

# *PWR Newsletter*



*I self-published  
stories!*



*Alexandre Dumas*

(July 24, 1802 – December 5, 1870)



PUBLISHED WRITERS OF ROSSMOOR



# PUBLISHED WRITERS OF ROSSMOOR



*A Club to Celebrate and Support Aspiring and Published Authors*



February 3, 2018

Volume VII, Issue 2

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<i>Room Setup:</i>	Duke Robinson
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<i>Social Coordinator:</i>	Patricia Keith-Spiegel
<i>Fall Bazaar Coordinator:</i>	TBD
<i>Newsletter Editor:</i>	Peter Li

**Coming up!**  
**This Saturday, February 3, 2018**  
**From 9:45 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.**  
**In the Fairway Room at Creekside Clubhouse**  
*Come early and enjoy complimentary coffee or tea!*

***February's Speaker:  
Colleen Edwards on  
Marketing Your Books***

**BY PETER LI**



Peter Li

Colleen Edwards, formerly of Edwards & McCaslin Creative, will be the featured speaker at our meeting on February 3, from 9:45 A.M. to noon, in the Fairway Room of the Creekside Clubhouse.

Colleen has a long distinguished career in marketing and is a popular speaker, author, columnist, and radio reporter.

In 1980, Colleen opened an advertising agency specializing in the branding and marketing needs of the expanding home-building field in the San Francisco Bay Area. Within five years, her firm, Edwards & McCaslin, dominated that space, a position that the firm held until 2013.

Now working as the Marketing Director of River Islands, the biggest master-planned community in Northern

California, Colleen is responsible for developing the marketing strategy for a community-in-the-making of 11,000 homes, 10 schools, a business park, and downtown retail stores.

At the meeting, Colleen will bring her extensive experience and expertise in marketing and branding to bear on the ups and downs, ins and outs of publishing. □

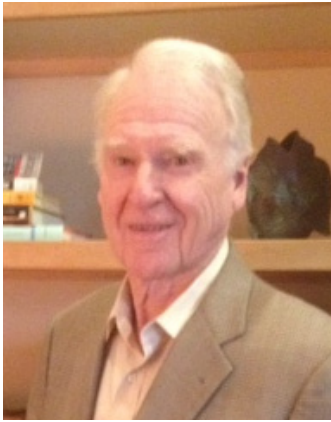


Colleen Edwards



## *The President's Page*

BY RON WREN



Ron Wren

It's a mere ten months to go before our next annual Holiday Party! And judging from attendance at our December 2nd event and comments at our January meeting, we'll be celebrating again with song, seasonal drinks, and warm socializing.

In the meantime, planning is well under way for guest speakers. On February 3rd, Colleen Edwards will tell us about how she's marketing the new River Islands development, and offer some promotional tips that will be applicable to us. In March, we'll welcome Maureen O'Rourke of the *Rossmoor News* with suggestions about presenting our messages to the press. In April, Bob Hollis will reveal how his Auntie Bell wrote scores of stories (none published), compiled a list of 800+ synonyms for *said*, and what we can learn from her efforts. May will feature Ruth Schwartz, an old favorite. In June, Julie Blade will discuss ghostwriting.

It's going to be a great year. Don't miss our monthly meetings. And feel free to invite friends who show an interest in writing.

PWR is dedicated to supporting both aspiring and accomplished authors in publishing and promoting their books. All residents of Rossmoor are welcome to attend its programs. For more information on the club, visit its website at [www.Rossmoor-writers.com](http://www.Rossmoor-writers.com) or contact me at [ronwren@aol.com](mailto:ronwren@aol.com). □





## January's Speaker: Richard McLean on “*I Remember Mama*”

BY PETER LI



Richard McLean

Residents of Rossmoor who remember the movie *I Remember Mama*, starring Irene Dunne, or the book *Mama's Bank Account* were pleased to learn that Richard McLean was the featured speaker at PWR's meeting on January 6, 2018.

