

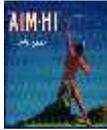
The True-badour

A LITERARY NEWSLETTER

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Doyle Fellers – Dripping Springs, TX

Bart Ambrose – Nashville TN

Kriz Rogers – Nashville, TN

Describing and discussing the writing process through various genres, methods, and venues, for writers and readers alike.

(If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, Unsubscribe contact ernie.lee@live.com.)



Welcome one and all. Thank you for signing up for the *True-badour* literary newsletter. We've put together quite a crew for our inaugural edition. I'm pleased to introduce them in this first issue. We'll add more as we go along. Remember this is an interactive newsletter. If you see a [link](#) point at it and click and you'll be taken to that site. It is also interactive because you can send your poems, songs, stories and ideas directly to me at ernie.lee@live.com for publication consideration. We'd love to hear what you have to say and share. Enjoy. First, I'd like you to meet a few of my friends.

Ernie



Billy Wall

BILLY JAMES WALL Poetry, to me, is a moonlit sea shimmering with soothing waves that gently wash over and satisfy the soul. It is true some poetry is a wind-whipped ocean of notions: a tempest tossed with more tension than tenderness. Each way stirs the lyrical waters. As for me, I prefer to frequent gentle tides lured by the silvery moon. When I tip-toe into that foamy deep, I strive for the grace of a seasoned swimmer. That's my goal, but, alas, I'm much more of a dog-paddling poet.

Who I am starts out in Texas where I was born and raised in the once-tiny town of Bryan, conjoined twins with College Station, more popularly known as the home of Texas A&M University. In that Central Texas cocoon I grew from child to student in the hallowed halls of Texas A&M, where I earned a degree in journalism. From there, I fell into a part-time job at the local Bryan-College Station Eagle newspaper where I worked for 30 years, rising from cub reporter to assistant managing editor. I thought I would be there until my demise, but fate or more likely God, fortunately, took me to Atlanta, Ga. There I met my darling wife of 15 years, joining her in her work in hospice. She, a registered nurse, guided me in the hospice direction and I became a nurse assistant for a different hospice, where I devoted my time to the dying for seven years. We both retired in 2012 and beautifully landed in St. Augustine, FL, where my wife, Debby, grew up and was away for many years.



DOYLE FELLERS Poet Laureate of Dripping Springs, Texas
Doyle is a Texan through and through. His family's been here from the beginning. His great, great grandfather, John G. Fellers came to Texas with Stephan F. Austin. His great-grand father, had 21 kids in concert with three different wives, so if you meet a Fellers anywhere in Texas, chances are they are part of the family tree. (The Morgan family, where Doyle gets his middle name were also early Texans.) He is a graduate of Texas State University, in San Marcos, Texas where he studied art and music and received a B. S. degree in education. He still loves art, singing and teaching.

His latest adventure is the role of lyricist on a new demo-album of country-western songs. He is a student of behavior science and continues his work in that field. He is an avid bird watcher and nature lover—his poetry reflects his passion for his love of the Texas Hill Country. Doyle was named the first Poet Laureate of Dripping Springs in 2007, an honorary post he considers a serious commitment and responsibility to poetry and poets. The Fellers live on a small ranch, just outside Drippin' where they raise a few longhorns, a couple of burros and enjoy an abundance of wildlife. Claireen, also a writer, is from Michigan, She was a reporter for the Marshall Chronical of Marshall, Michigan and they met when she came to cover a story for the paper where Doyle worked. Doyle and Claireen have been married over fifty years. They spend summers cooling out and breathing in the beauty of nature at their cottage on Black Lake, in Michigan's lower northern peninsula.



BART AMBROSE

Bart Ambrose is a songwriter and guitarist living in Nashville, Tennessee. His musical career spans playing pop and rock with his first band, then moving on to country and country rock as a lead guitarist and vocalist in various bands in his home state of Arizona. He has written hundreds of songs, in genres ranging through country, folk, blues, and jazz. He has had success with indie artist airplay and a supporting video, and has continuing success in

developing relationships in publishing and the film/TV market, with numerous songs under publishing contracts, and songs placed in music libraries.

