

# DISPATCHES

MILITARY  
WRITERS  
SOCIETY OF  
AMERICA

Rescuing History One Story at a Time

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

FALL 2015



*I May Not Be Where I Am Today - Jenny LaSala*  
*Dogwood Canyon near Branson, MO - Pat McGrath Avery*

*Hello, my Friend - Terry Gould*

*No One Wants to Hear About That - Jim Tritten*

*Surviving the Holocaust in a Cave - Pat McGrath Avery*

*MWSA Writers' Retreat -Gettysburg, PA*

*Gettysburg Battlefield B&B*

*May 24-May 25, 2016*

*Details inside*



## Letter from the editor

2015 has been a year of growth and change for MWSA — new technology innovations including a website restructuring, an expansion into new and varied regional events geared to reach writers at all levels, and new organizational procedures focused on our nonprofit status.

The 2015 conference was a huge success with attendees. Read Carolyn Schriber's recap of events. Although unexpected changes occurred, Dwight Zimmerman deserves kudos for pulling it all together at the last minute. Thanks, Dwight and all those who helped him.

*Dispatches* is also in a growth mode. Beginning in January 2015, we will introduce new features. The Board has approved a budget to pay a nominal sum to writers — up to four per issue. We introduced travel articles this year and plan to continue that feature. It benefits writers, researchers and travelers.

Features this month include a Jenny LaSala interview, a short story by Jim Tritten, a poem by Terry Gould, a research article by Joyce Faulkner, a story I discovered about Holocaust survivors, a poem by our student award winner and two places to visit — Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and Dogwood Canyon in Missouri.

The fall reading guide and MWSA 2015 award winners are listed. Here's your chance to find books our judges considered outstanding.

Joyce Faulkner announces a spring retreat in Gettysburg in this issue. Because participation is limited, be sure to sign up early if you are interested.

Gettysburg is the first regional event that MWSA has hosted. The second one, a retreat near Ft. Leonard Wood in the Missouri Ozarks, is scheduled for next fall. You can sign up now for Gettysburg and more information on Ft. Leonard Wood will be available in the next issue. Both events are for experienced writers who are looking for research opportunities or story and setting ideas.

Pat McGrath Avery

**Editor**

## Staff

Editor - Pat McGrath Avery  
 Columnist - Dwight Jon Zimmerman  
 Columnist - Bill McDonald  
 Columnist - Bob Doerr  
 Columnist - Joyce Faulkner  
 Feature Writer - Jenny LaSala  
 Feature - Pat McGrath Avery  
 Layout and Design - Joyce Faulkner  
 Photography - Pat McGrath Avery  
 Photography - Joyce Faulkner

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# President's Message

The 2015 MWSA conference was a great success!

I want to thank everyone who volunteered their efforts from Jack London and Don Helin who did a special writing workshop at the Phoenix VA prior to the start of the formal conference, to MWSA member spouses like Jaime Navarro who served as auctioneer, special guest and bestselling writer and Founder's Award winner Gayle Lynds who had a seminar and presented an award, and Debra Winegarten who took photos during the awards ceremony. So many people stepped up to help out in ways big and small — and that participation, both planned and spontaneous, helped make this year's conference the success it was. Thank you, everyone, again, and congratulations to all the book award winners!

Another success was this year's election of officers and board members. This was our first year using an electronic vote process and the turnout was the best we've ever had for an election. I want to thank our past officers and board members for all their work for the organization and welcome our new officers and board members. Most especially, I want to thank Betsy Beard for her input, support — and the work she has done over last three years to elevate the quality of the annual MWSA Anthology.

Now that the elections and the 2015 Conference are over, we will be implementing strategies that have been in the works for the last two years. We have three new committees, the Programming Committee, the Review Evaluation Committee, and the Website Design Committee.

The Programming Committee, chaired by Joyce Faulkner, will be putting together all kinds of new events starting with our first ever Writers' Retreat focused on working authors, bloggers, researchers, journalists, and educators. Details will be found on page 4 of this issue of *Dispatches*. We will be adding more regional and online events as well including seminars, workshops, online activities, radio, and full-fledged conferences — although there will not be a traditional conference in 2016. Keep an eye out for announcements in the coming months as this team ramps up.

The Review Evaluation Committee chaired by Betsy Beard will be doing an assessment of our techniques and updating our processes. Since we have a large backlog of books which have not been reviewed and while this committee goes about its work, we have suspended new book submissions until January. Books that were submitted before September 15, 2015 will be processed during this moratorium.

The Web Design Committee is chaired by Bill McDonald. A new site is being created and we hope to have it ready for launch in January as well.

It's going to be an exciting future of Military Writers Society of America!



## MWSA Leadership

**Founder/Board Member -  
William McDonald**

**President - Dwight Jon Zimmerman**

**Vice President Bob Doerr**

**Treasurer - Pat McGrath Avery**

### Board

**Sandra Linhart**

**Farrell Chiles**

**Mike Mullins**

**Valarie Ormond**

**Kathleen M. Rodgers**

**Joe Epley**

### Committees

#### Programming

**Joyce Faulkner - Chair**

**Bob Doerr**

**Pat Avery**

**Beth Underwood**

**Kathy Rodgers**

**Jack London**

**Don Helin**

#### Review Process Audits

**Betsy Beard - Chair**

**Joyce Faulkner**

**Carolyn Schriber**

**Bob Doerr**

**Sandra Linhart**

#### Web Design Committee

**Bill McDonald**

**Betsy Beard**

**Maria Edwards**

**Consultant – Maria Edwards**

## MWSA Announcements

With new leadership comes many changes. These changes represent a move from an all volunteer group to one with a few part-time employees to support the efforts of our long-suffering and dedicated good Samaritans. This is possible because more members have stepped forward to help run and grow the organization.

Here are the first structural changes:

1. To facilitate budgeting, all memberships are being moved to a calendar year basis. Payments for those renewing or joining in the second half of 2015 will only pay \$20. Beginning in 2016, dues will be \$75/year and everyone will be invoiced at the same time.

2. Three committees have been formed. In the future, there may be others.

\* The Programming Committee, chaired by Joyce Faulkner, signals a change in MWSA event planning. First, while the traditional national awards conference caters to award-nominees and the broad scope of MWSA members, the committee will be developing additional programs that are regional and focus on the interests of specific audiences. The first will be a Writers Retreat set in Gettysburg, PA in May, 2016. Other events being defined by the committee include MWSA participation in Book Festivals, Educational Seminars, Workshops, online radio and video events, and Outreach Activities. All suggested programs will be evaluated by the committee and those which pass the committee will go to the Board for approval. If you are interested in participating on this committee or if you have an idea for an MWSA sponsored event, contact Joyce Faulkner at joycekfaulkner@gmail.com.

\* The Review Evaluation Committee is chaired by Betsy Beard and is charged with periodic reviews of the awards process. While this work is being performed, Joyce Faulkner is serving as interim lead reviewer. There is a considerable review backlog, so all new award submissions have been suspended until mid-January when the program will be relaunched.

\* The Web Committee, chaired by Bill McDonald, is charged with redesign and maintenance of the website and moderating the Facebook group.





# ANNOUNCING

## Military Writers Society of America's First Retreat for Working Writers The Gettysburg Battlefield B&B

2264 Emmitsburg Road, Gettysburg PA

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

**May 24-26, 2016**

Members in shared rooms - \$575

Member single room or with spouse - \$650

Members with Spouse - \$650

Nonmember - \$650

Open to Authors, Journalists Bloggers, Researchers, Photographers, and Educators

Price includes two nights at the Battlefield B&B, two formal breakfasts, a dinner, a two-hour bus tour of the battlefield, a two-hour walking tour of the town of Gettysburg, two pre-breakfast lectures, three special speakers, a reading list, and a private Facebook Group for participants. On registration, each participant will choose or be assigned a topic to research while in Gettysburg -- or can elect to research their own topics in support of existing projects. At end of the retreat, there will be a storytelling session where you can share what you have learned with the whole group. There will also be opportunities to submit stories, articles, photos, and poetry to MWSA's quarterly magazine, *Dispatches* -- or to the annual anthology. Selection for publication will depend on the editors of those publications.

