

A PATH LESS TRAVELED TO OUR LIFE WORTH LOVING

Gary Smith

I was born in Hayward, California. I was the first in the family that was supposed to go to college. My sophomore in high school, I started working construction in the summer. I loved it and decided not to go to college disappointing my family. After high school, I joined the Labor Union and started my working career digging ditches as a common labor. Next, I joined the Naval Air Reserve and entered the electrical construction trade. I started my own electrical construction company in 1978. This became a large company doing large industrial projects throughout the United States until my retirement in 2011. In 2016 I began writing.

I am the author of the Warren Steelgrave series of five five-star novels and a book of short stories. I am finishing the sixth book in the series. In addition, I am an award-winning professional photographer with works in private and public collections and the holder of three patents. I choose the path less traveled, following my passions and leading me to a lifetime of adventures and challenges.

I was accepted to the 1983 Ansel Adams workshop to study with Ansel Adams, Ruth Bernhard, Lucien Clergue, and others. I also served as a member of the advisory committee for the Connections Leadership Project for the State of California from 1993 - 1995. I have served on the Board of Trustees Saint Rose Hospital 2003- 2010 and Board of Trustees Vice Chairman Saint Rose Hospital. 2011- 2014. I serve as Director of Scholarships for the Peter Sategna Educational Foundation. I established the Peter Educational Foundation, a family foundation in 2008 that gives out fifty thousand dollars in grants yearly. I have received the following honors. Elected to the Y.M.C.A. Hall of Partners 1988, Outstanding Rotarian of the Year 1991, Vocational Service Award 2000,

Community Service Award 2000, City of Hayward Business Award 2001, Hayward Volunteer Recognition Award 2001, Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition 2001, Directed the Ghana Well Project 2002 which installed three hundred wells in Ghana. I am the winner of the 2022 Independent Press Distinguished Favorite Award short stories for the book Collection of Short Stories and Poems. The 2921 NYC Big Book Distinguished Favorite Award for the book Vengeance can be Deadly.

I have read most of my life, starting in the fifth grade with *The Canterbury Tales*. Next was *Cyrano de Bergerac*, my favorite. Then many others: *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, classics like the *Divine Comedy* and *The Decameron*. Many biographies from Ezra Pound, James Joyce, and Ernest Hemingway to Elvis Presley and John Lennon. Reading hundreds of diverse books over the years and the eclectic life I have lived has given me a wealth of ideas and experiences to draw from to write.

Raymond Chandler, Ernest Hemingway, and James Joyce have had the most significant influence on my writing. Raymond Chandler for the way he developed characters. Not only did you know what a character looked like, but their personality and hidden thoughts. Ernest Hemingway, for his to-the-point sentences. James Joyce and his experimental use of the language.

Good writing never gets old. I have read many of the seven hundred books in my library more than once.

And at present, I am reading *Trouble Is My Business* by Raymond Chandler for the sixth time. Written in 1939, some of the terms are dated, but still a great story. I am getting the urge to start writing a new novel. Raymond Chandler is the go-to author for me to begin the process. By the time I finish reading the book, I will be ready to start writing.

