



FOR ESCAPEES WRITERS...PUBLISHED OR NOT

March 2014
OFFICIAL PENWHEELS LOGO



MAY 1994-MAY 2014

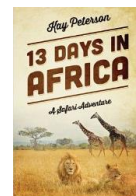
May 1994-2014 For twenty years *Escapees* Penwheels BOF writers have expressed their writing styles. (Joe Lacey)



Kay Peterson's SKP#1 (A member of Penwheels BOF)

Escapees co-founder, Kay Peterson, just released her very first novel,

“13 Days in Africa,”-A Safari Adventure. After nine successful



non-fiction books, this is her first venture into the creative world of fiction. When tourists on an

African safari are kidnapped by bandits, it changes their lives...forever. For Sarah, an American nurse who has just lost her job, it means accepting her past in order to find the family she always wanted. Sarah's group includes a teenager named Boy trying to discover why he is alive; his racist father who resents his son's existence; a former drug addict trying to rebuild her life, and the wealthy Englishman who loves her. Their leader is an Anglo-African guide haunted by his own ghosts. When the group is left stranded in Africa's wild savanna, Sarah learns the value of living every moment, the importance of helping each other, and that hate and cruelty are two of the disguises worn by Fear. 13 Days in Africa is a memorable and evocative story of love and hate, kindness and cruelty, and the peace that comes when we can accept who we are.

References: Available Now! Read the first chapter on the *Escapees* website or purchase the book in eBook printed formats from Amazon, Barnes and Noble or directly from Outskirts Press

Letters from Kay Peterson SKP#1 (by permission)

my advice to Penwheel book writers -

Google the internet for POD publishers.

There are many to choose from and their services vary. The "initial" price can be misleading because they lure you in with extra services you may not need.

Writing is only the first step whether you go with a traditional publisher (hard but I have done it) or a self-publisher (my absolute preference) you have to do the marketing.

KAY PETERSON

CARE PROGRAM

This seems a good time to send my personal thanks for Penwheels support of the CARE program. You have an amazing group of talented people and I wish everyone success with their writing in whatever form.

I hope none of you will need to use CARE but some of your traveling Escapee friends will find it a true blessing some day. The generous donations keep it affordable so please thank everyone for me.

Love and good thoughts to all!

Kay Peterson

EARLY YEARS WITH *ESCAPEES*

By Joseph Lacey SKP #9461



A SKP member shared the skinny (at that time) SKP newsletter with me. We were fulltiming and never heard of SKPs. This was back in the late 70's or early 80's. We signed up, but since we were working on the road we never had an opportunity to visit any SKP locations (few, back then). We also never had an opportunity to attend any Escapades or the monthly luncheons wherever they were held. In other words, we were SKPs in name only.

When I did finally meet Joe and Kay (Quartzsite at SKP booth) they had 'heard' of me. We talked and they invited me to come to Livingston and look things over for a week. At the end of that time they offered me a position as Marketing Director. I held that position for 5 years and helped establish the website as well as updating the Escapees Travel Guide. I also helped update the Escapee Booth at Quartzsite and the other major RV shows they attended.

I hit the road and life happens as time passes. I've totally lost touch with 99% of the SKP members. This is my first 're-touch' with Escapees. Most Escapees will remember me for answering their questions "what Escapees had to offer them." Using the computer, I spent hours each day detailing how joining Escapees significantly improved their RVing experience. I think this more accurately reflects my contribution to individual Escapees desiring RV information.

By Bernie Fuller SKP #32

I've checked my files of some of the early years with SKP. Those were the days when the Newsletter was produced by Kay and Joe using a copy machine in their Avion RV. A couple of times in the early years stand out:

+ Kay, Joe, Ruth and I spent the better part of a week together at the Slabs. The purpose of the trip was to brainstorm ideas for the future of the SKPs. One of the things we came up with was the skeleton of training sessions for new full-timers. (Later became the "Boot Camp" series as we now know it).

+ Kay and Joe were actively selling Kay's books at some of the RV gatherings. I vividly remember the time the four of us manned a table selling Kay's then new book "Survival of the Snow Birds." This time we all were in Utah during the fruit growing season. Kay and Joe cranked up the copier in their Avion R.V. to print the latest NL; Ruth and I canned peaches from the local harvest.



Just looked at my copy of "Home is Where You Park It". It's the original and Kay autographed it in Feb 1978 -just immediately prior to Ruth and I becoming SKPs. Our member number of #32 tells our story of full timing and early involvement).

I PRODUCED A COLUMN ON BOONDOCKING IN EACH ISSUE. THIS IS

ONE OF THE COLUMNS I DID FOR THE EARLY NEWSLETTERS. (CONTINUED PAGE 4)

THE GENTEEL ART OF BOONDOCKING

by Bernie Fuller



The sparks flew skyward like fireflies heading for the stars as we threw another log on the campfire ... the only sounds invading our ears were the rushing of the brooks, the crackle of the fire and the hooting of an owl in a distant tree ... finally our reveries were interrupted with a question from the other side of the circle: *WHO SAYS YOU HAVE TO BE UNCOMFORTABLE IN THE BOONDOCKS?* Unfortunately, a great many RVers feel that a stay in the boondocks today can be equated to the days when we headed for the bush with a heavy paraffin coated canvas tent, a week's supply of canned beans and bacon, and a "Lister" bag for water ... in

