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WOMEN Writing the West

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www.WomenWritingtheWest.org

WASP Gold Brings Closure to Biography

By Sarah Byrn Rickman

On March 10, 2010, the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) received the Congressional Gold Medal for their service as civilians during World War II. A total of 1,102 women pilots flew for the U.S. Army Air Forces 1942-1944.

Twelve years ago, Nancy Batson Crews, a member of founder and leader Nancy Love's first WASP squadron of 28, challenged me to write the story of Love and that groundbreaking group of women ferry pilots. The result was *The Originals*. The welcomed fallout from Crews' challenge is the reason I am, today, the author of not only a WASP history, but a WASP novel (*Flight from Fear*, a WILLA Finalist), and three WASP biographies one not yet published.

Love's biography was published in 2008. Nancy Crews' biography came out last fall, 2009. I came to know Nancy Crews well,

through hours of conversation and one-on-one interviews over the two years before she died. Writing a biography is a very personal undertaking. We became close friends.

Now I'm finishing the biography of another of Nancy Love's originals, Dorothy Scott, one of 38 WASP to die during World War II. The Gold Medal events in Washington, D.C., held at the Air Force Memorial, included a Memorial Ceremony for the 38 WASP.

Tuesday, March 9, 2010, I carried Dorothy's red rose for her family in that ceremony.

Vice Admiral Vivien Crea, U.S. Coast Guard (Retired), escorted the WASP representative, Dawn Seymour. Together, they lay the commemorative wreath: two women in different shades of military blue—arm in arm—both aviators, each a daughter of her time and her war.

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WWW Business

Alice D. Trego, (801) 573-5309

e-mail: alicetrego@utahbroadband.com

WILLA Literary Awards

Sheila Wood Foard, (573) 323-4827

e-mail: SheilaWFoard@aol.com

Newsletter Committee

Editor

Doris Gardner-McCraw

e-mail: renawomyn@gmail.com or

dorismccraw@yahoo.com

Assistant Editor

Mary Trimble

e-mail: trimble@camano.net

Graphic Design

Jenny Hancey (303) 816-0396

e-mail: jenny@hanceydesign.com

Marketing Committee

Director

Mara Purl, e-mail: marapurl@aol.com

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Editor

Karen Casey Fitzjerrell

e-mail: kcfitz@sax.rr.com

Web Coordinator

www.WomenWritingtheWest.org

Donna Druchunas

e-mail: web@womenwritingthewest.org

Yahoo Groups Coordinator

Priscilla Maine

e-mail: maine@hughes.net or

maine@priscillamaine.com

Administrator & Inquiries

Joyce Lohse (303) 773-8349

e-mail: wwwl@lohseworks.com

Membership

Gwyn Ramsey

e-mail: gwynramsey@yahoo.com

Cover Photography by Nancy Godbout Jurka

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“Flight is by nature hazardous, and accidents not uncommon, especially in the frenzy of America at war,” Admiral Crea, the featured speaker, told the nearly 200 WASP, their families and friends gathered in remembrance. “Mechanical failure, disorientation, mid-air collisions and training accidents took their toll. ... 38 of you died in service to our nation.”



Photo by Sarah Rickman

Vice Admiral Vivien Crea, U.S. Coast Guard (retired) escorts WASP Memorials Chair Dawn Seymour for the memorial wreath laying.



Sarah places Dorothy's rose with those of other fallen WASP.

Photo courtesy U.S. Air Force (released)

Dorothy Scott was a good pilot—one of the first selected by Nancy Love to attend Pursuit School to learn to fly the Army's fastest, most complex WWII aircraft. Pursuit was the name for what, today, we call fighters. It was Dorothy's fate to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. She died December 3, 1943, in a training accident. She was 23.

I like to think that Dorothy, who hid a thoughtful and caring soul behind her fun-loving personality—a young woman who had so much going for her in 1943, and who would be 90 years old this year—watched the proceedings from the cockpit of some celestial Pursuit, like the earthly one she yearned to fly, but never did.

