



Valley Byliners Newsletter

Harlingen, TX

January 1, 2011

NOTES FROM THE December 11 Meeting

The December meeting was our annual Christmas celebration. It was held at Jack King's home in his studio. While the event was crowded, all who attended had a great time with good food and fellowship. Our first order of business for the meeting was to vote on the stories for Jack's contest. The stories were titled **A Peaceful World** (By Nellie Venselaar), **Flower** (by Ruth Garcia), **In Spirit Run Free** (by Pat Collins), **A Small Reward** (by Edgar Clinton Jr.), **A Solution** (by Eunice Greenhaus), **The Right Decision** (by Mariana Nelson), **Words Cannot Express** (by Judy Stevens), **The Worst Christmas Song** (by Peter Gray), **The Fountain of Forever** (by Frank Cortazo), **Morning** (by Bidgie Weber), and **The Temptress** (by yours truly, Hugh Barlow). **The Temptress** won the contest. Don announced at the table before feasting commenced that the reading at the Quinta Mazatlan birding center in McAllen was our best showing ever.

Our second order of business was to enjoy the meal provided by Jack and his family. A fantastic spread was laid out for Jack's guests. Jack's wife Nina and his daughter Miranda provided a delicious turkey with all the trimmings. The guests helped fill the feast out with sides and deserts. I am sure that I speak for all when I say thank you to Jack and his family for hosting the Christmas meeting.

A call for new officers was made during the meal, and it was announced that there will be a vote in the future for President, and a call was put forth for someone to take the position of Treasurer. Anyone interested in running for office please contact Mariana Nelson.

Edgar Clinton Jr. gave the group his ideas as to why the border is as unstable as it is today. His ideas were interesting and plausible. They explained why the small town border crossing at Nuevo Progreso is still relatively safe as long as you go during daylight hours and do not show flash (fancy cameras, phones, and jewelry). He made a request for stories to his web site (<http://writersoftheriogrande.com/>).

I am unable to introduce the guest for our next meeting since Brenda has not given me that information. The minutes for the latest board meeting will be appended to this newsletter for all to peruse.

Rio Grande Valley Byliners
Minutes of Board Meeting, Jeff Harris Presiding
Dec. 29, 2010, Harlingen, Texas

The meeting was opened at the Java Café in Harlingen at 10:06 am. Attending were all three board members: Jeff Harris, Jack King, and Marianna Nelson; and Byliners President, Don Clifford, and Treasurer, Verne Wheelwright.

Budget proposal for 2011

- The budget proposal prepared by Verne Wheelwright was reviewed and amended to incorporate these changes:
 - add \$100 for Writing Challenge awards rather than having Jack King continue paying the awards out of his own pocket.
 - add \$65 for rental of a post office box for the Byliners Corporation. Jeff will arrange this in February at the Main Post Office in Harlingen.
 - reduce the speaker's fee for the Annual Workshop from \$500 to \$340.

Jack King made a motion to approve the budget as amended and Marianna Nelson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Jeff Harris noted that Items in the budget may incur expenses up to 25% above approved amounts, if necessary. Items not in the budget, such as a new book, would require board action.

Verne Wheelwright noted that the bank surplus of \$12,000 in the Club's checking account is earning no interest. Jeff Harris and Verne recommended that money be transferred to Certificates of Deposit at staggered time periods.

Writing Challenges

Encouraged that more members are submitting their work to the monthly Writing Challenges started by Jack King more than a year ago, attendees brought up the following points:

- **Eligibility** – Jack King has not been submitting stories but would like to, now that the Club is giving the awards.
- **Longer stories** - consider having a Writing Challenge every three months specifically for longer stories (4,000 words).
- **Award limit** - should there be a limit on how many times the same author can win?

Annual Workshop:

It was noted that publicity for the Annual Workshop on Feb. 12 needs to begin in early January to be effective. Therefore, the speaker needs to be determined within a few days by the Vice President for Programs. Suggestions for programs included one by Shoney Flores (last year's popular speaker from UTPA) or a program on editing given by Don Clifford and Jack King,

Other items discussed:

- Don Clifford said as president he has received materials that may be useful in the future and suggested that there be a Club repository for them.
- Verne Wheelwright said Steve Schneider and his students in the Master of Fine Arts program at UTPA would be good prospects as Byliners members.
- Verne Wheelwright said Byliners should make the Friends of the Harlingen Library aware of our Annual Workshops.
- Marianna Nelson said she will inquire at the Harlingen Library Administration Office whether Byliners' status as a not-for-profit corporation would reduce room rental rates for meetings and

workshops. Also, she will inquire what Byliners can do to qualify for a waiver of rental fees, a privilege enjoyed for example by the Tip of Texas Genealogy Society which maintains a room of genealogy materials at the library.

The next scheduled Board meeting will be in June after the Club's annual election. The new president and treasurer will be asked to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:59 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Marianna Nelson, Secretary