those days a stay in the boondocks was an exercise in how to be uncomfortable. The simple truth is that, unless you are of the "I need a telephone and Jacuzzi" school, there is no reason to be uncomfortable while boondocking. Do yourself a favor - even if you have never spent a night away from the umbilical cords of a full hook-up park - spend a couple of days in one of the vast boondocking areas of the Southwest like "The Slabs", and spend some time looking at the rigs and talking to the people. You'll find that, in true American spirit, these present day pioneers are in many instances a darned sight more comfortable than you have ever been in your RV. You'll find that the technology exists today to have all the electric power you could want using solar panels or wind power (or both) to keep your battery pack at full charge; that simply by extending the capacity of your fresh water supply with the addition of another tank you can reduce the number of trips you must make to town; that you can even take advantage of a small woodstove to extend your propane supply (unsafe? Mariners have been using them for centuries, why not RVers?); that by following Phred Tinseth's advice you can convert your stereo to operate on 12 VDC and enjoy your records and tapes; that the predominant color in camp is blue, for the blue "Tote-tanks" are the means by which most folks deal with the problem of how to do the weekly dumping chores; that the majority of the units are heated with propane catalytic heaters that don't require electric power. And, most of all, you'll discover, as we have, that everyone seems happier and one devil of a lot more in-tune with life than in the average high density packaged RV park. The techniques are available to make us more comfortable; why not take advantage of them? After you've sampled the life, you might want to make some modifications to your rig ... except for Kay's books, there is very little written for RVers, but yachtsmen have been wrestling with the same problems for years and there are several good books on the subject: "The Finely Fitted Yacht" by Ferenc Mate Volumes I and II, Albatross Publishing House, Vancouver, BC, Canada, 1981 and "The Care and Feeding of the Offshore Crew" by Lin and Larry Pardey, WW Norton & Co, New York, 1980 ... both of these books are filled with ideas and techniques that should be incorporated in our rigs to make boondocking more enjoyable and safer. If you are planning to attend the Annual Escapade, take advantage of the opportunity to learn about boondocking during the Post Rally Boondocking Experience with Don and Mo Cannain.

EARLY YEARS OF PENWHEELS

**Myrna Courtney SKP#1930_ started the Penwheels Newsletter in
MAY 1994- as Editor**



**Betty Prange SKP #22195
Membership for many years**



Jaimie H Bruzenak SKP#19361

Editor 1996, Consultant



**Joanne Alexakis SKP# 19367-Copy/Mail,
Editor, Membership-current time**

**THANK YOU ALL FOR STARTING THIS WONDERFUL BOF FOR WRITERS –
PUBLISHED OR NOT**

Jaimie H Bruzenak wrote an article "Support on the Road," in the April 1995 newsletter –next page).

Penwheels

For Escapees Writers...Published or Otherwise

In this issue...

- ♦ Jamie Hall encourages writing support on the road
- ♦ Ed Water's poem, "Bisbee, Arizona"
- ♦ Verna Baker finally gets around to procrastinating
- ♦ And more.....

Welcome, New Members!

Joanne Alexakis, Ron Kohn, Don Lynn, Donna Ellis, James Hussmann, Harold Michelson, Ed Waters. Addresses will be in future issue (no room this time). Glad to have you!

Support on the Road

By Jamie Hall

At a writing session at Quartzsite I asked how writers could get support for their writing on the road. As quick as you can blink an eye I was commissioned to write something on this topic by our editor and other Penwheels. These are my sole credentials for what follows!

Impromptu Writing Session

You don't have to have a formal writing group to conduct writing sessions. Wherever two or more writers are gathered you can have a session. At a Thanksgiving rally,

Alice Zyetz announced a writing session using Natalie Goldberg's exercises for anyone interested. Five women attended. Since then whenever a couple of this original group has gotten together, we have organized additional sessions. We have had one or more sessions at Christmas and Quartzsite rallies. Lest you think this is for women only, three men participated in writings sessions at Quartzsite.

Last weekend about 30 SKPS held a potluck north of Mesa AZ. Three of us decided to get together the next morning. Betty Prange, Donna Ellis and I took our chairs out near the saguaros and wrote. First we did a descriptive exercise. Then Betty suggested we write about a "moment of mortification". Great topic! Our last topic was more challenging, taken from *The Zen of Seeing*. We were to focus on an object such as the breeze, a rock or plant, immerse ourselves into that object and then write about it. At best, I would like to try it again when a nearby radio playing a murder mystery isn't competing for our attention with a description of a gory murder. Listening to how another writer has described the breeze or the inside of a motorhome you are all sitting helps sharpen your own observation and descriptive skills. At each session I have been amazed at the variety of responses to each topic.

Writing Buddies

Another way to get support and encouragement is to have one or more writing buddies. I am fortunate to have two and am adding a third. Alice Zyetz has really encouraged me

when I never even thought I could write anything someone else might like to read and continues to do so. Betty Prange has shared resources with me and we discuss possible stories and encourage and give each other feedback. Donna Ellis and I will both be in the Phoenix area for the next couple of months. We have agreed to get together and write and I know we will both benefit.

Pen Pals

Even if you can't get together with other writers, you can exchange pieces by mail. Corresponding with other people also is an opportunity to put words to paper and communicate events and feelings or a description of that beautiful sunset. I find that I focus on different aspects of my life with different people. With one I dig deep into feelings. with another I explore the spiritual side. With others I share my outdoor adventures. My network of writing buddies grows.

Take Responsibility

Feedback and encouragement can make a difference for fledgling



Think PHOTO! Good pictures can convince an editor to buy your article.



By Margo Armstrong SKP# 47139

Tools of the Trade

If you are still writing drafts with pen and paper, it is time to move on. There are a number of products on the market that cost little (or nothing) and encourage the words to flow.

Being ready to capture that thought as it flitters through my consciousness is part of the fun. For me, putting pen to paper takes a lot of energy and seems to limit my train of thought. If you find that holds true for you, here are a few tools to help with the process.

Sticky Notes

At no extra cost, Windows 7 provides a "Sticky Notes" feature. Find it in *All Programs Accessories Sticky Notes*. Right-click to "pin it to the Taskbar." Leave it open on the desktop or pop it up anytime you want to jot down a thought. It saves automatically, so there is no chance of losing content. Cut and paste from these notes to the final product.

Word Web

Word Web is a dictionary, thesaurus and word finder. The version provides definitions and synonyms, proper nouns, and related words. I "pin it" to the taskbar for quick access when my mind does not respond promptly to my query. Find the download at <http://wordweb.info>.