Richard, the son of Kathryn Forbes, who wrote *Mama's Bank Account*, shared his experiences as his mother's confidant and literary executor since 1966 and provided insights useful for authors.

As Richard told the tale, a 34-year-old housewife without a college education emerged from a Burlingame writers' group into a celebrated author of an American classic. It is a tale of astounding luck, careful literary management, and the power of a compelling theme that has continued to thrive for seventy-five years.

*Mama's Bank Account*, first published in 1943, was actually seventeen linked short stories about Ms. Forbes's family. Later, it became the play *I Remember Mama*, adapted by John Van Druten, with Marlon Brando in the cast, lasting eighteen months on Broadway.

In addition to the film starring Irene Dunne, *Mama* was a prime-time TV series with Peggy Wood on CBS for five years. The play is still an international favorite and is popular in little theater productions and school presentations.

In 1979, it became a Broadway musical by Richard Rodgers starring Liv Ullmann.

In all its incarnations, the story presents a series of heartwarming vignettes centering on a family of Norwegian immigrants living in San Francisco in the early twentieth century.

The book has been published in thirteen languages and was distributed widely by the U.S. government as an example of American life. It has remained in print since its initial publication. Most recently, *Mama's Bank Account* is enjoying popularity in China as both a printed book and an e-book. □



## Vegetarian Circle

By GENE GORDON



Gene Gordon

motivation for being vegan is ethical: her desire to mitigate the suffering of animals.

Victoria lives in New York City with her husband and their rescue dog. □



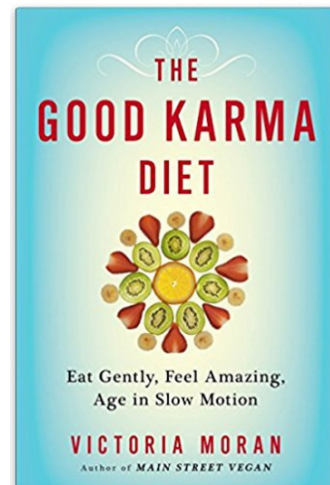
Victoria Moran

### Vegetarian Writer of the Month: Victoria Moran

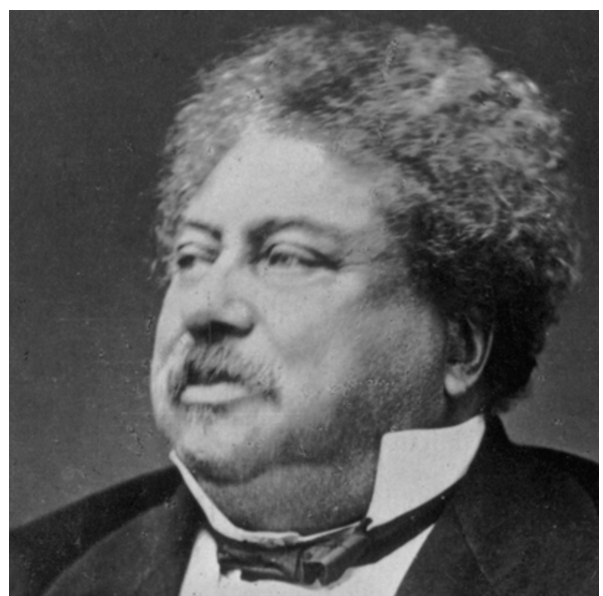
Victoria Moran is an American author, who has written a number of books specializing in both spirituality and veganism. She also hosts a radio show called "Main Street Vegan."

Victoria started her career as a freelance magazine writer and has gone on to publish a number of best-selling vegan books, starting in 1985 with *Compassion: The Ultimate Ethic*. In 2012, she was named Vegan of the Year. Her most recent book, published in 2015, is *The Good Karma Diet*.