Bart has facilitated group critique sessions for songwriters in Nashville since 2007, helping dozens of writers improve their songs. He also teaches guitar, specializing in technique for songwriters.

KRIZ ROGERS



Kriz Rogers grew up on the east coast of Sweden, in a small village by the sea three and a half hours drive north of Stockholm. Her dad loved music, especially country music, and always gave her toy instruments for Christmas and for her birthdays. He gave her a real accordion when she was ten and she started learning to play it, but switched to guitar at age 12 when a new music teacher found that Kriz could sing, thinking guitar would be more appropriate to develop her talents.

The music teacher was right, and at age 13, Kriz made her first public appearance as a country music act at an end of school celebration concert. She wrote her first country song at age thirteen. Between then and today, Kriz has among other appearances, performed on Swedish national TV, been featured on Nashville Broadcasting Network, and has had the honor of sharing the stage with main headliners. In September 2008 she was one of three nominees for the title The Best Swedish Traditional Country Music Artist of the Year.

Since 2013, she is calling Nashville home and enjoy utilizing NSAI's songwriting services. In October 2015 it earned her a spot on their list of "Writers To Watch".



ERNIE LEE

 Songwriter, poet, and writer from Canyon Lake, Texas.

I wrote my first song when I was six years old. The encouragement I received from my parents is something I will always remember. I grew up in the area around Bryan, Texas where I graduated high school. I spent twenty-two years in the U. S. Air Force. Along the way I earned degrees in Business and Management from the University of Maryland, and a Master's degree in Public Administration from Texas State University.

I began a second career in public service serving as a City Manager, Purchasing and Contracts Manager and a Contract Specialist. Along the way I earned national professional certifications as a CPPO and several others. I was a speaker at national procurement forums, and a master instructor for the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing. I wrote books and professional manuals for public procurement officers, and wrote and conducted numerous class and workshop events. After a successful public career, I turned back to the work I truly loved – writing. Through various levels of success, it has been a wonderful ride. My music is published and performed. I am registered with BMI as a songwriter, and produced a podcast The Indie Country Roadshow featuring songwriters and performers from all over the globe. Most recently my songs are played on the MTV Artists page. Poetry was a natural spin off of music and lyric-writing, and I have had a wonderful time in that community. I am a member of the Academy of American Poets, Austin Poetry International, and several local poetry groups when I have met such wonderful writers and friends. Through the help, support and encouragement of family and friends I have begun a new adventure – writing fiction novels. My first novel, *Aquasaurus* is scheduled to be released this spring. I live and write on the shores of Canyon Lake with my lovely wife Donna. Grown children include Diana, Carrie and Erin, with grandchildren Blake, Caitlynn, and Sara. Recently my music publishing organization, Aim-Hi Music, has morphed into Aim-Hi Publishing LLC, and has been registered with the Library of Congress.

BackStory

... the words behind the words ...

The Helmet at Duc Lap

A helmet was left upon the battlefield;
Lost or abandoned like Archilochus' shield.
And I, a Saion, a white knight, off to save
someone,
A Paladin, I took the helmet, and left the gun.

It was perfectly good this enemy's lid.
And, perfectly ironic the message it hid.
For inscribed within were a palm tree and a
dove.
Ancient symbols of peace and love.

Why would our sworn and deadly foe
Have such symbols? I would never know.
And, why should I care for that lost enemy pot?
Except, as a victor I should exult not.

And by delighting in things that were truly
delights
I kept the thing with me through long days and
nights.
(My soul, my soul!) Disturbed by sorrows that
could not be consoled
And for forty years harbored a grudge
uncontrolled.
But I finally found comfort from the message
within
And at last returned the helmet to that lost
soldier's kin.
And in the peaceful rhythm that controls all
men's lives
I found another Shield, no worse, but One far
more wise.