Atlantis Word Processor

Atlantis, a little jewel of a word processor, opens Word files (.doc* & .rtf) for editing and saving to ePub and Mobi conversions. It keeps the formatting simple, eliminating those frustrating error messages when trying to validate ePub files. Start the book from scratch or closer to the final draft; it is easy to use with a short learning curve. I have successfully used this program to convert 15 of my books to ePub.

It seems like magic to me after using Word => HTML => Calibre for the same purpose. Usually there is an error when validating after converting with Calibre, so back to the drawing board, so to speak. Calibre is free, but you really earn the results. Try the Atlantis 30-day trial version first to see if it works for you, but the cost is around \$30.

There used to be several downloadable, free grammar-checking programs available on the Internet, but they seemed to have disappeared. One of the several free online programs available is GrammarBase.com, and you can pay them to fix the issues. I find it fascinating that the editing costs are calculated right there, how innovative! If you find a good one that can be used offline, please let me know at margo@themaxwellgroup.net. IMHO, any tool that makes writing flow is worthwhile checking out.

(A FLUENT AND PROLIFIC WRITER)

"A Word A Day Keeps Boredom Away"

WORDSMITHS

~Number One~ PLACEBOARD IN

by Joseph Lacey SKP #9461

Antenna Down – Step In. Anyone who has driven a motorhome or other recreational vehicle has, sooner or later, placed a similar reminder on the steering wheel. Driving off with the TV antenna fully upright in the air or the steps fully extended usually results in repair or replacement, or both.



Although I no longer have a motorhome, I have a steering wheel reminder: **Placeboard In.** Unlike the replacement cost of a TV antenna or a step, my 'cost' was seven hours and one hundred twenty

miles. I carefully planned the entire day and looked forward to having a free evening, the first one in two weeks.

It was a simple plan. Drive to the dog training area about 30 miles away. Logistics included having a full tank of gas and estimating traffic flow at rush hour. I couldn't do anything about daylight hours. The one hour dog training class started at six. It would be dark for the drive home.

My two dogs need exercise before class. Dogs respond better to commands when their pent up energy is drained. My timetable: Leave at 4:30pm,

arrive at 5:30pm, leave class at 7:05pm, and arrive home at 7:45pm. Total time/mileage: four hours/seventy five miles. It was a good plan. Unfortunately, life has a nasty way of changing human plans.

We left on time and arrived on time. I let the dogs loose to frolic for about 20 minutes. Bernie is a white 90 pound Golden Doodle. He's a mixture of Golden Retriever and White Standard Poodle, over two years old. I've had him about a year and we trained in this park, where I have good memories. We were both novices in the beginning. I never trained a dog and Bernie was social but untrained. Our time together in this park introduced us to a new lifestyle. Bernie is now a Certified Therapy Dog. He visits five separate facilities each week, giving comfort to people of all ages.

Chris is an Apricot Standard Poodle and weighs 40 pounds. I received him as a gift a week before his first birthday on December 22nd. I named him Chris for Christmas. He is the reason we are at the park. Chris and I will go through the same training I did with Bernie. I am optimistic he will eventually become a certified Therapy Dog. This is his first group lesson. It will require months of training before he may qualify. Not all dogs become certified Therapy Dogs.

With students arriving, I leash both dogs and return to the car. I remove the placeboard from the car, put Bernie in the back seat and lock the car. The placeboard is a training device. I use it to teach Chris to go to a specific 'target area- a place.' At home, to keep my dogs from eagerly greeting people, I send them to their 'place' before opening the door.

With the placeboard in my right hand, Chris on a leash next to my left side we join the rest of the students and their dogs. Chris is scared of the placeboard, other dogs and students. His carefree, playful behavior with Bernie just a few minutes earlier is gone.

The first lesson went well and my plan stayed on schedule. Then everything changed when I left the illuminated dog training area. Without lights, the parking lot was really dark. I don't have a remote to unlock the car door. I had Chris on leash in one hand while I fumbled for the car key with the other. Key inserted, I opened the door and Chris jumped into the front seat. I wasn't prepared for that move. He had never jumped into the front seat before.

My car requires manually unlocking the rear door. I need to keep Chris from leaping out of the front seat, while I fumble in the dark to release the back door release button. Too many buttons! Six buttons on the car door console. Four window buttons, one window lock button and the elusive rear door unlock button. Click! The soft sound I've been listening for—Like clockwork I:

1. Close the front door to keep Chris in.
2. Open the rear door and tell Bernie to 'STAY'.
3. With the rear door open, move back to the front door.
4. Slightly open the front door and grab Chris's leash.
5. Open the door wide and;
6. Allow Chris to jump out, flash around to the rear door and leap into the back seat.
7. Done! Chris wiggles around Bernie, who is blocking most of the doorway.

Still on schedule, I quickly close the rear door and slip into the driver's seat. I fasten my seatbelt, insert the key in the ignition and drive out of the parking lot. Because of light traffic I am a few minutes ahead of schedule when I arrive home. I open the rear door and both dogs jump out. Knowing Chris needs training on the placeboard, I open the back of the Toyota SUV. The placeboard is not there. *I can't believe it! I don't want to believe it!*

I know exactly where the placeboard is and how it happened. I was distracted both by the dark parking lot and Chris unexpected jump into the front seat. After the lesson, when I approached the car, I set the

placeboard against the rear bumper. Emotionally congratulating myself on getting Chris into the back seat, I simply drove off.

Thinking the trainer may still be there, as she lives close to the park, I call and leave a message then I go online and send an e-mail. Perhaps she would look for the placeboard early in the morning. It is now 10 o'clock. Darkness and cold weather are my allies. The placeboard is hard to see and people won't be roving around.

I must go back now!