Only 24 spots still available. To register, contact Joyce Faulkner at [MWSAPresident@gmail.com](mailto:MWSAPresident@gmail.com). You will be invoiced for \$100 to hold your reservation and the remainder will be invoiced April 1, 2016.

### Speakers

Dale Fetzer - Historian and Military Choreographer of the 1993 movie, *Gettysburg*

Maggie Abbott Fowler - Historian and expert on historical clothing reproduction

Florence March - Owner of the Battlefield B&B and storyteller

Judge Gerald Eak - Licensed Gettysburg Town Historian

Michael Vice - Historian and Museum Consultant

Electronic Brochure: <https://slate.adobe.com/a/kYB90>



### Retreat Research topics include:

*The Two First Ladies \* Basil Biggs \* Lee's Retreat \* Symbolism of Union Monuments \* Cornelius Houghtelin \* Medicine \* Flag Communications \* The Boy Major and Benner Hill \* Union Color Bearers \* Oliver Wendell Holmes at Gettysburg \* The Underground Railroad \* Gettysburg Artists \* Lutheran Seminary Cupola \* Costner Avenue Murial \* Witness Trees \* Confederate Color Bearers \* Frank Furness \* John Burns \* Alonzo Cushing \* Longstreet's Monument \* Confederate Dead \* James Francis Crocker \* Gettysburg Shoe Factory \* Solder's Kit \* Paul Revere and the 20th Massachusetts \* Penelope and the Gettysburg Complier \* 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg \* Rush's Lancers \* "Slave Hunt" of the Gettysburg Campaign \* Devil's Den \* The Wheat Field \* Abraham Brian \* John Bell Hood \* Iverson's Pits \* Clara Barton \* David Wills House \* Vannoy H. Manning \* The Pipe Creek Circular \* Sachs Bridge \* Sallie the War Dog \* Elizabeth Thorn \* Private John Chase \* Third Arkansas \* Elon J. Farnsworth \* Confederate Ambulance Corps \* Peace Memorial \* Symbols on Confederate Monuments \* George Armstrong Custer \* Hettie Schriver \* Sachs Bridge \* Unknown Soldier at the Railway Cut \* David Wills House \* Lora A. Hudson Bissell*



*Michael Chambers, Living History  
Reenactor and Lecturer*





Gettysburg





# Gettysburg Battlefield National Park





# I MAY NOT BE WHERE I AM TODAY

My name is Samantha Jean Jasso, and I am currently an Active Duty Soldier and Medic in Charlie Company, 10 BSB.

I turned 28 while at Basic Training at Fort Jackson in 2012 and recently had my 31st birthday. I have been serving at Fort Drum from July 10, 2012 to present. I have met some of the coolest and most caring people in the military. (Veterans too!) It takes courage, sacrifice, and love to say, "I may get wounded, injured, and die, but I am willing to serve my country and willing to help those in need and suffering."



*Samantha Jean Jasso*

In August of 2007, I graduated Cum Laude from Texas Tech University with a Bachelors Degree in

Human Development and Family Studies, which is about enhancing and improving the human condition. After graduating, I worked, went to graduate school for a while, and later went back to working. Joining the Army was never a dream, goal, or back up plan of mine; it was a God appointed opportunity. When I was looking for jobs in mental health (that's how I like to help people), the Army was looking for mental health specialists. I went to my Army Career Center (that no longer exists) and talked to the recruiter about the MOS. It wasn't available and I had to wait a year and I didn't want to. When I decided on "Healthcare Specialist" the recruiter told me we could start the process and if I changed my mind it would be okay. I told him that I would give him an answer the next day.

I prayed that night for peace about joining the Army and afterwards, I believed I was going to be okay (there were times I definitely didn't feel okay, but I have made it this far!). The next day I told my recruiter to start the process. That day my mom asked me if I was joining and I told her yes. She told me afterward that she believed that was what I was going to do. I enlisted into the United States Army and even though I been through a lot since I joined, I have no regrets. My greatest fear about joining the Army, was if I could physically and mentally make it through training and if I had the skills and ability to become an effective soldier.

I come from a big family and I have other relatives who served in the military. My Grandpa Jasso got drafted to serve in WWII but did not get deployed as the war was at the end. Uncle Arturo G Ramos was drafted in 1966 and started at Fort Bliss, then headed to San Antonio. He served in Vietnam as a Combat Medic and left the Army in 1968 as a SGT. He would talk to other veterans about his experiences and had flashbacks. He died in 2005. My second Cousin Justin Roubidoux served in the U.S. Army September 18, 2008 to August 11, 2011 as a Combat Engineer. He came in as an E-2 and left as an E-4 promotable. He deployed to Iraq



in 2009 and went through a lot dealing with his PTSD. He was treated as if nothing was wrong. He spoke about how soldiers like him battled with depression defending our country and just need someone to talk to. His friend's battle ended up with him taking his own life because no one would hear him out or was there for him.

During May 2001, I was on the roof of one of the Twin Towers; I was with my high school choir on a trip (we got to sing at St. Patrick's Cathedral). On September 11, 2001, I was taking my 2002 Senior Class group picture before school started. I learned that the Twin Towers had been attacked when we got back to class. We stayed at school but had no school that day. I was confused and scared. I knew

we were going to war. Ten years after the Twin Towers had been attacked I officially enlisted into the United States Army.

Since 9/11, I am one of the very few who hasn't deployed. I was on the list to back in 2012, but then fewer personnel we're needed so I got cut. The hardest part of that for me was some of my battle buddies were hoping that I was deploying with them. I felt sad that I was not going to be right by their side. But they asked me to pray for them. Another hard thing was that I might lose someone I know and lose someone on the deployment. I see the struggles my battle buddies/comrades have after deployment(s). They stare off into space, shake when they tell their stories, get jumpy, look

*Continue on Page 12*



*Continue from page 11*

depressed/sad/indifferent and get angry. Some of them avoid small spaces, dark places, and/or crowded places. Some of them talk about the dead bodies, battles and comrades they have lost, about not being able to help and save a life (lives), about how they did what they were told, and how they killed who needed to be killed. Many of them sleep little, having nightmares and flashbacks. Many of them cry at night, struggling to heal, connect, and love. Many struggle with guilt, forgiveness, their purpose, and their worth to live.

What if my grandpa would have deployed? What if my visit at the World Trade Center would have been the day America got attacked? What if life would have gone the way I wanted it to? I may not be where I am at today, and that is to fulfill my purpose, which is this: To help to not leave a comrade behind. I am in my last year of the Army. Some of the soldiers who joined and grew up abused, never began the healing process from it, and when they came back from war, their pain and struggles grew heavier.

I have been diagnosed with depression, so I can relate to the feelings of sadness, tears, not wanting to do anything, not wanting to be around people, not having energy, not wanting to participate in activities you usually enjoy, trying different medications, knowing you have a purpose but feeling like you are just there, existing, being moody, struggling to think, struggling to function, hoping you don't feel those ways and struggle with those things the next day, feeling like you have a blanket of weights on you, being extremely sad, wondering when you will feel good, feel like yourself, be happy. It's a struggle to stay motivated and keep yourself together at work and during training while feeling and dealing with those things.

With the help from I WAS THERE FILM WORKSHOP, I will be creating a video about depression, suicide, and ways to bring awareness and help to those in need.