Author's note: Duc Lap was a Special Forces camp on a hill in Viet Nam three miles out of Cambodia that guarded two heavily traveled trails into South Viet Nam. Because this vantage point hampered movement into the South, the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) needed to control that place. Largely defended by Montagnards and other mountain tribes, they were assisted by advisors who called the site Camp A-239. The attack began in late August 1968, and the defenders were push to the southern ridge, until special strike forces could come to the rescue and enabled them to retake the valuable position. Over 800 enemy were killed in the battle. Assigned to a special team of "advisors", Sergeant John Wast, the only American in the group of mostly Australian forces, picked up a helmet of a dead NVA soldier as a souvenir. Inside were inscribed the soldier's name, and symbols of a dove and a palm tree. In 2012 Sergeant Wast, with the assistance of the DOVE Fund began looking for the soldier's family, and through the efforts of that healing organization, the helmet was eventually returned to the lost soldier's family in a village just outside Hanoi. This poem is a fictional account of the finding o that helmet, borrowing heavily on passages from Archilochus who described an abandoned shield on a Greek battlefield. A Saion, or Paladin, defeated their enemies and used white magic to heal, similar to our modern warrior battlefield medics who use medicine to heal the wounded. Sgt. Wast was Platoon Leader and was acting as medic with 212 MSF Company at the time. Thank you, John, for helping me tell this story.

WordShop

“Did you check your story for pleonasms?”

“Uh, sure ... what are pleonasms?”

There are many ways these pesky space gobblers can creep into our stories. They can take many forms, and often are very hard to find. But the effort is well worth the time it takes to seek and destroy them unmercifully – if you can. They hide very well. One clue is if the word could be dropped with no loss of meaning to the sentence. Think “tuna fish”, or “hot water heater”. In the first example, you could drop either word and not change the meaning at all. In the second, ask yourself why you need to heat hot water. These idioms, and others like them, have embedded themselves in our conversations and our less formal writing, and are so common that we often do not even notice we used them.

Think George Carlin. He made a fortune coming up with famous, very funny examples. But if you plan to submit your work for publication, they might just kill your story dead. (See how easy it is to make one?)

Some danger words to look for that might indicate the presence of an extraneous word are: That, there, very, both, there was, began, started, continued, really, quite, perhaps, and about.

Of course, with every rule there are the exceptions. Many famous writers have used them from time to time. Be sure you have a reason if you decide to use them in your story.



Watch for the release of Ernie Lee’s thriller novel *AQUASAURUS!*



“The problem with fear ... is we think fear is the problem.”

Rules are set in stone – that is until someone shatters that rock and all hell breaks loose.

A determined oil driller uses an illegal fracking method, causing a devastating earthquake and fire that destroys much of San Antonio. Cave explorers, Jesse and Jake, are trapped in the dark with a monster crocodile, long thought to be extinct – Aquasaurus – a forty-foot, 8-ton descendent of *Carnufex* – “*The Butcher*”. World-class rock climber, Rita, must overcome her lifelong fear of darkness to rescue her boyfriend Jesse. A state senator must juggle her fear losing a child, with the greater need of thousands of disaster survivors. A businessman must deal with the fear of losing a business his dying father spent a lifetime building.

Why is Rita afraid of the dark? What happens when Aquasaurus escapes from the cave system and runs loose among disaster survivors? What will happen if the dangerous crocodile escapes into the Gulf of Mexico?

Fear can cause people to react in unpredictable ways. Fear can distort judgment, and cause likeable people to commit irrational acts. Fear can masquerade as bravado. Fear can paralyze. Fear can provide a cover for the truth. Everyone has a fear of something. What are you afraid of?



The experience of Red Stewart, a popular singer and songwriter in the 1940's is a good lesson for songwriters today.

He and another artist of the time, PeeWee King, were traveling from a show in Kentucky about 1947, where PeeWee had performed a song called the Kentucky Waltz. PeeWee remarked to Red that there ought to be a Tennessee Waltz, too. So Red wrote it, with some assistance from PeeWee.

Red offered the song to a Grand Ole Opry artist named Cowboy Copas for the total sum of \$25, which he declined. Red sang it on a radio station in 1948, then it was recorded by several other artists, with no success.

Eventually, Patti Page recorded the song to complete an album. It was released as a single in 1950, and sold 5 million copies, becoming the most popular song in the country for about 6 months. It has sold over 65 million copies and climbing, worldwide. It is still being recorded by traditional artists and receiving radio play.

I'm always amazed by stories like this. They affirm my belief that a truly great song will eventually find its path and realize the success it deserves. It encourages me to take a long term view of songwriting.