We return to the park within the hour. My headlights find the placeboard exactly where I knew it should be. The drive home is leisurely. I am finally calm. Yawning, I look at the clock. Eleven o'clock. I began this journey at 4pm and seven hours and one hundred and twenty miles later I am finally back home. Both dogs are asleep in the back seat, oblivious to the extreme range of emotions I've experienced. I turn into the carport, turn off the engine and remove the key from the ignition. Totally exhausted, I mumble "Just another day in my dog training life."

SUPPORT ON THE ROAD

(cont'd from page 6)

By Jaimie Hall Bruzenak
(fledgling)

writers. On the road we have to be more creative but finding that support is possible. Contact other Penwheelers with similar interests. Build a network of writing buddies. Create opportunities to get together with other writers. With mail forwarding and 800 #'s, we have the capability to meet up with other Penwheels when we are traveling. And if not, then use the mail. Don't be shy or think you will be bothering someone. By reaching out to another for support you help another writer. Who doesn't like to share their knowledge? And, as a side benefit it is a wonderful way to get to know some folks a little better. Sharing words from your heart creates a common history and a special bond. Isn't connecting with others what writing is all about?

BRAGGING RIGHTS



Escapees Jan/Feb 2014 magazine

Lynne Benjamin SKP#86190 has an informative article, Commonly Asked Questions about RV Insurance, on page 62. Lynne Benjamin also has a short piece, Keeping Fit on the Road, on page 22. And there is the Snowbirding 101 column RVWest every month. Good work, Lynne!
http://www.rvwest.com/index.php/snowbirding_101

Jane Foraker-Thompson SKP#112143 wrote an excellent report, Escapees DOVE Training, on page 52.

Escapees Mar/Apr 2014 magazine

Betty Prange SKP#22195
 Supplied the cover photo for this this issue. Her pic of Anza-Borego, CA is full of spring flowers.

Terry Hager SKP#22195 contributed his humorous article Camper Wars. Pg 82.

Jane Foraker Thompson SKP#112143 offered info on Post Escapades DOVE BOF & Red Cross Training. Pg 42

Betty Mulcahey SKP#76334 contributed her piece, Living in a National Wildlife Reserve, Pg 28

RE: ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!

from **Tue 7/2/2013, Betty Prange, SKP #22195** writes:

Little slow getting newsletter read and this message sent. I want to add my voice to the kudos. This was a great newsletter and a tribute to all the people who have made this BOF. My thanks to everyone who has been an editor, to people who have handled membership, copied and mailed, set up our web site and administered it. And especially to everyone who has written articles, shared experiences, and helped their fellow writers. It is a great BOF and I am proud to be part of it. Doris, thank you for all the effort in providing us with this special anniversary issue.

TIPS FROM JAIMIE! (Jaimie Hall Bruzenak SKP#19361)

A collection of tips...welcoming tips from other Penwheelers

We always put periods and commas inside quotation marks.

Commas and periods always go **inside** the quote marks. You only need one space between sentences with word processing but some people automatically put in 2 spaces.

Summary in American English, periods and commas always go inside the closing quotation mark; semicolons, colons, asterisks, and dashes always go outside the

closing quotation mark; and question marks and exclamation points require that you analyze the sentence and make a decision based on context. - See more at:

<http://www.quickanddirtytips.com/education/grammar/quotation-marks-with-periods-and-commas>.



Part of writing is editing, revising and correcting! Read them all aloud - you always find something that sounds better worded another way or an error. Editing: This appeared in part 3 of a series on publishing an anthology. Part 3 is on editing and formatting. This tip looks worthwhile for any writer:

"Get a copy of [NaturalReader software](#). You can use their free version at their website. The quality is surprisingly good, and, if you buy the full version, you can purchase different (even better) voices, and use it directly on your computer, which is what I did. Their free online version has male and female voices to choose from as well, but in my opinion, the quality of the fee-based voices is better. You can even control the speed at which the program reads to you. Yes, you will notice some errors during this step, too!" You can read the full article at:

http://writersweekly.com/the_latest_from_angelahoycom/008329_01032014.html

The Typographical Error: Ode to

"The typographical error is a slippery thing and sly;
You can hunt till you are dizzy, but it somehow will get by.
Till the forms are on the press, it is strange how still it keeps.
It shrinks down in a corner, and it never stirs or peeps -
That typographical error, too small for human eyes -
Till the ink is on the paper, when it grows to mountain size.
The boss, he stares with horror, then he grabs his hair and groans;
The copyreader drops his head upon his hands and moans.
The remainder of the issue may be clean as clean can be,
But the typographical error is the only thing you see."

- Author Unknown

This clever poem appeared in "Erase Embarrassing Typos in 5 Minutes" in the Ezine Articles blog at <http://blog.ezinearticles.com/2013/12/erase-embarrassing-typos-in-5-minutes.html> with good suggestions for catching your typos. It includes some real-life examples of embarrassing typos.

I'm saving this article! "[The Thesaurus: Your Dark Horse to Writing Killer Titles?](#)" This is well worth reading. Lots of ideas for spicing up titles to articles. See

<http://blog.ezinearticles.com/2013/12/the-thesaurus-your-dark-horse-to-writing-killer-titles.html>

Here's one example from the article: Combining the powers of ingenuity and creativity with a thesaurus can help you turn this: *5 Ideas for Increasing Your Personal Productivity* Into this: *5 Smart Ways to Rally and Empower Your Waning Productivity* Much more engaging, isn't it?

Guest blogging that pays: Sign up for "Be a Freelance Blogger" site [<http://beafreelanceblogger.com/>] and you can receive a list of blogs that pay \$50 or more for guest posts to their blogs. Two other resources come with your subscription. (You can unsubscribe at any time.) Her blog has tips on making money at this type of writing.