We who write biographies rarely know our subjects when they are alive. I got lucky

home” throughout his lifetime and donated them to the WASP Archive at Texas Woman's University before he died in 2001. The letters are the bulk of my biography of Dorothy together with everything else I have been able to learn about her completing the story.

But I couldn't finish it. I had no final chapter. Somehow, I couldn't leave “the end” of 67 years ago hanging. I lacked a “finis” that resonated for today's readers.

There at the Air Force Memorial on March 9, surrounded by her surviving sister WASP, I found the last chapter to her story and was able to let her go.

• **Sarah Rickman** is a former WWW president and WILLA chair and the author of four books about the women who flew in World War II.

Advertising Policy and Rates

pdf or jpg email files preferred

* Minimum of 300 dpi resolution, and b/w or greyscale only.

Ad Sizes:	W	x	H
Full pg	7.5"	x	9.75"
Half pg	7.5"	x	4.75"
Quarter	3.625"	x	4.75"
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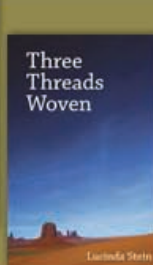
2010 WILLA Award Winners and Finalists



Contemporary Fiction

◀ **Winner**
 Wild Sorrow,
 Sandi Ault,
 Berkley Prime Crime/
 Penguin Group USA

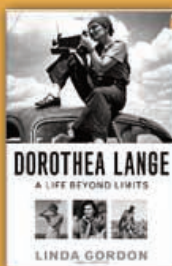
Finalists ▶
 A Sandhills Ballad
 Ladette Randolph
 University of New Mexico Press
 Three Threads Woven
 Lucinda Stein
 iUniverse



Creative Nonfiction

◀ **Winner**
 No Place Like Home:
 Notes From a Western Life
 Linda Hasselstrom
 University of Nevada Press

Finalists ▶
 The Last of the Wild West
 Cowgirls: A True Story
 Kay Turnbaugh, Perigo Press
 Riding the Edge of an Era:
 Growing Up Cowboy on the
 Outlaw Trail, Diana Allen Kouris
 High Plains Press



Scholarly Nonfiction

◀ **Winner**
 Dorothea Lange,
 A Life Beyond Limits
 Linda Gordon
 W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

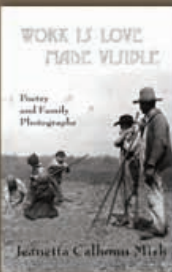
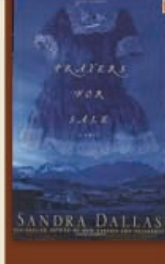
Finalists ▶
 Red Light Women of the Rocky
 Mountains, Jan Mackell
 University of New Mexico Press
 Finalist: Montana Women
 Homesteaders, A Field of One's Own
 author/editor Sarah Carter
 Farcountry Press



Historical Fiction

◀ **Winner**
 My Name is Falon:
 One Woman's Saga from
 Scotland to the Texas Frontier
 Kim Wiese
 Brown Books

Finalists ▶
 Prayers for Sale
 Sandra Dallas
 St. Martin's Press
 The Sky Took Him
 Donis Casey
 Poisoned Pen Press



Poetry

◀ **Winner**
 Work Is Love Made Visible
 Jeanetta Calhoun Mish
 West End Press

Finalist ▶
 Infinite Possibilities:
 A Haiku Journal
 Laurie Wagner Buyer
 Filter Press, LLC



Original Softcover (Trade or Mass Market)

◀ **Winner**
 A Flickering Light
 Jane Kirkpatrick
 WaterBrook Press/Random House

Finalists ▶
 What Lies West
 LaDene Morton
 iUniverse
 Counting the Cost
 Liz Adair
 Inglegstone Publishing



Children's/Young Adult Fiction & Nonfiction

◀ **Winner**
 Hellie Jondoe
 Randall Platt
 Texas Tech University Press

Finalists ▶
 The Healing One: Book One of the
 Dreamwalker Trilogy
 Deb Murzyn, Publish America
 The White Ox, the Journey of
 Emily Swain Squires
 Ruth Hailstone, Illustrator: Dan Burr
 Boyds Mills Press



Hopscotching to the Writing Square

By Carol Devlin

“How did you go from the lovely, beaded creative mode to award-winning short story?” you asked.