Keep writing the best songs you can, and maybe one of them will turn into another "Tennessee Waltz".

Bart Ambrose



Listen to **Bart Ambrose** music on www.ReverbNation.com or follow this link: <https://www.reverbnation.com/bartambrose>

My favorite Bart Ambrose song is *Two Times Tomorrow*. Give it a listen and tell me which one is your favorite.

You can hear **Kriz Rogers** music on www.ReverbNation.com or by following this link: <https://www.reverbnation.com/krizrogers> . Her bio is listed below. She's a blue-eyed Swedish singing doll married to my friend **Chase Rogers**! You can hear Chase's music at <https://www.reverbnation.com/chaserogerscountry>

Speaking of Sweden... Let me introduce you to a genuine blue grass band from Sweden The **Downhill Bluegrass Band**: <https://www.reverbnation.com/downhillbluegrassband> You'll love a few of their songs, including my favorite *East of the Mountains*. I can't hear it enough! You won't believe how good it is. I also like, *The Duke*, and *Reckless Wind*.

Ernie Lee can be heard on www.ReverbNation.com at https://www.reverbnation.com/aimhimusic?profile_view_source=header_icon_nav And on MTV Artists page at: <http://www.mtv.com/artists/ernie-lee/>

Enjoy!



Writing for Children: My Theory

Billy James Wall

I'm in awe of children. Imagination, for most of them, fine-tunes in a flash, switching the dismissed-as-ordinary into the mystery of the ages or the magnificence of a conjured kingdom.

When I write for those young explorers, I try to elevate my storytelling to their towering child-brilliance. Yes, I think of my amazing grandchildren, who out-do me in tenacity (and, of course, technology) and wit and wisdom.

So, I start from the humbling perspective that my audience could, at any hour (except perhaps during nap-time), find my stories pure literary Pablum.

Pablum. I find it an interesting word. It sounds kind of blobby. Or, perhaps, syrupy or soggy. Infants find it filling. In writing, it's as popular as acne. It's the ordinariest of the ordinary. It's a bundle of the banal. That said, I struggle with MY definition of Pablum in the writing world. What may be ordinary to me may prove new and intriguing to a tot or a teen.

For me, writing for children requires me not to think about writing for children. Now that's deep, right? Actually, I'm fuzzy on what that sentence means; delightfully contrarian, for sure. I think I mean don't force it. Observe even the thinnest threads of thought in your busy mind. Woven they just might assemble into a warm-coat-of-a-story for a child.

Oh, pardon me please while I watch a flea sneeze. I digress.

How I write might scare you. I seldom have an iota of an idea where my mind might meander. Sometimes I start with a range of little thoughts that may or may not remain after careful winnowing. I sift and I sift until what settles are written lines that, I hope, sets alight a young one's interest and delight.

Just so you know I blessed the flea-of-the-sneeze, who thanked me after borrowing my hanky.

Said the flea, "Oh, kind sir, how can I repay you?"

"Slide from my schnauzer and seek other shelter before your next achoo." I digress.

Final words; I hope free of Pablum:

I simply say, please listen close to that master of muses: your own perceptive heart. Threads of your own youth linger there waiting for you to weave them into a most charming children's yarn.

Furiously Happy

By Jenny Lawson

Reviewed by: Billy James Wall

A stuffed raccoon, a scaredy-cat, a gift-(not gifted) armadillo, a crushed koi, all living (or not living) among the pages of a, sort-of, non-fiction book?

“Sort-of” due to Lawson’s layering her true-life with Twain-style charming touches. Actually, *Furiously Happy* is more of a bound set of poop stories (trust me on this) full of the author’s marvelous -- at times, miserable -- and mostly mirthful doozy-of-a-life. Oh, did I mention a boxing kangaroo and an un-hugged koala bear? A reader might ask, “Is she NUTS?” Yes she IS – certifiably and, at times, hysterically!

No, my answer regarding Lawson’s issues won’t set libel-lawyers looking for lawsuits off the top-dollar rack. For, alas, she freely admits she IS nuts! But Lawson smiles, mostly, in the midst of her mind-mayhem with a happy, happy HAPPY-FACE. Speaking of her face, don’t get her started on Botox.