~ SPC Jasso, Samantha Jean

United States Army

Story Shared by Jenny La Sala, Author of Never Forgotten, The Vietnam Veteran Fifty Years Later

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



*Dwight Zimmerman, Debra Winegarten, Gayle Lynds, Bill McDonald*





# JEWISH FAMILIES SURVIVED THE HOLOCAUST IN A CAVE

**Pat McGrath Avery**

“Our family in particular would not let the Germans have their way easily. We had ... determination to survive. ... But where could we go? Clearly, there was no place for us on Earth.” Thus begins Esther Stermer’s story.

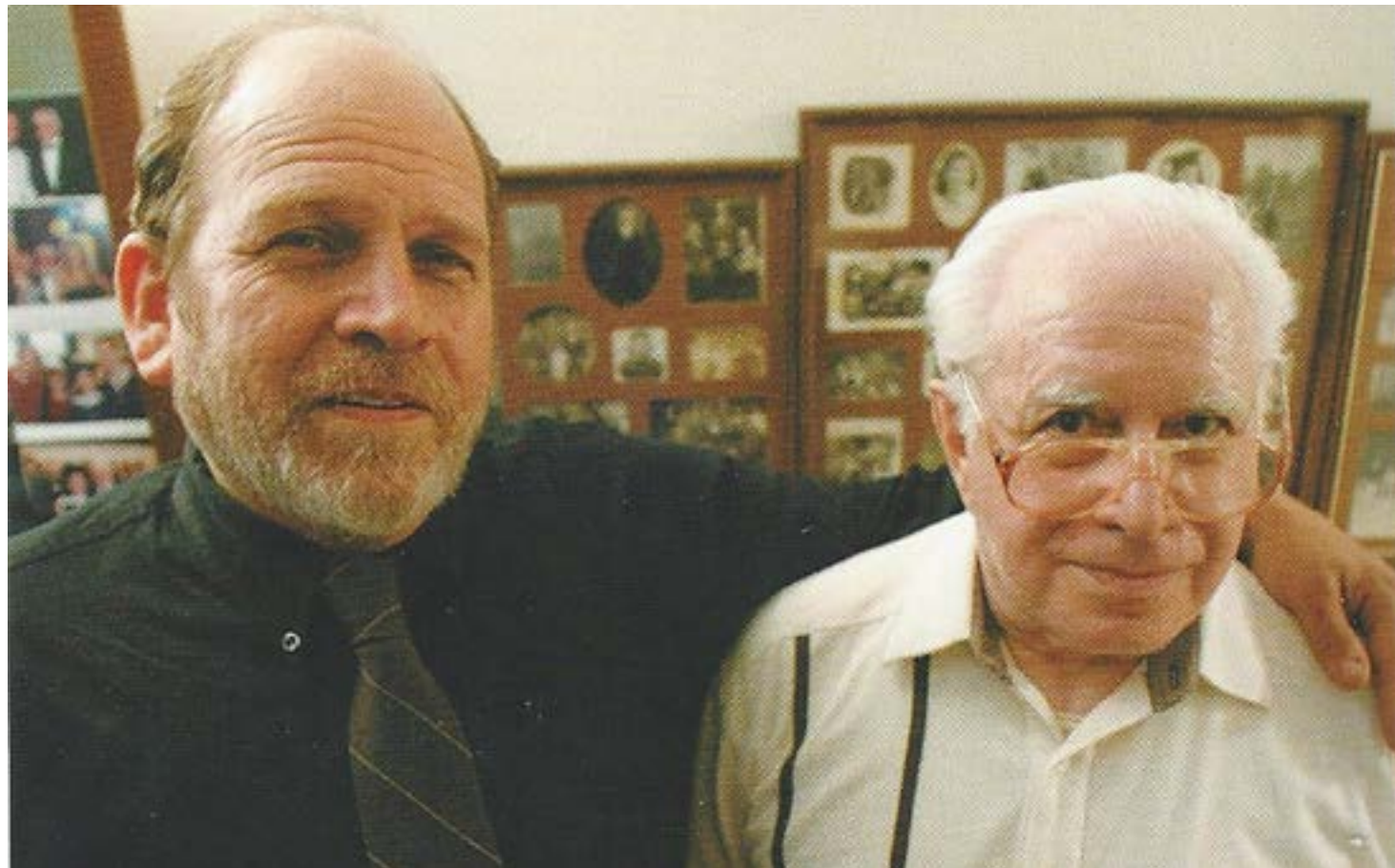
Chris Nicola’s lifelong passion has been caving around the world. I met him when he presented his incredible story at this summer’s caving (National Speleological Association’s) convention in Waynesville, MO.

Cavers explore the natural wonders of the underground world. While it’s not rare to find signs of human life, it is incredible to discover a lost piece of history.

“Amid the endless wheat fields stretching across the Western Ukraine, there is a weedy hole in the ground...” begins the Holocaust story in Nicola’s book, *The Secret of Priest’s Grotto*, which he co-wrote with fellow caver, Peter Lane Taylor.

In 1993, Nicola was one of the first Americans to explore Ukrainian caves after the fall of the Soviet Union. In one cave, a guide told him that local Jews hid there during World War II. However, no one knew anymore than that. It took Nicola ten years to piece together the story and locate survivors of the war.

When he finally met with the survivors, he learned their story.



Chris Nicola and Sol Wexler Courtesy of Chris Nicola from *The Secret of Priest’s Grotto*

“In the early 1930s, Esther Stermer was the proud matriarch of one of the most well-regarded families in Korolowka, and her husband Zeida was a successful local merchant. ... For many eastern European Jews, it was a rare time of opportunity, ...”

Hitler’s armies and Jewish ghettos changed their lives forever. Horror replaced opportunity. Nicola references Esther’s book, *We Fight to Survive*, in describing the chaos and cruelty the Germans brought when they arrived in their town. “... Jews were forced to dig their own graves before being executed. Esther’s memoir recounts some victims still being alive, sticking their heads up through the soil and gasping for air as the Germans walked away.”

The Stermers and their neighbors ran for their lives the night of October 12, 1942, taking refuge in a nearby cave. For the rest of the war, these families would not see daylight except to move to another cave. Ranging from a toddler to a grandmother, they depended on the young men to scavenge food from nearby fields and villages. Lack of water, cold, hunger, darkness and terror were their constant companions. Months later, the Germans swooped down into the cave, bringing their fears to reality. Esther argued with the soldiers, giving time for her family to escape through their recently scraped out emergency exit. Although she and several others were captured and taken to the local jail, all but two escaped. Knowing it was only a matter of time until the soldiers returned and captured them, the families moved to Priest’s Grotto, another cave, in June of 1943. They lived there until the Russians drove the Germans from the area in the spring of 1944. When they left the cave in April, their village was destroyed and only 300 of the 14,000+ Jews that once lived in the region had survived.

Check out the Facebook

page at [www.facebook.com/NoPlaceOnEarth](http://www.facebook.com/NoPlaceOnEarth).

The complete story is available in the book, *The Secret of Priest’s Grotto*, and the movie, *No Place on Earth*. The movie stars two of the survivors, Saul Stermer and Sam Stermer. The book and the movie are available on Amazon.



Bill McDonald and winner of the Founder’s Award, NYT Bestselling author, Gayle Lynds



MWSA 2015 Award Winners in Phoenix, AZ



# TIPS AND TRIPS - RESEARCH TOOLS

*by Joyce Faulkner*

Whether you are a novelist, historian, blogger, short story writer, or journalist, research is a necessary part of a professional writer's life. There are university classes on primary and secondary research — and on the various methods for confirming accuracy. However, for this article, I'm assuming that as working authors, these topics are your stock-in-trade — so I will focus on tools for collecting information.

