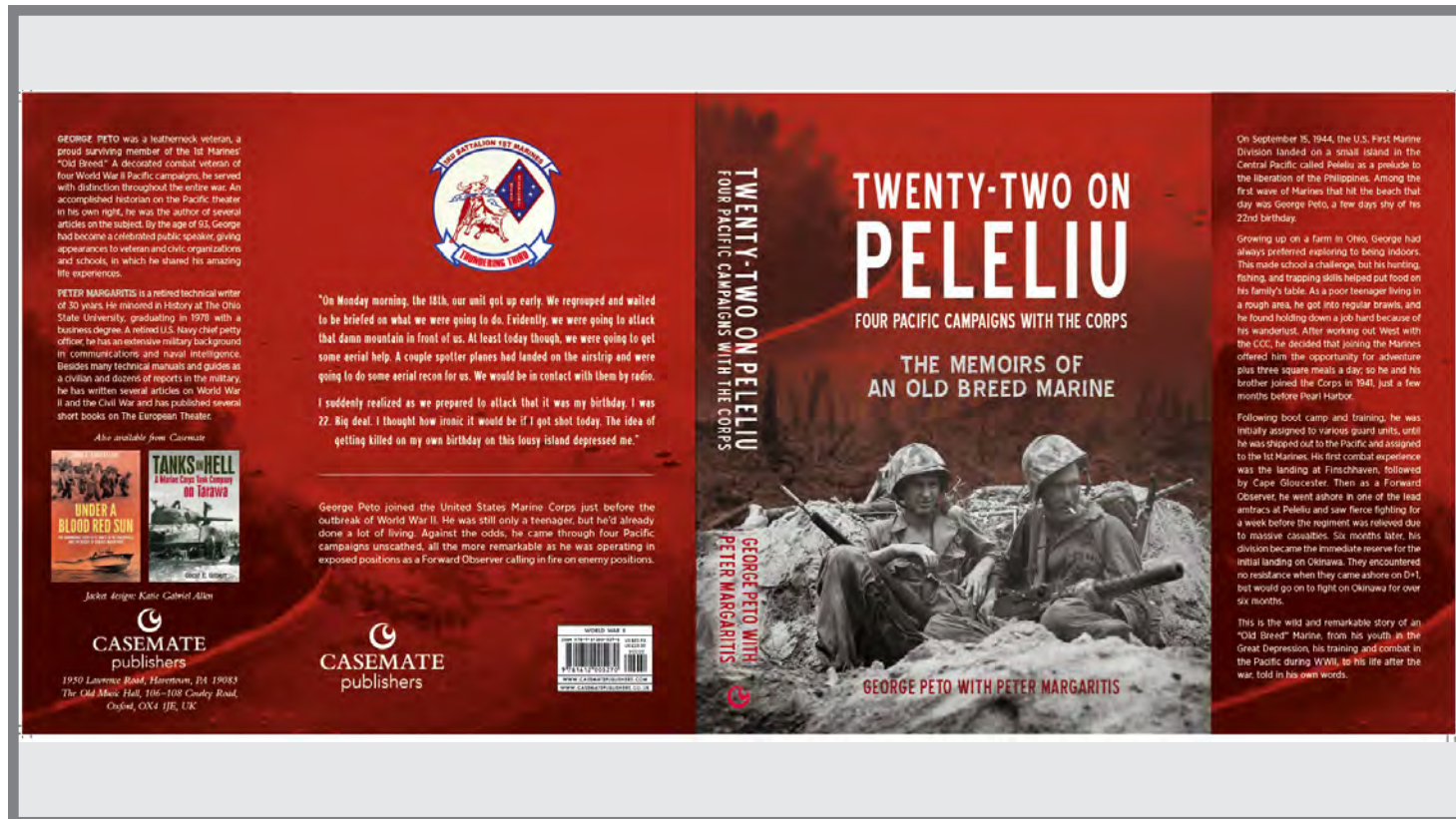
**EFE:** I wanted to write in this genre and, perhaps, continue this story as a series.

**MWSA:** What makes this particular book special to you?

**EFE:** I believe this is my best work yet.







A Conversation with MWSA Member & Author

## PETER MARGARITIS

**MWSA: WILL YOU GIVE US** a short biography and please send us your photo?

Peter Margaritis: I was born in the steel city of Gary, Indiana, but I have lived in Central Ohio nearly all my life. I graduated from The Ohio State University in 1978 with a Bachelor's Degree in Business. I am married, with four children.

I served in the U.S. Navy during Vietnam, and later, served another 18 years in the Naval Reserve in intelligence, retiring as a chief petty officer.

**MWSA:** Why did you become an author in the first place?

**PM:** I have enjoyed writing ever since the sixth grade. I loved reading all sorts of stories, and began writing short stories that were sequels to some of my favorite movies, projecting me into the story.

In my twenties, I became a manager in a firm specializing in aerial lift devices. There, I began writing inspection manuals. I eventually progressed into becoming a



technical writer, deriving a certain sense of satisfaction creating a document that others used in the course of their jobs.

**MWSA:** When and why did you join MWSA?

**PM:** I joined MWSA in the fall of 2017, when I first became aware of the organization.

**MWSA:** Why did you choose to work in this genre?

**PM:** Ever since junior high school, military history has always had some appeal to me. As a teenager interested in military history, I became fascinated with board war games.

Small cardboard counters represented military units that moved through these squares. I became enthralled with the mechanics of warfare, the art of conflict realistically in a game, portraying a large scale of battle over so compact a board. Interest in military history just intensified with my love for this hobby.

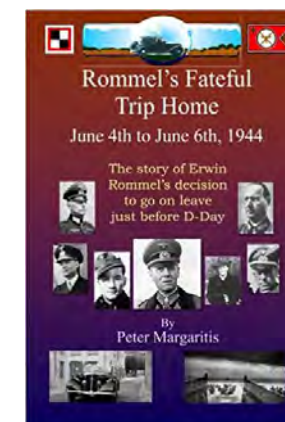
One day, I read a book that changed my life: Cornelius Ryan's classic *The Longest Day*. His account of D-Day brought the characters in the book alive through individual personal recollections, and suddenly a history book became a sort of novel for me. I found that the myriad of human elements in historical events gave the turn of events a sort of unpredictability that had to be dealt with in writing history. I later found out that his works were based on exhaustive research, which I appreciated.

Although I worked as a tech writer, my first love was always military history, and after retiring, I began to actively pursue that endeavor. I have ever since.

