



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



No. 30 Feb. 10, 2019



MRMS: Looking Ahead to the Future



MRMS (Member Record Management System) was a wonderful gift to CWC by its creator, **Ray Malus** of the San Fernando Valley branch. It represented a giant leap forward from the Excel spreadsheets we'd been using as a member roster up to that point.

But now the time has come to consider the need to regrettably and respectfully retire MRMS. Though less than ten years old, the software is starting to show its age, becoming incompatible with the underlying technology—PHP, SQL, Javascript, and all that other geek stuff—required by its web host. We no longer have Ray's genius to keep it up-to-date and he passed away before he could leave much in the way of documentation. System Administrator **Dick Amyx** of the South Bay branch is basically holding MRMS together with rubber bands and duct tape, and he warns us that it's a matter of when, not if, we suffer a catastrophic failure.

Dick has agreed to chair a task force to begin searching for a replacement for MRMS. With no Ray Malus (that we know of) among our ranks, we'll more than likely be looking at a commercial, off-the-shelf product. If any of you have worked with other membership database systems and have products to recommend, by all means let me know, president@calwriters.org. Likewise, if you'd just like to share thoughts on the functionality and features that you'd like to see in a new system. Finally, I would be derelict in my duties if I did not give a shout-out to **Carole Bumpus**, co-chair of Nor-Cal Group, who has been collecting concerns about MRMS from the branches in the northern half of the state, and has brought them to the attention of the statewide officers.

It's CWC Election Season—What, Already?

CWC's governing documents call for the four officers—president, VP, secretary and treasurer—to be elected on an annual basis, at the July Central Board meeting. According to the Policies and Procedures, the president is supposed to appoint a Nominating Chair in January. So, yes, it is election season already. I have asked **David George** of the Mt. Diablo branch to take on the role of Nominating Chair, and to my great pleasure and relief, he has accepted.

As most of you know, Dave is a former CWC president and Ina Coolbrith Award recipient. He has been a tireless volunteer, always willing to step in and help. Quite frankly, I don't know how the club would have survived these past few years without him. By the way, his arm-twisting skills are legendary—you have been warned!

In case anyone is wondering, the PnP does not require the Nominating Chair to be a CB rep. It does, however, require the appointment to have CB approval. So, if any of you object to Dave serving as Nominating Chair, speak up now, president@calwriters.org. If I hear nothing in the next week or so, the appointment shall stand. Also, under the topic of "if anyone is wondering" . . . no, I do not plan to seek a fourth term as president. Nothing personal, but three years has been plenty for me, and I'm ready to move on to other endeavors—like, you know, writing!



2019 Is a Jack London Service Award Year

It's not too early to start thinking about a 2019 Jack London Service Award honoree for your branch. This award is presented every-other-year at the July Central Board meeting to honor outstanding volunteer service at the branch level. The PnP does not set exact criteria, only stating that the award is designed to honor volunteer service, not writing achievements, and that the method of selection is at the discretion of the branches.

Why start so early? Mostly so your honoree can "save the date." And this is where your president has fallen down on the job. I have yet to contact the hotel to set up the July CB meeting. I can tell you that it will be either Sunday, July 21, or Sunday, July 28, at a hotel at the Oakland airport. As soon as I've put a deal together, I will let everyone know. Still, I'd encourage you to start talking about this now at the branch board, and if possible, set aside branch funds to pay the honoree's travel expenses. CWC pays for the lunch and plaque, but not travel expenses for the award recipient.

