

DISPATCHES

MILITARY
WRITERS
SOCIETY OF
AMERICA

Rescuing History One Story at a Time
www.MWSAdispatches.com

SUMMER 2020



*COMBAT THE COVID
NON-BOOK-PROMOTION*

BLUES

Pg 4

HISTORY

QUIZ

Pg 16



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Sandra Miller Linhart

PUTTING TOGETHER THIS EDITION OF Dispatches has left me in awe of the pure talent within our ranks. In answer to our request for submissions, we received an outpouring of articles this month—I'm ecstatic.

Thank you to all the members who submitted an article. Some were too long for one edition so we have to give them more than one installment. Some were too late (only because we had so many submissions) so they'll be published in the Fall edition. But they all were engaging, thoughtful submissions.

Our founder, Rev Bill McDonald graced us with an article on how to make the most of these strange changes in our lives on page 4. Dwight has given us a peach of a quiz this quarter. Be sure to check it out on page 16. Valerie has updated us on the MWSA Ambassador program on page 10. We have articles addressing the current 'hot buttons' and some address the craft and healing of writing. All of them are interesting and well-written.

If we missed printing your submission this quarter, please know we've kept all submitted works. We haven't forgotten you. Your submission wasn't rejected. We merely ran out of room. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask at dispatches@mswa.co

Sit back and enjoy this edition of your Summer 2020 Dispatches magazine. We hope you learn something or are entertained. Please consider submitting an article or poem for the future.

In Joy & Enjoy!

DISPATCHES REGULARS

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 FEATURE WRITER ~ JACK W. LONDON
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MWSA Leadership

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Betsy Beard

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Bob Doerr

ONCE AGAIN AS I WRITE this message, I hope everyone is staying healthy and safe. When I wrote my comments for the spring issue of Dispatches, I was really hoping the coronavirus would be gone by now. Sadly, it has stayed with us.

As you've probably seen in our most recent email blast to the membership, we've canceled this year's membership conference. The Board simply did not want to put any of our membership at risk. In its place this September, MWSA will be holding an online general membership meeting and an online annual awards ceremony, but we've moved the full conference to September 2021. It'll be held at the same location.

This year is an election year, and we're still looking for volunteers to fill our Board. If you're interested let us know ASAP as the window for nominations is about to close.

Like the rest of America, MWSA is discovering that we, too, have a need to improve our online offerings. We plan on developing a series of free classes and presentations that will be offered both live and recorded for our members. We've already begun talking to our "faculty" in an effort to get the ball rolling.

Sadly, the coronavirus has put a temporary halt to our outreach efforts and we had to cancel an upcoming veteran's "write your story" class. Once things improve, we will need to get this program going again. This program will be addressed in more detail in a separate email later this summer.

Stay safe, ~Bob Doerr



THE AGE OF CORONAVIRUS

Message from the Founder Rev. Bill McDonald

AS EVERYONE IN THE WORLD knows, life has drastically changed this year because of *COVID-19*. Many have died and more will die until there is a vaccine and/or a treatment for it. Nothing from this year forward will ever be the same for all of us.

For writers/authors and people who do public presentations and talks, this is a whole new journey. Not many of our members will be promoting their books with old-school book signings and public talks for the near future. No more handshakes, hugs or large crowds of people coming to see and listen to our authors talking about their books. So, what happens NOW?

It's time to evolve and change or be left behind. Some of you have discovered the power of virtual presentations, talks, and interviews on the Internet—you can reach much larger audiences of potential readers and book buyers. The good news is you no longer have to travel around the country to meet up with your readers. They're as close as your home computer.

I've discovered my *Amazon* book sales have increased through my *YouTube Channel* during these stay-at-home times. Some of my personal videos have found larger audiences from around the globe. I've had almost 800,000 viewers watching my videos and over 375,000 others who've watched my interviews (done by others). That's over ONE MILLION people I couldn't have reached by talking in front of 75- to 100-person groups, as I had been. I've also saved my travel costs (airfare, gas and lodging, etc.). More importantly, it

has gifted me with more time with my wife and family—time that would have been spent on the road.

My advice on how to promote your books for the coming year or two (or perhaps even for the future when we are past these times):



- ✓ **YouTube**—make short videos and post. Talk about your stories and your book(s).



- ✓ **Instagram**—post updates, photos, and videos to keep people updated on you and your books. Stay in the public eye.



- ✓ **Facebook**—Write articles for postings in various *Facebook* groups and on your own timeline. Create a *Facebook* group about your book or the subject of your book. Post on *MWSA FB page* and other writing groups' timelines. Do live broadcasts where you can interact real-time with your readers. (Keep these short.) Make the broadcasts informative, like a mini workshop: How to write or

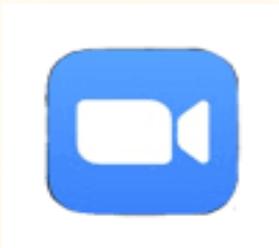
publish, or something related to what you write about (i.e. PTSD, VA benefits, handling grief, etc.).

✓ **Internet Interviews**—Contact people who've been talking to other authors/writers. Set up *Zoom* and *Skype* interviews. I've found thousands of readers who would've never discovered me had I not been interviewed by certain people. Do as many of these as you can.

✓ **Newspaper & Magazines**—Not only articles/stories, try to get them to do a featured interview with you. Whenever you do an article for any publication, always promote the name of your book.

✓ **Website**—All authors need a personal website. It's your business card in this Internet age. Post new photos, events, articles, etc., on a regular basis.

✓ **BLOGS**—If you have a website, you should have a blog people can come back to each month or so when you've posted something of interest to them. The key is, "*what is in your blog that interests them?*" If you're a military writer, share information or stories with which your followers can identify. It's not just about you.



✓ **ZOOM Conferences/Workshops**—A good way to include people into your sphere of influence. Gently mention your book(s) but don't make it all about sales—give them something of value for free. (If you have enough demand and you're popular enough, charge.)

✓ **Email Lists**—Much value in collecting email addresses of your readers. Harvest emails from organizations and group mailings when you see these people might be interested. Do not overuse emails—they become regarded as junk/spam and are quickly deleted. Spam emails seldom create positive feelings about you or your books. Once a month—or less, is plenty. Save your emailing for a special invitation or even an announcement.

✓ **Endorse other author's books**—Write book blurbs and book introductions/forewords for other books. Make sure you mention you're the author of whatever book you're still promoting. Write book reviews on *Amazon* for other authors and have them also review your book.

These are some of the more effective ways you can successfully market your books. Just because you can't get out of the house to travel doesn't mean an end to your book marketing.

MWSA—WHERE ARE WE HEADING?

I want this society to know how pleased I've been with the leadership from our current board members. We've also been blessed over the last couple of decades by volunteers who've kept this dream alive and well. I want to salute all the leaders and volunteers, both past and present—every one of them has added their own evolutionary visions of how to change and make things better. Each has taken us further down the highway toward a better place for our members.

The MWSA is now financially sound and seems to have gotten over many of its growing pains. We are now able to look at our more altruistic goals of service to our members and to the military community at large.

Continued on page 7

FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN ZOOM

Jack Woodville London ~ MWSA Director of Writing Education

MY FRIEND ROBERT GOSWITZ SENT to me this outline for the class he agreed to present at the MWSA one-day **Write Your Story** (WYS) program for veterans, a program on the discipline of getting started and staying focused. He knows something of this; Robert is the author of *The Dragon Soldier's Good Fortune* and a serious student of creative writing. In the middle of his presentation I read this: "THE FIRST DRAFT MUST BE WRITTEN!" Mired as I am deep into hundreds of rewrites and still struggling to finish a draft of my work in progress, this was a stark reminder of just how hard it is to do. It is a great paper and helped me get back on track. Unfortunately, he won't be able to give it at our meeting in Connecticut in September.

Shortly after the word came down from above that the MWSA annual conference is postponed from September until 2021, I contacted all of the WYS faculty and asked if they would be willing to teach the class this year despite the cancellation of the conference. They all said yes.

This one-day prequel to the annual conference is my guilty pleasure. Masquerading as the MWSA Director of Writing Education, I secretly use the one-day program we offer to veterans to learn a tremendous amount about the devices and conventions of creative writing. Our presenters are tremendous, and the veterans who attend our classes rave about how much they have learned, while I nod and smile and quietly say to myself, "me, too."

Then I asked this question: Why not present these programs for the full membership, on

Zoom? We can do a one-hour program on *Zoom*, present the presenters once a month or so, complete with handouts, slides, and wicked good humor. We can use the time to say hello to each other, do a bit of catching up, and do as I do: learn some things for the first time, be reminded of many things (such as *The First Draft Must be Written*), and profit from the classes that have, in the past, included programs on memoir, storytelling, character, dialogue, editing, poetry, short story, and non-fiction writing.

So, this announcement: MWSA leadership has approved the plan. The first class will be presented for approximately one hour on a day in September when we would otherwise have been at the annual meeting. The subject -presenter, the date, the time, and the log-in information will be sent to you via an MWSA blast and, come the day, all you have to do is join from the comfort of your... wherever you are comfortable. We will not present all of these classes at once. We hope to do this roughly once per month.

So, plan to join us on *Zoom* and enjoy my guilty pleasure: fellowship, writing education, and the brilliant guidance of such great fellow teachers as Robert Goswitz, Ruth Crocker, Dane Zeller, Nancy Arbuthnot, Val Ormond, Robin Hutton, and Dwight Zimmerman. See you there. ~Jack Woodville London



CORONAVIRUS Continued from page 5

Workshops, writing classes, VA hospital visits, and partnerships are taking shape. The future looks like what I'd always envisioned for this society. There's also been some early brainstorming on coming up with a way to give a few college scholarships to children and grandchildren of members. We're open to any feedback on how we can develop something along this pathway.

This society started off as a way to help PTSD veterans and their families, and to give writers of military genre a place to go. MWSA has expanded successfully into many different genres and members from a larger community of writers. We, as an organization, should retain that original vision of helping the veteran community. I believe we've managed to stay true to those founding principles.

I am in awe of what this group of authors has done over the years. I look forward to how we can make this even better as time goes on. The key is to be open to proactive, positive change by encouraging our members to become a part of that expansion of ideas and vision.



The MWSA board members are continuously looking for people to help with keeping this all afloat. If you have some talents or ideas, or want to volunteer in some capacity—like doing book reviews or helping with our website—speak up and let us know you are there.



WE need you!

MWSA *DISPATCHES* IS LOOKING FOR MEMBER SUBMISSIONS.

WE HAVE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE FOR you as a member in good standing, from [Author Interviews](#) to Poetry submissions, to Book Profiles (three books, first come-first served, will be showcased in the *Dispatches* every quarter). We offer this opportunity to be published in a national magazine exclusively to our membership.

If you'd like to write a feature article or have further questions, please email:

dispatches@mwsa.co

THANKS.



THE AMERICAN LEGACY PROJECT

Introduction by Bob Doerr

ONE OF THE MANY THINGS MWSA tries to do to provide the best service to our members is to identify other veteran-related writing services.

Valerie Ormond, our Outreach Manager, has done a stellar job in identifying these organizations (which are listed on our website). We absolutely don't want you to leave us but we do want you to be aware of other venues which may be of service to you and may fit a specific niche you're seeking. One of these organizations, *The American Legacy Project*, has come to our attention and has provided us the following about themselves and their mission:

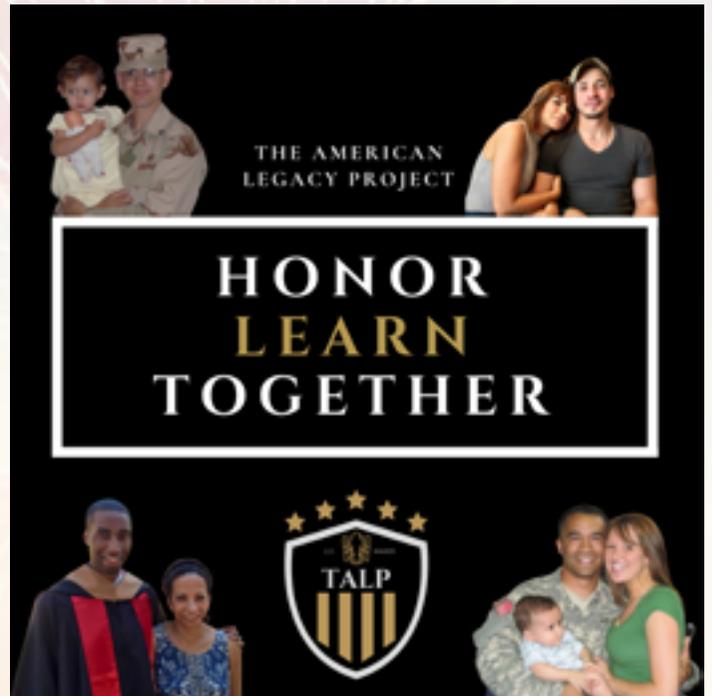


The American Legacy Project (TALP) is a nonprofit organization committed to preserving the legacies of America's veterans and service members by documenting their stories in personalized books and sharing their life lessons with the public.

Veterans and current service members choose

their interview experience with TALP:

- ✓ Connect with a TALP interviewer to conduct a 50- to 75-minute interview.
- ✓ Conduct the interview with someone not directly affiliated with TALP (i.e., family member, friend, former colleague, etc.) and submit the audio file to the project.
- ✓ Submit an audio file from a past interview or curate a personal text narrative to the project.



Following the interview, our editors and design team curate a "narrative" embedded with pictures the veteran submits. TALP's unique Legacy Book includes this narrative, the full interview, and other items submitted to the project. We publish the Legacy Book and send a copy to the address the veteran provides. After the veteran's approval, we post the narrative and associated photos to our website as a way to share lessons of service

with other veterans and American citizens.

We provide the first hard copy Legacy Book at no cost. Veterans and service members can choose to obtain a free digital Legacy Book in lieu of (or in addition to) the hard copy book. Additional hard copy Legacy Books cost \$60.

TALP's unique Legacy Book is perfect to display and share with friends and family for years to come. We work to ensure veterans and their loved ones will never lose the important life lessons from their time in service.

If you're interested in learning more about our process, our volunteer opportunities, or are inclined to donate, please visit us at www.theamericanlegacyproject.org or contact us today at stories@theamericanlegacyproject.org.

Would you like to place an advertisement in Dispatches?

Current rates:

Full Page Ad - \$150

1/2 page - \$85

1/4 page - \$50

(payable to MWSA)

To get started, email dispatches@mwsa.co for details.

Images must be of higher resolution—at least 300 dpi. Your Dispatches team will do their best to make your ad look professional but your best option is to send an already completed ad in jpg or png format.

Contact dispatches@mwsa.co for questions or concerns. *Thank you.*

MWSA SOCIAL MEDIA CONNECTIONS

Facebook | Goodreads | Twitter | YouTube

LinkedIn | Instagram | Tumblr | Blogger

PLEASE HELP US SPREAD THE word about MWSA programs and initiatives. Friend us, like our various pages, read and make comments, re-tweet our messages, and engage with other authors.

FACEBOOK

- ★ [MWSA Public Facebook Page](#)
- ★ *MWSA main website news stories updated here.*
- ★ *Open to everyone.*
- ★ *Members-only section coming in the future.*

GOODREADS

- ★ [MWSA Goodreads Page](#)
- ★ *Includes books from the 2015 season until now.*
- ★ *All our reviews copied here, and are subsequently mirrored in our dedicated [MWSA Blogger Page](#).*
- ★ *If you're interested in managing (or monitoring) this page, please contact us.*

TWITTER

- ★ [MWSA Twitter Feed](#)
- ★ *Our Twitter page gets all books and reviews added to our library.*
- ★ *Other items are posted on an ad hoc basis.*
- ★ *Are you a Twitter addict? Please help us out.*

INSTAGRAM

- ★ [MWSA Instagram Feed](#)
- ★ *At this moment, our library books are not automatically syndicated to this social media outlet.*
- ★ *We'll be using it for future advertising and book marketing efforts.*

Let us know if you'd like to help out.