"The Loneliness of the Long Distance Reader" is an op-ed piece in *The New York Times*. Interesting discussion on the changes taking place and the quality of books that are available.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/05/opinion/sunday/the-loneliness-of-the-long-distance-reader.html?emc=eta1&r=1>

Punctuation/writing tips

Nichol... [http://www.dailywritingtips.com/fragmentary-sentences-and-sentence-fragments/.....](http://www.dailywritingtips.com/fragmentary-sentences-and-sentence-fragments/)

Multiple definitions exist for *sentence*, and various sources differ in their interpretation of what constitutes a valid sentence and which forms are incorrect. Here's a brief [survey](#) of what a sentence is. A sentence is generally understood to be a unit of one or more words distinct from preceding and following text. Sentences are categorized as declaratives, or statements ("I walked the dog"), imperatives, or commands ("Walk the dog"), or interrogatives, or questions ("Should I walk the dog?"). A variation of the declarative form is the exclamation, or exclamatory sentence ("I walked the dog!").

A sentence can be both imperative and exclamatory (in which case the exclamation point preempts the period) or both interrogative and exclamatory (in which case the question mark preempts the exclamation point, though some writers include both in that order — a style considered improper in formal contexts). A sentence can also be both imperative and interrogatory, though the former function overrides the latter one, and such statements are not treated as questions. ("Would you be so kind as to close the door" is simply a more courteous way to direct someone to close the door.)

Traditionally, the first letter of the first word of a sentence is capitalized, although some writers have chosen to eschew capitalization of the first word and perhaps proper nouns. (This style, however, is eccentric and frowned on in formal writing.) Terminal punctuation — a period, a question mark or an exclamation point, or ellipses — is also a general feature.



"Cut out all these exclamation points. An exclamation point is like laughing at your own joke."

— [F. Scott Fitzgerald](#)



"Here is a lesson in creative writing. First rule: Do not use semicolons. They are transvestite hermaphrodites representing absolutely nothing. All they do is show you've been to college."

— [Kurt Vonnegut](#), [A Man Without a Country](#)



"I often fantasize about torturing some of the lazier letters of the alphabet, like C, U, and E, because together they only manage to accomplish as much as the solitary letter Q."

[Jarod Kintz](#), [It Occurred to Me](#)

"There are books of which the backs and covers are by far the best parts."

— [Charles Dickens](#), [Oliver Twist](#)



"I have advice for people who want to write. I don't care whether they're 5 or 500. There are three things that are important: First, if you want to write, you need to keep an honest, unpublishable journal that nobody reads, nobody but you. Where you just put down what you think about life, what you think about things, what you think is fair and what you think is unfair. And second, you need to read. You can't be a writer if you're not a reader. It's the great writers who teach us how to write. The third thing is to write. Just write a little bit every day. Even if it's for only half an hour — write, write, write." — [Madeleine L'Engle](#)



"I notice that you use **plain, simple language, short words and brief sentences**. That is the way to write English—it is the modern way and the best way. Stick to it; don't let fluff and flowers and verbosity creep in. When you catch an adjective, kill it. No, I don't mean utterly, but kill most of them—then the rest will be valuable. They weaken when they are close together. They give strength when they are wide apart. An **adjective habit, or a wordy, diffuse, flowery habit**, once fastened upon a person, is as hard to get rid of as any other vice." [Mark Twain](#)

"The second thing you have to do to be a writer is to keep on writing. Don't listen to people who tell you that very few people get published and you won't be one of them. Don't listen to your friend who says you are better than Tolkien and don't have to try any more. Keep writing, keep faith in the idea that you have unique stories to tell, and tell them. I meet far too many people who are going to be writers 'someday.' When they are out of high school, when they've finished college, after the wedding, when the kids are older, after I retire . . . That is such a trap. You will never have any more free time than you do right now. So, whether you are 12 or 70, you should sit down today and start being a writer if that is what you want to do. You might have to write on a notebook while your kids are playing on the swings or write in your car on your coffee break. That's okay. I think we've all 'been there, done that.' It all starts with the writing." — [Robin Hobb](#)

"To write or even speak English is not a science but an art. There are no reliable words. Whoever writes English is involved in a struggle that never lets up even for a sentence. He is struggling against vagueness, against obscurity, against the lure of the **decorative adjective**, against the encroachment of Latin and Greek and, above all, against the worn-out phrases and dead metaphors with which the language is cluttered up."

PENWHEELS BoF

Financial statement for 2013

Balance January 1, 2013	\$1,041.96
Income Jan 1 - Dec 31	248.00
Expenses Jan 1 - Dec 31	(819.33)*
(CARE, NL photocopying & postage, new checks)	
<hr/>	
Balance December 31, 2013	\$ 470.63

Number of members on Jan. 1, 2013 = 51
 Number of members on Dec. 31, 2013 = 40

Submitted by Joanne Alexakis, SKP #19367
 Penwheels BoF membership coordinator
 Submitted - January 1, 2014

*Penwheels BoF sent a \$500.00 donation to **Escapees CARE Center** on Jan. 24, 2013*



LETTER FROM EDITOR

Doris Hutchins #29167 valentinedh@gei.net

“There Are Two Types Of People In This World: Those Who
Can Edit And Those Who Can't”

Jarod Kintz

Some Editors are failed Writers, but so are most Writers.”

NEW MEMBER: Joseph Lacey SKP #9461. Welcome!

Joe has volunteered to become our new **Copy/Mailing** person. Thanks Joe for becoming a volunteer.

NEW MEMBER: Ellen Behrens SKP #103358 Welcome!

To: Penwheels Members: Penwheels is planning on joining several other BOFs and offer their newsletter electronically. Some of you have already switched to the online version. In fact, we only have a few members who still receive the print version. Almost everyone has a computer or has access to one at a library so no longer mailing out a newsletter will have several advantages. A hard copy can be sent to those who have no computer contacts.

1. The newsletter can continue to have more information. When mailed, 10 pages is the maximum we can send with one stamp. More pages, costs go up and we'll use up our treasury.
2. The photos will be of good quality. When printed they are gray and often unrecognizable.