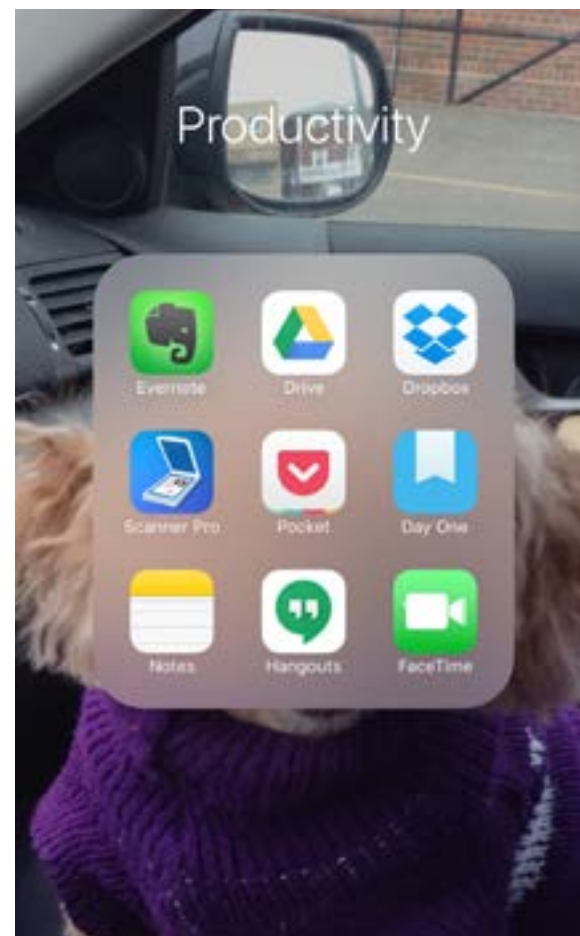
The introduction of new research tools has accelerated. Twenty years ago, we'd go out in the field with a cassette recorder and extra cassettes, a portable-but-heavy digital camera that miraculously stored images on new-fangled disks, pencils and notebooks.

I remember attending an RV show in 1995 with a leather bag full of paraphernalia for collecting information for a travel article. As I climbed in and out of the thirty-odd Winnebagos and Airstreams — and the weight of my kit left a deep crease in my shoulder, I wished for the days when all I needed was pen and paper. When I got home and assembled the materials I'd collected, I wasn't convinced I'd found a better method. I had pictures but I still had to label them hours after I'd snapped them — and my notes were still scrawled in my impossible-to-read cursive.

However, five years later I was grateful for photographs that documented the cabinets over the RV door where my husband had bashed his head — especially when I wrote *USERNAME*. Instead of saying that the killer was taller than the identity thief, I had him hit his head on the oak box that was positioned perfectly to stop the forward progress of anyone over six foot coming in the front entrance — while she scooted under it unscathed. It was a small thing that I might not have considered without those images. On top of that, the video captured far more than my hastily scrawled notes could. Both tools recorded details I hadn't even noticed.

These days we have something similar to paper and pen in size and weight, but which is far more pow-

erful than the crude devices of the 90s — smart phones. There are three elements that enhance that power — memory, software, and the Internet.

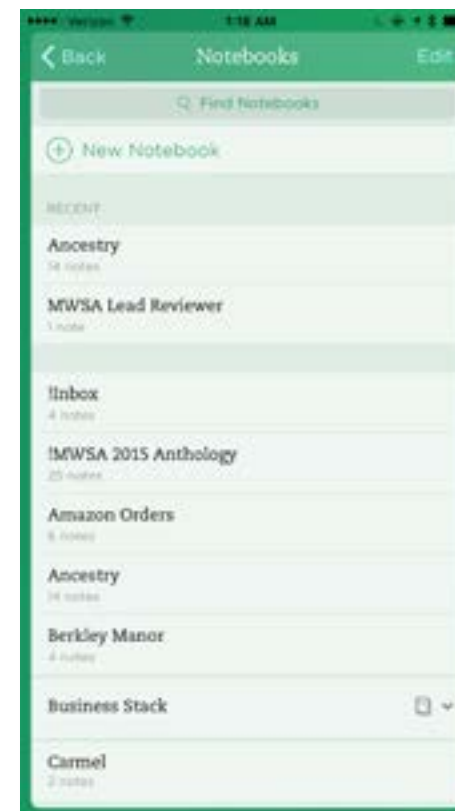


*Research Tools being discussed in this article*

## Memory

Aside from the memory resident on a smart phone, a number of remote options are available these days — iCloud, Dropbox, Google Drive, and Creative Cloud to identify a few. Installed, these services look like additional hard drives and link all of your personal devices with your computer, making it a snap to collect data on your phone and evaluate it on your tablet while riding home from an event. Gone are the hours and hours of assembling and storing your interviews and photos before you forget why you collected them.

Even more useful are apps like “Evernote” which is multi-functional and allows you to store information in definable “notebooks.” Not only can you save photos, audio, and video files — it also provides you will the ability to scan business cards into a sortable database. (I carry cards in my purse until they no longer make sense to me. This tool makes it easy to identify why I kept the card and which project I wanted to associate with that contact. It even allows me to snap a picture of the person who gave me the card (if they allow it) so that I have a face to link with the name and/or business.



*Example of Evernote on iPhone*

## Internet

There are now a variety of ways to meet someone remotely, interview them, and store the information. Online services like [FreeConferenceCall.com](http://FreeConferenceCall.com) allow several people to call into a telephone number. You can record the meetings in an audio file which can be downloaded and stored on Dropbox or Evernote. You can also share the computer screen of one of the participants to give a visual for the topic of discussion. Basic services are free. However, if you want customization of any kind, there are charges.

Social media programs like Facebook and Twitter and old services like Yahoo and AOL have “Instant Messages” or “IMs” where two or more people can have typed conversations — or audio or video. Many of them have logging functions which allow you to save those conversations for later.

“Skype” is a more robust online service for teleconferencing through the Internet — and has been around for a long time. It works with all kinds of systems and is mostly free. Even simpler in concept although it has similar functionality is the Google “Hangout” where you can add several people, see them or their screens, and record the information.

If you use Apple products, “Facetime” is a native app that allows you to “teleconference” with other Apple products including iPhone, iPad, and Mac computers.

If you use Android devices, “Tango” is similar in function to Facetime.

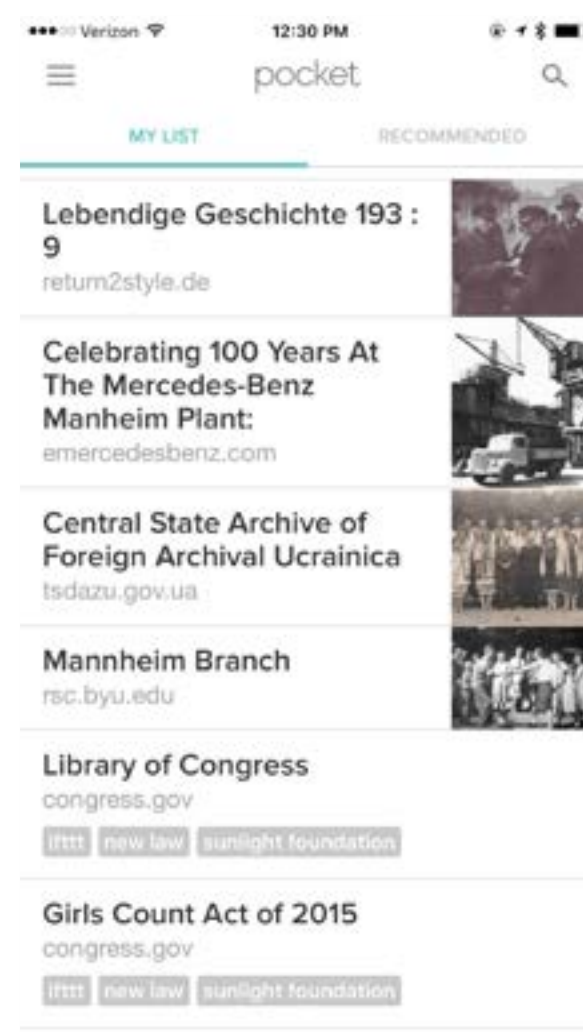
## Software

There are automatic ways to scan the news for topics you are researching. There are two that I use often — Google Alerts and Talkwalker. Both email the results though and pretty soon your mailbox can get cluttered. So I've started using a relatively new service called IFTTT (IF This Then That). This handy bit of logic allows you to automatically move information between apps based on recipes that you can specify. Below are examples of a few of the IFTTT recipes I have created for my purposes. In the first, I have IFTTT take any emails that come to my mailbox from Lightningsource with the word “proof” in the header BS store it in Evernote.