Victoria started her vegetarian journey in 1969 and became a vegan in 1983 after recovering from a compulsive eating problem. However, her primary









## *PWR's Second Year at the Bazaar*

BY PATRICIA KEITH-SPIEGEL

Eighteen PWR authors participated in Rossmoor's most popular annual event: The November Bazaar. This time around, authors selected their own spaces and table décor. Most chose to be close to the PWR "magnet table," where we positioned our large banner on the wall along with two large posters.

A post-event survey revealed that every respondent had fun regardless of the number of books sold, and almost everyone would participate again next year. □









## *PWR's Holiday Party*

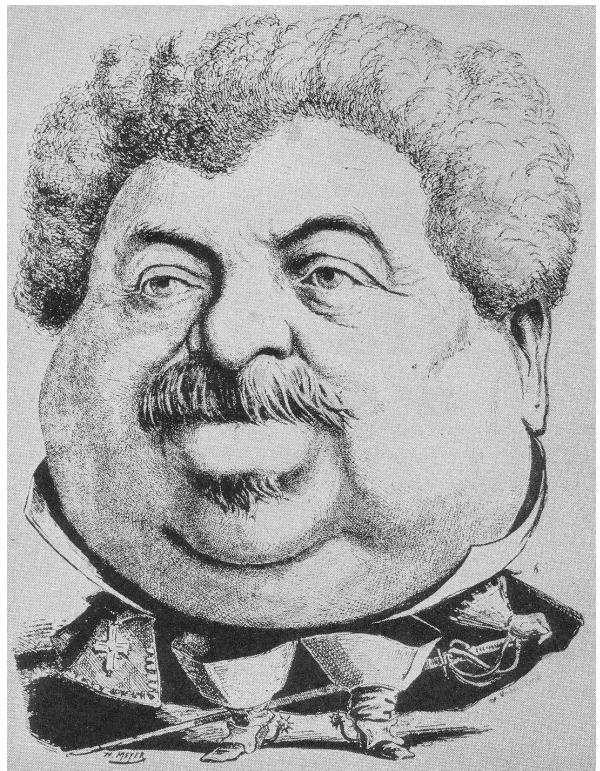
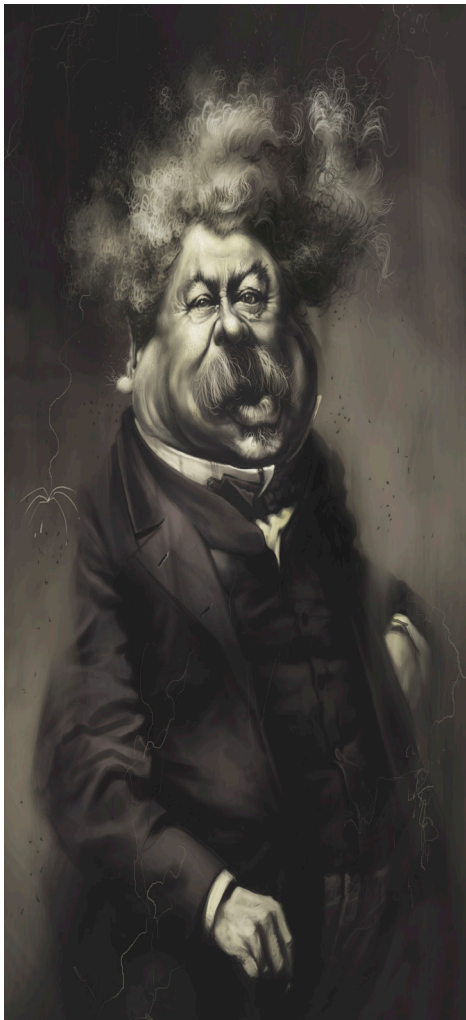
BY PATRICIA KEITH-SPIEGEL

At the December meeting, PWR members were treated to a game, a lovely hula dance by Frances Chin, an original sing-along song by Ron Wren (see p. 12), gorgeous live poinsettia decorations, and an abundance of delicious cookies and pastries to accompany the usual coffee service.