Here, I should insert a warning: this book might bring you to tears! Mainly, from long spells of laughter. To characterize Lawson’s life, try Googling “never a dull moment.” Next to her picture will be a snapshot of Rory. No, no, not her husband, although she has several names for her hubby. Just don’t ask what they are, OK? That might start a fight between them.

Lawson sometimes wracks with pain from her chronic mental and/or her physical illness. She suffers from debilitating depression, anxiety and, to conclude the triumvirate, rheumatoid arthritis. Believe me, I can relate -- at least to the need for medication for depression and anxiety. But that’s MY story. I think others in her shoes (that’s also another of her stories) can relate.

So, if you’re looking for a great read packed with mostly lighthearted lunacy, I recommend checking out “*Furiously Happy*.” The book title is Lawson’s mantra. I’ve adopted it for myself. By the way, I sent this review to my editor as-is. I’m a little leery of spell-check now. And that’s another (Lawson) story. But I say be brave and grow furiously happy as you read “*Furiously Happy*.”

Poetry

EDDY'S SONG

On a highway there's a woman walking
The miles she's traveled showing in her eyes
Sometimes she thinks about a man
That she could have loved if his heart was prepared

Everybody needs someone to turn to
It might be me, it might be you
So, be there when you see someone who needs you
'Cause it is love we're living on

I can hear a baby boy; he is crying
He needs someone to lead him through this world
A world full of heartache and sorrow
If no one gives him the love he deserves

Everybody needs someone to turn to
It might be me, it might be you
So, be there when you see someone who needs you
'Cause it is love we're living on
Everybody needs someone to turn to

© Kriz Rogers (used by permission)



SOUTHERN SECRETS

In the south, we have our secrets.
We know how to keep them too.
If we wanted you to know what we were
thinking,
We'd be talking.

And, we don't go around digging up old bones.
We leave them dead and buried where they
belong.
If we dug them up, we might find
Whatever put them in the ground
Might still be around.

Out on the creeks and bayous,
The silver moonbeams
Drip like earrings
Beneath the Spanish moss,
Where a week on either side of full,
The un-jeweled hag's hair hangs
In the shadows of the moon.

Where invisible things
Make concentric rings on the dark shadowed
water,
That spread away toward distant shores
To lip the far-away sands and quietly die.
Like our secrets.

© 2016. Ernie Lee

A Stump and a Bump and a Surprise

Steppity, stompity, bump!
Sasha bumped into a stump
While hiking with Mommy and Daddy and Brother Merlin
Sasha bumped the stump as she strayed to do a little squirrelin'
Startled, Sasha looked up in time to spy a squirrel atop
That just-bumped stump, his dark eyes ablaze and his furry tail aflop
"Ouch!" cried Sasha, as her stumped toe set to stinging
"Why are you following me?" asked the squirrel, his tail now swinging
"To twirl you by your fluffy tail"
"No thanks," said the squirrel, as his voice began to trail
In a blink, only a tiny cloud of squirrel fur
Floated in place of the squirrel and then the fur began to whir
Sasha forgot the minor paining in her toes
As she watched all her toes lifted in air in wiggly digital rows
Trees blurred around her as Sasha became aware
Of a strange and gentle pull of her hair
Sasha swirled, toes and all the rest of her off the ground
As the magical squirrel twirled Sasha, by her own ponytail, around and around
That rascally rodent turned the forest tables on Sasha with one jump
When the spinning ceased quite quickly, Sasha landed right on her rump
Sasha slowly stood up and swayed, a little woozy
Back on the stump, the squirrel said: "Wasn't that spin a doozy?"
Soon Mommy and Daddy and Brother Merlin found Sasha, who was shaken to the gizzard
Brother Merlin smiled and said: "It doesn't take a wizard
To know Sister Sasha found the squirrel she was chasin'"
"Actually, the squirrel found me," Sasha said, as she sizzled at the furry animal's guile
"I told him I wanted to swing him around by his tail awhile"
Brother Merlin laughed and asked what happened then
"That squirrel grabbed me by my ponytail and whirled me again and again"
Mommy asked: "What did you learn from all that?"
Sasha replied: "Next time I chase a squirrel I'll make sure I hide my hair in my hat"
© Billy Wall/November, 2015

The Poet's Choice

My poems, like most, may never be read,
But, many a lonely night my soul they've fed.
Perhaps someone will read them after I'm dead.
But, that's a case I face with restraint and dread
As I sit reading Poe's dire verses as I lie in my bed.
I much prefer, if it's my choice to be alive instead.