*Example of IFTT on iPhone*



A less techie option is an app called “Pocket.” Pocket is a free article collector available on phones, tablets and computers. As you browse through websites, blogs, and other online postings, you can save them to pocket. For example, I have been researching Mannheim Germany before, during, and right after World War II. Some things I thought were interesting, some important — some I have read, some I intend to read. So I have a pocket full of info I have collected from my Google searches. As I read each article in my Pocket, I go through an informal triage. If a particular piece is useful, I store it in my project file on Scrivener. If the information is interesting but doesn’t apply to my project, I leave it in the Pocket for another day. If it doesn’t interest me or I have no use for it, I delete it.

An app that I found last spring has quickly become my favorite — not only for research but for recording my daily activities and thoughts. Called “Day One,” it’s designed for journaling. One handy feature is that you can take a picture right in the app itself. Depending on your settings, the meta data of the image is used to order your entries. I find myself pulling it out whenever we go for walks or travel — or when I find something in a library or museum that I want to remember. Since it simplifies what I have to actually record, I do it more often. Note in the example below a picture that I took in Gettysburg. The date and location is automatic. There is an icon that indicates that we drove there — and I have tags that tell allow me to search on “travel picture” and “gettysburg.” And of course, I have space to type in a few comments.



*Day One App used on trip to Gettysburg*

In the latest iPhone operating system update to iOS 9, Apple has modified the native “Notes” app so that it functions a lot like Day One in that you can include photos. It adds the ability to write on the note using your finger or a stylus so that you can put handwritten additions to the entry later on. It also has more formatting functions allowing you to do lists and to choose the color of your font. Very handy.



*New Notes functionality in iOS 9*

Another piece of software that is useful for writers is an app called “Scanner Pro.” Designed to function exactly like a physical scanner with additional features, it makes use of the smart phone’s camera to take pictures of documents and creates a variety of formats — like pngs, jpegs, and pdfs. I use it to scan contracts, to get sharp pictures of book pages, to capture materials like old papers or photographs, and to make short work when collecting information in libraries.

Carrying just one small device provides today’s researcher with a degree of comfort and convenience while allowing the collection of a lot of data in a short period of time. The abundance of storage options ensures that nothing will be lost — and finally, having a variety of software products helps put context and meaning to the information you’ve stored.



# MWSA 2015 AWARDS

## Historical Fiction

Edge of Valor – John Gobbell – Gold

Emmerspitz, 1938 – David Andrew Westwood – Gold

Charentin, 1918 – David Andrew Westwood – Silver

Yankee in Atlanta – Jocelyn Green – Silver

Pass in Review: Country – Brian Untermahlen – Bronze

## Thriller/Mystery

Secret Assault – Don't Helin – Gold

Evil Deeds – Joseph Badal – Silver

Hellbound – Chester D. Campbell – Bronze

Murder in the Slaughterhouse – Tom Crowley – Bronze

## Literary Fiction

Johnnie Come Lately – Kathleen M. Rodgers – Gold

## History

Young Soldiers Amazing Warriors – Robert H. Sholley – Silver

Silent Invaders: Combat Gliders of the Second World War – Gary Best – Silver

Project Management in History: The First Jeep – Paul Bruno – Silver

## Biography

The Man Call Brown Condor – Thomas E. Simmons – Gold

Oveta Culp Hobby: Colonel, Cabinet Member, Philanthropist –  
Debra L. Winegarten – Gold

Guardian of Guadalcanal – Gary Williams – Silver

## Memoir

Sailor Man – Del Staecker – Gold

Those Who Remain: Remembrance and Reunion After War –  
Ruth Crocker – Silver

Fate Unknown – First Sergeant Galen Michell USA (Ret) – Bronze

Into the Land of Darkness: A Bombardier-Navigator's Story –  
Arthur Haarmeyer – Bronze

Surrender, September 2, 1945 –  
James L. Starnes with Suzanne Simon Dietz – Bronze

## Reference

A Novel Approach – Jack Woodville London – Silver

African American Warrant Officers ... In Service to our Country –  
Farrell Chiles – Silver

Warfilms: An Overview of Motion Pictures Within Military Record Groups –  
Philip W. Stewart – Silver

## Anthology

Corrales Writing Group 2014 Anthology – P. Walkow, J&J Tritten, D. Reightley, T.  
Neiman, S. Hoover, C. Allen - Silver

Corrales Writing Group 2013 Anthology – S. Hoover, T. Neiman, D. Reightley, J.  
Tritten, P. Walkow, L. Wiscup –Bronze

## Creative Non-fiction

Chopper Warriors: Kicking the Hornet's Nest – William Peterson – Bronze

Military Life: Service or Career, a Soldier's Perspective –  
John McClarren – Bronze

## Spiritual/Religious

24 Years and 40 Days: The Story of Army 1LT Daniel Hyde –  
Glenda L. Hyde – Silver

## Poetry

Memories and Shadows – Mike Mullins and Jim Greenwald – Gold

Medic Against Bomb: A Doctor's Poetry of War – Frederick Foote – Gold



## **Children Under 12**

**The Dare – Linda Swink – Silver**

**The ABCs of Titles for Tiny Tales – Mary Lee – Bronze**

## **Author of the Year**

**Carolyn P. Schriber**

## **Founder's Award**

**The Assassins by Gayle Lynds**



*MWSA Awards Conference in Phoenix AZ - 2015*

*Jack London, Gayle Lynds, Bill McDonald, Maria Edwards, and Don Helin*

# HELLO MY FRIEND

*By Terry L. Gould*

Hello my friend.  
It's good to see you once again.  
My search has brought me all this way,  
to look to you for strength this day.

Look at you.  
You stand so tall.  
So proud and humble on this granite wall.

Look at you.  
You haven't changed.  
But, oh how our hearts  
have rearranged!

I hope you know the flowing tears  
are from your brother  
as I linger here.

You hold your place  
with all the others.  
Arm-in-arm.  
Our fallen brothers.

I sit in solace with full respect,  
I touch your name,  
my face  
as it reflects  
the sadness,  
the honor,  
the pride,  
and no regrets.

I was lucky enough  
To know you then.  
Your smile.  
Your trust.  
Your courage.  
My friend.

Yes, I come before you,  
Humble and meek.  
I miss you more  
than any man will speak.

I see you standing  
tall and true.  
And I will forever,  
and always,  
look up to you.

I stand before you,  
my brother, vet.  
And I promise you,  
I promise you,  
no one will forget.

It's good to see you again,  
my friend.  
I'll visit more often,  
now  
that I know I can.



# ANOTHER 5-STAR CONFERENCE

*by Carolyn Schriber*

Phoenix offered us 108-degree temperatures. But the hotel was comfortable, the courtyard shaded and breezy, and the activities so engaging that I forgot to notice the heat.

Our numbers were small with more newcomers than old friends. But the newcomers proved to be delightful. By Friday night, tables full of people who had just met were generously pooling their Buckaroos to allow new friends to win great auction items.

Our founder, Bill McDonald, discovered people with hidden talents at the VA and invited them to join us. Thus we met Sarah Parker, whose neurological problems may keep her in a wheelchair but whose enthusiasm for becoming a writer will take her far beyond her local hospital boundaries.

We met Soldier Hard, who taught us that not all rappers use foul language and ethnic slurs. Instead he moved us to breathless emotion as he elicited a promise of life from a fellow veteran who might have been contemplating suicide.