I’ve always written little blurbs about the events in my life so I could sit down in my old age and relive those worthy of note. All through my working years I did crafts of one kind or another. And finally in 1997, retirement . . . I thought. Instead, I started playing things-to-do hopscotch.

Retirement supplies, collected for years, surrounded me with entertainment possibilities. I hopped onto the first chalk square and treated myself to a new Bernina with embroidery attachment. Then I discovered a pattern for bears made from fake fur and a wonderful shop that sold the fur – and a whole wall of silk ribbon. The next chalk squares were silk ribbon embroidery, making bobbin lace where I first designed my own patterns, tatting wedding hankies, stamping, making and selling wine charms to the new brewery in Evergreen, and my first dazzling bead show at the Merchandise Mart where I met the owners of the largest bead distribution business just 40 miles from my house. “Come and shop any time.”

One of my four sisters showed me how to bead on a loom, and I stood poised on one leg on the lone middle square of the chalk grid. I landed on the next two squares—beading and pattern design, then designed my own loom. You can’t make money selling completed craft projects – especially my purses that took hours to design and forty hours to bead, line, and put together. The next hop in 2003 was to publish my tiny book of twelve patterns and sell my looms—both are still selling.

The navigation of a long journey on my own taught me a little, and won an EVVY* award for, *The Little Coin Purse*. People began to ask questions about publishing. I helped establish a writers’ group to share my meager experience and bring in speakers to share with all of us the huge world of writing and publishing.

A critique group of fiction writers took me in and urged me to write something. What could I possibly write that people would want to read? Then, one day I told

them an event that happened on the farm and we were all in stitches. “Write that down and bring it in just so you have something for us to critique.” The word slaughter comes to mind. They wanted more.

Parents don’t usually talk about the mean things they did so writing about our lives on the prairie of western Kansas would be an eye-opener for my sister’s children. I decided to combine the copies. The stories flowed in such a flurry, I had to make a list of stories to be told. My keyboard hummed day and night for a year, through about 125 stories. The affect, when read at various gatherings, amazed me. Most people laughed, some, even elderly men, cried. I watched in awe, a room full of people who barely knew each other, suddenly vying for the opportunity to tell their story, as the room filled with chatter, laughter, and slapping of knees. “Read that one again,” they’d say.

Then my friend of thirty years, the sister of your very own Jan Cleere, called.

“I know you’re writing something and wanted to ask if you’d be interested in attending a convention of Women Writing the West in Colorado Springs. My sister, Janice, is receiving an award for her latest book and none of us can be there for her. I hate that she won’t have family to sit with at the banquet and share her success. Besides, you might enjoy it, and I’ve always wanted the two of you to meet.”

I attended Saturday and Sunday, shared some of my stories with publishers and agents, and though they actually laughed and enjoyed them, without exception, said, “You’re a great storyteller, but short stories are the hardest to sell and memoirs *don’t* sell unless they’re about famous people or adversity overcome. No one wants to read about a happy family.”

The people in the know convinced me only my family and friends would be interested, but by then, the energy, enthusiasm, talent and warmth of WWW had caused the seed to sprout of having a book to give my family. My sisters and I weren’t getting any younger and I wanted them to have my collection to share with their children. I

didn’t dare wait for a publisher, so self-published *What Do You Do With The Yolks?*. The feedback has been amazing. In fact, people *do* want to read about a happy family—even those who had a miserable childhood. They’ve said it gives them hope and guidance for raising their children in a better way. Because of you, WWW, I can pick up my book and hold, next to my heart, my family and young life—forever.