The game, "What is the Title of a Book You Would Never Write," elicited some laughs. Examples included *How to Knit a Life-Sized Gorilla* and *Do It Yourself Brain Surgery*. □







# *The 12 Days of Writing*

BY RON WREN

At the Holiday Party, the song “The 12 Days of Writing” was sung boldly and proudly with lots of chuckles along the way. The lyrics went like this:

*On the first day of writing,  
my true love sent to me:  
a keyboard with a PC.*

*On the second day of writing,  
my true love sent to me:  
two writers’ guides,  
and a keyboard with a PC.*

*On the third day of writing,  
my true love sent to me:  
three blank sheets,  
two writers’ guides,  
and a keyboard with a PC.*

*On the fourth day of writing,  
my true love sent to me:  
four tech supporters,  
three blank sheets,  
two writers’ guides,  
and a keyboard with a PC.*

*On the fifth day of writing,  
my true love sent to me:  
five publishers,  
four tech supporters,  
three blank sheets,  
two writers’ guides,  
and a keyboard with a PC.*

*On the sixth day of writing,  
my true love sent to me:  
six bad rejections,  
five publishers,  
four tech supporters,  
three blank sheets,  
two writers’ guides  
and a keyboard with a PC.*

*On the seventh day of writing,  
my true love sent to me:  
seven self-publishers,  
six bad rejections,  
five publishers,  
four tech supporters,  
three blank sheets,  
two writers’ guides,  
and a keyboard with a PC.*

*On the eighth day of writing,  
my true love sent to me:  
eight help-wanted ads,  
seven self-publishers,  
six bad rejections,  
five publishers,  
four tech supporters,  
three blank sheets,  
two writers’ guides,  
and a keyboard with a PC.*

*On the ninth day of writing,  
my true love sent to me:  
nine “How To” books,  
eight help-wanted ads,  
seven self-publishers,  
six bad rejections,  
five publishers,  
four tech supporters,  
three blank sheets,  
two writers’ guides,  
and a keyboard with a PC.*

*(continued on page 13)*



*On the tenth day of writing,  
my true love sent to me:  
ten terrific themes,  
nine “How To” books,  
eight help-wanted ads,  
seven self-publishers,  
six bad rejections,  
five publishers,  
four tech supporters,  
three blank sheets,  
two writers’ guides,  
and a keyboard with a PC.*

*On the eleventh day of writing,  
my true love sent to me:  
eleven eager agents,  
ten terrific themes,  
nine “How To” books,  
eight help-wanted ads,  
seven self-publishers,  
six bad rejections,  
five publishers,  
four tech supporters,  
three blanks sheets,  
two writers’ guides,  
and a keyboard with a PC.*

*On the twelfth day of writing,  
my true love sent to me,  
twelve Tylenols  
eleven eager agents,  
ten terrific themes,  
nine “How To” books,  
eight help-wanted ads,  
seven self-publishers,  
six bad rejections,  
five publishers,  
four tech supporters,  
three blank sheets,  
two writers’ guides,  
and... a partridge in a pear tree!*

□



## Grab Bag

### Screen Agents

Do any members of PWR have a relative, friend, or acquaintance who is or knows a Hollywood film agent? If so, let me know. I've got a terrific script for him or her about two 19-year-old women who drove across America from New York to San Francisco in a Model T Ford in 1918. (Much later, one of them became a resident at Rossmoor.)  
—**Paul Weisser** [editinggg@gmail.com or (510) 710-2249]

### Being Interviewed on Channel 28

At present, **Joanna Kraus** coordinates the twice-a-year Channel 28 interviews for new books by PWR authors. Usually, the slots for taping are in the spring and fall. The next tapings will be on Tuesday morning, March 20th. The half-hour tapes are aired at the discretion of the TV station.