MWSA AMBASSADORS PROGRAM NOW COAST-TO-COAST

Valerie Ormond

Military Writers Society of America Ambassadors, June 2020



THE MWSA AMBASSADORS PROGRAM OFFICIALLY approved in 2019 has now grown from the East Coast to the West Coast of the United States (U.S.) with six Ambassadors.

For those who are not aware of the program, the MWSA Ambassadors program provides qualified instructors to assist veterans, military, and families to share their stories through a variety of writing venues.

Please meet MWSA’s newest Ambassadors, Ruth Crocker (Mystic, CT), and Dane Zeller (Westwood, KS). Both Ruth and Dane expressed interest in the program following the MWSA Conference in Albuquerque and became Ambassadors shortly thereafter.

About Ruth Crocker (excerpted from <https://www.ruthcrocker.com/>)

“I grew up in a nursing home—the family business—perhaps that enlarged my view of life and death and why we should do what we

want while we can. Growing up among old people and then losing my husband in the Vietnam War in 1969 provided me with an early education about grief and resilience.”

Today, Ruth is focused on writing and teaching the writing process, especially with aspiring writers who have personal stories they would like to share.

She received an MFA in Creative Nonfiction from Bennington College, a PhD in Nutrition and Human Development from the University of Connecticut, and a Master of Education from Tufts University. Along the way she also became a Registered Dietitian.

Throughout Ruth’s career in healthcare endeavors, the creation of stories, essays, and writing for the theater remained a centering focus. She found her ultimate joy as a full-time writer and writing workshop leader.

“I don’t regret any of my life experience.

Everything has brought me to this moment— with a lot of stories to write.”

While managing a 100-bed skilled nursing facility, she managed to squeeze in portrayals of Louisa May Alcott throughout New England in her one-person play, *The Secret Life of Louisa May Alcott*. Among numerous publications, her essay *Sam’s Way*, originally published in the Gettysburg Review, was listed in *Best American Essays 2013*, and an excerpt from her memoir, *Those Who Remain: Remembrance and Reunion After War*, was nominated for a Pushcart Prize. She serves as Chair of the Women & Girls Fund of the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut and as national newsletter editor of the *Gold Star Wives of America*.

About Dane Zeller (excerpts from Dane’s *One Monkey Typing* blog)

I am a writer attempting to create fame and fortune for myself and my friends. The “one monkey typing” comes from the old saw about how an infinite number of monkeys could create the entire works of Shakespeare by typing random letters for an infinite amount of time. My literature/philosophical friend, Greg, has pointed out that it would be highly unlikely for this to be done, and impossible to do with a crew of one. I disagree. I’ll just put in more hours. Besides, I’m not fond of Shakespeare. I’m just shooting for a modest Pulitzer Prize in short fiction.

How did my early childhood affect my writing career?

We lived in a Schulte, 8 x 30 trailer house. That’s about 240 square feet. I didn’t have a typewriter because we had no table that didn’t fold up into a couch. I had no books to read because our three shelves were filled

with boxes of macaroni and cheese.

As a result, my interests were outdoors, on the ball field, 10 miles from the nearest library.

How did my Military Career affect my writing?

It got me out of town.

It helped me see the world differently.

It caused me to show my different world to you.

Ruth and Dane join the first four Ambassadors in the program from 2019. They are Tom Beard, MWSA Reviewer and award-winning author; Bob Doerr, MWSA President, Reviewer, and award-winning author; Jack London, MWSA Director of Writing Education and award-winning author; and Valerie Ormond, MWSA Outreach Committee Chair, Reviewer, and award-winning author.

We encourage our Ambassadors to reach out to our audiences in their communities in whatever means work best (e.g., personal mentoring, online sessions, email, blogs, or others.) In accordance with the MWSA Ethics Policy, Ambassadors’ course content will not include politically, religiously, or racially biased or anti-U.S./U.S. military material. MWSA’s Veterans Outreach page at www.mwsadispatches/veterans-outreach/ provides general information about our veterans workshops and an MWSA Ambassadors Program description.

Thank you to all of our Ambassadors, and if anyone is interested in becoming an MWSA Ambassador, please contact Valerie Ormond at outreach@mwsa.co/443-994-5651.



TOUCHED BY A SOUL-DIER

Barbara Perkins-Brown, Ed.D

MY DAUGHTER MARIE AND I drove 17 hours to Arlington, Virginia for a weekend. I had been invited as one of the guest authors of military-inspired topics at the Officer Women Leadership Symposium (OWLS) on September 20-21, 2013, which was held at the Women in Military Service for America (WIMSA) Memorial Museum. In the midst of those accomplished women in the military, I was honored to present my book *Subic: A Sailor's Memoir*, which is about my father's scarred military experience while he was stationed in the Philippines during the late 1960s.

After the conference, the two of us strolled around the vast cemetery. Suddenly, I was reminded by an acquaintance's request prior to our trip. She emailed, "If your trip to Arlington happens to include Arlington National Cemetery, give my Brad a kiss (Section 60, Plot 8008)."



There was a sense of awe walking around the Arlington National Cemetery. As if we were on a special mission, my daughter and I had intendedly located her son's plot. After all, we didn't know anybody buried there on a personal level. We just wanted to see the resting place of some well-known historical figures and U.S. Presidents. Interestingly, visiting her son's plot was spiritually solemn and reflective.

We took several pictures and said a prayer for both Brad and this young female soldier Jessica Ellis, whom we had learned about through her father, who was also visiting that weekend. Mr. Ellis was kind enough to share with us some details about Jessica's life as a daughter and as a medical specialist in the Army and how her military vehicle struck an improvised explosive device while serving in Iraq in 2008. CPL Jessica Ellis' uniforms, photos, email communication transcripts, and personal effects are on display at the WIMSA.

There are many "Brads and Jessicas" around us who fought for our priceless American freedom. How many times have we taken the time to commemorate them amid our daily routine? At least three times a year, we are reminded in observance of the following holidays: Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Independence Day.

Not only on cemetery grounds but also in every corner of our neighborhoods, there is a sense of honor to walk in the land of the free because a certain Brad or Jessica had taken a patriotic oath to serve and defend our democracy.

My daughter joined the Army National Guard in 2012. She eventually indicated that the heroic exemplar of those laid in Arlington gave her the motivation to pursue a long, honorable military career. She served in Alabama and Guam. Currently, she lives in Washington State and is still serving.

praying that made that weekend in Arlington a beautiful memory. I felt I became part of someone's story.

After our trip, I sent my friend an email back, "Thank you for telling me about Brad."

She replied, "You were so kind to visit Brad's place of commemoration and to take photos, too. I felt very comforted."



I brought a smile to this mother's heart, and she certainly brought a smile to mine as I continued to read the rest of her email. Consequently, through a simple note, Betsy Beard shared with me her son Brad—a gentle soul, a fallen fighter, a soldier, and a hero.

It was a long drive home, but every minute was worth it. It wasn't the OWLS presentation, where I stood in front of a crowd talking, but it was standing in front of a hero's burial plot

I believe SFC Bradley Scott Beard had also made a difference in other people's perspectives more than I could have ever known. One thing I know, this experience had touched me not only for one weekend but till the end!



THE HEALING POWER OF WRITING

Dr Mark Green M.A., J.D.

WOULD YOU SHARE YOUR WHOLE life in a book with the whole world? It was the question I asked myself as I looked at the completed manuscript on the desk of my first written book, the fear welled up in me because to overcome that fear and publish it meant I was sharing my entire life in a book—the good, the bad, and the ugly about myself and some of the most difficult and most triumphant moments of my life. I looked out the window and asked myself, “Should I do this?” A silent “yes” came back.

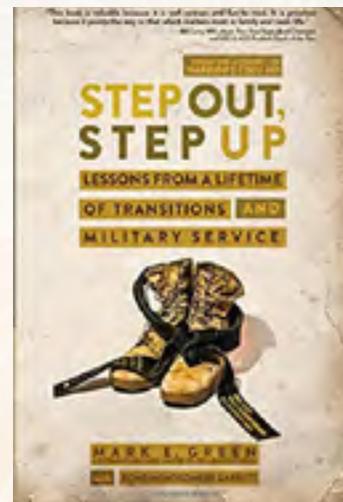
The unintended consequence was taking that mental journey of 34 years of military service and revisiting my youth had brought up a life of emotional trauma and triumphant events. Many things I had suppressed my whole life bubbled up. It took me on a journey again of the highest highs and the lowest lows. Then I realized there were people on that journey I had to reach out to again. True friends who I had been separated from for many years. It was mentally exhausting to relive some of the more difficult events but that’s where some healing was taking place.

By writing out what happened, how I dealt with each difficulty and what I learned from the lessons along the way, it strengthened my mind. The experience taught me that it is healthy to get things out through writing. At times, it was like I was experiencing the actual event again which brought on emotions that let me see things from a distance for a second time. It was reinforcing how resilient I had really become.

Instead of just writing the book to get things

off my chest, I also reunited with great friends I had made in life who were separated by Army life or other reasons. The rewards of the reconnection with them was so worth it because I had lived some of the greatest things that ever happened to me while they were my friends.

When I had my book launch, I invited them to attend with 100 friends, family, and community leaders at the Hard Rock Cafe at Universal Studios. I had a black-tie event and wanted it to be a big event because I was celebrating more than just writing a book. I was in transition. I figured that most people never finish a book and I was going to celebrate it right.



The picture on the front of the book is representative of my whole life. On the cover is a professional picture of a pair of my boots with my Black Belt draped over them. My time as an Army athlete in the 82nd Airborne and my whole life wearing boots had taught me

some unbelievably valuable lessons and challenged me in ways many military soldiers are challenged. I knew there is something more beyond my understanding in the words within that inspires hope and helps others in their own transitions. We all have a story.

A fortunate thing happened when Bill Curry, a two-time Super Bowl Champion who played

for Vince Lombardi and the Green Bay Packers wrote an entire praise page in the book. He called me a tough guy. Now, here is a guy who played center who used to get smeared into the grass by guys like Dick Butkus, calling me a tough guy. He sat with me for two hours and we talked about his career, my career and why I had written what I did. I called him once when things got tough, when I had a large event and lost lots of money on it. In an email he wrote, "That's OK Mark, you're going to get crushed more than once in life, just get back up!"

My "why" for writing became more crystal clear when it was mentored by Lisa Sharkey for a year under the Army Corporate Partners Program. She was the Senior producer of *Good Morning America* for five years and then moved on to Harper Collins as the Senior VP of Creative Development. I also got to sit in her office recently on 5th Avenue in New York. She told me once it was not my hard life that made me who I was. She said, "Most people do have a hard life. Your story inspires because you are a warrior and a fighter and never give up. You put it all out there and you shared your vulnerability. You shared some really personal things about relationship breakups, lack of money, the war in Afghanistan, having to learn to walk again after major surgery."

My other life challenges were really bearing all to help others see they, too, can stay in the fight. I wanted to tell anyone who has had difficult days that it is OK to see them for what they are but see them at that moment and move on from them. I wanted to connect and for my writing to also heal others.

I got the best advice about writing early on. A New York editor had looked at one of my

chapters and gave me some guidance and then she said, "Don't worry about the title, the chapters or the structure at first. Just sit down and write." By doing that, my mind carried me until the last keystroke was done. It set me on a journey to learn more about myself, get stronger in mind, body and spirit and healed some mental wounds.

If a kid who lived in a mobile home on welfare growing up from Missouri, did not graduate from high school prior to service, and went on to pass law school can find some success after the trauma and drama he experienced, so can you.

I retired as a Lieutenant Colonel from service. I used the healing power of a pen to heal the wounds of life. The best medicine I have ever taken was the prescription to write. If you have a book in you, I am paying it forward. Just write.



Dr. Mark Green M.A., J.D. Author of: **Step Out Step Up, Lessons from a Lifetime of Transitions and Military Service and Warriors Code 001, Learn the 7 Vital Steps to Resiliency**

THE MWSA MILITARY HISTORY TRIVIA QUIZ

Dwight Jon Zimmerman

THE SPANISH INFLUENZA



*Sailors assigned beds set up on the Drill Hall floor of the Main Barracks of Naval Training Station, San Francisco, in 1918. Note the sneeze screens separating the sailors as a precaution designed to prevent spread of the influenza and that the bunk headings all face the same direction instead of the typical alternate head-and-foot positioning.
Photo: Naval History and Heritage Command*

WELCOME TO THE MILITARY WRITERS Society of America Trivia Quiz! Here's your opportunity to test your knowledge of military history, rank yourself, and impress your friends as a respected fountain of irrelevant information—or maybe just have some fun at a time when we all need a distraction.

Because the world is now battling the COVID-19 pandemic, the subject for this quiz is another pandemic that wracked the planet: the Spanish Influenza of World War I. Though my preceding article about the Spanish Influenza provides background, you'll discover that answers to the following questions will not be found in that text. Like the doctors back then, you're on your own (though hopefully with less drastic results).

You'll discover some answers raise questions of their own, and explanations are provided in the answer section found at the end of the quiz.

Drop me a line at djonzim@gmail.com and let me know what you think, suggestions of how to improve it, and subjects for other quizzes.

Good Luck! (And no cheating going to Google or any other search engine or reference book for answers.) All photos courtesy of the Library of Congress or Naval History and Historical Command.

1 WHICH WORLD WAR II general was commander of Camp Colt—an Army training camp located on the Gettysburg battlefield—who suddenly found himself simultaneously having to train soldiers for deployment in France and deal with a growing number who became infected with the Spanish Flu?

- A. George S. Patton, Jr.
- B. George C. Marshall
- C. Omar N. Bradley
- D. Dwight D. Eisenhower
- E. Douglas MacArthur



A photograph taken of Douglas MacArthur after he had been promoted to the five-star rank of General of the Army in 1945. Of the men listed above, MacArthur was the only one to be a general officer in both World War I and World War II. Photo: Library of Congress

2 DURING THE POST-WAR NEGOTIATIONS that resulted in the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I, which Allied leader came down with the Spanish Flu?

- A. Georges Clemenceau
- B. Woodrow Wilson
- C. David Lloyd George
- D. Vittorio Orlando



From left to right: British prime minister David Lloyd George, Italian prime minister Vittorio Orlando, French prime minister Georges Clemenceau, and President Woodrow Wilson in front of a hotel in Paris during the Treaty of Versailles negotiations in 1919. Known as the "Big Four" according to diplomatic protocol Wilson outranked the other three because he was the only head of state.

3 WHERE DID THE SPANISH Influenza originate?

- A. China
- B. Crimea
- C. Spain
- D. Kansas
- E. Saudi Arabia



A map of Europe showing the battle lines in 1918. Photo: Naval History and Heritage Command

4 WHICH BELLIGERENT IN WORLD War I was the country most responsible for the spread of the Spanish Influenza?

- A. France
- B. Italy
- C. Germany
- D. Austria-Hungary
- E. United States

5 DR. WILLIAM GORGAS WAS:

- A. The U.S. Army Surgeon General at the time of World War I.
- B. The medical officer who eradicated yellow fever during the construction of the Panama Canal.
- C. Had the responsibility for the performance of medicine and medical treatment in the Army during World War I but little authority to enforce it.
- D. Ordered government and private drug manufacturers to produce the necessary quantities of vaccines, antitoxins, and sera that the Army would need because commercial drug manufacturers' products were unreliable and useless.



Dr. William Gorgas Photo: Library of Congress

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6 THE REASON THE SPANISH Influenza got its name was because:

A. It originated in an enclave just outside Acapulco that was inhabited by rich Spaniards and the Mexican government chose to name the virus after the people who contracted and originally spread it rather than the country of origin.