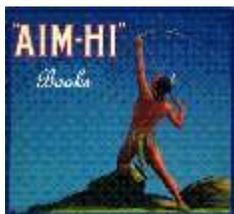
Doyle Morgan Fellers.

POET LAUREATE of DRIPPING SPRINGS, TEXAS
Copyright © 2008, Doyle Morgan Fellers

Poets in circles, reading in rotation;
 A gathering of the choir, singing to the choir.
 A grand chorus of court chroniclers
 Raising their voices in iconic verse.
 Who listens, who outside the circle hears?
 So much to say, so much to share.
 But then, who cares, who shares,
 When they are not present to hear?
 Who is the audience? Why are they absent?
 Where is the public forum, the common platform?
 What has created the abyss between poet and reader?
 Has the chasm between our worlds become too wide?
 Do we invite our audience in, or close them out?
 Has the poet forgotten the needs of the reader?
 Do we meet them on common familiar ground?
 Do we speak in words, terms, phrases they understand?
 Where is our rightful place in the literary arts?
 What is our role in recharging the creative process?
 Who will carry our banner, if we do not raise it?
 Who will stand up and issue the call for order?
 Rules, restrictions and regulations, never!
 But, the bridge between poet and reader must be rebuilt.
 Dialogue, the open and free exchange of creative expression
 must be revitalized to ensure and secure poetry's rightful place.

Have you a poem you would like to share in the *True-badour*?

Send it to Ernie at bardoftheblanco@hotmail.com We'd love to help you share it with our readers.



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Each issue of *True-badour* will feature a randomly selected winner. This issue we salute: **Sue Marshall of Chattanooga, TN**

Congratulations, Sue! Many thanks for subscribing to *True-badour*!

Sue will be receiving a \$15 gift card to Amazon.

WRITING IS GIVING

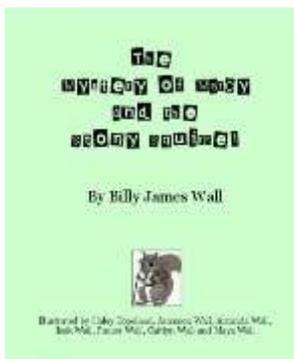
Writing+Is+Giving

means that the simple act of writing is an act of giving. When we write something, we give information to someone, even if it is a question.

Creative writers take that concept giving one step further. They give of themselves every time they put words on paper. Something from their own personality is printed on a page and shared with everyone who reads it. Think of all the wonderful memories you have of authors and their characters. Think of all the songs that hang in the back of your mind, ready to play in your head when something reminds you of a melody or a lyric appropriate to the moment. Think of the small snippet of poetry you recall when the time is right. All of those examples were given to you as a gift from a writer somewhere. Sure, maybe you paid for the book, or dropped coin in a jukebox, or tuned into a radio or television program. Even so, what you received was a uniquely phrased piece of writing that someone, somewhere, put their skill and inspiration toward. They took their most precious asset, time, to create something for you. Sure, maybe they also made a profit. Nevertheless, the gift continues to give as long as we carry it around in our minds and hearts. I could give you hundreds of examples, but they would be from my mind and heart – not yours. The gift is that which you keep stored away for yourself to treasure. If the writing touched us in some way, it is ours forever.

So, in keeping with that, I've carved out this little space as a way to say thank you to all of those writers and composers who have given us so much.

Watch this space in future issues, as the concept of **Writing+Is+Giving** is taken even further into the realm of giving. Join me as we explore the power of that gift. By: Ernie Lee



Billy James Wall's book *The Mystery of Marcy and the Stony Squirrel*, is available on Blurb. Just google Billy James Wall, or go to this link:

<http://www.blurb.com/b/295816-the-mystery-of-marcy-and-the-stony-squirrel> A second edition is being planned, along with an e-book version that is anticipated soon, and will be available on Amazon. Stay tuned for further developments.