**MWSA:** Will you briefly list your other books for us?

**PM:** PUBLISHED:

*Rommel's Fateful Trip Home:* June 4th to June 6th, 1944 (Published June, 2014)



*Crossroads at Margival:* Hitler's Last Conference in France: June 17, 1944 (Published July, 2014)

*90 Years of History:* The American Legion In Central Ohio (Published November, 2010)

COMING SOON:

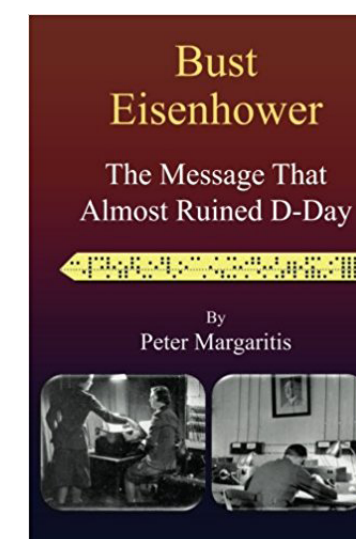
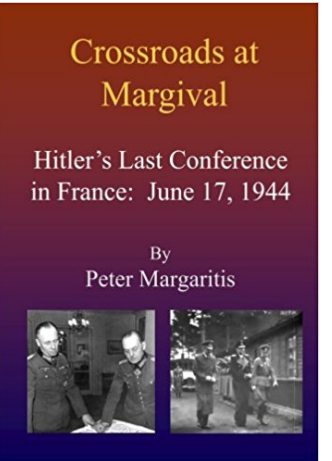
*Dissecting a Pyrrhic Victory:* The

First Marine Division at Peleliu  
IN PROGRESS:

*The Night the Sky Blew Up:* Clan Fraser and the Destruction of Piraeus, 1941

*D-Day Countdown: The German Perspective, Vol 1:* Der Atlantikwall

*D-Day Countdown: The German Perspective, Vol 2:* Les Sanglots Longs



*Reichsfibel: A Lexicon Containing Military & Political Acronyms and Terms of The Third Reich*

**MWSA:** Tell us a little bit about this book.

**PM:** *Twenty-Two on Peleliu: Four Pacific Campaigns With the Corps* (Published July, 2017, Casemate Publishing) is the exciting, true story of George Peto, an "Old Breed" Marine. Growing up during

the Depression, this happy-go-lucky kid's life, like an early day Forrest Gump, touched on so many unique facets of American 20th Century history: From watching dirigibles sail over Akron, Ohio, to fishing and trapping on the Erie Canal near a gangster's hideout, to working in the CCC out West (where he started a riot on his 16th birthday). And his World War II experiences are even more memorable, fighting in four famous Pacific campaigns with the elite 1st Marines. Even after the war, George seldom lived a dull moment, once fighting for what he believed right up to the Supreme Court. Yes, this was an extraordinary man who lived a life more exciting than four normal individuals. This is the story of George Peto.

**MWSA:** What made you interested in writing a book on this particular topic?

**PM:** In the spring of 2015, I entered a U.S. Naval Institute 3,000-word essay contest. The theme was some

*Continued on page 18*



MARGARITIS  
Continued from 17

significant event that occurred in U.S. Marine Corps history. I finally decided on the controversial 1944 Peleliu invasion. A friend suggested that I consult with a local expert, a 93-year old Mr. George Peto, one of the "Old Breed." George had actually landed at Peleliu, as well as three other major Pacific campaigns.

Mr. Peto and I immediately struck up a friendship, and I invited him to co-write the essay with me. We made a good team since I am an experienced researcher and George not only had actually been there, but still retained an amazing memory about his experiences and enjoyed retelling them.

During our research though, as I shared lengthy conversations with this charismatic, charming, genial old man, I realized that not only were his wartime experiences remarkable, but there also were quite a number of unusual events that had taken place in the other times of his life. As he told me tales of his youth (again, I marveled at his consistent, detailed memory of things that happened over seven decades before), I realized that a much better book to write would be about his life. He good-naturedly agreed, and so we were off.

Unfortunately, after finishing our first draft, Mr. Peto died in his sleep on the 4th of July, 2016. I had vowed to him that if necessary, I would finish the book on his behalf.

**MWSA:** What makes this particular book special to you?

**PM:** I am proud of this book because not only did I enjoy writing it with George, but it combines my in depth research in these historical battles with the extraordinarily detailed daily memories of someone who actually fought in them. The icing on the cake though, is in the exciting fine points of his experiences. I had as much fun listening to them as I did writing about them. Hearing him recall many near-death experiences (most serious, some not), I jokingly once remarked that with all the close calls he had faced in his life, he had absolutely no business being alive. And yet, amazingly, he had survived it all with little or no injuries.

I knew that this was a story I had to write, and I wanted the readers, especially those who had known him, to see his life through his eyes. To that purpose, we tried to put the narrative in his own style. I threw in the detailed historical perspective so that readers unfamiliar with this

time could follow along.

The idea of doing the book just to document his stories (he never gave a hang about money) really appealed to him, and as the project continued, his enthusiasm increased. Sometimes he would muse on who would play him in the movie (as if), and once in a while talk about going onto talk shows (which unnerved me).

George Peto, like so many of us, was just a simple happy guy forced to go to war, an ordinary man who was thrust into an extraordinary life of combat. He not only saw first-hand the horrors of battle, but had to inflict it on others to survive as he watched so many of his comrades perish at his side. He typified the American fighting man. Yet, he also lived an astonishing life.

For instance, George's daughter Nancy once told me a story about how he had driven his wife Juanita and her out West to Yellowstone National Park to camp and sight-see (he was always wanting to go SOMEWHERE). They had at the time a Ford station wagon. They stopped in the park on a beautiful day for a picnic. George got out, went around to the back of the station wagon, and flipped down the tailgate to set up the food. He started laying out the food on the open door. His wife had gone off into the woods with a roll of toilet paper.

His daughter, about eight years old, standing next to him, saw a big old brown bear approach the car behind them. She called out, "Dad! There's a BEAR behind you!"

Now George had been teasing his daughter for days about seeing mountain lions and snakes and bears in the park, so he of course assumed that she now was razzing him back (as they so often did). So he commented with a grin, "Yeah, sure."

The bear came closer. Nancy said it was huge in size. Again she warned her dad. He just smiled at her disbelievingly and shook his head.

Terrified, she took a couple steps back and opened the back door on the passenger's side. "Dad!" she yelled.

She recalled that he finally got a look on his face as if; hmmm... she can't be serious, can she? He sighed, straightened up and turned around.

And there it was, reared up on its hind legs, only about

*Continued on page 21*

## MWSA General Membership Meeting

*November 8-11, 2018*  
*Charleston, S. Carolina*

**ALL MEMBERS OF MWSA** should try to attend this year's conference. It's a great opportunity to network, learn from others, and be involved with the future of the Society. We have decided to hold the conference at the Hilton Garden Inn in Mount Pleasant, SC, and as with last year's conference, we have kept costs low without taking away from the quality of the location or the presentations. In fact, this year we hope to have a couple of key players in the publishing industry talk to us. More to come.

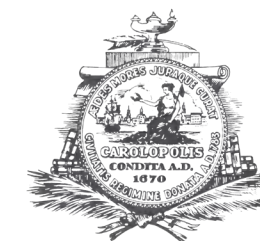
The Awards Banquet will be held the evening of November 10. Your conference fee will cover your attendance at the Banquet. Guests are welcome, but please note if you bring a guest there will be an additional charge.

We plan on putting on a free, one day writing course at the VA clinic in Charleston on the 8th. Any members in the area on the 8th are invited to attend. Additional specifics will be available in the future.

Please annotate your calendars to save the date. The registration form will be available on our website in the next month or so. Early bird registration will run through June this year, since the conference is in November.

As a reminder, we will honor cancellation refund requests until the last minute possible; however, once we have to lock in meals, etc. with the hotel, refunds will not be possible. This usually happens around a week before the start of the conference.