B. Spain, being neutral, had no press censorship like that in force by the World War I belligerents, thus it was the only major nation to widely report the existence and spread of the disease. As a result, for being the messenger, Spain got “credit” for the virus.

C. French prime minister Georges Clemenceau’s mistress dumped him to become the mistress to King Alfonso XIII of Spain. In an act of revenge, for one of the prime minister’s more notable traits was that he was a great hater, Clemenceau named the virus then sweeping through the French army the Spanish Influenza.

D. The Public Health and Marine Hospital Service (predecessor of the National Institutes of Health) had an alphabetical naming system for diseases similar to that used by the National Weather Service for naming hurricanes. But instead of Christian names, the Public Health Service (as it was known) employed the names of countries. When it was determined that the virus was new, the letter “S” was in play. As the PHS scientists were loath to give such a strong virus the name of a colony, like Senegal or Singapore, they chose Spain (Sweden being next on the list).



The war bond Liberty Loan Parade at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, September 28, 1918, featured the hull of an F5L patrol seaplane, escorted by armed sailors, built by the Naval Aircraft Factory in Philadelphia. Despite the fact that the Spanish Influenza was already creating major health problems in the nation, the mayor of Philadelphia ignored medical expert advice calling for the parade’s cancellation and allowed it to go forward as scheduled. Within a week, the city’s hospitals were overwhelmed with Spanish Influenza victims. On October 19, the Naval Aircraft Factory recorded 1,500 cases and thirty deaths, alone. Photo: Naval History and Heritage Command

7 HOW MANY U.S. NAVY nurses were awarded the Navy Cross during World War I?

- A. 4
- B. 6
- C. 1
- D. 3.



The Navy Cross. Authorized in 1919 and retroactive to 1917, the original design had a very narrow white stripe running vertically down the center of the blue ribbon and a medal of dull, sometimes greenish, bronzed. Some were awarded with the medal reversed, with the sailing ship being placed on the back and the crossed anchors and “USN” on the front. One design variation, in use from 1941-1942, picked up the nickname “Black Widow” because the medal was over-anodized, giving it a dark, gunmetal finish. Finding the nickname macabre following America’s entry into World War II, the medal was redesigned and is the one in use to this day. Photo: Naval History and Heritage Command



8 WHAT IS THE NAME of the U.S. Army camp most often identified as the location of the first major outbreak of the Spanish Influenza in the United States?

- A. Hancock
- B. Grant
- C. Devens
- D. Pike
- E. Sherman



An influenza patient receives treatment at the U.S. Naval Hospital, New Orleans, Louisiana in the fall of 1918. Note the face masks worn by the medical personnel.

10 NO ONE KNOWS FOR certain exactly how many people died from the Spanish Influenza. But everyone agrees it was a lot. How many people are estimated to have died of it?

- A. 21 million
- B. 675,000
- C. 100 million
- D. 350 million



An aerial photograph taken above Camp Sherman in Chillicothe, Ohio, showing the 21,000 officers and men of the U.S. Army's 95th Division arranged into a bust profile of President Woodrow Wilson on September 5, 1918. The division, activated on September 4, was preparing to be deployed to France, but the war ended before it could go to Europe. It was demobilized in December 1918. Photo: Library of Congress



A scene in D Ward of the hospital at Naval Training Station, San Francisco, California in late 1918. Note that all the occupied beds on the right have sneeze screens and the empty beds on the left do not. Photo: Naval History and Heritage Command

9 TRUE OR FALSE. THE Spanish Influenza was the only serious infectious disease the Army and Navy medical services had to deal with during World War I.

- A. True
- B. False

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MILITARY HISTORY QUIZ ANSWERS



General Dwight Eisenhower, shown here addressing troops from the 101st Airborne Division prior to the invasion of Normandy in World War II. Photo: Library of Congress

1 AND THE ANSWER IS: “D.” Two years out of West Point, Captain Dwight Eisenhower had already established his ability as a trainer of men. Because the Army had greater need for officers who knew how to turn recruits into soldiers, instead of leaving for France as commander of the 301st Tank Battalion, he was told to go to Gettysburg and be the commander of Camp Colt, some of whose soldiers would later serve under Patton. The camp’s first cases of the flu were diagnosed on September 14, 1918. From that point on Eisenhower, now a major, found himself battling two wars: one to train his men for battle, the other to save his men from disease.

As for the others:

“A”: Originally assigned to the staff of American Expeditionary Forces commander General John Pershing, Patton was promoted to lieutenant colonel and made commander of the 1st Tank Brigade which he would lead into battle, eventually receiving the Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Service Medal, and Purple Heart.

“B”: Like Eisenhower, Marshall did not command combat troops during World War I. Unlike Eisenhower, Marshall was in France. He served in a variety of important staff positions and was notable for being the principle planner for the Saint-Mihiel offensive and responsible for the massive redeployment under a tight deadline of 500,000 men and 2,700 guns from Saint-Mihiel to the Meuse-Argonne front, enabling that offensive to be launched on time, to the surprise of the German Army who did not think a force that large could move so quickly.

“C”: Captain Omar Bradley fought in the war, but against his own countrymen and inside the borders of the United States. Copper being a strategic metal, Bradley was assigned commander of a garrison company to guard copper mines in Butte, Montana. In that duty he found himself having to fight labor unrest and jail union agitators.

“E”: Douglas MacArthur entered the war as a colonel, the chief of staff of the 42nd Rainbow Division, so named because it was a National Guard unit that drew troops from a variety of states. His bravery in combat, and some heavy lobbying by his influential mother, Mary “Pinky” MacArthur, saw him promoted to the rank of brigadier general and, in the final days of the war, commander of the 42nd Division. He would be one of the highest decorated soldiers in the war, receiving seven Silver Stars, two Distinguished Service Crosses, two Purple Hearts, and one Distinguished Service Medal.

2 AND THE ANSWER IS: “C.” On Thursday, April 3, at six p.m. Woodrow Wilson’s personal physician Rear Admiral Cary Grayson recorded that the president was “seized with violent paroxysms of coughing, which were so severe and frequent that it interfered with

his breathing.” Grayson initially thought that the president had been poisoned. The actual diagnosis provided scant comfort. On April 8, though weak, Wilson claimed to feel well enough to continue negotiations with Clemenceau and Lloyd George, though all who saw the president recognized that he was even more ill-equipped to joust with those two master negotiators. Four months later, Wilson would suffer a major stroke that led to the controversial situation of his wife controlling all access to him and in effect acting as a female president.



From left to right: Georges Clemenceau (holding hat and cane), Woodrow Wilson (center), and David Lloyd George (shaking the hand of an unidentified well-wisher), exiting the Palace of Versailles following the treaty signing ceremony on June 28, 1919.

As for the others:

“**A**”: Georges Clemenceau didn’t get the flu; he got a bullet. On February 19, 1919, as he was en route to meet Wilson and others, an assassin fired a pistol at his car, with a bullet hitting him in the chest and lodged in a location that made it too dangerous to move.

“**C**”: Nothing so dramatic happened to David Lloyd George. His off hours were often spent with his mistress (and daughter’s former tutor), Frances Stevenson. Two years after the death of his first wife, and at age 80 (she

being 55), they would marry.

“**D**”: Vittorio Orlando wound up leaving the conference at Versailles early. The weakest of the Big Four (United States, Great Britain, France, Italy) at the conference. The Italian delegation overplayed its hand in trying to acquire territory from the dissolved Austria-Hungary Empire. Neutral at the start of the war, the Italian government played one side against the other before joining the Allies, who offered a better deal. When Britain and France reneged on that deal, the delegation left, with the Orlando government soon being voted out of office by an angry Italian electorate.



The governor’s mansion, Topeka, Kansas, circa 1910.

Photo: Library of Congress

3 THE ANSWER IS: “**D**.” Yes, Kansas! While it’s impossible to state with absolute certainty the virus’s original location, virologist and Nobel laureate Frank Macfarlane Burnet who lived through the flu’s outbreak and spent a good share of his career studying it concluded that it is “strongly suggestive” that it began in Haskell County, Kansas, located in the southwest corner of the state. Who would have thought? But there it is.

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As for the others:

“**A**”: China? Nah, that’s, hmmm, let’s see, “Asian Flu” (1957), “Hong Kong Flu” (1968), “Russian Flu” (1977), SARS (2002), H1N1 (2009), and, oh, yeah, COVID-19 (2019). And that’s just within the last hundred years.

“**B**”: Crimea? No, that’s the Black Death—the bubonic plague of the fourteenth century that killed up to 60 percent of Europe’s population and an estimated 200 million worldwide. It took Europe 200 years to return population levels to pre-plague levels. So, as bad as the Spanish Influenza was, and it was bad, the Black Death holds the title of Worst Plague in History.

“**C**”: Spain? Nope, despite its name, Spain is innocent. As for *why* it’s called the Spanish flu, the answer is waiting for you at #6.

“**E**”: Saudi Arabia? That was the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) (2012)



A 1918 map of the United States showing the nation’s rail lines. Railroads were the primary means of overland transportation in the United States during World War I. Photo: Library of Congress

4 THE ANSWER IS “E.” Yep, the United States! As John M. Barry wrote in *The Great Influenza*, the definitive work on the subject, after appearing in Haskell County sometime

in January 1918, traveled northeast across the state to Camp Funston, part of the large Army base Fort Riley “and from there to Europe. Later it began its sweep through North America, through Europe, through South America, through Asia and Africa, through isolated islands in the Pacific, through all the wide world.” As for the reason why? America’s entry into World War I. Virtually overnight, draftees from all over the nation were jammed together in hastily built camps, in overcrowded conditions with little to no sanitation, country boys mixing with city boys, transported from one end of the country to the other, and back, and then overseas. The goal, of course, was to train these recruits in how to fight and survive a war. It proved to also be the most efficient way to turn a local outbreak into a worldwide pandemic. As for the other nations, they had a hand in its spread, but by then it was all over the place.



The official portrait of Surgeon General William Gorgas.
Photo: Library of Congress

5 THE ANSWER IS: “**ALL of them.**” At the time of the outbreak, he was the U.S. Army Surgeon General. Earlier in his career he had been tapped by President Theodore Roosevelt to eradicate yellow fever, which was decimating the workers hired to construct the Panama Canal. Though he was the Army’s top medical officer, Army high command did not support him by giving him the authority necessary to enforce hygiene protocols he said were necessary. And, finally, because commercial drug manufacturers were doing such a bad job creating vaccines, he turned to his friends in academia, the military, and elsewhere, to stockpile in quantity the vaccines he knew he’d need for the troops.



Members of the St. Louis Red Cross Motor Corps pose behind their ambulances in October 1918. Note the face masks on all the nurses. The Red Cross was a major participant in the battle against the virus.

Photo: Library of Congress

6 THE ANSWER IS “**B.**” Spain, being neutral during World War I, had no press censorship like that in force with the belligerents, thus it was the only major nation to widely report about the disease. As a result, the world came to call the virus the Spanish Influenza, a case of the messenger getting the blame that rightly should have gone elsewhere. (The “American Flu” anyone?)

As for the others:

“**A**”: nah, I made that one up.

“**C**”: This one is another bald-faced lie. Though Clemenceau *was* a good hater (there’s a reason his nickname was “the Tiger”), and though he *did* have mistresses, in this particular case, not true.

“**D**”: My wife picked this one because she said it had so much detail in it that she felt it had to be true. Just goes to show that if you take some actual facts (the Weather Service nomenclature), mix it with some distortions cleverly woven and you come up with . . .



Portrait photograph of Superintendent of the Navy Nurse Corps Lenah H. Sutcliffe in uniform and wearing her Navy Cross and World War I victory ribbons. Photo: Naval History and Heritage Command

7 THE ANSWER TO THAT is: “**A.**” At the time the Navy Cross could also be awarded for exemplary non-combat action (that changed during World War II, with the authorization of the Navy Distinguished Service Medal) The women were Chief Nurse Lenah H. Sutcliffe, who was also the first woman to receive the Navy Cross, and Marie Louise Hidell, Edna

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Place, and Lillian Murphy. Sadly, the latter three all received theirs posthumously, having died of the virus.

As for the others:

“B”: Those were Marines who received it during the Haitian Campaign (1919-1920) and they were: Private Emery Entrekin, Second Lieutenant Herman Hanneken, Sergeant William Passmore, Captain Jesse Perkins, Sergeant Albert Taubert, and Corporal Roy Villars.

“C”: That was Marine drummer J.H. Arnold in the Dominican Campaign (1916-1924).

“D”: That was the number of U.S. Army nurses who received the Distinguished Service Cross in World War I. Yes, they received the decoration for action in combat. They were Helen G. McClelland, Beatrice M. MacDonald, and J. Isabel Stambaugh.



A hospital ward at Camp Devens, Massachusetts.

Photo: Library of Congress

8 WHILE ALL OF THEM did suffer from the Spanish Influenza, the answer is **“C”** Camp Devens, located outside of Boston.

As for the others:

“A”: Camp Hancock, located near Augusta, Georgia, literally had its outbreak shipped to it by train. Departing from Camp Grant (see **“B”**), when it arrived in Augusta, more than 700 of the 3,108 troops on board were sick with the flu, with ultimately 2,000 of them hospitalized. By that time the entire camp was infected.

“B”: A sad footnote to Camp Grant, located near Chicago, is that its commander, Colonel Charles Hagadorn, committed suicide, overwhelmed by guilt because he had issued overcrowding orders and did not enforce hygiene protocols until the virus had killed hundreds of troops under his command.

“D”: Camp Pike, located near Little Rock, Arkansas, saw 8,000 troops admitted to its hospital in a span of four days.

“E”: Camp Sherman, in south central Ohio, would have the distinction of being the military camp with the highest death rate in the country. Known as the nation’s “soldier factory” in World War I (ultimately 120,000 troops would train there), almost 6,000 soldiers contracted the disease in 1918, with 1,777 fatalities.



A masked nurse is taking the pulse of a patient in the influenza ward at Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, DC, in late 1918. Note that because of the large volume of influenza patients, beds had to be arranged in the hall. Photo: Library of Congress

9 THE ANSWER IS “**FALSE.**” Infectious diseases have been a bane of the military since the dawn of organized combat. In fact, up until World War II, the chances of death through disease was greater than that through action in combat. Talk about your devil’s banquet of diseases commanders had to struggle with: measles, mumps, yellow fever, cholera, diphtheria, pneumonia, smallpox, chicken pox, hell, you name it, at some point troops caught it.



The American ward at the Fourth Scottish General Hospital in Glasgow in November 1918. Photo: Library of Congress

10 TRUTH TO TELL, NO ONE KNOWS for certain how many died from the Spanish Influenza. The answer to this question is “**All of them.**” Here’s the breakdown:

“**A**”: 21 million is the estimated number in the 1927 study sponsored by the American Medical Association.

“**B**”: 675,000 is the estimated number of recorded deaths in the United States, out of a population at the time of 105 million. In other words, .65 percent of the population. By way of comparison, 750,000 men died in the American Civil War, more than 2 percent of the population at the time, with roughly 67% from disease.

“**C**”: The figure of 100 million worldwide is a suggested low figure determined in a

2002 study. With a population estimate of 1.8 billion in 1918, this amounted to about 5 percent of the world population.

“**D**”: The figure of 350 million is the highest estimate.

These numbers are so large as to beggar understanding. To better comprehend the enormity of the pandemic and its impact, here are some death toll figures from other extraordinarily bloody events in the twentieth century: World War I (excluding Spanish Influenza deaths): 15 million, World War II: 66 million deaths, Mao Zedong’s purges and Great Leap Forward (1949-76): 40 million deaths, Josef Stalin’s purges (1928-53): 20 million. And that’s not including what the Khmer Rouge did in Cambodia, the various purges, civil wars, and genocides in Africa, who knows what in North Korea, and the “Dirty War” in Argentina. It’s worth knowing that in Mao and Stalin’s cases it took those two monsters decades to reach their figures. The Spanish Influenza did all that, and so much more, in just two years. Finally the sad and sobering take-away is this: the twentieth century is the bloodiest in recorded history.

