

Note: This was an introduction of Howard at a Hardin County Historical Commission annual meeting. Howard was the speaker for the event.

Have you ever noticed that introductions are frequently a dull recital of he graduated, he worked, he achieved, etc.? Another favorite pattern is to identify oneself with the introducee-- apparently in the hopes of reflected glory.

This is neither -- no specifics -- just the essence:

Howard graduated from Beaumont High School. He had a classmate named John Tower, but the exposure was not infectious.

When I first met him, Howard was a fund raiser for the Houston Museum of Natural Sciences

He once served as administrator for the University of Houston Law School

He was an institutional developer at Lamar University.

For a time, his back-to-nature trail led to operating the Big Thicket Gardens in Woodville, and from 1975-77, he was president of the Big Thicket Association. Howard served as Chair of the Arid

Sandyland Committee and wrote a report for Arthur Temple on the proposed management of what later became the Roy E. Larsen Sandyland Sanctuary.

But first and foremost, Howard is a writer with an easy, folksy style with uncluttered prose and neat turns of phrasing. He has three books to his credit, and his stories have appeared in numerous magazines such as Texas Highways and Texas Parks & Wildlife. His subjects range from wildflowers to folk medicine, from history to legend. He is a rarity among writers in that he can actually make a living at the trade --

Howard was blessed with a lovely, intelligent, gracious, delightful wife, Kitty, and her loss was a severe blow.

There are some folks who call Howard "The Tush-Hog," which he defines as the meanest old rooter in the woods. Not really. Howard only gets mean when faced with disagreeable people or things -- so mind your manners.

Howard, with my new found authority as "queen for a day" -- I dub thee Sir Howard of Big Thicket Baygalls. Arise Sir Howard and address these lords and ladies.