If you want to participate in a panel or would like to give a presentation, please contact Bob Doerr at [rddoerr@cs.com](mailto:rddoerr@cs.com).





# MWSA Recommended Reading List – Winter 2017-18

By Bob Doerr

The Military Writers Society of America (MWSA) is an organization of hundreds of writers, poets, and artists drawn together by a common bond of military service. One purpose of our Society is to review the written works of our members. From a compilation of books by our members, we've selected the following as our 2017-18 Winter Recommended Reading List:

*Stump* by Larry Allen Lindsey

*Small as a Mustard Seed* by Shelli Johnson

*Don't Label Me* by Sandra Miller Linhart

*Vala's Bed* by Joyce Faulkner

*Hitler's Time Machine* by Robert F Dorr

*Kissed by the Snow* by Dennis Koller

*Damned Yankee* by Carolyn Schriber

*The Life of Steve McQueen* by Dwight Zimmerman

*Greed Can Kill* by Bob Doerr

*The Men Who Killed the Luftwaffe* by Jay A Stout

*Yankee in Atlanta* by Jocelyn Green

*Murder is for the Birds* by Pat McGrath Avery

*A Call to Arms* by William C. Hammond

*The Man Called Brown Condor* by Thomas E Simmons

This quarter's list is shorter than most because it comes after our Awards Banquet and before the review season begins. These books reflect the works of a number of our past award winners. I know many of you might be thinking about digging out of the snow, but why bother? More snow and cold are on their way. I'd much rather be reading a good mystery, some historical fiction, someone's stories about their experiences in conflict, (heck, I can read most anything) than going outside to fight Mother Nature. Didn't someone once say that reading was our most valuable pastime? Someone should have. If you're looking for a good read, just look at this list. More info about the books and authors in MWSA can be found at [www.mwsadispatches.com](http://www.mwsadispatches.com).

MARGARITIS  
Continued from 18

ten feet away. George whirled around, his eyes now popped open, yelled at Nancy to get in the car, tossed the food containers into the back end, and slammed the tailgate door shut, propelling the food all over the place. He jumped into the car, they roared over to where his wife was. He rushed her into the Ford, and took off like a bat out of hell.

Nancy ended the story with a smile. "It was always like that with dad," she said. "We never had a vacation. It was always an adventure."

THAT'S the guy I want the readers to get to know.

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*Twenty-Two on Peleliu* (Casemate Publishers - ISBN: 978-1-61200-527-0) can be purchased at any major book outlet, including Barnes & Noble, Amazon.

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*Lander, Wyoming*





## THE BIG SCREEN COMES TO PHU CAT

*Joe Campolo Jr. (from The Works of Joe Campolo blog)*



*The Phu Cat theater and stage provided both film and live entertainment of all kinds*

**ONE OF THE NICER AMENITIES** provided by the U.S. military for American GI's in Vietnam was the opportunity to view feature films. (The word feature being highly subjective) Most medium and large U.S. military facilities had a movie theatre of one type or another. The real large bases in Danang and Saigon actually had indoor theaters, complete with air conditioning and concession stands. When I was in Danang for a short time I was able to catch an indoor movie while munching buttery popcorn in a reclining seat; at a nice cool 72 degrees. (Heaven on earth) I was never in Saigon, but I understand the theater at the air and army base there was every good as any large cinema back in the states.

The Phu Cat Airbase, though not as large as many other facilities in Vietnam, boasted a movie theater; albeit out door and somewhat Spartan. The small theater and stage was put up in 1968 specifically to host a USO show by Bob Hope and company. Standing on the edge of the base, the screen faced the western perimeter. While this solved a light pollution problem, it did provide somewhat of a security problem, as the men watching the late night entertainment now sat with their backs facing a very active (and dangerous) Vietnamese countryside. As a result of this security risk, all attendees were required to wear flak vests and helmets as they sat through the feature; keeping in mind that it was normally around ninety eight degrees Fahrenheit with the humidity being close to one hundred percent. And of course during the monsoon season the viewing audiences would be subjected to torrential rains. (But the show must go on)

The security problem manifested itself often, as a close inspection of the large screen revealed a surface pock-marked by bullet holes, both large and small caliber. The bullet and shrapnel holes, though patched up on a regular basis, were soon replaced by new ones. Rumor had it that one particular Vietcong sniper, who preferred westerns, would take pot shots at movies he didn't care for. I personally viewed several films at the theater and had to run for cover on two of those occasions; one of which was a short mortar attack not directed at the theater specifically, but a threat nonetheless. The other involved a VC (or other disgruntled film fan) sniper who shot at the movie screen during the film. Having been shot at before, I recognized the popping of air past my ears well before I heard the report of the weapon; and along with the others present I scrambled for cover under the aluminum bench seats. Fortunately no one was hit that night.

It was no surprise to us that the VC or anyone else would take exception to the films, both from a quality or content stand point. Most of our supplies at Phu Cat came from the army facility at Qui Nhon, a coastal town about thirty miles away. From Qui Nhon our supplies and materials stopped at one or two other compounds in route before reaching Phu Cat. By the time the films arrived at Phu Cat they were often in country for several months; the heat and humidity not to mention wear and tear from repeated use wore them down considerably.

Our films usually broke several times during the performance much to the chagrin of the film projector who was known to one and all as "Lester". (What else) Outside of the local VC, who often ruined our sleep with their shenanigans, our film projector "Lester" was the most despised man at Phu Cat. We often had the same movie for weeks, and only out of insane boredom could I drag myself to go see some of them. The movies were mostly old westerns from the thirties, forties and fifties, and if any of them got close to seeing an academy award it would have been only through geography perhaps. How many people remember "Johnny Mac Brown"? Yep....not exactly top flite entertainment.

When the film broke, as aforementioned, the viewing crowd went after Lester like an angry lynch mob. They showered him with obscenities, and threw debris at his little projection booth in the middle of the viewing stands. On several occasions he was dragged out of the booth and beaten, prompting the Apes (Air Police) to

be summoned to quell the disturbance. I felt sorry for the guy; kind of like one does for Barney Fife on the Andy Griffith show. You gleefully know a disaster will occur that Barney is responsible for, yet you're glad when Andy takes pity and bails him out. Unfortunately Andy wasn't anywhere near Phu Cat and old Lester took more abuse than a telemarketer at suppertime. I often wondered how poor old Lester got stuck with that duty. Between VC snipers and the surly audience, Marines at Khe Sanh took less abuse than Lester.