SO, HOW DID YOU DO? Tally up your score and find out below what your rank is.

★ *Commander: 10 answers correct. Need I say more?*

★ *Chief of Staff: 7–9 correct. You’re smart enough to know your stuff. More importantly, you’re smart enough to not show up your commander.*

★ *Adjutant: 5–6 correct. You’re learning.*

★ *Orderly: 2–4 correct. You’re beginning to learn.*

★ *Flag bearer: 1 correct. You know your place.*

★ *Recruit: 0 correct. Welcome aboard. Time to bone up.*

THOUGHTS ON *DELTA FILE*

Dale A. Dye

27 June 2020

*On the publication of **Delta File**, the ninth adventure in Dale Dye's award-winning Shake Davis series, the author reflects on the process.*

SINCE I WAS A LITTLE lost 12-year-old striving to outshine my military school peers, I've been an avid and voracious reader. Just to be a noted contrarian at that young age, I actually struggled gamely through Tolstoy's *War and Peace* while most of my buddies were devouring *Sgt. Rock* comic books.

It was somewhere around that time I got hooked on books, particularly action/adventure novels that feature and follow a central character. I am and have been for years a huge fan of works by series authors like Lee Child. In my mind, Jack Reacher is the epitome of cool, and the fact that Reacher—the ultimate rootless iconoclast—has a military background sealed the deal between me and Lee Child.

To be open about all this, I really should mention my fanboy addiction to other writers such as Tom Clancy (Clandestine Ops), W.E.B. Griffin (mostly Army), Dale Brown (Air Force), Ward Carroll (Naval Aviation), and John Gobbell (surface Navy), just to list some of my personal favorites. Of course, if you're a perceptive and discriminating reader, you'll want me to include my own *File Series* novels featuring retired Marine Shake Davis.

I mention all this because the ninth Shake Davis novel (*Delta File*) has just been released, and writing it was a weird experience. It left me wondering how much of their personal life and experience

my fellow novelists are willing to reveal in writing about Jack Reacher, Jack Ryan, Punk Reichert or Patrick McLanahan. I'll probably never know, but if I were to run across any of them in one of the exotic locations we write about, I'd caution them about the minefields sown all over memory lane.



At the Mark Twain Museum in Hannibal, Missouri

There were times in writing *Delta File* when I wanted to quit, hit delete, and restart the tale because I found myself revisiting sensitive times and places, as I took Shake Davis back to his (and my) old home place in Southeast Missouri.

Fortified by strong drink, I pushed on with *Delta File*, and while it was a little painful in places, it was also an opportunity to take a cold, hard, and ultimately rewarding look at my life to date.

Of course, the plot carries Shake into a grisly discovery and any number of dangerous challenges he must overcome in putting an end to

a very seamy criminal operation he discovers in the heartland. Along the way in getting up that tree and down again, Shake reveals a lot about his personal life. And much of that is a mirror to my own upbringing and development. I'm hoping it will appeal as much as the other *File Series* books, which typically take Shake and his partner, associates, and colorful acquaintances into locales and situations that are more exotic and deadly.

If nothing else, it was fun to clone Samuel Clemmons and commune with Huck Finn and Runaway Jim.



About the Author: Marine officer Dale A. Dye rose through the ranks to retire as a captain after 21 years of service in war and peace. Following retirement from active duty in 1984, and upset with Hollywood's treatment of the American military, he went to Hollywood and established **Warriors, Inc.**, the preeminent military training and advisory service to the entertainment industry. Dye has worked on more than 50 movies and TV shows, including several Oscar- and Emmy-winning productions.

Dye was named the **Mike Mullins Memorial MWSA Writer of the Year** for 2019. Find the complete *File Series*, featuring Shake Davis, along with Captain Dye's other books [here](#).



Jeannette Monument

by Nancy Arbuthnot

*Marble ice drips from the marble cross,
memorial to officers and crew
lost in the expedition to the Pole—*

*failed experiment that shows
how hopelessness*

can be faced with hope:

day after ice-bound day to take soundings,

*toss footballs, plan trips to Paris, France,
and name the sled, the ship now sunk,
Nil Desideratum, Never Despair.*

Nancy Arbuthnot contributed six poems about the monuments at the US Naval Academy. This is one of them.

MWSA Dispatches Seeks Member Submissions.

WE'VE MANY OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE FOR you as a member in good standing, from [Author Interviews](#), to Poetry submissions, to Book Profiles (three books—first come-first served, which will be showcased in the *Dispatches* every quarter).

If you'd like to write a featured article, submit a book or you just have questions, please email dispatches@mwsa.co

Thanks for playing.

WISDOM FROM THE TRENCHES

Brad Graft

Upping Your Game, Via Steve Pressfield's Mentorship

REMEMBER BEING THAT YOUNG PFC or Second Lieutenant and checking into your first unit? Recall looking up in awe at that squad leader, that section head, or that company commander—the salty dog who had all of the answers? He was the one who took you under his wing and showed you how things really worked.

When things got hairy on a mission, all eyes went to her for the trusted solution. “I wanna be like him,” is what you told your mates. When that key leader—that treasured influencer—eventually rotated out, it felt like a gut punch. You had learned so much from him. How would the unit ever function without her? That mentor left your life that day, but that old relationship remains like the tattoo on your forearm—maybe a little faded on wrinkled skin, but singed into your being, forever.

Whether we knew it or not at the time, the wisdom acquired from these important individuals, during this impressionable time—how to act, what to do, how to look, how to deal with people, how to solve problems—was seared into our brains. For many of us, this base of knowledge became the foundation from which we launched our lives, our careers. From that point forward, we were professionals.

Once changing duty stations, or having left the military for second careers, we surely appreciated competent bosses and the counsel of wise peers in the civilian workplace. But

being older and saltier to the ways of the world, many of us never again felt the dominant presence of that first military mentor. Having lost the wetness behind our ears, follow-on jobs were no longer our “first rodeos.”

But then we started writing. And regardless of what age we picked up this new trade, we once again became that apprentice, that greenhorn, that baby-faced chap with only one chevron on his collar.

Unafraid (or as my mentor would say, “Too dumb to know better”), we plunged into the work of writing. Why not? We received fine marks in English and writing classes. Disciplined and accustomed to misery from our time in the service, we were up early, hammering away in solitude, before work and on weekends.

Once finished with the book, some of us may have sent the manuscript to ten, maybe twenty, literary agents. Surely one of them would deliver us a publishing deal. And for many of us, we did hear back: “No thanks.” I got forty of those emails.

Disappointed, but familiar with hardship and wired not to quit, we considered hybrid and boutique publishers, and self-publishing. Once our book was in print, we set our infant work afloat into the river of books—an ever-crowded marketplace.

We were challenged in trying to market our work. Some of us wrote another book, gaining self-satisfaction from the achievement and our improvement in the craft. Yet busy with jobs, families, and with the writing life not panning out as we hoped, maybe our writing

fire fizzled? Maybe we lost heart?

Perhaps bagging the writing venture seemed logical, as during this entire process, it felt like nobody was covering our backs. Unlike our time in the military, we had no comrades to push or pull us forward when we needed it. Every step in the writing, publishing, and marketing process was filled with new disappointments. Maybe we started to think our work inadequate? Writing was a hobby. It didn't pay the bills. Who did we think we were? Hemingway?

Writing later in life was like being that eighteen-year-old in the service again. A foreign environment. A battlefield of sorts, filled with heartbreak, setbacks, and landmines around every turn.

Wouldn't it have been great, when writing that first or second book, to have had a gal like that seasoned staff sergeant in our corner—just like the old days? A trusted comrade to navigate us through the painful, solitary environment of the writing world. A sage to enlighten us to the intricacies of storytelling, how to overcome the myriad of obstacles in writing a book, and what it means to be a professional artist?

For some of us, that first or second book may be trapped, half-done, held hostage in the c-drive. Wouldn't it be great to pick up the craft again and have the writing equivalent of that old corporal or that square-jawed captain to lean on?

There are options. You can go back to school. You can hire a "writing coach." As my father would say, "All it takes is money." I would add, "And time." But most of us don't have weeks to go back to college and learn the nuances of writing tales. We don't have the

spare jack to leisurely polish this second trade of ours at an "Iowa Writers' Workshop."

You can hire an editor. But a hard truth is that editors can only fix so much. Even stellar editors can't make chicken salad out of... Well, you know. Finding a skilled, affordable editor who understands your work is no joy.

We can pay a better writer to rewrite our subpar stories. But would this option eat our souls? Yes, it would.

What's a more reasonable solution? A writing mentor. A person who will show us how to be a writing pro, help improve our craft, and instruct us to self-edit. Let me introduce you to my mentor, Steven Pressfield.

You've likely heard of him, or at least some of his work. Pressfield's first book, *The Legend of Bagger Vance*, was made into a 2000 film. His second novel, *Gates of Fire*, has sold a million copies and is still going strong. Steve's a former Marine and a solid example of who military writers should emulate.

Full disclosure before we dive in. Am I somehow financially connected to Steve Pressfield and his books? Is he tied to my work? Do I work for him, or owe Steve money? Nope, nope, and nope.

I write this article because I embraced Steve's guidance more than a decade ago and it continues to help me to this day. I write this article because of my desire to help fellow Vets. And last, I write this out of a deep respect and admiration for Steve and his efforts to assist aspiring writers. That's it.

Without getting too personal, I've had four essential mentors in my life: my father, my JV football coach, a Marine Major, and Steve

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Pressfield. If a building is burning and I hear Pressfield is in it—my ass is going in to get him.

So who is Steve Pressfield? More than I can cover in three pages.

Pressfield succeeded via the “school of hard knocks.” Per his biography, he was: “an advertising copywriter, schoolteacher, tractor-trailer driver, bartender, oilfield roustabout, attendant in a mental hospital, fruit-picker in Washington state, and a screenwriter. His struggles to make a living as an author, including the period when he was homeless and living out of the back of his car, are detailed in his book, *The War of Art*.

He has penned thirteen works of fiction, so far. Despite modest beginnings, Steve Pressfield has made himself into a master of the written craft, in every sense of the term: in attitude, accomplishment, and body of work.

So why mentorship? And why Pressfield?

Humans are social creatures. We copy behaviors, good and bad. Mom was right: we become who we hang out with. I won't bore you on the reams of studies supporting this, but mentorship works. You want to become a writer, or a better one? Here's a solid path—follow Steve Pressfield.

Anthony Tjan wrote an article on mentorship in the *Harvard Business Review* (February, 2017). One section stuck with me: “Having interviewed close to 100 of the most admired leaders across business, culture, arts, and government, one important characteristic stands out: They do everything they can to imprint their ‘goodness’ onto others in ways that make others feel like fuller versions of themselves. Put another way, the best leaders

(mentors) practice a form of leadership that is less about creating followers and more about creating other leaders.”

That is Steve Pressfield. What makes him unusual is not that he is successful, technically competent, and talented. What makes him rare is his heart, his solid character, and his wish to see more of us “self-actualize” as artists. These are the things that make him mentor-worthy.

Some key clarification. The mentorship I'm suggesting is not one where you will sit at the master's side and watch him work, or that Pressfield will in any way critique, or even read, a single word you write. In fact, he refuses to read any fiction for fear of losing “his voice.” He's known to parry friends' offers for golf outings like a UFC champ blocks punches. Steve's got work to do, too.

We're not going to drop Steve Pressfield an email and soon after be enjoying coffee-house chats and musing over antagonists and plot lines. He's a pro. He practices what he preaches. He's a wise time manager and has his own works under construction, always.

Then how? The mentorship I'm suggesting is you learning from Steve through his work. In addition to his stack of fiction books, Steve has written a handful of non-fiction books on writing, including an excellent series called *Black Irish Jabs*. I beg you to read and digest all of them. They can be found at: <https://blackirishbooks.com/books/>

Through his non-fiction, you will learn much about Pressfield, his anecdotes, and lessons. If you also read his fiction, you will not only find great stories, but also see fine samples of this hard-charging writer putting his own counsel to paper. In the end, if you apply yourself to his teachings, you will become a

better writer. Guaranteed. And this is plenty to be grateful for.

I have read, and in many cases reread, all of Pressfield's books. Below is a "sweet list" of his non-fiction that has been the most helpful for me. Recommended:

The War of Art, The Artist's Journey, and Turning Pro: Three books to help overcome "Resistance," answering your calling, developing a professional mindset, and much more

Black Irish JABs: A collective toolkit of storytelling principles; quick hits, reinforcing storytelling's first principles

I also suggest these books, separate from Steve's work:

McKee: *Story* (covering the fundamentals of story)

Shawn Coyne: *Story Grid* (written by Pressfield's business partner and editor; a how-to on plotting books and more)

Janet Burroway: *A Guide to Narrative Craft* (great textbook on many facets of writing fiction—theme, setting, characterization, and more)

Some closing thoughts:

MWSA members write for different reasons. Regardless whether we're authoring for



self-satisfaction, therapy, or to become a NY Times bestseller (or all the above)—we owe it to ourselves to be the best writers we can be.

If we publish our work and wish it to sell, we have no choice but to be competitive in the market. That means putting out quality, entertaining product that adds value in the marketplace. This is only done by developing ourselves into technically competent writers and solid story-tellers, both.

Have heart. We former military folk have some advantages over many civilians who write on military topics. For one, a good number of MWSA members have experienced the things they write about. Warrior tales are best when told by warriors. We have discipline, a hard work ethic, and tenacity. We must maximize this edge.

Writing can be taught. Don't believe otherwise. We have a base of talent that can be built upon. Have faith.

Career writers and journalists who pen books on military topics often have the benefit of advanced-level instruction and decades spent in the craft. We often don't. While there's no substitute for writing experience, we can narrow the talent gap between "them" and "us" by becoming students of the game and applying the same professional attitude toward our writing as we did toward the military, and our current, paying jobs.

There's no better coach out there to achieve this end than Steve Pressfield. His non-fiction comprises a solid collection that, if followed, will up our game. And that's the name of the game.

Brad Graft is a former Marine, businessman, and author of the *Brotherhood of the Mamluks Trilogy*

WRITE YOUR OWN STORY

Dane Zeller

SHE DIED WITHOUT TELLING ME her secret. Fortunately, my mother left evidence in her desk drawer. Her apartment was designed by a minimalist: a few store-bought paintings on the wall, a couch and a chair in the living room, a toaster next to her refrigerator. Walls painted in shades of beige. And a gathering of memorabilia in the bottom left drawer of her desk.

The drawer contained papers and awards and certificates that belonged in frames on her walls, if she had been more inclined to boast. Her grandfather's disability check stub that was the whole of his story about his joining, and leaving, the 74th Wisconsin Volunteers in the Civil War. She had writing awards and teaching awards, dated and signed, but void of specifics.

And finally, the secret at the bottom, in a yearbook, a photo of my father with someone's pen scratching: "Hey Ken! Did Clara find out who put the dead squirrel in her locker? Ha ha ha!" The story continues.

He is dressed in a suit and tie. He looks like a professional, an accountant, perhaps.

Nothing on the page indicated he would be a career over-the-road truck driver. To the contrary, below his picture was printed "1929 South Dakota State Coronet Champion". It was a story and title I had never known until that day.

I closed the yearbook and scrolled through my memories of him. I knew him one day a week. Music was never a topic. I never heard him hum a tune nor saw a coronet stored in the basement.

When my mother died, she was the last storyteller who could have told about her husband, the truck driver. She joined a crowd of people committed to the silence of my father's untold story. His mother and father, two brothers, three uncles, and an aunt. Only my dad's friend who introduced the dead squirrel attempted a story.