Devorah Winegarten, another poet in our midst, offered us mind pictures of the cat-police and Texas Jews that will stick with me forever.

The Jack and Don Show (aka Jack London and Don Helin) addressed the problems of novel-izing and set several of us, including me, to rethinking and revising our own projects.

Caroline LeBlanc summed up the conference on Facebook this way: "The facilities were great, the generosity was boundless, the camaraderie unsurpassed, and the teaching some of the most helpful I've experienced."



*Author of the Year Carolyn Schriber and Dwight Zimmerman*



*Gold Medalist Kathy Rodgers and her agent Jeanie Lociano celebrate Johnnie Come Lately!*

# ALYSSA CREZEE – SILVER MEDAL - STUDENT

## ALONE

Words came crashing down  
Nobody, worthless, unwanted  
She tried to straighten her crown  
But still the words haunted.

Her gaze became empty;  
With time she grew thin.  
She feared no one would help  
So, finally, she gave in.

Yes, this story is sad  
And all too real.  
It did not have to end this way  
Let down your guard of steel.

No one asked her "how are you?"  
"Need help?"  
"Stand with me."

We all walk by sometimes, too busy to ask:  
"How are you today?"  
To answer her plea.

Someone could have asked "how are you?"  
"Come stand with me."  
Maybe stretch out a hand  
Save a life, two, or three.

We fail to recognize  
That girl is no stranger at all—  
She is you, she is me,  
And at some point, we all fall.

Let us reach out a hand,  
Even through fear.  
Because we all stand alone,  
But alone together we may dry a few tears.

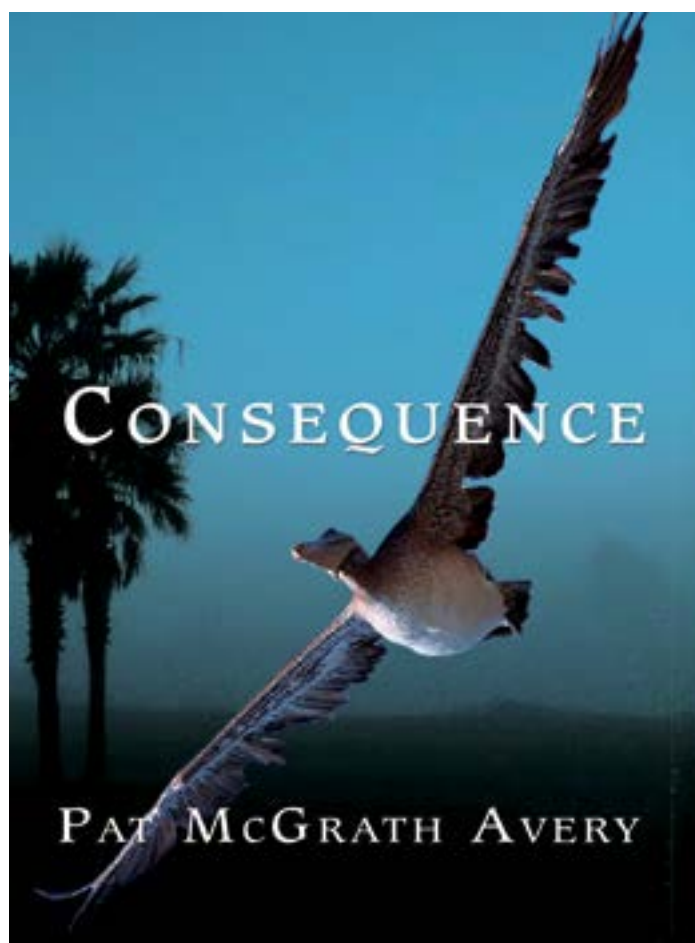
What the girl forgot  
Was her worth, her potential;  
She let her crown fall,  
Her self-criticism far from gentle.

Long live the girl,  
For you and for me.  
Please help curb the epidemic of suicide  
From its unforgiving weight we can be freed.

She faced this world alone.  
Alone no one can live.  
All we can do is link hands,  
And together we may give  
Each other a reason to live.

So straighten your crown  
You matter, you are not alone.  
Please do not leave.  
Don't leave someone behind unattended and alone.