*USO shows drew GI's from far and wide*

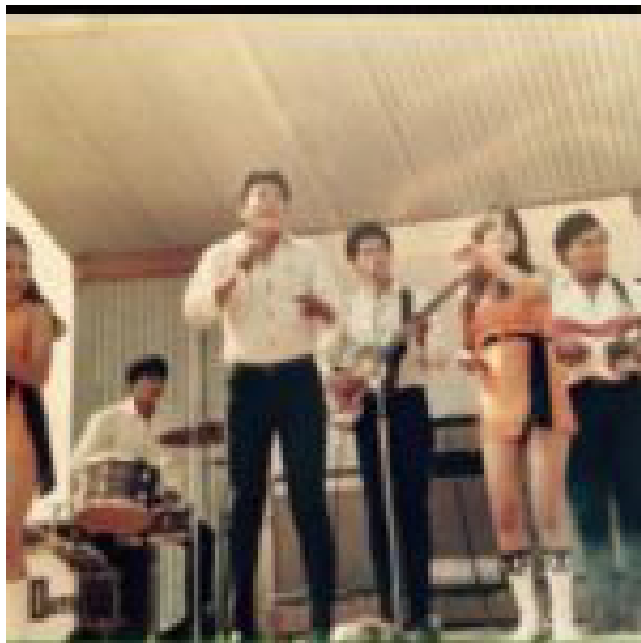
The newly installed electrical grid on base provided plenty of power for the theatre and any accessories required. A stage was built in front of the screen and in addition to the Bob Hope show in '68, many other USO shows were held there as well. The USO contracted with many Asian entertainment groups to perform for American GI's in Vietnam. Korean, Filipino and Thai bands performed often and "Plowed Maly" along with many other pop favorites would be belted out, albeit with a unique Asian dialect.

After an internal investigation by the U.S. military during that time, it was revealed that a group of senior NCO's responsible for the USO shows in Vietnam were skimming off the top. (Reference my book The Kansas NCO) This was no surprise to anyone, as the same performers visited Phu Cat over and over again...no matter how bad they were.

The quality of the musical performances by these bands was often determined by the amount of alcohol the audience had consumed; (despite having been barred from these shows) however the bands knew what the



American GI's really came for...and they gave it to them. Each band contained several young girls who, scantily clad, would gyrate to the music in the steaming Vietnamese heat. The young, robust GI's, months away from home, would yell, scream and dance along with the nubile young women, while pressing as close to the stage as they could. Security police kept a close watch on these performances, as GI's would often encroach upon the stage while attempting to grope the dancers. Performances were stopped on many occasions, as hordes of lustful men would breach the stage all at one time. When this happened the entertainers would flee in terror as the beleaguered and badly outnumbered security police would futilely attempt to stop the surge of alcohol fueled, hormonal crazed GI's.



*The USO knew what the GI's wanted*

Despite the questionable quality and condition of the films and USO bands you couldn't keep GI's away from these shows with a gun. (Which was often tried, as previously noted) Entertainment was at a premium and any chance to get away from the glum reality of the war was taken. Troops who came in out of the field took advantage of the theater as much as they could; some just came to grab a place to sleep. If they caught any part of the show, so be it, but they enjoyed their short respite from life in the bush. Local villagers would often sit outside the wire and watch the entertainment as well. Come darkness, however, they would melt away into

the night; as the territory was now occupied by Vietcong and trigger-happy American perimeter guards.

And despite any problems regarding the movies and USO shows, any GI who served in Vietnam has fond memories of those movies and shows, and probably photos as well. Bob Hope, Ann Margaret, Chris Noel, James Brown, Sammy Davis Jr, Martha Raye, Raquel Welch and many other performers took time out of their lives and schedules to visit and entertain us in Vietnam. It wasn't easy for them either; they had to deal with the heat, the monsoons, the bugs and the VC just as we did. And thanks also to the many Asian performers who provided us with entertainment ...of all kinds.

But we can still look back and chuckle at the various adventures and misadventures surrounding our outdoor theater at Phu Cat.....And Lester...if you're still out there somewhere...thanks for taking all that abuse and showing us those great films back in the day!



VisualLightBox.com

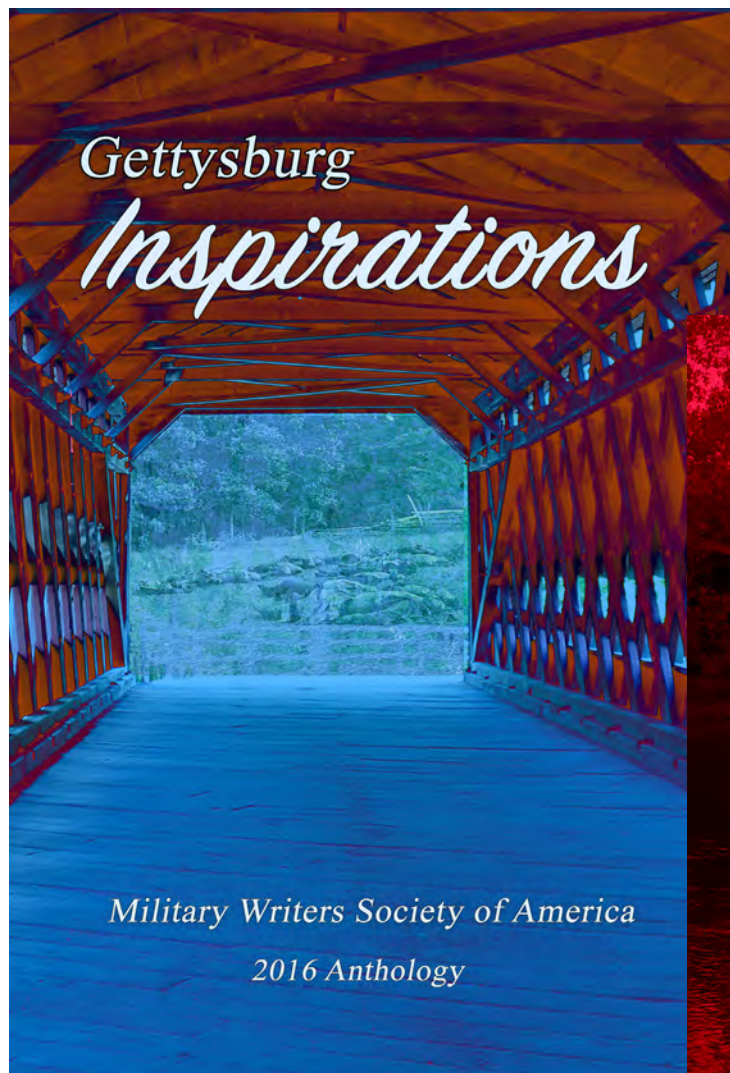


Fast moving memoir of adventure, romance, history and nostalgia. A youth from Queens, NYC. Soldier at 15, met his sweetheart at 20 and proposed the next day. He faced the unknown of the Korean War. This young couple sprints ahead through adversity, tears, laughter and success to attain the American Dream. Journey with them on their path of chance and uncertainty now looking back and enjoying their triumphs and *A Time To Remember*. You will laugh and a tear may also sneak up on you. 400+ pages and 150+ pictures will inspire and entertain anyone.

THIS BOOK IS AVAILABLE AT:  
[www.amazon.com/dp/1943581096](http://www.amazon.com/dp/1943581096)



# 2016 Military Writers Society of America Anthologies



## PEOPLE I MEET

Pat McGrath Avery

**I LOVE THE STORIES I HEAR** when I have a booth at an event. One weekend at the Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival in Harlingen, TX, three people shared their stories.

A man talked about his uncle, a Mexican citizen who escaped the infamous 1843 Dawson Massacre, a battle between Texas and Mexico that took place at Salado Creek near San Antonio. During the battle fifty-four Texans under the leadership of Nicholas Mosby Dawson, arrived on the battlefield at the rear of the Mexican troops. The battle raged until the Mexican general, Adrian Woll, sent his cavalry in with two cannons. Dawson raised the white flag to surrender but both sides continued to fire. By the battle's end Dawson and 36 of his men were killed and fifteen captured.