What secrets are you committed to? And why? A hero? Are there a few notes from a harmonica that you've never shared? I'm asking, what will you leave behind?

I know why writing your own damn story is difficult for you. It is fear. Fear of embarrassing yourself with a mistake. Fear of discovering something about yourself. Fear of offending someone. Fear of memories.

Surely, you've met greater fears head on.



Dane Zeller is an ambassador for MWSA. He writes short fiction, usually humorous. He has established a goal for himself of teaching, encouraging, nagging, and helping veterans and their loved ones to take action on their dream to write.

He is a Vietnam veteran who served as a cryptolinguist for the United States Air Force Security Service over a two-year period (1965-1967). He was based at Yokota AB, Japan, but spent a full year of temporary duty at Danang AB in South Vietnam, flying in RC-130's.

Dane and his wife Rita live in Westwood, Kansas.

He has stories and believes you do, too.

danezeller@yahoo.com

WHY I AM BAKING THROUGH THE CORONAVIRUS

Sue Rushford

I LOVE TO BAKE.

I've been home sick, for weeks. I live alone and work from home so, self-isolating is second nature to me—but not being able to help is frustrating. I can't deliver food (I can't even get my own groceries), I can't give blood, I can't make cute videos because I'm a mess, and I can't make masks because they'd be contaminated with, well, me. I can, however, bake.

No matter what I'm doing, no matter where I am, no matter who I'm with, I'd rather be baking. When other people invite me to bake with them at their houses, I try very hard not to scowl. How could I possibly bake with other people's things, in other people's kitchens? I love my whisk and my measuring cups and my measuring spoons and my KitchenAid. Using someone else's stand mixer is lunacy.

As soon as I was well enough to get out of bed, but still clad in pajamas (bra? what's a bra?), I went to work in my kitchen. Never mind that I'll have to throw it all in the freezer because no one will eat anything from my house right now.

They say that baking is more of a science than cooking, but I think baking is magic. How one turns flour and sugar into cake is akin to turning water into wine. That said, I don't think I have a special talent. I throw the ingredients in the air and they magically turn into spongy chocolate layers lovingly held together with buttercream, hidden under a silk cloak of chocolate ganache.

Baked goods bring people together. Over the years, I've received more than my share

of marriage proposals based solely on my baking. Literally, solely on my baking.

And I couldn't keep the other wild animals away, either. I lived in a sleepy (read: hungover) village, population 600, where New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania all meet. Baking brownies one Saturday morning with all the windows open, I looked out and saw a huge bear sauntering up to the house, nose twitching. He smelled the brownies. I quickly closed all the windows and watched (okay—from behind a curtain) until he left. The recipients of those brownies were regaled with the bear story. In fact, every one of the 600 residents was regaled with the bear story.

Baked goods are a labor of love, and bringing them to work lifts everyone's spirits. I worked at the Four Seasons Boston—at that time it was rated the ninth hotel in the world for its service. In the employee cafeteria we were regularly offered pastries left over from its five star restaurant, but it was my homemade, cockeyed, mismatched, sweet, creamy, fresh goodies that my co-workers ogled.

Alas, not everything is *croquembouche*. Don't sell plain sugar cookies short. There is joy in the process—baking and decorating—especially where children are concerned. While visiting old friends in Iceland, they took me for a weekend in the countryside. On the journey from Reykjavik we passed mountains of volcanic rocks jutting out of the earth, miles of moss, and waterfalls delivering the most magnificent glacial runoff. If you have never seen teal water, it is worth the

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trip, just for that. When we arrived I was rendered speechless as I looked out on the most glorious view I have ever seen: snow-capped mountains, amazing colors, and dots of sheep as far as the eye could see.

I had brought the ingredients to make sugar cookies (including lots of sprinkles) on the plane, crossing my fingers through customs. My Icelandic friends' five children did not speak English and Icelandic is not a language one can pick up on the fly. Nevertheless, the *börn* and I had a grand old time, making not just cookies, but cherished memories. Baking transcends language and culture, and sprinkles are universal.

As engaging as making cookies in Iceland was, it paled in comparison to baking with homeless children. I volunteered at a preschool with Horizons for Homeless Children in Boston. The families live in a shelter and the children attend the school during the day. (The organization also provides playrooms and volunteers in the shelters.) Toddlers are thrilled when they're given choices and are empowered. We've all seen it—they wear their confidence on their sleeve when they've tied their shoes or dressed themselves. They tell everyone they encounter when they've "gone potty."

Homeless children living in utterly insecure circumstances have so much more of a need to be in control. Of anything. We're all currently experiencing some level of helplessness. Everything's up in the air—our health, insurance, food, jobs, the economy, and toilet paper. This powerlessness is felt by homeless families on a daily basis, regardless of a pandemic, and no matter how hard parents attempt to shield their children, the stress

trickles down to them. Volunteering with homeless children put my life in perspective.

We would bake. All four-year-olds like to bake but children who don't get the opportunity to participate in something that creative (and important!) are thrilled.

Mixing the dough and cutting out and baking the cookies is beyond the comprehension of a child living without a kitchen. And then the real fun begins: frosting and decorating. What a humbling experience it was for me to witness my little friends come alive when they saw the fruits of their labor. Never has the exclamation "Look what I made!" meant so much. We need some of that pure joy now.

There is a power in baking. To make something from nothing. To make something that warms your heart. To make something that is not perfect. To make something that reminds you there is healing and sweetness and joy, and it is right in your kitchen.

Here is a surefire way to get started—let me know how it turns out.

Chocolate Cake

2 cups flour

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup unsweetened cocoa powder

1 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking powder

1 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup sugar

3 eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla

1 cup mayonnaise

1 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup water (or strong coffee, cooled)

Raspberry jam, if desired

Preheat oven to 350°F

Lightly grease and dust pan with cocoa powder, or line with parchment paper

Sift dry ingredients and set aside

Beat eggs, sugar, vanilla at high speed for 3 min or until light and fluffy

Beat in mayonnaise on low speed until just blended

Alternately beat in dry ingredients and liquid, starting and ending with dry ingredients

Pour into prepared pan

Bake 30 min or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean

Cool in pan 10 min before removing

Spread raspberry jam between layers



Macedonian Monument

by Nancy Arbuthnot

*To burn the captured Philadelphia free,
Decatur braved the night-dark waters
off Tripoli; then in the bright Azores
fought until the decks flowed red
and the British Macedonian
struck her colors.*

*Two centuries on, the figurehead,
a helmeted warrior from Macedonia,
gazes not into blue horizons
but toward buildings
of academic instruction that
teach the importance
of reflection as well as action.*

Nancy Arbuthnot contributed six poems about the monuments at the US Naval Academy. This is one of them.

THINGS YOU NEVER KNEW YOU NEVER KNEW

...about the MWSA Website.

★ We list the types of correspondence members can anticipate receiving from MWSA here:

<http://www.mwsadispatches.com/membership>

(3rd bullet under "New Members" section)

★ Archived, electronic copy of past email blasts (back to Nov 2017) can be found on our website here:

<http://www.mwsadispatches.com/mwsa-news>

★ MWSA Blasts can be found here:

<http://www.mwsadispatches.com/mwsa-news?tag=Blast>

If you have any questions about navigating the MWSA website, please reach out to MWSA and we'll answer as best we can. Thank you.

WRITING IS A CONTACT SPORT

Steve Doherty

AFTER THIRTY-NINE YEARS OF WRITING and publishing, I've concluded that writing is a contact sport. It doesn't involve bodily contacts like basketball, football, soccer, or martial arts. Still, it does require mental and emotional contact with your readers. How well you connect with those readers depends not only on how well you write but how you make your presence known to your potential readers.

First, your cover needs to attract the attention of the reader, much like a graphic used in a business presentation that reaches out and grabs the attention of people, focusing them on the subject. As our face and body language can reflect our feelings, a book cover reveals what is inside the book. We are seduced all the time with words, smells, and images. A book cover is no different. When a reader sees a book with a great cover, he thinks positively about the book. A cover that reaches out and grabs the reader's attention might convince the reader that the book is worth the purchase. Visual contact, therefore, is critical because a well-designed and attractive cover will cause the customer to look closer.

Next, the book title must be appealing to the reader. The book title is your calling card. Your title sets the tone of the book, hints at the style or genre, and draws the reader to look more closely. Don't settle on a title without running it by someone. Someone without an emotional commitment to the book can significantly aid an author in coming up with a marketable title. The title is your second opportunity to make visual contact with a customer and draw them in to explore it further. The title is

the first emotional contact opportunity. You want a title that sings so powerfully it makes the reader desperate to read the book and predisposes them to want it.

Lastly, the description of your book needs to be clear, concise, and elicit an emotional response that draws the reader into the story. Although people do judge books by their covers, a solid description is what pulls logical thinking people in to purchase the book. If the book description is poorly written—and trust me, so many are—the customer will respond by putting the book down or clicking on another attractive cover or title. Your book description introduces the prospective readers to what the story is about and what they'll get out of the book. It doesn't need to cover all the detail, but you do want it to inform the reader what they'll learn from reading the book. If your book is an action-packed thriller and you fail to present that in your description, you may lose people who are on the verge of making a purchase. Remember, emotional contact is critical to the reader.

Creating a great story is just the first step in marketing and selling a book. Without a great cover, title, and compelling description, your book won't sell. Do your homework, bounce ideas off of others, and don't be afraid of criticism meant to help you become a better writer and marketer. You need to connect with people who can and want to help you be a successful writer. And you must connect with customers you want to read your books. That's why writing really is a contact sport.



Steve Doherty is a retired United States Air Force officer and the author of four historical fiction thrillers and three children's books. Steve obtained his undergraduate degree from Texas State University and earned a master's degree from Chapman University. He holds a doctorate in flying training from the US Air Force and completed post-graduate studies in adult education at The Ohio State University. Steve lives in New Albany, Ohio, where he is a 2nd Dan assistant instructor in Taekwondo.



WELCOME TO THE MWSA ~ WHO WE ARE

John Cathcart

WE ARE A NATIONWIDE ASSOCIATION of authors, poets, and artists, drawn together by the common bond of military service. Most of our members are active duty military, retirees, or military veterans. A few are lifelong civilians who have chosen to honor our military through their writings or their art. Others have only a tangential relationship to the military. Our only core principle is a love of the men and women who defend this nation, and a deeply personal understanding of their sacrifice and dedication.

Our skills are varied. Some of us are world class writers, with many successful books. Others write only for the eyes of their friends and families. But each of us has a tale to tell. Each of us is a part of the fabric of Freedom. These are our stories...

For more details, [click here](#) to read more about us on our website. Feel free to browse our site and get to know our organization, our members and their works.

Thanks very much for being a part of your MWSA organization.

SAVING HISTORY ONE STORY AT A TIME

CORONAVIRUS, ONLINE LEARNING, AND AMERICA'S STUDENT VETERANS

John H. Davis

STUDENT VETERANS ACROSS AMERICA ALREADY face significant difficulties in educational environments. The transition from the rigid military structure into the unstructured nature of college predictably brings difficulties leading to high dropout rates, especially in the first year of college.

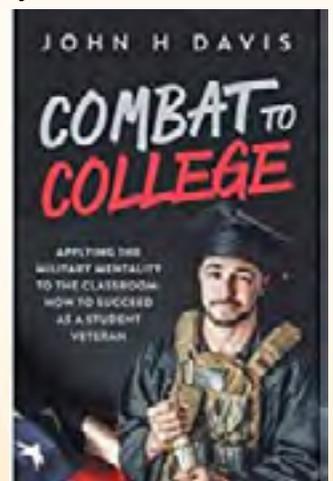
College has moved online in many areas, pushing an already isolated population further into isolation. Veterans are often skeptical of online learning, as are many older Americans who did not grow up in technology-driven generations. Student veterans are already more likely than traditional students to have to manage medical problems, financial difficulties, be older and have families. This year, due to the shift to online learning across the country there is a high probability that we will see increased college dropout rates for current veterans that could lead to higher suicide rates, PTSD, divorce and life struggles.

In the military, we learn experientially. You can't learn how to fire a rifle through a computer screen, it takes hands-on practice and training. Online learning cannot provide all of the benefits that in-person experiences can, one of the many college benefits for veterans is the social aspect of college. Veterans can partake in Student Veteran clubs, political organizations, academic clubs and more to ease the transition into civilian life. Some students are partying it up during school shutdown but not America's veterans. Online learning isn't going to live up to its expectations with student veterans. Switching from military training to online classrooms

makes the learning experience entirely different and many veterans are proving resistant to these changes. In the military you learn from your superiors and your peers and are a member of a team, online learning is a dramatic shift from that previous experience. Online learning can feel lifeless and boring whereas in the military, lives can rely on your skills and abilities. It just doesn't engage veterans who didn't grow up on iPads but instead riding bikes and playing outside.

Student Veterans also experience technical difficulties in accessing online learning and that can lead to frustrations with the whole process. If you can't login, print documents or if your internet connection is too slow then the technical difficulties prove enough to throw your hands into the air. Veterans get tired from the lack of human contact when before we were integral parts to a real team, working together for a common goal.

Personal connections through the online world just aren't the same for veterans. Veterans naturally view this as inferior to in-person experiences and are less likely to want to engage meaningfully with the material. Student veterans are already vulnerable students, and this move to push them online can have disastrous results for educational outcomes. There is a lot of momentum due to the coronavirus for increased online



education, but student veterans need in-person experiences. In person experiences can lead to better connections with professors, letters of recommendation, job services and internships.

Colleges have a responsibility to retain their current student veterans throughout the move to online education and must provide them necessary accommodations, academic coaching and support. If student veterans around the country can't manage online education, we will see increased drop-out rates which can lead to a spike in PTSD, depression and even suicide.



*John H Davis is a combat veteran who served in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. He is the author of *Combat To College* and holds a BA in History from St. Joseph's College in New York. He has served as a Student Veterans of America officer and is a graduate student at Harvard.*

ON THE EDGE OF THE ABYSS

Edgar Welty

I COULD FEEL THE COOLNESS of the air and I see my breath steaming in the night, that dreadful evening so long ago. I could taste the salt in the tears that streaked down my face. I could hear the thuds of my footfalls as I was driven to the abyss. I could see down the arcades arching as I was prodding along. With each step, my body shook.

Above me were elongated rectangles, of Spanish Colonial moldings, which extended for hundreds of feet. In the middle of each one hung an electric lantern with a glass and wrought iron cage containing a light bulb.

I gazed at one through my squinting tear-filled eyes. A kaleidoscope of shapes assaulted my brain. I smelled the rose through the arches on my left. But somehow, in my mood, the blossoms gave out a rank odor.

I turned the corner where arcades encompassed the courtyard of the Museum of Man.

I noticed, on my left, the entrance to the tomb of the Egyptian Mummy. It seemed to me, to be the perfect foreshadowing to what I intended to do.

In front was the wrought railing which was the last barrier to the abyss. I vaulted myself and looked down into the void. I pushed myself towards the plunge. But my legs, almost without me wanting it, locked onto the railing.

I don't know how many attempts I made. But at some point I gave up and just sat on the cold iron railing for I don't know how long.

Then, once again I noticed my breath in the cool evening air. In context of what I had gone through, I saw it as a sign of my life. It occurred to me I had not created myself. God had. And I had no right to waste God's gift.

So I climbed off the railing which guarded the edge of abyss.

YOU HAVE TO SHOW UP

Jacqueline Murray Loring

I'M NOT A VETERAN, so volunteering to teach a memoir class for the 2019 joint Military Writers Society of America (MWSA) and SouthWest Writers (SWW) writer's conference held at Hotel Albuquerque from Thursday, September 12th through Sunday, September 15th was a giant leap outside my comfort zone. Meeting strangers or finding myself in unfamiliar surroundings, even if I've chosen to be there, turns me into the shadow you don't notice standing in the corner of an overcrowded room.