Oh yes, the short story. I used to meet with good friends at the glorious old hotel in Evergreen for coffee, writing discussions, and Cribbage. One morning, as we stood in front of the huge bank of windows, preparing to leave, a family of four walked past, saw us inside and tried to open the locked door at one end of the room. I motioned them to the unlocked door at the opposite end, they waved “thanks” and walked past.

“Wouldn’t it be funny if they opened the door, walked in, we weren’t really here and the room was empty?” I asked. We laughed, Carolyn said I was weird.

“I’m going to write a ghost story about this,” I said, and wrote *The Second Time Through the Door*, which won third place in the LAURA contest. I shook for two hours after reading the email from Alice saying I was a finalist.

Landing on the WWW square added an unexpected dimension to my life. I’m wobbling on one foot again, waiting to hop and see what’s there. Story shadows float around me, waiting to take form.

You wanted to know how this happened? Ya got me, I don’t know.

*EVVY is in honor of Evelyn (Evvy) Kaye who founded CIPA.

• **Carol Devlin** is a storyteller and author who also designs and publishes her craft patterns and teaches crafts. She volunteers to help seniors in the Colorado mountains near Evergreen where she writes and lives with her Lhasa Apso. Carol helped establish Mountain Writers, and is a featured speaker and panelist.





WWW ALWAYS “UNDER CONSTRUCTION”

By Alice D. Trego
2010 WWW President

Around my city, there is road construction everywhere.

Most major streets are overloaded with all the paraphernalia that designates a “construction zone,” a sign warning travelers that soon, or maybe later, there will be a new look to our byways and highways.

Even through the expanse of orange, drivers can tell rather quickly whether the street is being widened, whether new tar and asphalt are being laid in readiness for the coming winter or if cement pipes as tall as the tallest person and three people wide are going underground. On top of all this, there’s no left turn anymore.

A peculiarity I’ve noticed in a construction zone of this sort is that there are many men, and an occasional woman, working on all facets of these new creations, albeit brief times of nuisances or annoyances, until the work is done. I pondered many times why there was one man working and two or three others “watching.” I wondered why men, or women, sit seemingly in thought in those big machines that are meant to dig through all the man-made material to get to the dirt so that a street can be rectified, refurbished or restored. Most of all, I’ve been curious as to why large construction projects have few people working certain jobs.

I have frequently asked myself these questions, and of late I began to weigh them in my mind. I came to the conclusion that working in a construction zone has an

uncanny likeness to leading an organization. Therefore, throughout my Presidency this last year, Women Writing the West has been a type of “construction zone,” all in the name of betterment of its future. And I’ve been the construction boss.

One slight difference, though, between the WWW construction zone and that of a city’s is that our members rely on those they elect to be the guiding force, the Board of Directors and its Committees. These are the people who set out to improve the byways of our organization, to give WWW a new look in keeping with the times.

We may not have all the distinct paraphernalia or the expanse of orange to give our members a heads-up that some area of the organization is being rectified, refurbished or restored like city streets. But be reassured there is a crew working with all types of tools at their disposal to finish the necessary projects. Nowadays the WWW “construction” takes on a “virtual” sense with the Board and Committees communicating throughout the year via e-mail or phone communications, with an occasional piece of information printed and snail mailed.

One of the Board’s considerations for this year has been the pursuit of widening WWW’s mission to a broader audience, letting others know that our association of writers and other professionals is all about the support, encouragement and the networking we give each other as authors.

We’re making strides in this area but we’ll probably have to consider this a construction zone for a little longer. Nonetheless, we know a foundation has been laid in readiness for next year’s incoming Board and Committee members.

Our organization’s projects are many and ongoing, an update here, a new process there. Working with few people from our Board and Committees, our tasks are being completed for the good of the membership. Maybe some of the larger plans will have to carry over into the following year, but I like to think that my Presidency has been fruitful in its endeavors these past 365 days since I took office.

Like a construction crew boss, I will step aside and hand the proverbial gavel to my successor at the 16th Annual WWW Conference in Wickenburg, AZ, next month. My main job will have been completed, but you’ll no doubt see me working perhaps on another crew, on another activity in the future.