If you have a new book, contact Joanna at [tjkraushouse@hotmail.com](mailto:tjkraushouse@hotmail.com)

You will need to provide her with a copy of the book, which she will then pass on to the studio, and it will be returned to you after the tape has been edited. Also, you will need to complete the Channel 28 interview form, which Joanna can e-mail to you. When you have filled that out, return it to her. This also goes to the studio.

It is up to you to find someone to interview you.

(Learn about Joanna's new children's book, *Blue Toboggan*, here: [www.joannakraus.com](http://www.joannakraus.com))

### Two New Novels

**Jon Foyt's** two latest novels will be published in 2018 by Andrew Benzie Books.

*Two Old Guys Not Selling Anything* delves into a conversation during a dinner event. In this short novel, Jerry and Walter examine the forces of aging while living in a large retirement community.

*Homeward Bound—But What If There Is No Home?* is an historical novel with a message. The plot revolves around the real estate problems affecting the homeless in a fictionalized Bay Area that traces its roots back to a Mexican Land Grant and Los Patricios—the Irish who fought for Mexico.









## *From the Editor*



Paul Weisser

### *Alexandre Dumas, Self-Publisher*

Dumas Davy de la Pailleterie, who later came to be known as Alexandre Dumas, was born on July 24, 1802, in Picardy, France. His mother, Marie-Louise Élisabeth Labouret, was a humble innkeeper's daughter. His father, Thomas-Alexandre Davy de la Pailleterie, had been born a slave in the French colony of Saint-Domingue (present-day Haiti), but went on to become a general in the French army.



Thomas-Alexandre Davy de la Pailleterie

When Alexandre became famous as an adult, critics and others often scoffed at his lowly origins, but he was always proud of his heritage. One time, when he was insulted by a condescending aristocrat, he replied, “My father was a mulatto, my grandfather a Negro, and my great-grandfather a monkey. You see, sir, that my family starts where yours ends!”



In 1806, when Alexandre was four years old, his father died of cancer. His widowed mother could not provide her son with much of an education, but Alexandre read everything he could and taught himself Spanish.



*(continued on page 17)*



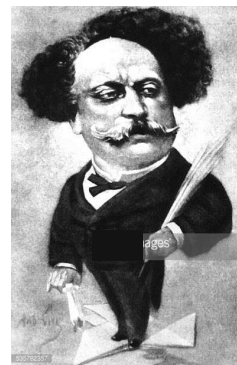
In 1823, when he was twenty-one, Alexandre moved to Paris, where he read insatiably, wrote unperformable plays, and penned overheated poems. Three years later, he self-published a collection of stories, which sold only four copies.



In 1829, however, when Alexandre was twenty-seven, his play *Henry III and His Court* was produced at the Comédie-Française, starring the famous actress Mademoiselle Mars. The play had fifty performances over the next year, which was extraordinary at the time. Alexandre's second play, *Christine*, was equally popular the following year. These successes gave him financial independence, which allowed him to write novels and nonfiction full-time.



Serial novels, published in magazines and newspapers, were very popular in Alexandre's day, so he rewrote one of his early plays as a serial novel, *Le Capitaine Paul*. Soon he founded a studio staffed with writers who turned out hundreds of stories, all subject to his personal direction, editing, and additions.



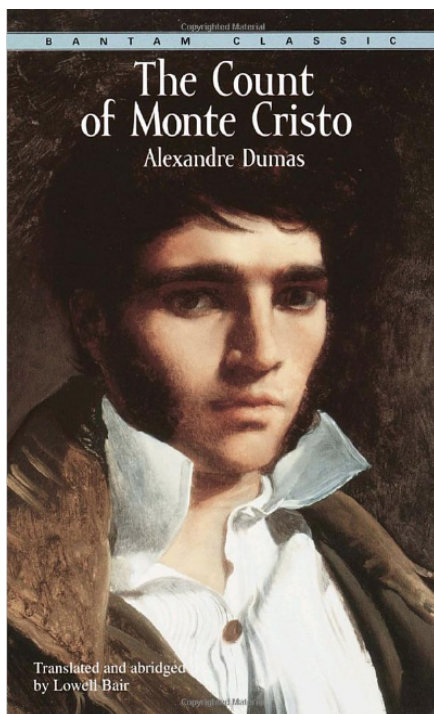
In February 1845, he successfully sued a journalist who accused him of running a “fiction factory” staffed by hacks who churned out books which Alexandre merely signed. He admitted using secretaries and collaborators, who nowadays would be credited as researchers, story consultants, or script editors, but he always acknowledged them, and counted his most efficient lieutenant, Auguste Maquet, as a friend.