AUGUST 2015

Author

**OF THE MONTH**

**Pat McGrath Avery**

*Consequence*

Mystery/Thriller

SEPTEMBER 2015

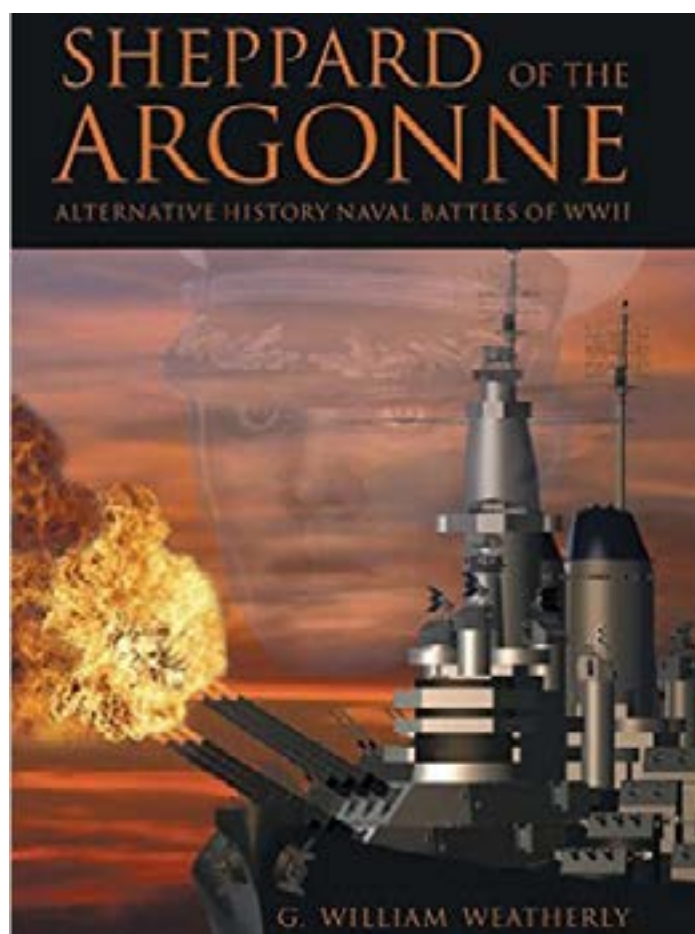
Author

**OF THE MONTH**

**Phil Keith**

*Stay the Rising Sun*

History



AUGUST 2015

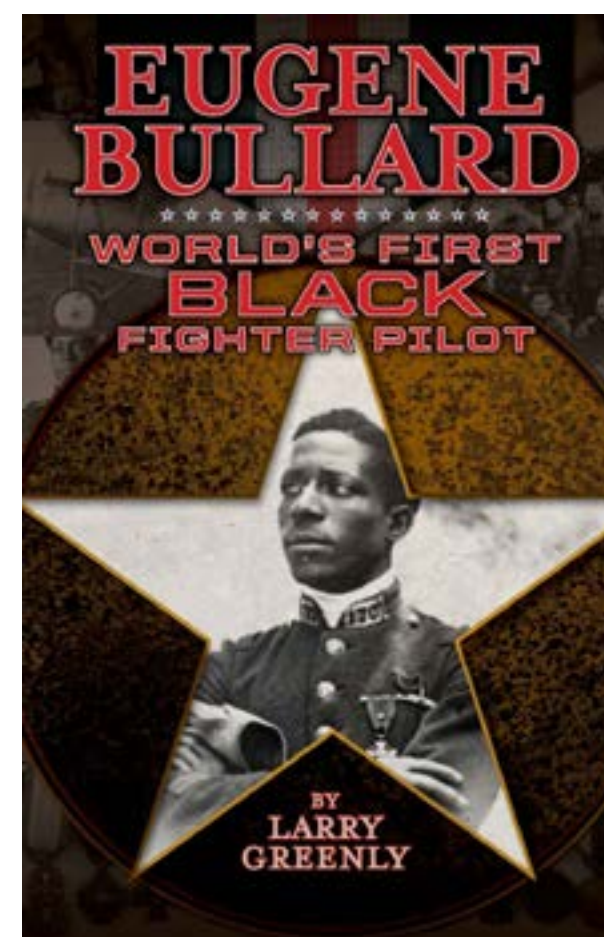
*Book*

**OF THE MONTH**

**Sheppard of the Argonne**

*G. Wm Weatherly*

Literary Fiction



SEPTEMBER 2015

*Book*

**OF THE MONTH**

**Eugene Bullard: The World's First Black Fighter Pilot**

*Larry Greenly*

Young Adult



# DOGWOOD CANYON

*by Pat McGrath Avery*

Dogwood Canyon near Branson, MO, is a privately owned nature park and wildlife preserve. My recent tour surpassed my expectations. I anticipated the natural beauty and I was impressed with improvements that enhanced, rather than detracted from, nature.

Visitors can see Dogwood Canyon by tram, private jeep tour, horseback, bicycle or hiking. The tram and private jeep tours are the only ones that also allow people to visit the wildlife preserve. An adventure pass includes fishing in streams that are stocked with rainbow trout.

Trams run throughout the day (you can check schedules at [www.dogwoodcanyon.com](http://www.dogwoodcanyon.com)) through this 10,000-acre park. The road through the canyon runs alongside Ozark spring-fed streams. Waterfalls abound with plenty of great photo ops.

This family-friendly nature park was the brainchild of Johnny Morris, the owner of Bass Pro Shops. His commitment to conservation found a home in this Ozark wilderness that stretches from Missouri into Arkansas. "It's so well-laid out," my husband commented. "There's plenty of room for all kinds of activities."

The two-hour tram tour winds past a wilderness chapel, rugged bluffs, caves, and the musical sounds of waterfalls. You'll see folks fishing and hiking as the tram guide drives a road that is smooth in some places and naturally rough in others. You may even get splashed from waterfalls along the road. You'll certainly want to stick your hand in the crystal clear water.

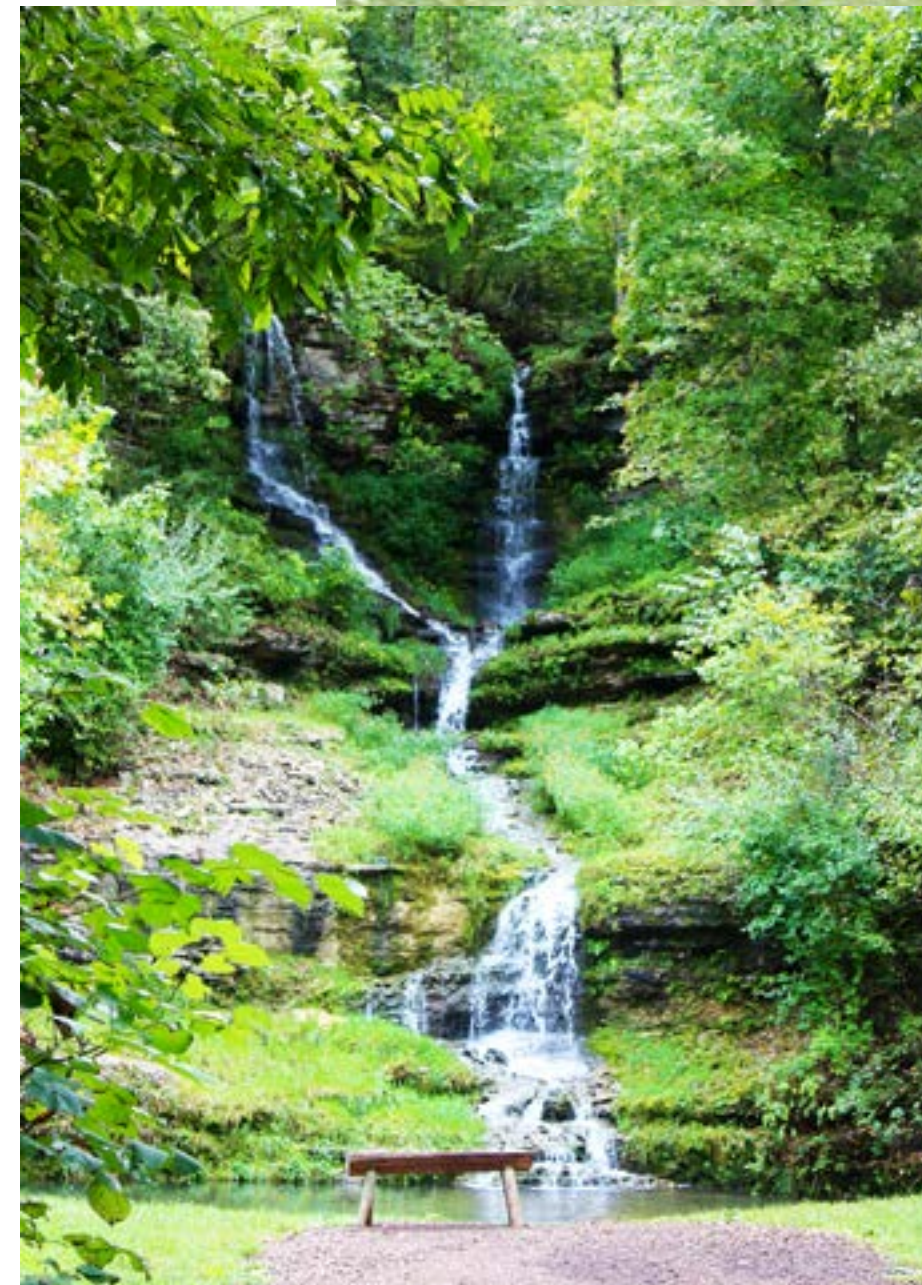
I boarded the tram with my telephoto lens on my camera. Tony, our guide, urged me to replace it with my wide-angle lens. "We'll probably get too close to the elk to shoot with a telephoto," he advised. He was right. The highlight of the tour included an elk giving me an up close and personal mug shot opportunity, a bull elk bugling, an elk nibbling on my husband's jacket sleeve and a couple of bison calves. Wow, I fell in love with the park!

The park caters to fishing, offering fly-fishing school, a casting clinic and plenty of places to try your luck. And for the dog lovers among us, you can take your furry friend hiking with you.



*Entrance to Cave*

*Buffalo Calf*



*Waterfall*



# No One Wants to Hear About That

*Jim Tritten*

“John, shush, no one wants to hear about that,” my grandmother shooed us out of the warm kitchen of her small New York apartment. He kissed her on the cheek as we left.

“Kisfiam, come and I will tell you.” His wrinkled rough hands took me by the arm and we went into the living room.

My grandfather stood up in front of the family radio. He was as tall as the refrigerator and he buttoned his sweater. His hands started to fly up, down, left, right matched by stamping on the floor as he marched in place.

I sat back in the wobbly wooden chair and smelled the roast chicken while I watched the oft-repeated military drill. Up, down as he marched in place on the worn rug that doubled for parade field grass.

I heard the rapid clicking of a knife on wood as my grandmother cut noodles for the soup.

My grandfather sat next to me. I could smell the cigar tobacco on his clothing and the whiskey on his breath. “Kisfiam, look here” as he rolled up his left trouser leg. The purple stain on his calf marked shrapnel not removed at the field hospital. “Did I tell you the story about how I smoked a cigarette with a soldier on Christmas Eve and then I killed him the next day?”

“Yes, grandpa.”