I’ve definitely been proud of my experience as President of Women Writing the West, overseeing many types of creation taking place. Working with the current Board and Committee Chairs has personally given me the friendships, the knowledge, and the wisdom to sustain me.

Even though in the Women Writing the West organization there will always be something “under construction.”

• To avoid going through construction zones, **Alice Trego** opts to take alternate routes. But even those are under construction nowadays. However, while acting as President of WWW in 2010, she has had to travel right through the thick of “construction” toward maintaining WWW as the best creation possible.





16th Annual Women Writing the West Conference Rancho de los Caballeros, Wickenburg, Arizona

**"A Write Retreat: Reconnect, Re-inspire, Rejuvenate, and Relax at the Rancho"
October 15-17, 2010**

Place: Rancho de los Caballeros is an historic Arizona landmark Guest Ranch and Resort. Surrounded by high Sonoran desert, the Rancho's 20,000 acres welcome guests with abundant amenities offering chances for riding, swimming,

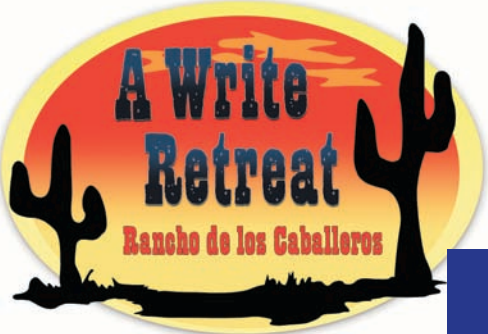
hiking, golfing, tennis, a spa, — and plenty of places for WWW attendees to enjoy the desert beauty and each other's company. See the Rancho website for a preview www.sunc.com. Please note booking information in the center box on the Registration form. Transportation from Phoenix Airport will be provided by the Rancho, or, if driving, the Rancho is approx. 60 mi. NW of Phoenix.

Program: For this gathering of members from all facets of the writing community, this year's program seeks to offer workshops and presentations on the creative side of writing as well as discussion of marketing tools, publishing trends and changes which impact all writers. If attendees wish, there is also room to roam and write on their own. The Conference begins on Friday afternoon.



Additional programs (with more in the works) include a panel of Authors and Editors discussing Working Relationships, a Marketing Update by WWW VP of Marketing, Mara Purl, a Panel on New Directions in Publishing, opportunities to "meet and pitch" with editors and agents (TBA), Friday evening "Cookout and Campfire Under the Stars" with music and readings, Saturday Luncheon honoring WILLA Finalists and Banquet honoring WILLA Winners, and Bookstore. Please check website, Newsletter, and mailings for more news or contact Marcia Melton, Conf. VP, melton.marcia@gmail.com (480-244-9343)





Registration for the 16th Annual Women Writing the West Conference Rancho de los Caballeros, Wickenburg, Arizona

**"A Write Retreat: Reconnect, Re-inspire, Rejuvenate, and Relax at the Rancho"
October 15-17, 2010**

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

If available, would you wish to schedule an editor/agent appointment: Yes () No ()

Please contact me about selling my books in the conference bookstore: Yes () No ()

This will be my first time attending a WWW Conference: Yes () No ()

Make guest room reservations directly with the Rancho de los Caballeros www.sunc.com (1-800-684-5030). The WWW room rate is \$150/single/double, \$35/each addl. person (max. 4/room). A one night deposit is required. Reservations must be made by August 15, 2010. Deposits received after this date will be accepted on a space available basis. Transportation is available through the Ranch from the Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport, \$30 round trip per person. Ask the reservations department for details. Confirmations will be sent upon receipt of your deposit. Any cancellations after October 1st will forfeit deposit.

CONFERENCE FEES: (Registration includes two breakfasts, one luncheon, and two dinners. You may request vegetarian or vegan meals at the conference registration desk.)