Recently, I learned that if I want to share in life's magical moments, those outside and inside my writing-room, "I have to show up".

The Thursday workshop at the Raymond G. Murphy Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Albuquerque was designed to assist emerging veteran writers to gain the skills and confidence necessary to use creative writing as a part of their recovery plans. I designed my memoir class to fit those parameters.

Before arriving that first morning to teach, the only person I thought I'd know was Rose Marie Kern, president of SouthWest Writers. It turned out several other SWW members taught classes. All the Military Writers Society of America board and faculty were strangers except for Jim Tritten, the conference coordinator. He is a MWSA and SWW member.

The morning's events were held in a large room on the VA campus. The day moved along quickly. I offered to drive a teacher to her hotel near the airport. On the drive, we struck up an immediate friendship. Robin

Hutton traveled from California to teach at the conference.

Robin's *War Animals: the Unsung Heroes of World War II*, was a medal winner in History Category. The book tells the story of "American and Allied dogs, horses, mules, birds, and a cat that assisted the war effort as part of the Greatest Generation" and her story *Sgt Reckless: America's War Horse*, is a biography of the "famous Korean War horse, Reckless, whose heroics were so incredible that the horse is listed in Life Magazine's "Celebrate our Heroes," as one of our all-time great heroes. The book was a categorical New York Times Bestseller in September and October 2014." (<https://robinhutton.org/>)

At the conference and during our rides to and from, Robin's spontaneity, her inclusionary personality, her genuine interest in my and other faculty and participant's writing and publications, opened my timid floodgates and proved my mantra "you just have to show up" to be undeniable.

Among the flow of other writers, I met was Gail Summers. Her book *Across the Inlet: A Story About Unconditional Love in Alaska* was an award winner in the Literary Fiction Category. Gail is a SWW member who lives in Edgewood, New Mexico. Though I may not see Robin till the next MWSA conference, Gail and I will see each other at SWW meetings.

The real proof of my mantra happened at the awards banquet. Dale Dye's name may not be recognized by all writers but I'm the wife of an in-country Vietnam veteran and the author of several books and screenplays that focus

on the war in Vietnam or its aftermath.

Dale Dye is a decorated Vietnam veteran, an actor, and writer. He might be best known for insisting to Hollywood movie directors that actors in war films should understand what is being asked of their character. In 1984, he founded Warriors, Inc, “a company that specializes in training actors in war films to portray their roles realistically and he provides research, planning, staging, and on-set consultation for directors and other film production personnel.”

When Dale’s name was announced as the recipient of the Mike Mullins Memorial Writer of the Year Award for Exceptional Literary Achievement & Contributions to the MWSA Mission I was thrilled.

I wondered if I were bold enough to walk up to him and say congratulations. No. Ridiculous idea, my shyness warned.

A few minutes later, I was in the hotel lobby talking to several women when I saw Dale enter the men’s room. I had an idea. I asked the women if they would like to meet Dale. When he reappeared, a gaggle of women stood in front of him.

He looked suspiciously at us and asked, “What’s this?”

I laughed, mostly at myself, when I told him we were his fan club.

“We’d like a photograph.”

He seemed delighted.

After I dropped Robin off at her hotel and started home, I thought about the networking I’d done over the past three days, the amazing people I’d talked to and the six emerging writers I’d mentored. I marveled at the fun I had stepping out of my comfort zone. For my efforts?



A photo of Dale and me as my new screensaver.

Mahan Clock Tower

by Nancy Arbuthnot

*The white face stares
relentless as an eye.
Every fifteen minutes,
bells mark the time
between class and drill
and meals and study hour.*

*Only sometimes,
as when a youngster,
as told and retold
in October homecoming days,
climbs the tower to drape
a Beat Army! banner there,
does time relent.*

Nancy Arbuthnot contributed six poems about the monuments at the US Naval Academy. This is one of them.

LEAVING HEART MOUNTAIN; PART I

David Andrew Westwood

NATSUKO HARADA OPENED THE GATE to the little zoo, releasing the rabbits first to give them a head start on the reptiles. The animals, logy from the intense heat and used to being fed by human hands, were reluctant to leave for the open Wyoming plain, but eventually their instincts prevailed.

For a moment, she watched the little creatures hop off into the chaparral and then turned for her family's hut where her mother was finishing packing their meager possessions. "*O genki desu ka?*" Natsuko asked, and Keiko shrugged. "Are you all right?" to a recent widow was a senseless question, mere words to fill the silence; unanswerable.

Internees—the other caged creatures—were leaving too. Those who had somehow held onto some money had bought cars in town from dealers. Dealers who were delighted to be able to offload their old lemons on Japanese Americans desperate to get away. For Natsuko and her mother, though, it was to be the bus to the train.

Natsuko lifted her cheap suitcase onto the cot and took one last look around the room. Its cracks still let in the dust. It was still too hot in the summer and would still be too cold in the winter. But it had been home for two-and-a-half years.

Once their suitcases were clicked shut, the two women walked to the bus and handed them to the driver, who stowed them on the roof rack.

"Fifteen minutes," he told them.

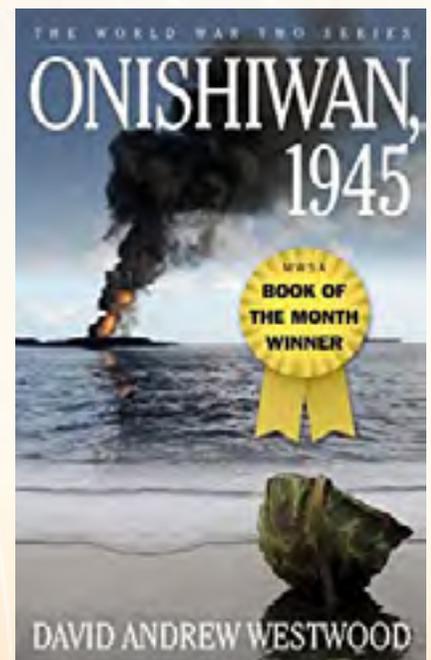
Natsuko took her mother's arm and

walked with her to the little cemetery. A sculptor had carved a narrow vertical headstone there with her father's name.

Natsuko would also have liked to pay her last respects, but to give her mother the privacy of her own thoughts and feelings she walked away, past now-empty huts to the Pagoda cinema. Only last week it had been playing "*Week-End at the Waldorf.*" The movie's depiction of rich sophisticates in their plush suites seemed so far from her own experience as to belong to another world entirely. The urbane banter, the cocktails, the dancing...these were Americans of the luckiest brand. White, well-heeled, with room service at their beck and call. And free.

Sitting watching, Natsuko had become overwhelmed by a feeling of loss. Lost opportunities, lost futures, lost lives. The strutting monochrome figures on the screen blurred in her vision and she had walked out before the end. It was one thing to be sent to live in a chicken coop, but quite another to have your face rubbed in others' luxury while you were there.

At the zoo again she released the last of its creatures, the



snakes. They were lethargic at first, lying like beaded belts in the dust but with a nudge of a boot, they got the message and slid away. Then, at a honk, she walked back to the bus. Her mother was already there and they took their seats.

“*Itte irasshai!*” called the block manager, laughing and waving. The phrase meant “Go and come back safely,” though he did not really expect to see any of them again. Then he said, more seriously, “*Ichiroheian o inoru*”—“I wish you a smooth road,” and turned away.

The bus made its way out into the sagebrush toward the station in Cheyenne. Natsuko turned in her seat to say goodbye to Heart Mountain’s tilted-can summit. A sad excuse for a mountain, really—lopsided and lumpy, no Mount Fuji—but their own landmark for a while.

The gates closed behind them on a camp where many had been born and many, like her father, had died. Many had come of age there, fallen in love, married...and now they were going to try to restart their former lives.

Life in the cheap tar paper hutments had been like living in one big room and it had taken a long time to get used to. But just as curtains for privacy had quickly divided the first, wall-less latrines, everyone learned to lower their mental screens to separate themselves from their neighbors. It came naturally to a people whose manners had formed on a group of small and crowded islands.

To be outside again after so long was unsettling. The camp sat square in the middle of a vast and bleak plain, daunting in its emptiness—the Siberia of the northwestern United States. This, she had read in the little camp

library, was land abandoned in the winter even by the Shoshone, who were wise enough to migrate elsewhere until the weather warmed. Now it would revert to its former state—windswept and inhospitable.

Natsuko pulled out her notepad and pencil.

*Tumbleweed hindered
by barbed wire, heaps in tired pile
to tumble no more.*

Was ‘tired’ one syllable or two? Who cared?

What kind of life they would find when they got back to Seattle was hard for her to imagine. The world had changed for the worse since they left their old lives. Millions had been killed, and cities like Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Dresden, and Coventry no longer existed. Entire nations had been razed, absorbed, renamed. The world’s soil had been soaked with the blood of generations, and the century only half over.

The bus joined the highway. There was no air conditioning and all the windows were down—the hot air ruffling everyone’s black hair. She looked out the window for a moment, took out her notepad again, and despite the jolting of the bus penned another haiku.

*Dust tornadoes twirl.
This sketchpad, now theirs again
on which to scribble.*

* * *

*To be continued in MWSA's Fall Dispatches Magazine—
Leaving Heart Mountain is adapted from Westwood's novel,
Onishiwan, 1945.*

DRAGON'S JAW VS NUKE WALLEYE

Lt Col Ed Cobleigh USAF (Ret)

America's Only Smart Nuke

THE VIETNAM WAR WAS NOT going well. The Dragon's Jaw was biting hard, devouring American planes and aircrew since 1965. Nobody knew how to pull its teeth. The Thanh Hoa bridge over the Song Ha River three miles (4.8 km) northeast of Thanh Hoa, North Vietnam carried both rail and road traffic—a key link on the principal route for supplies flowing south to the Viet Cong. Both sides in the war understood the importance of the bridge as a potential choke point.

The North Vietnamese stationed three air defense battalions near the bridge, armed with AAA guns of all calibers. MiG-17 interceptors were on-call in the area, as well. By some estimates, 75 US aircraft, including a giant C-130 transport and its thirteen-man crew, were lost in operations trying to drop the bridge, earning its nickname, "The Dragon's Jaw," from the Vietnamese.

Nothing seemed to work. Squadrons of F-105 Thunderchief fighter-bombers attacked with 750-pound iron bombs and Bullpup command-guided missiles. The US Navy tried Walleye TV-guided glide bombs. USAF C-130 four-engine transports dropped magnetic mines upstream, which floated down and detonated under the bridge. Scorched, bent, and scarred, the bridge endured, never out of service for more than a few hours. Along with its counterpart, the Paul Doumer Bridge over the Red River linking Hanoi and Haiphong, the Thanh Hoa bridge was an obsession for US planners working the target list in North Vietnam considered politically acceptable by the

White House. But, absent a way to sever the steel trusses spanning the river once and for all, additional mass raids, with the inevitable losses, seemed criminally futile and dangerous to the over-stretched aircrews.

At the US Navy's Naval Air Weapons Center, China Lake, CA, a group of engineers tried to come up with a plan. Accuracy wasn't the problem—a Walleye's TV guidance system could deliver ordinance to the bridge. The weapon's 250 pound linear shaped-charge warhead was successful in cutting steel beams and girders in the test arena. But, against real bridges like the Dragon's Jaw, not so much. The team urgently needed a new, more powerful warhead for the Walleye.

The weapons wizards at China Lake thought the Los Alamos National Laboratory, north of Albuquerque, NM, might hold the key to fracturing the Dragon's Jaw. Originally developed for the Davy Crockett recoilless rifle system, W72 nuclear warheads were available. The miniature device was the most tested nuke in the US inventory.

Dozens of trials were run, not to increase the explosive yield as with other warheads, but to decrease its power. A short-range nuke with the equivalent power of many kilotons of TNT would be like a hand grenade with a 100-foot kill radius and a two-second delay, i.e., suicide to deliver from a jeep-mounted recoilless rifle.

Eventually, the yield was dialed down to "only" twenty tons of TNT, .02 kilotons, 1/1000th of the size of the fireballs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki ending WWII.

The USAF adapted the tiny nuke warhead for the Falcon air-to-air missile, tasking it to blast whole formations of enemy bombers out of the sky at once. Warhead power was scaled back up to 400 hundred tons for the Falcon. The atom scientists in New Mexico were confident they could improve the yield to just over six hundred tons using the W72's salvaged from retired Falcons. The equivalent of six hundred tons of TNT would trash any bridge in the world with one weapon delivered by one fighter aircraft.

The cylinder-shaped W72 measured just 10 3/4 inches (27cm) in diameter with hemispherical ends 15 1/2 inches (39 cm) apart and weighed only 50 pounds (23 kilos). It would slip easily inside the Walleye's tubular body, replacing the heavy conventional warhead and extending the glide bomb's range. The China Lake team considered it a marriage made, not in heaven, but in the fires of nuclear hell.

The Walleye was developed at China Lake. It was the first American terminally guided munition—a “smart bomb,” to perform well in combat. The term “smart bomb” came from the different paths bombs take once released from an aircraft. Dumb bombs only know where the ground is. Smart bombs know where the target is.

The glide bomb's nose featured a flattened glass dome with a TV camera staring out through it. Resemblance to a giant fish's eye earned the Walleye its nickname. Why the China Lake boffins, stuck out in the middle of the Mojave Desert, named their creation after a cold water member of the pike family from Minnesota remains a mystery.

Launched from altitude, the Walleye could glide over 30 miles with a spinning ram air turbine supplying electrical power and would

hit within a few feet of the aim point. Six hundred tons of explosive power vaporizing the center span of the Thanh Hoa bridge should break the Dragon's Jaw forever.

Employing the Nuke Walleye would be easy. As with the conventionally armed weapon, a fighter pilot would set up a shallow dive from high altitude miles from the bridge, aiming his aircraft to put his gunsight on the bridge. The Walleye's TV camera was bore-sighted to stare at the target under the projected gun sight. A radar screen in the launch aircraft doubled as a black-and-white TV set, displaying the target area as seen by the weapon's sensor.

Usually, only a slight change in flight path superimposed the Walleye's aiming crosshairs on the scope over the target and to lock the camera on. Once the display had settled down after a second or two, a quick press of the bomb release button launched the Walleye. The TV guidance system would guide the bomb to a direct hit, homing in on optically contrasting details on the bridge.

After the conventional Walleye left the aircraft, the cockpit TV display went snow white. No further action by the aircrew was needed, or even possible—the bomb was on its own. The launch aircraft was free to get the hell out of the reach of the Dragon's breath defenses.

Nuke Walleye boasted one additional trick. After launch, the cockpit TV display wouldn't go blank. A video data link would transmit the TV camera's picture back to the aircraft until impact.

Dropped with the warhead in a safe condition, the W72 had to be armed after the aircrew monitoring their TV display determined that the bomb headed for the right target. A second

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button push would arm the weapon with a signal sent back along the data link from the jet to the bomb. A black stripe across the scope signified the arming command had been sent and that a mini-mushroom cloud would soon blossom.

This added step was easier in a two-seat aircraft like the A-6 Intruder or F-4 Phantom. The second crew member, the Bomb/Nav (USN) or the Weapon Systems Operator (USAF), could confirm the aim point and arm the W72 while the pilot kept his attention out of the cockpit, scanning for MiG's or surface-to-air missiles.

What about the effects of a nuclear blast on the area around the bridge? The W72 was not a threat to an unprotected person standing only 3000 feet from ground zero. There would be some collateral damage, but this was judged to be worth the price for not losing any more aircraft, or the war.

The Nuke Walleye was designed, the components were tested, the aircraft were modified, and aircrews were trained in its use. I can attest to this as I trained the USAF crews. It is unclear from the records if any of the terminally guided, nuclear-armed smart bombs were ever fully assembled. Certainly none were used. Why not?