My grandfather stood again, fully at attention. He lifted his legs as he continued to march in place to the distant cadence call of his sergeant, “Ein, zwei, drei, vier.”

I heard from the kitchen, “Shush John, no one wants to hear about that.”



## MWSA Recommended Reading List Autumn 2015

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 our recent book reviews, we've selected the following as our 2015 Autumn Recommended Reading List:

*Sailor Man* by **Del Staecker**

*Pass in Review – Country* by **Brian Utermahlen**

*Memories & Shadows* by **M. Mullins & jim greenwald**

*A Novel Approach* by **Jack London**

*Behind the Steel* by **J. Carvalko**

*The Rule of Ranging 3* by **Timothy M. Kestrel**

*Paragraphs: Mysteries of the Golden Booby* by **B. Doerr, D. Harry, P. Avery, and J. Faulkner**

*Corrales Writing Group 2014 Anthology* by **Jim Tritten (& others)**

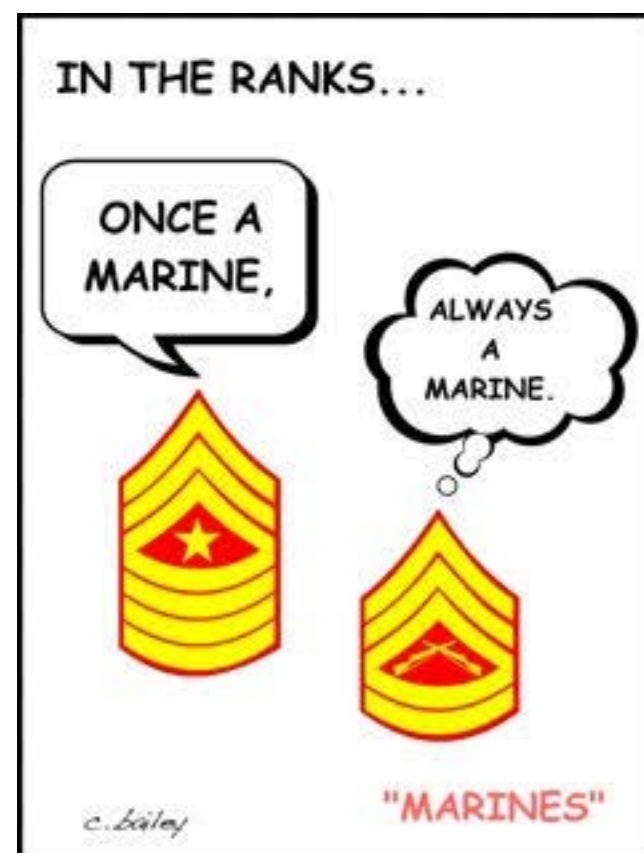
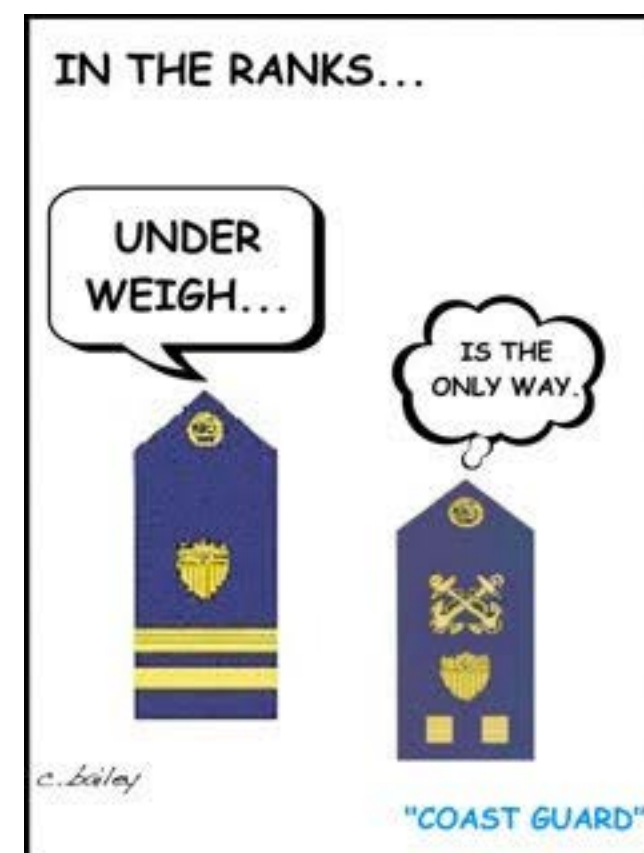
*Medic Against Bomb* by **Frederick Foote**

*Young Soldiers Amazing Warriors* by **Robert H. Sholly**

*Her Own Vietnam* by **Lynn Kanter**

I don't know about where you are, but here it's been a very hot, dry summer. It's meant staying in the house and trying to avoid work for me. Of course, I'm an author so staying indoors and avoiding work is what I do best. I know, I should be writing, but I'm better at watching television with a bag of chips on my lap. When I realize I've wasted most of the day, I do turn to something productive. I read. It's not writing, but it's close, and I enjoy it. Quit wasting your days. Entertain and educate yourself with a book. Settle back with your Kindle, Nook, iPad, or just an old fashioned book. One of those listed above would be a great place to start. More info about the books listed above and the authors can be found at [www.mwsadispatches.com](http://www.mwsadispatches.com)





Members of Soldier Hard Rap Group with Bill McDonald and Dwight Zimmerman



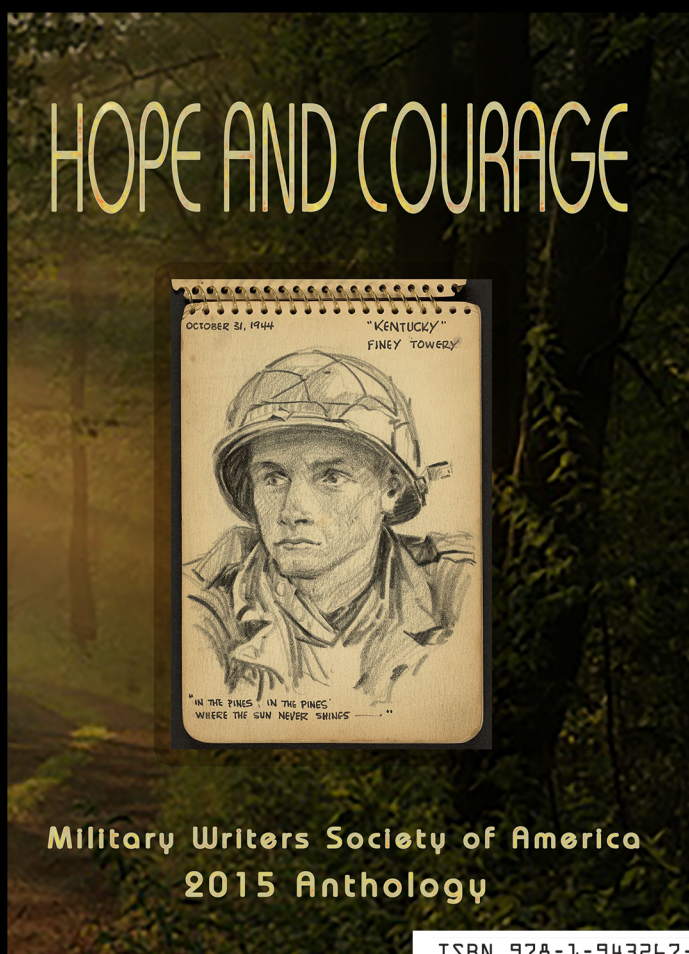


Devil's Den seen from Little Round Top in Gettysburg





***Galen Mitchell***  
 2015 Bronze Medal for a Memoir  
*Fate Unknown*



***Arthur Haarmeyer***  
 2015 Bronze Medal for a Memoir  
*Into the Land of Darkness:  
 A Bombardier-Navigator's Story*

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