- **Early Registration**
\$195 – WWW member (postmarked by June 30, 2010)
\$220 – Non-member (postmarked by June 30, 2010)
- **Registration After June 30, 2010**
\$215 – WWW member
\$245 – Non-member
\$165 – Registration at the door (Saturday only; no meals included)
- **Guest Meals**
\$50 – per guest Friday evening Cookout # guests ____
\$40 – per guest Saturday WILLA luncheon # guests ____
\$50 – per guest Saturday evening WILLA banquet # guests ____
- **Friday Morning Desert Adventure (NOT included in registr. fee)**
\$20 – per person; guests welcome # persons ____

TOTAL REGISTRATION
\$ _____

TOTAL GUEST MEALS
\$ _____

TOTAL TOUR TICKETS
\$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED
\$ _____

Make checks/money orders payable to Women Writing the West
To make payment via PayPal www.womenwritingthewest.org/conference.html
Copy and send this form to: Ann Parker, P.O. Box 1164, Livermore, CA 94551

REGISTRATION DEADLINES:

Mail-in Registration must be postmarked no later than October 1, 2010. Pay Pal accepted through midnight, October 10. Refund Deadline is October 4. (No refunds after this date for any reason.)
No meal changes after October 10.
Conference questions: Marcia Melton, VP Conference, melton.marcia@gmail.com 480-244-9343



Marketing on the Move

ON THE ROAD with Thelma and Louise Act 1

By Gwyn Ramsey and Virginia Czaka (Crane)

Have you ever thought about your marketing and promotional opportunities? How about bookstore or restaurant book signings? Craft bazaars, especially during the holidays? School reading programs in the spring? Book Blog Tour hosted by your friends on the Internet? Gift shops? What about an actual on-the-road book tour?

A book tour can be fun, educational, and a great sales tool. Just ask Gwyn Ramsey and Virginia Czaja (Crane), the *Thelma and Louise ladies*, who spent five weeks together traveling the Midwest this June. They did their homework in May gathering information as to where they wanted to go, how long they would stay, who they would visit, etc. Once all of that was in place, the rest was easy.

With the car packed from stem to stern, these two ladies were ready to head north from Florida armed with a GPS, Atlas, case of water, lunch in a cooler, AAA state books, cell phones, traveling office supplies, boxes and boxes of autographed books, two suitcases and miscellaneous bags, and an accordion spandex folder with all important contact information. There was no other inside available space. One more person would mean a rocking chair strapped to the roof of the vehicle. Well, that would be a sight.

The trip started out like the Jenga game, pieces pulled leaving holes to be filled later. Their newly released books had to be drop shipped to an address up north because of



late printing. Did that stop these two ladies? No way.....no way. With maps consulted, friends and family contacted, book signings set up, and libraries notified, Gwyn and Virginia climbed into the front seat of Virginia's Fusion and waved goodbye to their families. Their first destination: Huntsville, Alabama and a small book launch set up by their friend. Let the fun begin.

• **Gwyn Ramsey** grew up in Jennings, Missouri. She attended Florissant Valley Community College in Missouri, pursuing a Computer Applications Associates Degree. Her outside interests include tap dancing, bowling, and researching genealogy.

Gwyn is a member of a writer's critique group, Tampa Area Romance Authors in Florida (TARA), Romance Writes of America, and Women Writing the West. She has participated in workshops, seminars, and classroom presentations. She writes full time and resides in Florida with her husband.

Her first three novels, **Journey to Tracer's Point**, **Winds of Change**, and **Bound for Texas** were published by Treble Heart Books. She is currently working on her fourth historical fiction of the Anderson Chronicles and a contemporary mystery, **Dusty Rose**.

• **Virginia Czaja** grew up in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. She and her husband moved to the Southwest Coast of Florida to experience a slower-paced lifestyle and pursue her love of reading which evolved into writing.