American leaders concluded nuclear weapons were not just devices with bigger bangs, but represented an entirely different class of weapon, one reserved for existential national threats, not hard tactical problems. So, the Vietnam agony dragged on, war material still flowing south over the bridges.

But, conventional terminally-guided weapons were improving rapidly. In 1972, twelve

F-4's flying from Ubon, Thailand, dropped the Thanh Hoa bridge with 2000-pound Laser-Guided Bombs with laser illumination provided by Pave Knife targeting pods. The LGB's hit within three feet of their aim point. The Dragon's Jaw was shattered by the USAF Phantoms, without a single aircraft loss and without unleashing the nuclear genie.

The only surviving (unarmed) Nuke Walleye can be seen in the Atomic Weapons Museum on Kirtland AFB, Albuquerque, NM. To enter the museum, you need a military ID card and to not be pregnant.



Lt Col Ed Cobleigh's vivid writing stems from his background as a combat fighter pilot with the US Air Force, US Navy, Royal Air Force, Imperial Iranian Air Force, and French Air Force as well as his experiences as an Air Intelligence Officer working with the CIA, FBI, and MI6. His memoir went to #1 on the Amazon bestseller list in its genre and his novel is getting laudatory reviews. His current project is a biography of the first fighter pilot. Cobleigh knows Paris well, having visited the City of Light 50+ times. He features Paris, the city and its people, in his writing. He has visited 50 countries in various capacities including bombing them, and has lived for years in Scotland and Thailand. Ed has been on the faculty of the of the Central Coast Writers Conference and teaches STEM classes on raptor aerodynamics. Ed and his wife live in Paso Robles.

HOT AND COLD RUNNING WARS ; PART I

JR Redding

Washington, London, Naples and The Fort

TIGHTENING THE BELT



Swiss Cottage Tube Stop, Jubilee Line, London.

Photo London Transit System.

This is the second unpublished part of my book about RADM Mac Showers, last of the HYPO code-breakers at Midway, and who stayed in the middle of the IC in the years of the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations. I interviewed Mac between 2002 and his death in 2012. A great friend and benefactor too many.

IF I WAS NOT IN the act of taking notes, this would have been an ordinary late afternoon on a workday, seated at the bar at Willow, drinking. Instead, we were continuing the oral history interview with Mac, which lent the enterprise a certain high-minded quality. Liz-with-an-S, the lovely afternoon slack-time bartender approved, and was solicitous. When the shift changed, and Peter and Jim arrived to service the industrial strength crowd, we had ventured a little off track.

“So,” I said, taking a sip of my refreshing white wine, “The draft proposal of the President’s bipartisan commission on reducing the

federal debt calls for deep cuts in domestic and military spending, starting in 2012. That is going to screw the business climate for contractors.

“I presume the assumption is that the current economic crisis and the wars will be over and enable us to do even more irresponsible things in 2011.

“Like extend the Bush tax cuts, which would let me try to keep paying down the hit I took on real estate in the bubble. I have never missed a payment but I can’t qualify to refinance because the loan-to-value ratio has—”

“Reform like the report recommends won’t happen,” said Mac, raising his amber glass of Bell’s. “It’s a draft. A trial balloon to see what gets people all riled up. We’ve been talking about fixing the tax code for a generation and it just gets more convoluted. From what I read, the changes would erase nearly four trillion from projected deficits through 2020. I will be one-hundred-and-one that year.”

“I heard the plan is going to reduce Social Security benefits to all of us Boomers, though the people that don’t pay taxes now—the poor ones, not the rich ones—will get higher benefits. They also propose eliminating the cap on the FICA deductions from our paychecks. Bastards. That means whatever the benefits I get back are just about what they take away to begin with.”

“It is all in the art of the budget. They are going to promise you that with some current sacrifice, Social Security will be solvent for at

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least the next seventy-five years.” Mac said.

“They never seem to do the sacrifice. It is always us. You will be one-hundred-and-seventy-six then,” I said, making a calculation on the napkin. “You’ve been drawing Social Security for twenty-six years.”

“Pays to have your timing right,” said Mac with satisfaction. “But you get what you pay for.”

The notes, as I review them this morning, begin in an organized enough fashion. We plowed a little familiar ground to get calibrated. I was prepared to listen to 1953, and settled into the rhythm of the long ago.

Mac wed Billie in 1948—an excellent year for new beginnings—and elected to stay in the Navy. After a period at the Pentagon writing the Political Cable, he was transferred to the European Navy headquarters, CINCNELM, which had taken over Ike’s old SHAEF headquarters on North Audley Street near the Embassy in London.

I had intended to discuss the great tides in international affairs that were going on then; the Greek Crisis, the impact of the Marshall plan, the strange events in Iran.

Instead we got off on beds, though not literally, of course.

Mac and Billie didn’t take much to England except their beds and the 1948 Mercury sedan. It had been a bad war for the British, and they accepted a lot of things we wouldn’t as a matter of necessity. Rationing was still in effect, though of course the Yanks managed to have their own supplies.

For one thing, the British slept on appalling mattresses, or at least that was the word

in Washington before they decamped for London, and the beds were shipped to a row-house located at 18 Maresfield Gardens, near the Swiss Cottage Tube stop.



The Showers' residence on Maresfield Court. The third floor flat must have been tiny—Mac and Billie liked the one on the first floor.

“The station was opened just as the war was starting in late 1939, on a new section of deep-level tunnels constructed between Baker Street and Finchley Road. They used them as shelters during the Blitz. It’s named for a nearby pub, an old one that dates from before the battle of Waterloo. It was originally called The Swiss Tavern, and later renamed Swiss Cottage. The pub is still there, or at least it was in 1950.”

I made a note to check and did this morning. It is.

“What sort of place did you live in,” I asked, spilling a little wine on my note-napkin, making the ink bleed.

“It was a nice place. It had been an imposing three-story home that had been divided into three flats. We had the ground floor, with the garden, and with the good American mattresses beneath us, life was pretty good.

“What was interesting was that Sigmund Freud, the pioneer psychotherapist, had lived just two doors down the row. He was dead, of course, the cancer having taken him in

September of 1939, just a couple months before the tube station opened. He had to get out of Austria with the growing madness there and lived the last year of his life in the relative safety of London.



Ana Freud, Mac and Billie's neighbor in Swiss Cottage.

Photo Bettman Archives.

“The house survived the Blitz, and his daughter Ana lived there most of the rest of her life. The house is a museum now but in my time, it was just Ana’s residence—where she carried out her life’s work refining the principles of her father. “

“Freud didn’t exactly invent the idea of the conscious versus unconscious mind,” I said, working my slow way into unconsciousness, “but he certainly was responsible for making it popular. He also famously asked the question: ‘What do women want?’”

“He never got a satisfactory answer,” said Mac. “But Ana had some ideas about it, and so did Billie.”

In a roundabout fashion, we had got onto the topic of bagpipes—which means one of my napkins might have gone missing. We were moving backwards in time or maybe the notes are out of order. The pipes, and piping, were funded in Mac’s home state of Iowa through the Department of War. The mechanics of

playing the bagpipes involved both the Conscious and Unconscious minds, which had to be trained to work in concert.

Mac said you have to squeeze the bag with your left arm while blowing into the pipe and fingering the chanter. I thought that it sounded a lot like trying to strangle a cat while getting it to purr, but that in turn was tied to life on a farm in Iowa, in the Great Depression.

We had jumped right across the war and into a time when the banks were closed and there was no money at all.

“Imagine an America without cash!” said Mac. “That’s a ‘Black Swan’ even for you! Everything was done in barter, vegetables and meat for dental services, professionals and farmers alike getting by as best they could.”

That was where the pipes came in, since Mac played for three years in the Drum and Bugle Corps at the University of Iowa before he had to drop it to assume the duties of City Editor at the Daily Iowan, the campus newspaper. He might have been a reporter, if the world had not lost its senses to the Monsters.

There was another glass of wine, and a Bell’s IPA in there somewhere, though my notes are not clear as to the timing.

What is clear is Mac’s recollection of change. His first president was Herbert Hoover, who inherited the first three years of the national disaster after the stock market crash in 1929. Those of us who did not live through it tend to see the thirties in scratchy, black-and-white flickering images of marching Germans and indomitable Franklin Roosevelt propped at a podium, easing the crisis with bold new programs like the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration.

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“I was an FDR supporter,” he said. “But I still went down to the depot to watch Mr. Hoover’s campaign train come through, and listen to a speech the president gave in his doomed campaign for reelection in 1932. He didn’t have a prayer, any more than this bipartisan panel’s recommendations do. We could save ourselves, but I suspect we won’t.”

“That is the way I feel,” I said, drawing a line under the words ‘mortgage interest deduction’.

“Hoover was trying his best to turn things around, and he might have succeeded, since all these great economic things are cyclical, and largely beyond the power of any one President to alter. Mr. Roosevelt was selling hope, and change, and that is exactly what people wanted. That is how Obama got elected and why the Republicans took back the House.”

“It is all about the public’s conscious mind,” I said. “But Dr. Freud could tell you a lot about

all the seething Id down below. “

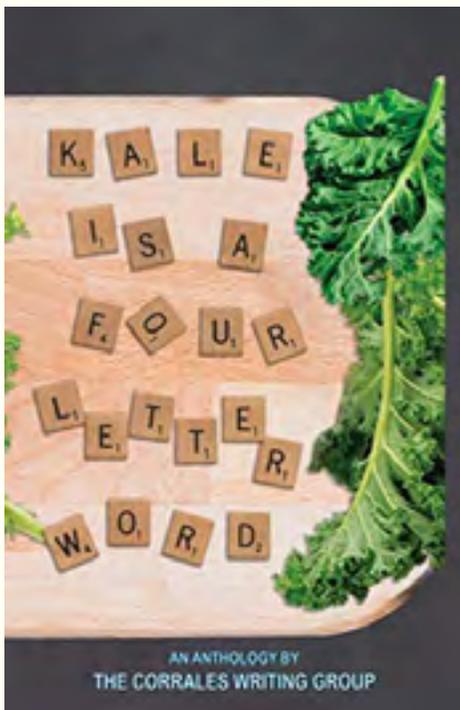
Eventually we got to the point where my notes no longer make any particular sense. The bar at Willow was filling up with vibrant pre-weekend noise, and it was time for us to move on.

I walked Mac out to his gold Jaguar, and we made arrangements to meet again next week.

I walked across the street to the office tower where I had to retrieve the ’04 P71 Crown Vic Bluesmobile from the garage under my office and re-enter the world of now.

The prospects were not encouraging. The cleaning crew, all Hispanic, was in the office when I ducked in to grab my briefcase and check the last e-mail of the day. It didn’t make any sense and I shut down the computer. 2012 looks like it’s going to have some challenges. I wondered if I should go home, or just go back to the Willow and get ready.

I think you know I did the right thing.



KALE IS A FOUR-LETTER WORD

by **The Corrales Writing Group**

Genre(s): Anthology

Format(s): Soft cover, Kindle, ePub/iBook

ISBN: 978-1951122096, ASIN: B087V9KfV5

This collection of short stories shows kale in a new light. Some stories present the perspective of those who introduce kale to their spouses and the reaction of those who are so targeted. A couple of tales are horror stories about kale's effect on a life; another one describes a speculative history of kale; one is a murder mystery where kale plays an unusual role; and one is a fantasy about kale's rivalry with another popular, competing vegetable, cauliflower. This book also has delicious recipes that feature kale as the primary ingredient.

THE INFORMATION APOCALYPSE PART VI

Major General Mari K. Eder, U.S. Army, Retired

Paranoia and Privacy – the Case for Being Prepared

Synopsis: Part I of the Information Apocalypse established the unraveling of trust is affecting not only our trust in democratic institutions, their products and outputs, primarily news, information and most critically, ideas and values. Part II examined how personal the destruction of trust has become. Part III looked at the ever-expanding role of technology in our lives and its role as an accelerant, speeding up not only change but our abilities to keep pace and to control our responses. Part IV explored the issue of trust in the intelligence community while Part V circled back to an in-depth discussion of the role of media in our society and why it must change to survive.

Part VI examines the corrosive effects of a lack of personal privacy in the 21st century fast lane. All Americans are distracted constantly by interruptions from news reports, an incoming text or email, and a barrage of information from all quarters. But for military leaders the balance between open communication using social media tools and the need to protect operational security and personal privacy for soldiers merits constant surveillance.

“Every border you cross, purchase you make, call you dial, friendship you keep, site you visit... is in the hands of a system whose reach is unlimited but whose safeguards are not.”

Edward Snowden

EMBEDDED IN THE INFORMATION APOCALYPSE is another crisis moving at a crawl, a worm surreptitiously making inroads to destroy, not only our trust, but our privacy. The Surveillance Apocalypse has been sneaking up on us for the past several years—a problem with Facebook stalking here, a hacking blip there, and even an issue with deployed soldiers being tracked through their fitness devices by unknown actors while out for a run on the FOB. We’ve been picking at the edges of the problem of protecting individual privacy. But we haven’t fixed it, much less confronted it directly.

DoD kicked off the new year this January with a ban on the Chinese app TikTok. The

App exploded in popularity in 2019, with its short video format and appeal to Gen Z users. The Army even used it as a recruiting tool along with *Instagram* and other social media outlets as part of its new recruiting strategy, the ‘Warriors Wanted’ campaign. The approach focused on 30-second videos and memes as being more effective than television commercials at audience penetration.

Action shots of military hardware are the type of video subjects that go viral. That happened as planned on *TikTok* with scenes of paratroopers jumping out of helicopters or aircraft doing fancy maneuvers. What else did those videos reveal while showcasing weapons platforms, new training or advanced technological capabilities? In November 2019, Senator Chuck Schumer urged the Army to assess potential risks because the seemingly innocent App was busily vacuuming up user data, including IP addresses, metadata, and other potentially sensitive information. Schumer said he was especially concerned about Chinese laws requiring domestic companies “to support and cooperate with intelligence work controlled by the Chinese Communist Party.”

That resulted in the recent instruction to Soldiers to avoid the App. The instruction also urged Army personnel and their families to uninstall the app from personal devices, phones, and tablets. This is not the first time a specific platform has been targeted for avoidance. In 2016 DoD advised service members to avoid *Pokemon Go* because the App tracked the location of users and some

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users ventured into restricted areas on military installations while playing.

Smart watches and fitness trackers have also come under scrutiny. GPS-based geolocation features present in devices like smart phones, *Apple* Watches, and other devices including fitness trackers were banned for service personnel while deployed. DoD found that fitness trackers in particular posed a threat because they could reveal the location of soldiers and patterns in their travel when deployed.

Alexa listens and records. Doorbells watch, and can share with neighbors and law enforcement what they learn. What does that data do when it is sent back to the company who programmed its harvest? It is more than shopping habits consumers need to be concerned about. It is the collection, sale to third parties, and use of data for surveillance, manipulation, and information operations.

The seemingly benign family genealogy sites that offer kits for individuals to trace their heritage through DNA research have come under fire. In 2018, the Golden State Killer was nabbed using information from an ancestry site that linked his DNA to a crime scene. The ethical and legal ramifications of the fact that personal kits inadvertently provided 'evidence' to law enforcement continues. Whether companies sold the data they collected or researchers were able to access it through publicly accessible sites, the problem continues to be that private data released inadvertently could have major impacts, from paternity testing, to discovery of existing health issues, or even a genetic predisposition to cancer or other serious afflictions.

DoD officials were alerted to the issue last fall when it was brought to their attention that direct to consumer (DTC) testing companies, like Ancestry and 23andMe were offering

discounts to service members to take the DNA test. Both companies stated that they were diligent in protecting user data and did not target service members. The DoD Memo published Dec 20, 2019 states, "Exposing sensitive genetic information to outside parties poses personal and operational risks to Service members."