(continued on page 18)

Aside from writing plays and novels, Alexandre produced travel books, memoirs, histories, and accounts of great crimes. In addition to writing travel books on Italy, the Rhine, and North Africa, which he had actually visited, Alexandre occasionally wrote engaging, informative books about places he had never been.



Forexample, *Un Gil Blas en Californie* (1851) was a vivid description of life in gold-mad San Francisco, which Alexandre culled from newspaper articles and from conversations with a man who had been there.



Alexandre also wrote a mass of “occasional” writings, including his vast *Grand Dictionnaire de cuisine*. As is clear from his portly stature, Alexandre certainly liked to eat. Nevertheless, he was very popular with the ladies. In addition to his wife, Alexandre had numerous mistresses, perhaps as many as forty.

During his lifetime, he was known to have four illegitimate or “natural” children, but twentieth-century scholars have established that there were actually seven. One of them, Alexandre Dumas,  *fils*, went on to become a successful novelist and dramatist in his own right. We know him today principally as the author of *La Dame aux camélias* (The Lady of the Camellias), which Giuseppe Verdi adapted into his opera *La Traviata* (The Fallen Woman).



Alexandre Dumas, *fils*

In 1847, Alexandre, *père*, realized his dream of owning his own theatre, the Théâtre Historique, where he staged Shakespeare, Goethe, Schiller, and adaptations of his own novels, including *The Three Musketeers*, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, and *The Man in the Iron Mask*.

(continued on page 19)

Alexandre's novels were so popular that they were soon translated into English and nearly 100 other languages, which earned him a great deal of money. Nevertheless, he was frequently insolvent, since he spent lavishly on women and sumptuous living. It has been estimated that Alexandre's novels contain 4,000 main characters, 9,000 secondary roles, and 25,000 walk-on parts. His writings have also been adapted into more than 200 motion pictures.