Another woman had an uncle who worked on building the Panama Canal. President Theodore Roosevelt had supported Panama's fight for independence, which it gained in 1903. The new country signed a treaty with the US providing a ten-mile wide strip of land for a canal to connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The US paid \$10 million in an upfront payment and \$250,000 annually. The canal was completed in 1914. More than 5,600 of the 56,000 people who worked on the canal died in accidents.

In 1977, President Jimmy Carter signed the Panama Canal Treaty, which promised to give Panama control of the canal by 2000. The US officially honored the treaty on December 31, 1999.

I met a woman whose grandmother ran a boarding house. One particular man would do some type of physical labor during the day, spend his hard-earned money on liquor and finish off a bottle every night. The lady wondered why her grandmother would bother with a drunk - until she heard his story.

He was a German Jew during Hitler's reign of terror. His entire family was sent to Auschwitz. He escaped because Hitler liked the way he shined shoes. Later some people arranged his escape to Ireland where he was sold to a potato farmer. Years later, he came to the United States. His first friend here turned out to be a criminal. One night while the two of them were together the guy robbed a store, killing someone in the process. The German Jew ended up in prison. "I understood why he drank after that," the woman told me.

In each case, I want to hear more of the story.





# GOOD-BYE, JERRY YELLIN

Joyce Faulkner

**MOST OF US MET JERRY** Yellin at the MWSA Orlando Conference in 2009. He was square-jawed and superman handsome—the image of a war hero to those of us who were the children of World War II veterans.

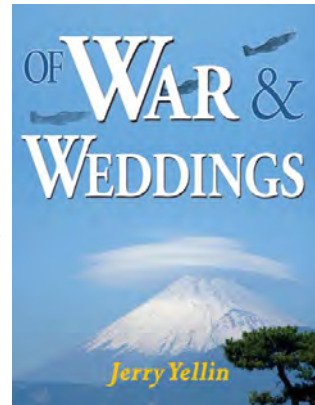


Jerry was a P-51 pilot who strafed in support of the Marines fighting on Iwo Jima in March 1945. Since my dad was a Marine machine gunner there at the time, this immediately endeared Jerry to me. After the island was secured, Jerry continued the fight over Japan from the airfield that had been secured during the 36-day battle. He flew the final mission of World War II on August 14, 1945. In fact, Phillip Schlambert, his wingman, was the last person killed in combat in WWII.

Jerry was both strong and sensitive, willing to show his complicated emotions about his service. He won an award that year for his book, *Of War and Weddings*. In it, he told the story of his bitterness toward the Japanese after the war. He hated them, he once told me through

clenched teeth. He hated them so much. I understood. My dad felt the same way.

Yet, life threw Jerry an unexpected curveball. His son Robert moved to Japan and married a Japanese woman whose father had been a Kamikaze pilot. *Of War and Weddings* followed Jerry's journey as he came to terms with this reality and then through the process of making peace with his son's new in-laws. Jerry's growth touched me personally—and everyone who read this painful but extraordinary memoir.



Our paths crossed several times since he also belonged to the Iwo Jima Association of America and I did their newsletter for a while. Several years ago, Jerry took his sons, Robert and Michael, and his half-Japanese grandson, Simon, back to Iwo Jima. He wanted them to appreciate the enormity of what happens in war. After this trip, Michael Yellin wrote a moving piece which I published in the IJAA Newsletter:

*"We arrived on Iwo Jima at about eight a.m. and departed at around four p.m." Michael wrote. "The trip, the first time he had been back to the island since the war, was emotional and difficult for my father. He cried as his feet touched the ground and again when he stood on top of Mount Suribachi, where he recited the names of his comrades in the 78th Fighter Squadron who died during the war. He told us that when he was on Iwo Jima all he could think about was home and when he finally came home all he could think about was Iwo Jima. He recited his experiences there, of the mass graves, of the piles of dead bodies, of the stench of death, of living in fox holes, experiences that haunted him and affected his life until this very day..."*

A ceremony atop Suribachi touched Jerry and his children and grandson deeply:

*"On a plateau overlooking the invasion beach north*

*of Mount Suribachi, Japanese and American honor guards stood at attention as delegates, including the US Ambassador to Japan, the US Marine Commandant, and Yoshitaka Shindo, the grandson of the commander of Japanese troops on Iwo Jima, Tadamiichi Kuribayashi who died during the battle, spoke about the courage and dedication of the soldiers that fought on the eight-square-mile island, the now strong alliance between the two countries, and their hopes for peace."*

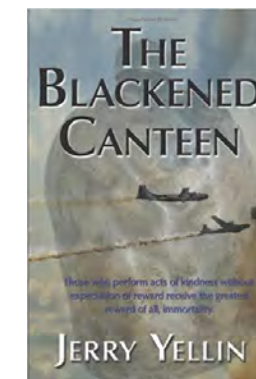


Michael's article included a photo of a giant peace symbol drawn in the sand on the very beach my father ran across on February 19, 1945—armed, determined, and terrified. Every time I see that image, I choke up... for Daddy, for those on both sides who never left that island alive, and for Jerry and his family...and the other veterans who suffered long after the guns went silent.

The next time I saw Jerry, he had become an advocate for those suffering from post-traumatic stress. Having struggled with the symptoms of this condition for most

of his post war life, he was determined to help others. His method since the 1970s was Transcendental Meditation. He was especially concerned about the young soldiers coming back from Iraq and Iran and traveled endlessly in support of their issues. He is quoted in his website:

*"We are all the same in the eyes of Nature. Human Beings! We cannot continue to kill people because of what we believe. We need to join together as humans or we as humans will destroy our home, the Planet we all inhabit."*



I remember him at one of our events. An old Marine—who had been wounded on Iwo but didn't actually lose his leg until months before his death a few years ago—wrote a memoir about his combat experiences and won an award for it. However, when he stood to receive his award, the years of painkillers and constant hospitalizations caught up with him and he faltered. Stumbling over his words, he repeated himself until the audience grew restless. When the old man finally finished, embarrassed by his inability to get to his point, Jerry Yellin stood up and applauded—alone. Soon the people at his table stood—then the next and the next. The exhausted Marine squeezed my hand and straightened his shoulders as pride and dignity returned. Later, I gave Jerry a hug and thanked him for his kindness. He scowled at me. "I'm not kind," he said. "I just know a great speech when I hear one."

Jerry wrote more books, including with Don Brown, *The Last Fighter Pilot: The True Story of the Last Combat Mission in World War II*. A documentary, *Last Man Standing*, remains unfinished. You can learn more about it here: <http://captain-jerryellin.com/last-man-standing-documentary-film/>



*The Resilient Warrior* by Jerry Yellin, Co-Chair, Operation Warrior Wellness, Dr. Sarina Grosswald. The cover features a yellow and orange background with the title in bold letters.



## ***THE BLUE, THE GRAY, AND THE RED***

### ***A Serialized Novella ~ Don Helin***

**TO WADE FOWLER, THE SON** of the late Robert and Beverly Fowler, giving back to Perry County was important to his parents. They founded the Robert H. and Beverly U. Fowler Foundation to support charitable and literary arts in central PA. Their foundation provided a grant to the Perry County Council of the Arts to assist local writers involved in creating a novella to be published in a series of newspaper installments.

