



# Valley Byliners Newsletter

Harlingen, TX

April 3, 2011

## Notes from the March 12 Meeting

I was not at the March meeting due to illness. I must rely on the missives from President Don to provide the information in this newsletter.

The high light of Saturday's Byliners meeting was Diana Dominguez who demonstrated to an appreciative audience a journalism interview technique in order to create an authentic voice for your character. Diana specializes in writing about women who enjoy a brief, mostly anonymous, moment in history and then are lost forever. She used the Biblical wife of Cain as an example in a poem she wrote about Enoch's Mom. The questions posed and the responses were typical of a give and take between a mother and an interviewing reporter. The result was a poem that gave life to a flesh and blood person from a simple one-liner statement in the Bible.

Jose Alvarez won the March Writing Challenge with his Letters from My Father. This was the first in the new 4000 words or less competition that will be scheduled every third month. The competing entries were Trade War by Travis Whitehead; The Doubloon, Judy Stevens; Lessons of my Childhood, Ana Cavazos; Are You a Good Egg? Edna Ratliff; A Planet with a Lost Destiny, Frank Cortazo; Stench of Freedom, Hellene Funtanilla.

Marianna Nelson presented an initial slate of nominations for several club positions soon to be vacated. Bidgie Weber – Member of the Board; VP for Publicity and Newsletter Editor – Bruce Nelson; VP for Programs and Special Events – Frank Cortazo. The office of President is open and all members are asked to nominate someone for the position between now and the April 9 meeting. During the month of April the out of town membership will be asked to vote for the elections, which will be held in May.

Also nominated for Lifetime Memberships are Mona Sizer for her work in developing and producing the book, Tales Told at Midnight Along the Rio Grande – the first book published since the Rio Grande trilogy of the 1970's; Eileen Mattei, long time member and past president for several years, who literally held the Byliners' club together during a period of slack membership; and another long time member, Marianna Nelson for her consistent loyalty and extraordinary volunteerism whenever something needed doing.

(Excerpted from Wikipedia)

Charles M. Robinson III is the scheduled guest speaker for the April 9 Valley Byliners meeting. He is a history instructor with South Texas College in McAllen, Texas, and was a member of the 2010 Oxford Round Table. He is a graduate of St. Edward's University and the University of Texas–Pan American. He has written more than a dozen books that deal with the American Old West, as well as the American Civil War and the Spanish Conquest of Mexico. He has also written magazine articles on seafaring, sailing, hunting, guns, and antique automobiles. In 1993 he was awarded the Thexas Historeical

Commission's prestigious T. R. Fehrenbach Book Award for *Bad Hand: A Biography of General Randal S. Mackenzie*.

Robinson was born in Harlingen, Texas, to Rosalyn (née Crispin), a public school teacher, and Charles M. Robinson Jr., a Presbyterian minister. At 17, he dropped out of high school and obtained a berth as a crewman on a Norwegian cargo ship. He worked on several ships serving Africa and northern South America, until a back injury and recurring malaria rendered him unfit for further service. After working two years in Scandinavia, he returned home, and worked as an aircraft mechanic. In 1971, he joined the staff of the Harlingen Valley Morning Star as a copyboy, eventually rising to city editor in 1979. He later worked as editor of the San Benito News, and the Weslaco, Texas, Mid-Valley Town Crier, while simultaneously continuing his education.

He was married to Perla M. Torres from 1974 until her death in 2004. He has one daughter. Robinson was a chain smoker for more than forty years, and in March 2008, his right lung was removed because of cancer. He currently resides in San Benito.

Books by Charles M. Robinson III:

Frontier Forts of Texas

The Frontier World of Fort Griffin: The Life and Death of a Western Town

*Bad Hand: A Biography of General Randal S. Mackenzie*

The Court Martial of Lieutenant Henry Flipper

The Buffalo Hunters

A Good Year to Die: The Story of the Great Sioux War

Shark of the Confederacy: The Story of the CSS Alabama

The Indian Trial: The Complete Story of the Warren Wagon Train Massacre and the Fall of the Kiowa Nation

Satanta: The Life and Death of a War Chief

Hurricane of Fire: The Union Assault on Fort Fisher

The Men Who Wear the Star: The Story of the Texas Rangers

General Crook and the Western Frontier

The Diary of John Gregory Bourke, Vol. 1, 1872-1876

The Diary of John Gregory Bourke, Vol. 2, 1876-1878

The Diary of John Gregory Bourke, Vol. 3, 1878-1880

The Diary of John Gregory Bourke, Vol. 4, 1880-1881

The Plains Wars, 1758-1900

The Spanish Invasion of Mexico, 1519-1521

Texas and the Mexican War: A History and a Guide.

The Western Lawman, 1850-1930

With John Pohl. *Aztecs and Conquistadores: The Spanish Invasion and the Collapse of the Aztec Empire*

Roadside History of Louisiana

The Fall of a Black Army Officer: Racism and the Myth of Henry O. Flipper.

I am including these notices from our president, Don Clifford:

April 16th is "Authors' Night" at the Narciso. The 10th Anniversary of the NMCAC Writers' Forum is May 21. You may want to send out a correction to keep people from getting their dates mixed up. Also, The night will began at 6:30p.m. for social time and the presentations will began at 7:00 p.m. The event is going to include two artists exhibitions on each of the two front rooms. There will be finger food and beverages for the guests.

Valley Byliners meet, Apr 9, 1:30 pm, Harlingen Public Library. Featured guest speaker is historian Charles M. Robinson III, who has written more than a dozen books of Texas History, one of which earned the T.H. Fehrenbach Award from the Texas Historical Commission. Looking for a Club President, nominations expected.

Open mic Poetry Nite, Apr. 11, 6:30 free registration, 7:00 readings, Harlingen Public Library. Starbucks promises to be there with free coffee and pastry.

Writers Forum, Apr. 16, 10th Anniversary celebration at the Narciso Martinez Cultural Arts Center, San Benito. Late afternoon or early evening. Details forthcoming.

Authors Roundtable, Apr. 25, Paragraphs Book Store, South Padre Island.

For WRITINGS YOU MIGHT ENJOY

visit

<http://donclifford.webs.com>