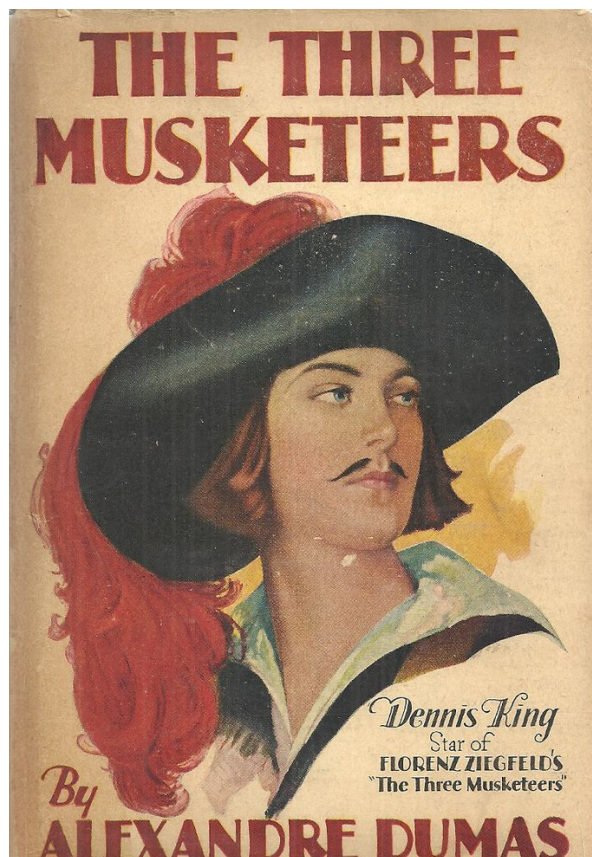
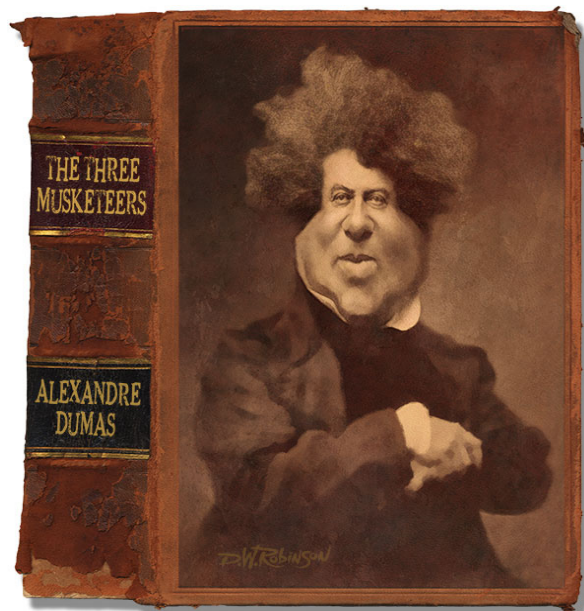


At the age of 68, Alexandre suffered a stroke, but lingered for a time in the home of his namesake son, before succumbing on December 5, 1870. He was first buried in a local cemetery, but the mayor of Villers-Cotterêts, where he was born, insisted that Alexandre's coffin be transferred there, which it was in 1872. For the bicentennial of Alexandre's birth, in 2002, French President Jacques Chirac hosted a ceremony at which Alexandre's ashes were reinterred in the mausoleum of the Panthéon in Paris. Thus, Alexandre's remains now rest beside the crème de la

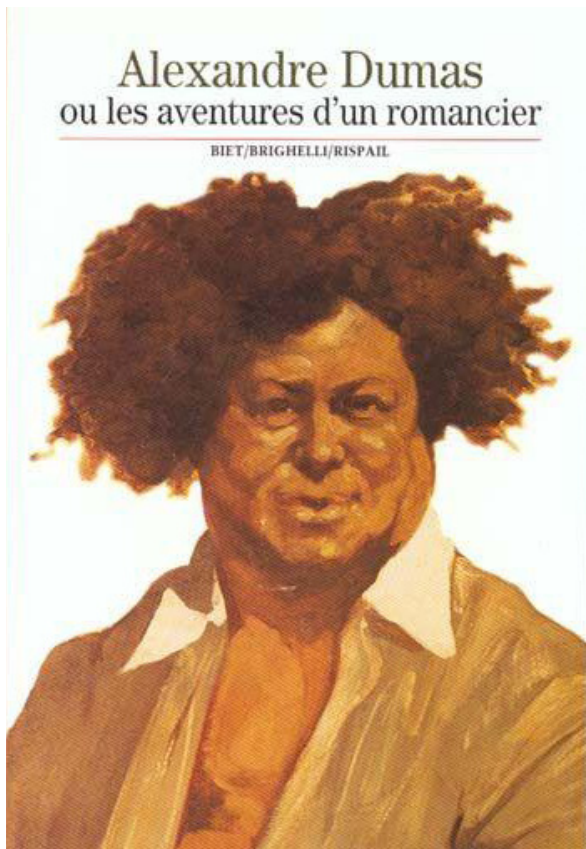
crème of French luminaries, including Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Victor Hugo, Émile Zola, and (to provide some female companionship for him) Marie Curie. □











### *Thought for the Month*

*"I have always had more dread of a pen, a bottle of ink, and a sheet of paper than of a sword or pistol."*