The PCCA, with executive director Erika Juran, has collaborated with its students and faculty from their "A Novel Idea" workshops. A Novel Idea was formed by PCCA members Don Helin and Roger Smith in May 2014 to help writers draft and market their novels. The PCCA is proud to showcase an art form popular in the time of Charles Dickens, and offer readers a historically themed serial novella.

Real places and events are woven together with fictional characters set in Perry County's Civil War era, 1863. This story, titled *The Blue, the Gray, and the Red*, will be published in five installments as an insert in the Perry County Times beginning in January 2018. Student writers assisted by their mentor will write each segment. Catherine Jordan, as editor, will review all the work to ensure continuity. The story includes historical pictures and artwork.

The story's premise involves sisters Matilde Kesler, a devout braucher (spiritual and natural healer), and petulant young Abigail. The sisters are left behind to manage the family homestead after their mother perished in a fire and their father left to fight in the Civil War. Josiah, a seriously injured Confederate soldier, stumbles out of the woods and onto their property. When

Matilde decides to nurse the beguiling soldier back to health, and the man Abigail loves is drafted, resentment builds. Abigail consults a witch in a selfish act that brings swift, unintentional consequences.

Carrie Jacobs, a third year student writer, wrote the first installment with mentoring from editor and facilitator, Catherine Jordan. Ms. Jacobs spent fifteen years as a newspaper columnist, and frequently writes articles for a local non-profit. Carrie laid the story's groundwork, and introduced conflict strong enough to carry the entire novella. Her guidelines were simple; set the project during the Civil War somewhere in Perry County, and include a supernatural element.

Carrie chose Shermans Dale as the setting, mainly for its proximity to Sterretts Gap, Gettysburg, Harrisburg, and Duncannon. She selected March 1863 because President Lincoln had just signed the Draft Act, and the country was four months away from the Battle at Gettysburg.

"The most challenging part," says Carrie, "has been writing without ending the story, leaving enough conflict and loose ends for the next writers to pick up where I left off."

Ms. Jordan, a horror novelist and short story author, has been featured in a variety of anthologies and on-line publications, and is a contributor to *The Burg* magazine. She has been a judge for the Bram Stoker Award and for the ITW Young Adult Award. Ms. Jordan also facilitates several writing courses and critique groups.

*Continued on page 34*

## **Attention Members of MWSA:**

We are offering another benefit to members of Military Writers Society of America. If you are launching a new book, send us the good news and we will introduce it to our MWSA audience. The first three submissions each quarter will receive a 1/3 page ad (\$100 value for non-members) in *Dispatches*. On submission, you will be told if your book will appear in the magazine. If you miss the magazine, you can request an announcement in the monthly email blast.

In addition, each issue of *Dispatches* will feature one two-page spread MWSA author interview which will include cover art, author headshot and bio. The interview will be limited to the first request each quarter.

Here are the rules:

- ✓ You must be a member in good standing of MWSA.
- ✓ Your book must be published, complete with an ISBN. We will not accept ARCs or manuscripts.
- ✓ Your date of publication must be no more than twelve months before requested date of ad in.
- ✓ Your book must comply with the rules specified by the Awards Program, i.e., no pornography, must be respectful of the government of the United States of America and the United States Military.

Here's how to submit:

- ✓ Submit your cover art (jpg), genre and subcategory, a summary, and where your book can be purchased.
- ✓ The quarter you would like your ad to appear in.
- ✓ If you would like a staff member to interview you for a full article about your book, please indicate that in your submission. Only one interview per issue, so first come first serve.
- ✓ Send to [patavery@gmail.com](mailto:patavery@gmail.com)



*Branson, Missouri*



# HISTORIC ST. CHARLES, MO

*Pat McGrath Avery*

**HISTORIC TOWNS OOZE CHARM** and St. Charles, Missouri, fits the mold perfectly. The old buildings have been kept up and the diversity of architectural styles is delightful. Add that the buildings house unique little shops and boutiques, restaurants and galleries, and the town is a great destination.



Last May when we visited, the number of people strolling along the streets and visiting the shops on an early weekday evening amazed me. Although the stores were closing, people didn't seem to mind. Maybe they had been there in time to shop and now were simply enjoying a beautiful May evening. It's the perfect time of

year in Missouri - winter is gone and summer heat is still in the future.

It's a dog-friendly community. Many visitors brought their furry friends along and some of the businesses do their best to make them comfortable. That's always important for those of us who travel with our doggies.

Just a block off the main street, the Missouri River slowly flows toward the Mississippi. Although the river was quiet, signs of recent flooding were everywhere. Huge piles of debris still lined a section of the river. However, it's obvious that the area is a great place to enjoy riverfront activities.

Lewis & Clark met here on the banks of the river to begin their westward expedition. Today a commemorative statue stands proudly with the Missouri River as its backdrop.

St. Charles is on the Katy Trail (named for the former rail line for the Missouri, Kansas and Texas railroad, the MKT). Whenever I stop along the trail, I meet people and St. Charles was no exception. When we took Luke's picture, we met a couple of guys from New York who stopped to have their photo taken in front of the statue.

St. Charles has an interesting history. Founded by Louis Blanchette,



a French Canadian fur trader, in 1769, it was under Spanish control until the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. In 1804, Lewis and Clark began their expedition from the area.

Daniel Boone built a family homestead nearby and the town became the starting point of the Santa Fe Trail and the Oregon Trail.

In 1818, St. Philippine Duchesne opened the first free girls' school west of the Mississippi. From 1821 - 1826, the town served as Missouri's first state capitol. German settlers developed a wine region during the 1800s. Today St. Charles is in the midst of Missouri's wine country.

I experienced a tiny smattering of what the town has to offer and it's definitely on my "return" list. Next time I plan to take the trolley tour and learn more about the area and its history.



For more information about Historic St. Charles, Missouri as your next vacation destination, check out their website:

[www.discoverstcharles.com](http://www.discoverstcharles.com)

You'll find a list of events, things to do while there, food and drink, places to stay, and just about anything else you may want to know about before heading out to explore.





NOVELLA  
Continued from page 30

“This project is a perfect example of the practicum offered within our program,” says Jordan. “I knew Carrie could write an engaging launch that will have readers wanting more, and I can’t wait to see where our writers take this project.”

Angela Binner, also a student writer, follows with the second installment. Ms. Binner, a ninth grade English teacher, earned her MA in creative fiction from Seton Hill University. “Carrie did a fantastic job of developing characters and setting,” says Binner. “My job, as I saw it, was to build the tension through additional conflicts.”

For Binner, the project involved two subjects of fascination—the Civil War and Pennsylvania Dutch Magic—along with the chance to work one-on-one with an established writer, Laurie Edwards.

Laurie Edwards, a former teacher and librarian, is the author of magazine articles, and print books under several pen names. The founder and former owner of Leap Books, a small YA publishing house, she also works as a freelance editor and copy editor for several educational publishers.

“One of our goals as teachers,” according to Edwards, “is to pass along our hard-earned knowledge and make it easier for beginning writers to learn the craft and avoid many of the pitfalls in the industry. As their skills improved, we hoped to provide opportunities for them to experience publication.”