And the biggest advantage:

3. If we no longer have any costs, then we will not have to collect dues! And this means we will probably refund dues we have in our account (or you could choose to donate that amount to CARE).

We are working on a way to send you the actual newsletter in pdf format along with the announcement that it has been posted at Yahoo Groups. If you really want a print copy, you can print out the pdf. Otherwise, make a folder on your computer or in your inbox for your newsletters and store them there so you can refer to them if you like.

If you have any objections to this move, please send an email to Joanne Alexakis at joalexakis@earthlink.net or write her at 140 Rainbow Dr. #4093 Livingston, TX, 77399-1040.

JUNE NEWSLETTER: SUBMISSIONS ARE DUE BY JUNE 10th.

JUNE CHALLENGE By JOE LACEY SKP# 9461 What is so special about June?

Writers Graduation!

Our members are writers... I think the perfect theme would be what every person experiences about that time of year. GRADUATION. No... I'm not talking about high school, or college. I am talking about Writer Graduation! (the actual time of year isn't important). The Graduation Event is the theme. When did the individual make THE DECISION...or WAS published? For some, it might be ...being published. Their name in print. For others, it was their first step convinced they Would Graduate ,like freshmen entering high school...knowing four more years before (naive...of course) they would be an adult.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EDITING by Jaimie Bruzenak SKP#19361

Have you ever said something that you wish you could take back? Has there been a time when you know that if you had thought about it, you would have said it differently or kept your mouth shut? All of us have fallen into this category at one time in our life. Yet how many of us write something and send it off without reading it again? And not only emails, but we send things to Penwheels for publication. Some submissions have clearly not been reread.

“First drafts don’t have to be perfect. They just have to be written.” is a quote from an EzineArticles.com article. What doesn’t follow, and should, is “Never submit or send anything without reviewing (and proofing and editing) three or four times.” Writing as an adult is no longer a timed test like writing an essay in school. Even if you have a deadline, go back and read it again, and again. Let it rest overnight or a few days and look at it again. Unlike the spoken word that you’d like to take back, the written word hangs around. On the Internet it can be forwarded to others, saved, and hang in cyberspace forever. It bears your name and is a reflection of you.

If you are submitting something to Penwheels or where other people will read your words, here are some tips for catching errors of spelling, grammar, punctuation and usage:

1. Turn on spell check. While this doesn’t catch all errors and not all marked words are misspelled, you may catch some.
2. If you use Microsoft Word, red indicates a spelling error; a green underline indicates a misuse of language. Right click on the phrase and it will tell you what is wrong. Click on Grammar under that and it will suggest a fix. Other word processing programs have a grammar check as well.
3. You can find editing software, some free. A very comprehensive program with a 30-day free trial is *Editor* from Serenity Software. <http://www.serenity-software.com/> I have used this and found it improves my pieces.
4. Have one or more proofreaders read your submission. Depending on the subject, one might read for content, another for correct language usage.
5. Print out your piece and read it aloud. You’d be surprised how many errors, sentence fragments or awkward phrases you catch by doing this.
6. “Top-5 Editing Tips to Improve Your Writing” identifies additional areas you can consider when working on your submission. <http://ezinearticles.com/?Top-5-Editing-Tips-To-Improve-Your-Writing&id=8323589>

While I can’t recall the author or title, years ago I read an anthology written by published writers, many well known. All shared how much time was spent on editing and rewriting. Their books are beautifully written, but they didn’t come out that way in their first draft.

Why go to all this trouble when submitting something to Penwheels? First of all, it’s good practice. But more importantly, you are a writer. You certainly don’t want anything published that has obvious errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. Our editor is in an awkward position. She doesn’t like changing someone’s piece, but she doesn’t want you to be embarrassed either. This goes for me and others who proof the newsletter and help the editor catch any errors. So, submit, but submit your best writing. Take the time to work with it again and know that you have good company—it’s part of the writer’s job to edit and rewrite; that’s what makes us good writers

“You can’t edit a blank page.”



—[Nora Roberts](#)

ACCESSING the PENWHEELS WEBSITE By D.G. Smeall, SKP#100803

Website Moderator

With the constant fluctuations in website design and page configurations by Yahoo.com, I felt it was time to write an article explaining the ins-and-outs of accessing the PENWHEELS website to our members.

1) PENWHEELS has been and always will be an exclusive Birds of a Feather Group restricted to Escapee registered members. So if you haven't registered to become an Escapee member via www.escapees.com. You will need to start their FIRST!

2) Once you have signed on as an 'SKP member, then to access PENWHEELS will require a visit to <https://www.yahoo.com/>. YAHOO.com has made some changes to their page configurations.

To make the process of getting into the PENWHEELS website, I recommend highly that members use www.yahoo.com as their entry point. If you find yourself unable to access the webpage specifically for PENWHEELS, you will need to contact our Membership Coordinator, Joanne Alexakis, to get an invitation to our Yahoo group once you have paid the annual dues fee/\$8 per year.

3) Using your yahoo login name and password, access your Yahoo! Mail page. Your personalized page should have a thin banner at the top with topics like:

HOME MAIL NEWS SPORTS FINANCE WEATHER GAMES GROUPS ANSWERS SCREEN and other titles scrolling across the top of your open window on yahoo.com. Each of these topics is click-able. Select the topic you want, which in this case, will be GROUPS.

4) Locate the GROUPS topic header at the top of the screen and click on it. Once you click open the next window, it should show a series of Group names on the left side of the page.

For example, my Groups page looks like this:

"YAHOO!