The means in which personal data can be harvested from unassuming individuals has grown exponentially over the past few years. It isn't just the technology that poses a threat, like fitness devices and entertainment apps, or even social media sites where individuals unwittingly disclose personal data in chatting or dating situations.

It is the genetic fingerprint, whether exposed through family DNA testing or a retina scan that could potentially be used for mass surveillance or to identify individuals involved in a covert action, or lead to their discovery when entering a foreign country under a different name. The two-edged sword could be used effectively by law enforcement and military personnel but be weaponized by foreign governments or non-state actors for nefarious purposes.

Millions of people "carry spies in their pockets." Researchers recently tracked the exact location of the President due to the location pings from a Secret service agent's smartphone. The POV that travels from a soldier's home to office transmits data about the drive, the destination, even the driver's acceleration and braking habits. Most new cars in 2020 come with built-in Internet connections, transmitting data directly to manufacturers, insurance companies, and through apps. It adds up, piling onto the burgeoning mountain of data discards that

reveal our daily movements, conversations, buying history, and more.

“Only the paranoid survive,” said Sara Swisher of the New York Times. How soldiers protect themselves is the big question, particularly when the most innocent of cool devices, toys that connect to the Internet, even simple downloaded gaming apps or mapsAll can potentially reveal each day’s browsing history, reading choices, travel plans, destinations, and even health decisions. Preventing the data dump may be inconvenient. But it also may be necessary.

There is growing public awareness about some security measures. Don’t accept the default settings on a communications device. Use complex passwords and two forms of authentication. Don’t reveal personal information such as birth dates, hometown, or phone numbers on social media sites. Keep checking for potential breeches. Switch off all of the location monitoring access buttons on personal smartphones. Change the default setting from “Always on,” to “Ask next time.” Be wary of new apps designed to ‘voluntarily’ conduct contact tracing regarding the spread of Covid19.

These steps may not be enough. It requires constant monitoring to keep on top of potential issues. Where to go for help? Will an app that keeps passwords actually keep those passwords or share them? Can it resist outside efforts to access them? What else can be done? The truth is that the majority of people don’t have the time or the expertise to defend themselves from this nefarious offshoot, the Surveillance Apocalypse.

All consumers need to pay attention to changes in the law concerning data protection and privacy. The U.S. still doesn’t have a

broad privacy law like the European Union’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The U.S. is moving in that direction but it appears to be difficult at this time to gain consensus on how to move forward. Action to date has taken the form mostly of regulatory fines and a focus on tech regulation and anti-trust action.

States are taking action. In January 2020 the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) took effect. It directs companies to tell consumers what data they have collected about them, and on request, to stop selling it. This requires companies to be cognizant about their data collection practices and storage. New York and Washington are considering similar laws and globally, India is also looking at a similar law while the U.K. will be developing its own privacy protections once Brexit takes effect.

The threat continues to grow; while changes are coming in laws and law enforcement, individual efforts only go so far. Perhaps consumers need something along the lines of a Privacy Advisor, performing the role of shield, teacher, and supporter in much the same way a financial advisor does. The new privacy laws in California and the potential for more in other states mean that there is an opportunity for start-up businesses to provide those health checks.

There are a growing number of Apps designed to safely store passwords, delete old texts, or social media posts and photos, such as Life-lock, Private Photo Vault, and hundreds more. *Jumbo* is one new app that purports to “Help build an Internet we can all trust. We believe that your data belongs to you, which is why we fight so hard to give you the tools you need to

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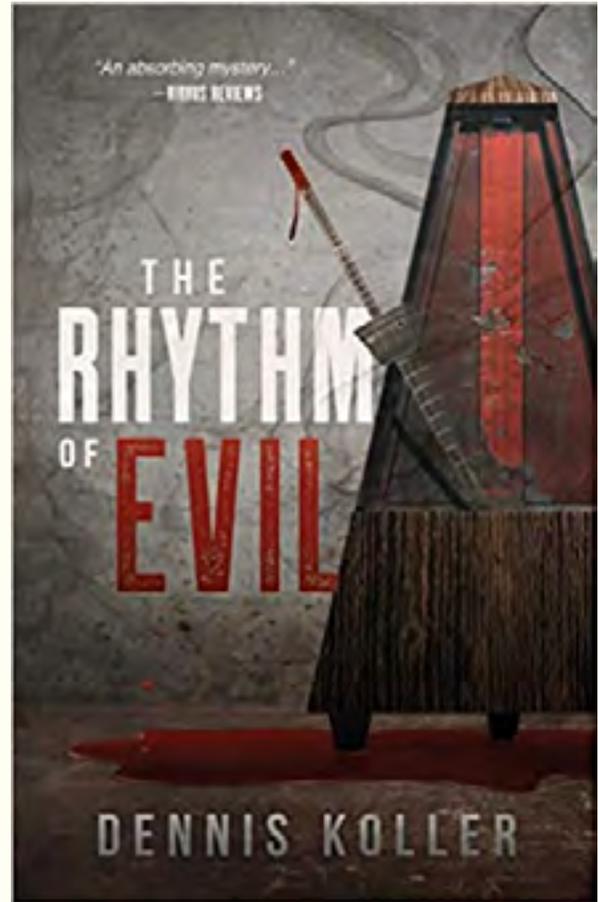
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protect your personal data and privacy. Download today and take back your privacy!" New Apps are arriving daily. Some increase parental controls. Others block participation in certain social media settings. Whether it's access, deletion, or simply opting out, changes continue to arrive with a downpour of options.

While it is impossible to predict where this will go, we do know that protecting ourselves is a lifelong project. Soldiers don't leave their lives as young men and women behind when they put on the uniform. We need to ensure that our technology is sufficiently advanced to protect them operationally and that they are educated to the point to be able to take measures to protect themselves and their families personally.

Once upon a time, classes for soldiers teaching checkbook management were thought to be innovative. Media literacy and privacy protection may just be the next block of instruction we need to develop.

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[THE RHYTHM OF EVIL](#)

by **Dennis Koller**

ISBN: 978-0998080819

Book Format(s): Soft cover, Kindle

Review Genre: Mystery/Thriller

THIRTEEN YEARS AFTER Poppy Garcia was murdered in San Francisco, a Tweet accusing the SFPD of systemic racism and homophobia for dead-ending her case goes viral. Infuriated by the tweet and the public relations nightmare that follows, SFPD Homicide Inspector Reg Decker receives permission to re-open the case for one week so he can quash the conspiratorial once and for all. But it's not that simple!

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/0998080810>

WHAT SYMBOLS MEAN TO A NATION

Reuben Keith Green

I CAN DISTINCTLY REMEMBER TWO times that a piece of cloth stopped me in my tracks. I was in uniform both times. The first time was when I was browsing through the Navy Exchange at Newport Rhode Island and looked up to see a man in uniform, not an unusual occurrence. What was unusual was the little piece of cloth on the top of his ribbon bar. If you didn't know what it represented it would be easy to miss. It was the Medal of Honor (MOH) ribbon. It was the first time I had seen a flesh and blood MOH winner up close and personal. I stopped, stared, and tried not to be so conspicuous in my gawking.

I wanted to approach him and thank him for his service, get his name, and research his background. Instead I simply looked to see if I could read his name tag, unsuccessfully, and he moved on. To me, whoever he was, he represented the best that America has to offer. To this day, I don't know who he was, but I'll never forget the encounter. It filled me with pride to simply be in his presence.

The second time I was stopped in my tracks by a piece of cloth was on the Quarterdeck of the USS Gettysburg (CG-64). This one was bigger and impossible to miss. I was going aboard to conduct some training and, after saluting the ensign on the fantail, I turned to see the Officer of the Deck standing next to a display of the crossed United States and the Confederate States of America flags, awaiting my salute. I was flooded with emotion as I made the split second decision to refuse to salute the Confederate flag, violating protocol and subjecting myself to punishment under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. That flag

meant something entirely different to me than it did to many people, particularly white people from the South.

I reported to Chief of Staff at the squadron to which I was assigned, a white Southerner, and let him know how offensive I felt it was to have minority sailors of all nationalities have to salute that flag in an official capacity. I saw that flag daily on the naval station at Mayport, Florida, but I never imagined that I would be required to render it honors. That's how I viewed the situation.

He called the ship and had the display removed. Decades later, I learned from a subsequent former commanding officer of the Gettysburg that the display was still being used, and he saw no problem with it.

I have long been bothered by symbols of the Confederate cause on military bases. This issue has been contentious for decades. During the Vietnam War, soldiers would fly the Confederate flag in the rear echelons to intimidate black soldiers, sailors, and Marines but it would disappear in front areas, where everyone depended upon each other for survival.

I've read a good deal about the discord and conflict this caused, and the physical conflicts that resulted. In desperation, the Army banned the display of the Confederate flag, only to reverse the decision after an outcry from powerful politicians from the south who were then in government positions of power, such as Mississippi Senator John C. Stennis.

This took a tremendous toll on the black servicemen, and some of them have written bitterly about the lingering memories of betrayal

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MWSA RECOMMENDED READING LIST ~ SUMMER 2020*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. The following list includes some of the books from this year's review cycle we believe you might enjoy reading:

- ★ A Lion's Share ~ Brad Graft
- ★ All Blood Runs Red ~ Phil Keith & Tom Clavin
 - ★ Alter Road ~ Mark James
 - ★ Angie's War ~ Gary DeRigne
- ★ Branch Immaterial ~ Colonel W G Bonvouloir
 - ★ Combat to College ~ John Davis
 - ★ Crusader ~ Mike Guardia
 - ★ Dark Angel ~ Joseph Badal
- ★ Deliberate Discomfort ~ Jason Van Camp & Andy Symonds
 - ★ Enchantment ~ Virginia Burton Stringer
 - ★ Force No One ~ Daniel Charles Ross
- ★ Frozen Tears ~ J.B. King & Sandra Miller Linhart
- ★ Full Mag: Veteran Stories, Vol 2 ~ August Uhl
 - ★ Going Home ~ Carol Brungar
- ★ Grandman Dean Goes Big Shopping ~ Warren Martin & Star Huddleston
 - ★ Haboob Wind ~ Tommy Anderson
 - ★ Hal Moore: A Life in Pictures ~ Mike Guardia
 - ★ House de Gracie ~ Dennis Maulsby
 - ★ Imminent Threat ~ Steve Doherty
 - ★ Katusha ~ Wayne Vasant
 - ★ Trust but Verify ~ Karna Small Bodman
- ★ Vietnam Photographs from North Carolina Veterans ~ Martin Tucker
 - ★ Youth in Asia ~ A. L. Tiffany

Most of us are wondering if we should go outside right now with the pandemic still hanging around. If you do, be smart and stay safe. If you want to stay inside, why not find a good book to read? Turn off social media for a while and educate your mind. Reading will help time go by and lower your stress levels. We all need a little less stress right now. Heaven help us, it's another election year. So, grab your Kindle, Nook, iPad, or an old-fashioned book and bundle up on the old recliner. The list above is a great place to find a new book.

More info about the books listed above and the authors can be found at www.mwsadispatches.com

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by their own government. To make matters worse, any black serviceman or woman serving in Vietnam who complained about discrimination would have his or her complaint either dismissed or not investigated. Not one single complaint of racism during the Vietnam War, filed while in country, was substantiated. Not one. In 1989, not a single discrimination complaint filed by a black sailor was substantiated. Not one. Progress is sometimes excruciatingly slow without good leadership.

Now, as the battle rages about symbols of division within our armed forces, the Navy and Marine Corps leadership are taking steps that should have been taken decades ago. The Army is also considering how this symbology affects unit cohesion and good order and discipline.

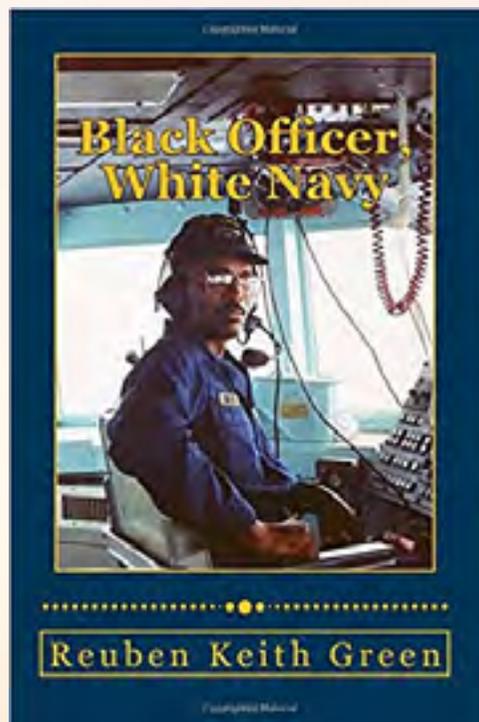
The state of Georgia contributes more volunteers to the national defense than just about any other state. What the Confederate flag means to a Georgian depends on which side of the color line they live on. There are strong opinions on each side. Each is entitled to their own beliefs. Neither should be subjected to the divisive flag on a military base dedicated to the preservation of our Democracy.

Stop for a minute and think about how you would feel if you walked aboard a military vessel or into a government building to conduct business and were confronted with a display of the ISIS flag, an insurrectionist group that enslaved, raped, and murdered Christian women and children, killed men and boys, and declared it all to be in the name of freedom of religion and the right to autonomy and to own slaves. It's chilling to think of, but that pretty much fits the description of what the Confederate government wanted to and nearly did accomplish.

The state of Mississippi finally decided to remove this flag from its official state flag. This is a milestone in the progress of finally coming together as a nation. That doesn't mean that white citizens of Mississippi can no longer be proud of their Confederate heritage. What it does mean is that the minority citizens no longer have to conduct official business in the presence of offensive symbology.

I started a campaign to remove the name of Mississippi Senator from a naval aircraft carrier because, like the citizens of Mississippi, I don't want a crew of diverse sailors to have to render honors to the memory of a man who dedicated his life to maintaining white supremacy and second class citizenship to them.

I don't think that's too much to ask in support of citizens who volunteer to put their lives on the line in defense of liberty.



Reuben Keith Green

Lieutenant Commander, US Navy, Retired

*Author of **Black Officer, White Navy** and **The Case for Renaming the USS John C. Stennis** (Proceedings, USNI)*

NEW MEMBER BENEFIT: BETA READER FORUM

John Cathcart

AS A NEWER SERVICE TO our members, MWSA reminds you of our Beta Reader Forum. The idea is to easily expand our authors' pool of potential beta readers—an important part of our creative process for books nearing completion.

As with our review swap program, MWSA is only providing a venue to get authors and beta readers together. Once there, you might also agree to swap reviews once the book is published.

The page is available to members only (username and password required).

Here are the details (which are also posted at the top of the forum page):

PURPOSE

- ★ Use this forum to line up beta readers for your book.
- ★ This is a member-to-member program, MWSA will not monitor any individual agreements made via this system.

SUGGESTIONS

- ★ Provide a short paragraph describing your book.
- ★ Include title, author, genre, expected publication date.
- ★ Keep your initial posting short—you can always share more details once another MWSA member responds to your request.
- ★ What format(s) you'll provide your beta readers.

- * Paper copy: manuscript, proof, etc.
- * Digital format: Word document, PDF, eBook format (.mobi, .epub).
- ★ How you'll collect feedback—i.e. via paper questionnaire, online form, email responses.
- ★ When you'll collect feedback—i.e. your expectation on how long beta readers have to read and provide feedback.
- ★ Whether or not you'll be posting beta reader names into your book's acknowledgment section.

MWSA recommends authors acknowledge beta readers... and that authors allow the readers to opt in or out!



MWSA Beta Reader Program

<https://www.mwsadispatches.com/mwsa-news/2019/4/new-member-benefit-beta-reader-forum>