Cindy Simmons, a second year student with the Perry County Council of the Arts writing workshop, and newest faculty facilitator, Heather Heyford, partner for the third installment. Ms. Simmons, a former political reporter, teaches journalism at Penn State’s University Park

Campus. Ms. Heyford sold her first romance novel in 2014 to Kensington Publishing’s then-new digital imprint, Lyrical Press. Having garnered a following in digital, her first mass market paperback series launches in 2018.

Sandra Bush, a student in the A Novel Idea II program, and founder/facilitator Don Helin have the fourth installment. Ms. Bush authored articles in the Pennsylvania School Board Association’s magazine, *The Bulletin*, and the online magazine, *Keystone Edge*. She worked in advertising, and museum script writing, and is the Area 5 Representative for Pennwriters. Mr. Helin is a published novelist whose thrillers draw from his military experience. His novel, *Secret Assault*, was selected as the best Suspense/Thriller at the 2015 Indie Book Awards. Don has been active with the Perry County Council of the Arts for almost twenty years.

Brenda Taydach, a participant in the charter “A Novel Idea” writing workshop, and facilitator/editor Catherine Jordan tackle the fifth and final piece. Ms. Taydach is a freelance writer and contributor to the Dauphin County publication *Woman*. She has also been published in several newspapers and online publications.

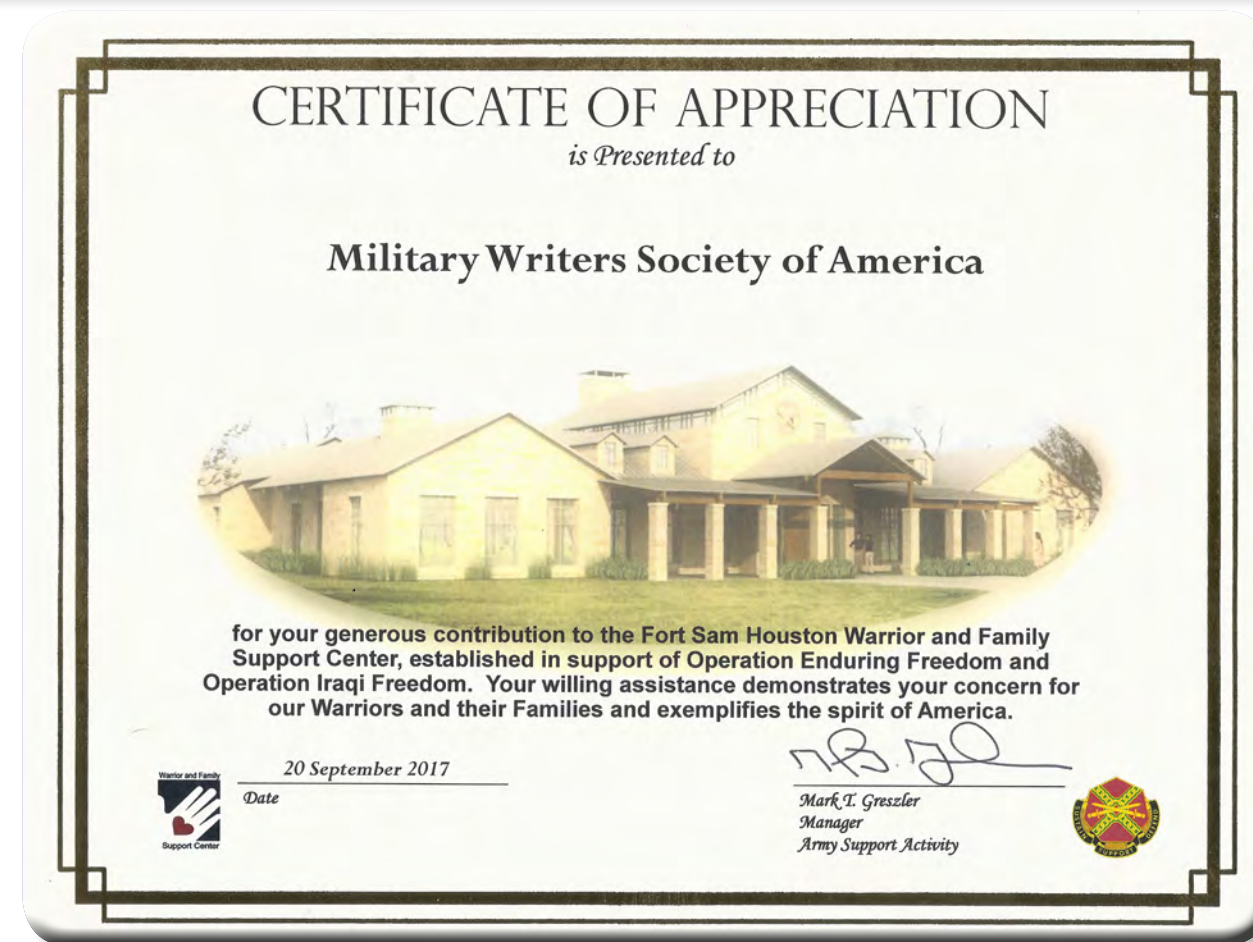
Lawrence Knorr, founder and CEO of Sunbury Press, has agreed to publish the complete story as a novella in book format. Look for the first section of this series to begin January 2018.

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**The Novel Idea** runs a one-year workshop on how to draft a novel. One of the programs the students can compete for is writing a serialized novel, like the above. For more information, contact Don Helin at [DHelin@copper.net](mailto:DHelin@copper.net)

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Wallowa Lake, Oregon





# LEAVING OUT THE PARTS THAT READERS TEND TO SKIP

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**ELMORE LEONARD'S TENTH RULE** for writing a novel is 'Leave out the parts that readers tend to skip.' Every writer seems to know the rule but almost no one knows how to find those parts and get rid of them. Thank goodness there are some runes and mile markers to help point the way. Before we begin, let me insert this caveat. This article is for educational purposes only. In referring to published works that are copyrighted it makes fair use of such material within 17 USC Sections 106, 106a, and 107.

Let's start with the premise that readers don't know at the beginning of a book what the story is. The clues in the first paragraph are signals to something, but to what? Let's look at the first paragraph of *The DaVinci Code* by Dan Brown:

*"Renowned curator Jacques Sauniere staggered through the vaulted archway of the museum's Grand Gallery. He lunged for the nearest painting he could see, a Caravaggio. Grabbing the gilded frame, the seventy-six year old man heaved the masterpiece toward himself until it tore from the wall and Sauniere collapsed backward in a heap beneath the canvas."*

What were the signals? Unfortunately, in this example, most of Brown's adjectives are either miscues or are unnecessary. 'Renowned, curator, Jacques, and seventy-six year old' read like an obituary, particularly when Sauniere collapses. Words like 'Grand Gallery' and 'gilded frame' don't contribute to what happens to Sauniere. If the painting he grabbed is a Caravaggio, calling it a masterpiece is redundant. Of course it's a masterpiece! By the time I finished

reading it the first time, I was wondering how one heaves a painting toward oneself and whether one man under a canvas constituted a heap. But mainly I thought the book was about Sauniere, a painting, and the layout of the Louvre. It wasn't. So, ultimately, I pondered whether the reader would have been given a cleaner slate if the paragraph had been written approximately like this:

*"Sauniere staggered through the vaulted archway of the museum's Gallery. He lunged for the nearest painting he could see, a Caravaggio. Grabbing (its) frame, the old man tore it from the wall and collapsed (on the floor) beneath the canvas."*

I suspect Brown fell prey to a curse all of us face, the urge to show off all that research in an attempt to prove we know what we're writing about. I once wrote about the D-Day landings in Normandy and did intensive research about the process of opening the bow doors of an LST. When I read a draft of the resulting manuscript, it went something like, "The landing ship lurched onto the shingle beach and its giant doors swung open on enormous steel barrel hinges manufactured by Pittsburgh Iron Works and with load ratings of 25,000 pounds per square inch, winched by 1 ¾ steel cables..." The story wasn't about the doors, or the hinges, or the cables and it wasn't about my research. What was the story about?