Groups

Groups Home

Penwheels

SKP Genies

SKP BOFDOWs"

5) Go to this group header: Double Click on it. It should reveal a header with a **Chinese Dragon Head** and the words: *Penwheels is a private list for Escapee RV Club Members who belong to the Penwheels BOF.*

With these headers:

All My Groups

Manage my groups, Create a group, Browse Groups, Terms, Privacy, Guidelines, Feedback, Help, Blog

6) Once you have reached this page with the header of the Chinese dragon on it, there are additional headers in gray lettering beneath the **dragon's head**:

Conversations Photos Files More About

a) The **CONVERSATIONS** tab is what leads you to Posts that have been written by PENWHEELS members and shared with the entire group:

For example,

(1) "Navigating the PENWHEELS website for new members

Dear Penwheeler, If this is your first visit to PENWHEELS website, welcome. If you aren't sure how to navigate your way around the site; here are a few tips

(2) March Penwheels Newsletter

Additionally, any member may post a topic here and carry on a multi-member conversation about a specific topic like "Writing semantics" or "Penwheels Newsletters."

b) The **PHOTOS** tab allows a member to upload photos of interest to the group. Currently there are only three albums posted here. (I would like to see us update this a bit more with individual photos of each PENWHEEL member being added to the album. So if you have a photo you would like to share with us, please send it to me at dgsmeall@me.com and I will upload it to the 2014 Members Album that I will be creating soon.)

c) The **FILES** tab holds all the articles written by Penwheel members and the PENWHEELS Newsletters from years 2005 until present day. If you want to access the NEWSLETTER in PDF format, you may double click on the 2014 Newsletters folder to access the newsletters for this year. Inside the folder, by year's end, should be exactly four newsletters in PDF format. PDF files are accessible via Adobe Reader which most every computer system has available.

IF not, then Google "Adobe Reader software" and you should be able to get a free software download.

Beyond these six steps, if you are still experiencing difficulties with accessing the PENWHEELS website, please feel free to contact me directly and I will walk you through the process of getting into the website.

My email address is dgsmeall@me.com and my phone number is 253-549-3772. Please leave a message for me to contact you by phone or email and I will need you to leave the phone number and your name if a phone call is preferred.

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Hello Penwheelers, from Donna Smeall SKP#100803

Today I wanted to take some time to share some insights on writing in terms of a more personal nature.

As a writer, we get to pick and choose the style of writing we want to engage in. There is the romance, the science fiction, the fantasy, the paranormal and even, the focus that I want to engage in: family history writing or genealogy as it is known as.

I began researching my family's history at the young age of 13. I was and am fascinated by the various stories family members have shared about their lives, how their world was different and some of the major events that touched them personally.

Events like the Holocaust during Hitler's time, the Golden Jubilee Celebration of Thomas Edison's contributions to our society, and even the assassination of JFK played a part in the lives of each American, European, and all the other nationalities.

But the wonder of writing a family history is that you get to reach in and pull out the wondrous moments of connection with your family members through the information they share with you. Just an example for you: my great-grandfather on my mother's side of the family had been a victim of an apartment building fire in Boston, Massachusetts.

The result of that fire hit his life hard. Local media had reported that he, Percival Carpenter, had died in the fire. Yet a photo that had been attached to the article posted in the Boston newspaper of the time, showed my great-grandfather being hauled down the fireman's ladder over the shoulder of the Boston fireman who had rescued him.

When my great-grandfather Percy shared that story with me, he was in his mid-80's and laughed over the incident. However, when he experienced the chaos that disrupted his life totally, the Social Security Administration had declared him dead so he was unable to claim his paychecks from his job until he had proven who he was. This required witnesses who had been present the night of the fire, who had

seen him coming down the ladder. Plus his identifications; fortunately, he had managed to snag his wallet before leaving the apartment.

Still when all the dust had settled over the incident, it had taken him three months before he could get his paychecks and work again. The curious person that I am, had inquired vigorously about the incident and then the genealogist side of me sought the news article that featured my grandfather, at age 26 climbing out of the window.

These little pieces of life shape our characters and lives. IF you have living relatives older than you, an oral history interview of their lives will help you fill in the "meat of the story" about this relative as you ask about the various things that helped them make choices in life or impacted them in some significant way.

As a genealogist, writing is a key element of telling the story of an individual's life factually and accurately. As a writer, the revelation that is an individual life in the midst of American history is a wondrous spot of illumination on how the society survived, lived and overcame the various obstacles of life.

Try embracing this idea of writing by interviewing a family member, ask them the usual questions like, "Who are you? What did you do for a living? Who are your parents? Why did your family move there? How did you overcome a specific event? When did you get married and have children? When did you change jobs?" Ask them to share a specific event that impacted them the most.

Then and only then do you truly begin to see and understand the very character of this family member's being.

Drop me an email if you would like to have a copy of the oral history format that I have developed to help beginning genealogists evolve their family history to help future generations understand the past generations at dgsmeall@me.com

ONLY A LIFE LIVED FOR OTHERS IS A LIFE WORTHWHILE.. [Albert Einstein](#)

HUNKERING DOWN FOR WINTER

By Verna Oxford
SKP# 1921

Central Nebraska had long, warm falls. After a cold snap the lovely warmth would return and we enjoyed Indian summer. This included many evenings of the fragrance of burning leaves raked into piles and burned in the street on the back alley.

The canning was finished. Some root vegetables were stored in sand and loam soil in a big box in the cellar. There were always apples for sale at a good price in the fall for those who didn't have apple trees. We sorted out the windfalls and other culls to use first and stored the best ones also in the cellar. The same method was used for squash and a few pumpkins.

My father managed a retail lumber yard. In addition to lumber, he handled glass, paint, linseed oil, nails, bolts, cement and coal. He always scheduled a railroad car of good lump coal from Colorado, and alerted the draymen—horse and wagon drivers. A small advertisement in the weekly paper urged the local inhabitants to buy their winter supply to be delivered direct from the railroad car. This emptied the can faster, thus saving the payment of demurrage, and the yard's storage bins simply

were not large enough to store the entire can load. He was one of his best customers, and our coal house behind the house was also filled.

On a nice evening, the winter storm windows were brought up from the basement, washed, and at times the frame was touched up with new paint. As the storm windows were ready, the summer screens were removed, swept, hosed down and stored in the basement.