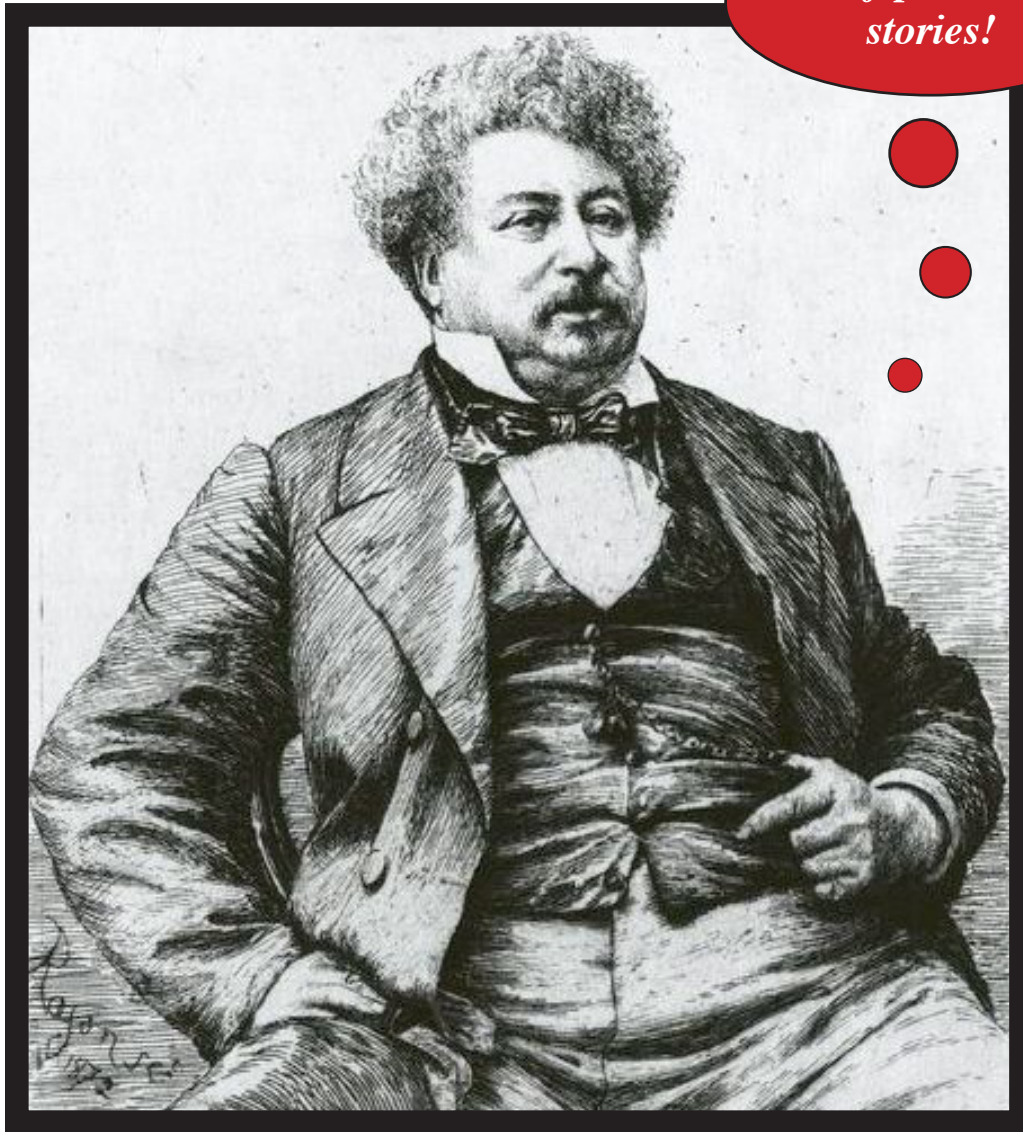
— Alexandre Dumas



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*Alexandre Dumas*

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