The three things readers look for when they open a book:

Who is the book about?

What is the book about?

Where do I come in?

I believe that of all those, number three is the most important. Readers want to see themselves somewhere in the story. They bring their own personal experiences, their interests, and their expectations to the book they set out to read. In the case of *The DaVinci Code*, the extra words sounded like words I read almost every day in the local paper: adjectives about who just died and how. Worse, the paragraph was a miscue to me regarding who the book was about and what it was about. When the scene shifted to a murderously religious albino, I was so far beyond both my life's experiences and my expectations that I had great difficulty buying in to the fiction of the story. Before long, I was skipping lots of paragraphs in my hunt for who and what the book was about and where I fitted into it.

So, what are some of the techniques that writers apply to leave out the parts that readers tend to skip?

Don't hide your story from the reader. Lay it down quickly. One knows from the first paragraph of *A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian* that an elderly parent is telling his middle-aged daughter he's about to marry a much younger woman. And she will not be allowed to meet his new wife until after the wedding. This who and what evokes every reader's personal fear that, as our parents age and get nutty, they'll do something crazy, like getting remarried at age 80. That's a story we all can see ourselves living.

Don't over-describe minor characters. One of the great characters of *Catch 22* was Major Major, who was promoted to major because of military bureaucratic ineptitude over his name. Would the novel have been any better if Joseph

Heller had included several set up pages about length Major Major's pre-war life as a college literature professor who had a particular disliking for Henry James? The guidepost is to know your characters, their backstories, their likes and dislikes and habits, then leave out everything about them that either doesn't contribute directly to the conflict or flesh out an essential backstory. Major Major's name did contribute. His distaste for Henry James did not. Out it went.

Don't over-describe details. Why? Because details are the biggest clues to the resolution of a conflict. An excess will mislead the reader to what the book is about. Bernard Cornwall's novel, *Azincourt*, is about Henry V's victory over the French army. His everyman hero goes into a stable, where an arrow maker is putting feathers on arrows for the coming battle.

*"I steam them, boy... Then I weights them, and with any luck I straighten them, and the fledging falls off because of the steam... And there's no silk... so I'm having to use sinew. ... But sinew's no good, it dries out, it shrinks, and it goes brittle. I've told Sir Roger we need silk thread, but he don't understand."*

This goes on in exquisite detail for almost three pages, with discussions of nocks, slivers of reinforcing horn, indented disks, varnish, and bodkins, but only one sentence about the coming battle. I fully expected the battle to hinge on those details. Guess what was never mentioned again...

And, finally, dialogue:

Write dialogue in which people talk like people talk about things that people actually do. This is where writers lose readers the most quickly. Conversations must seem like our conversations

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SKIP

*Continued from page 37*

or must meet our expectations for the story. We rarely speak in more than one or two sentence fragments and usually reply with either a one or two word reply or in a slightly longer disagreement or concurrence. Lengthy descriptions of anything sound made-up. And dialogue is like details: it should either support an element of the plot or describe a character. This is from *Gone with the Wind*, a passage in which Scarlett O'Hara is trapped in Atlanta with her nemesis, Melanie Wilkes, who is about to give birth to Ashley's baby. After assuring them that she knew all about how to deliver babies because she had helped her mammy do it lots of times, when the time came, Prissy fails: "Lawdy Miss Scarlett, I don' know nothin' 'bout birthin' babies." This one sentence tells us both about Prissy also underscores the real story: Scarlett expected to continue living in a world in which the ruling class collapsed because it was unable to do the dirty work and left it to others.

Perhaps the biggest trap is that of experience. Writers who have brought off one book have an unfortunate tendency to believe they've learned all there is to know. I suggest you should not

believe you've already written your best work but, rather, your best is yet to come. Work at it, edit it, use the delete key, and remove as many adjectives as possible. Don't explain anything, because readers like to do a bit of work for themselves. After all, what the reader wants to know more than anything is 'Where do I come in?'

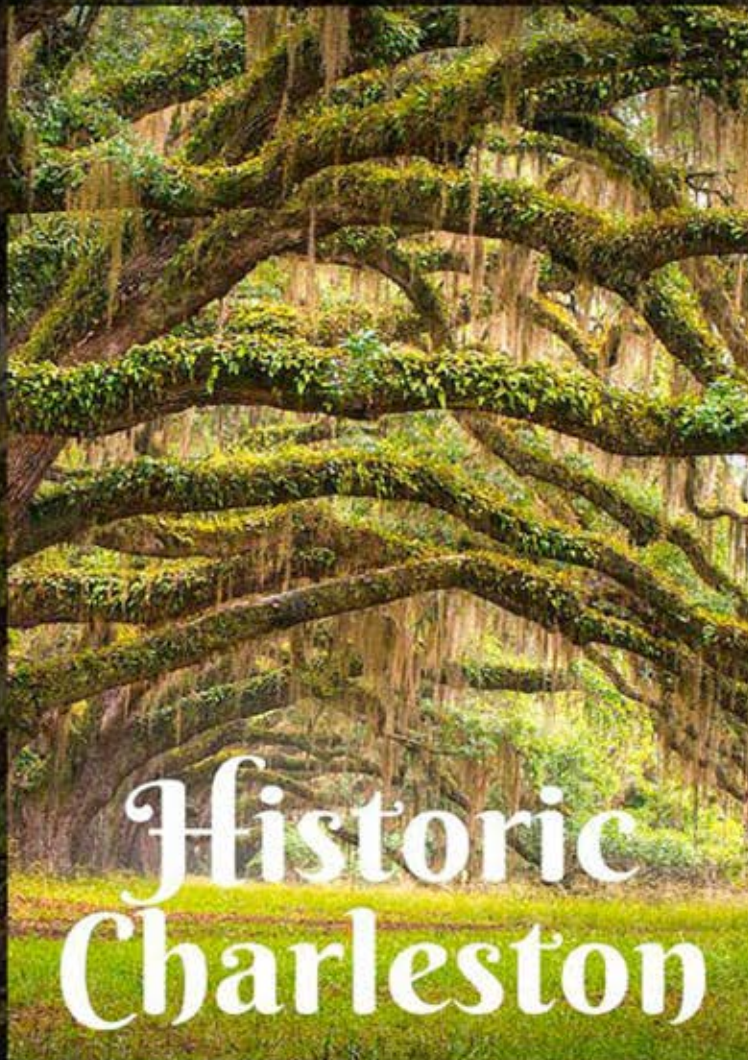
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