The warm winter woolen clothing was removed from storage boxes where they had been stored with moth balls. They were well aired on the clothes line before hanging in the closets.

One of the last things was to buy at least a flour sack of popcorn-still on the cob, for storage in the basement. As soon as we had a day with a brisk wind we hand-shelled a few of the ears and winnowed it in the wind by pouring it from pan to pan, letting the wind blow away all the chaff. With all these preparations, those wet, heavy deep winter snow could come now—we were ready

Are You Guilty of Acyrologia? Yule Have to Reed to Find Out

Submitted by [Lauran](#) on January 25th, 2014 –Category: [Funny](#) . Text and image: Copyright 2014 [+Lauran](#)

Acyrologia is the incorrect use of a word where you displace one word with another that sounds familiar but has a totally differential meaning. Why people due this is a mystery. Maybe they want to seemingly sound more articular, or educational. But in the pursuit of sounding intelligible, what they sound like is completely delugenal. For those of us who long to see the English language used probably, this is intellerable.

In fact, stench defenders of the English language can wind up going start craving mad. Imminent English language professor Mr. Mortimer Wigglesworth-Crumpet III upon hearing too many of these eras, banged his head against a brick wall one too many times and wound up in a comma. Mrs. Clementine Burpee from Rochester, New York, lies forever crumpled in the feeble position muttering, "I took Rex to the vet to be neutered, not tutored." Her beloved poodle in the meantime can be found doing the New York Times crossword. And what about young Belinda Hup, who was so distrot she stole a tub of lipstick and was prostituted for shoplifting. So, please, for the love of the English language, don't miss it up.

37 Ways To Get Paid For Your Words

By permission of
Brian Feinblum
brianfeinblum@gmail.com

If you have great ideas, excellent writing skills, and a creative approach to your craft, you may be wondering just how you can cash-in on your genius and hard work. Well, wonder no more. Here is a list – in no set order – OF WORDSMITH TALENTS: (continued)

11. Grant writer
12. Annual reports writer
13. Technical writing
14. Paid to blog, tweet, post on FB, and other social media for others
15. Write white papers
16. Write text for educational manuals
17. Write training manuals
18. Write for business, trade, scholarly or specialized newsletters/journals
19. Co-author a book
20. Write scripts for theater, TV, film, or radio shows
21. Write book reviews or product reviews
22. Write jokes
23. Write captions for art pamphlets and photo publications
24. Articles for journals and newsletters
25. Write eulogies and obituaries
26. Speech writing
27. Write personal or corporate histories
28. Write government reports
29. Create polls, surveys, and questionnaires
30. Direct-mail copywriter
31. Brochure writer
32. Write entries for encyclopedias
33. Resume writing
34. Webinar content writing
35. Software content writing
36. Writing content for online videos
37. Self-publish a newsletter or blog for a subscription fee.

"What's good about March? Well for one thing it keeps February and April Apart." Walt Kelly

"March is an in between month, when wintry winds are high. But milder days remind us all,
Spring's coming by and by." - Author unknown

EASTER

By Joanne Alexakis SKP#19367

Easter is in April this year. I remember Easter Sunday four years ago...

On Easter Sunday, April 4, 2010, Nick and I ended our driving day just north of the Mexican border in El Centro, California. We were intending to spend the night and travel on to Anza-Borrego State Park in southern California in the morning.

We had checked in to the Best Western in El Centro and were carrying our luggage up to the motel room. We came back outside for our next load and the earth began to move. It started to bump up and down and shake back and forth. I'd never been in an earthquake before, but this was it! The ground continually rolled up and down and sideways, too. It was like standing on a small ship that was being tossed around in stormy seas. But we were standing on solid ground - solid undulating ground! The radio reports later said that the earthquake lasted about 45 seconds. I couldn't keep track, I was just trying to keep myself upright by leaning up against a car, which was yawing to and fro also. I kept thinking, "This can't be happening!" But I knew I better hang on anyway! I was starting to feel desperate and didn't know how long I could stay on my feet. My legs were wavering. I was repeatedly losing my tentative grasp on the car door handle. I was worried about what could possibly be coming next when the movement finally ended.

"Write while the heat is in you. ... The writer who postpones the recording of his thoughts uses an iron which has cooled to burn a hole with."

—Henry David Thoreau

I looked around. The normally calm waters of the swimming pool had become waves that sloshed back and forth and spewed fifty feet out into the street. Motel statues had keeled over and smashed on the ground, as did the lamps in the lobby. Glass was all over. The electricity was out at the motel and streetlights were nonfunctioning. Motel employees and over-nighters sat in the parking lot - safe from falling building debris if the earth should heave again. It was hot and the flies were bugging us. But we all were afraid to go back inside the motel. Small shakes and many, many vibrations kept us leery.

Nick and I wondered if anyone in El Centro would dare to sleep that night. We finally decided to leave nature's uncertainty and drive farther north to Brawley CA. We felt several hard earth-moving jerks during the night at that motel. The whole building moved. But mentally exhausted, we slept, and headed for Anza-Borrego State Park the next morning.

The 7.2 earthquake was in Baja Mexico, about twenty miles south of Mexicali, a large Mexican border town. Across the border is the little USA town of Calexico, and El Centro is 10 miles north of that. So, were we about 30 miles from the earthquake epicenter when it all began? An Easter Sunday to remember!

PENWHEELS BOF- a group of RVers interested in writing of all kinds. Some are published and some are not. The purpose of Penwheels is to establish a support network of RV writers for sharing information, discussion, critiques, and socializing in person, snail and email. Penwheels is published 4 times a year. Subscription is \$8.00 (USD)per year. In order to belong to any SKP BOF group you must be a member in good standing of the Escapees RV Club. (1-888-757-2582) Editorial submissions may be sent to **Doris Hutchins, valentinedh@gci.net**
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