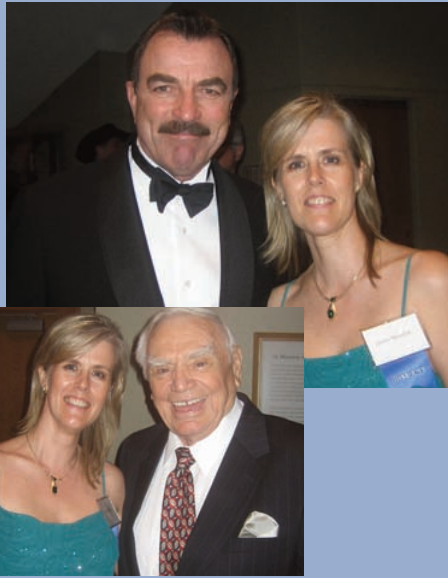
Virginia is a member of Romance Writers of America, T.A.R.A. (Tampa Area Romance Authors) and Women Writing the West. Her two books, **Emeralds on Wednesday** and **Gently Generous** were published by Treble Heart Books. She has participated in writer's workshops, seminars and classes. She has served as a judge in their First Impressions Contest for several years.

Because of the difficulty in pronouncing her eastern European name, Czaja (chiya), she has opted to use the pseudonym, Virginia Crane.



WWW Members Photos

Shery Monahan visits with Tom Selleck and Ernest Borgnine after receiving the coveted Wrangler Award from the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum.



Randall Platt (in guttersnipe garb) reads from HELLIE JONDOE at Literary Lubbock, hosted by Texas Tech University Press



Memphis Film Festival 2010 June 4, 2010 "Gathering Of Guns"; Actor Robert Fuller "Cooper Smith" from Wagon Train with author Melanie D. Calvert-Benton "Dahlia Patton"



WWW members Dianne Hartshorn and Doris McCraw take time out with Karen Lakes and Ingrid McDonald at South Park City's "Living History Days" Aug 14, 2010

The Yellow Notebook

By Doris McCraw



I love notebooks. If there is a sale, I stock up. They can be thick, thin, large or small. It is all the same to me. Holding and looking at the blank pages create a warmth and joy that is well-nigh indescribable.

Over the years I have used these simple, bound blank pages for many purposes. A few of those uses: journal, scrapbook, class note taking, even mileage keeper.

My latest favorite is a 140 yellow paged stenographer style notebook. It has become my repository for all things fascinating. I carry it in my car. It goes to the library and bookstore with me along with my trusty pencil.

As I peruse this tome from time to time, I find story ideas, bits of history and bits of overheard conversations. I am constantly adding content. Let me share some of what is currently between the covers of this my current favorite:

- H. H. poem, "Glimpses" first appeared in the September issue of the 'New York Independent'

- Katherine Lee Bates, girl poet
920.b329m

- Conversation overheard between two truckers (Strangers)

"How ya' doin'

"Without. And yourself?"

"Learnin' to live with it."

- Bloomington, IL. Ira Brown

- Melancon S. beach, built the first house in Colorado City and was the first county recorder

- A partial list of early Colorado City and El Paso County Colorado residents

- Character Analysis

Structure of Scene

Scene Interaction

(the above was for an acting class I was teaching)

- One of my favorites:

Patrick Murphy lived near Monument and used to walk to Denver carrying butter & eggs. Lived to be 103.

As you can see, it is quite diverse.

At one time I was concerned that I couldn't stick to one topic per notebook, be more organized. Then I read somewhere that DaVinci even put his grocery list in his notebook. Whether true or not, it validated my crazy note taking.

While I may not be remembered as a female DaVinci, I will keep buying and using my "special" books. I may never use all they contain, but I will always cherish what fascinated me over the years. The notebooks may give me a poem or story idea, perhaps more. That alone is worth the price. Possibly someday these idea notebooks will lead to fame, fortune or just a fun look back.

• **Doris McCraw** is the current Newsletter Editor. She is finishing up her year of short stories on her blog: angelarainesshort.blogspot.com

and continues to perform as Helen Hunt Jackson and other historic characters. In her spare time she works on the rewrites of her novel, cast and directs murder mysteries for Red Herring.



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