



Escapees BOF

FOR PENWHEELS WRITERS
PUBLISHED OR NOT

Spring 2022

Editor's Note

You asked for it, you got it! In the Winter Survey, you said you'd most like to see profiles of fellow Penwheelers, so when **Marisa Wolf** volunteered, she got the job ☺ In this issue, she introduces us to **Gary Spangenberg** in our first Member Profile.

This past fall our Penwheels family lost a dear member, **George Bruzenak**. Joanne Alexakis remembers him in a heartfelt tribute.

Deb Sanders, author of the "Dead Men" series (!) takes on the Fiction Tips column starting with this issue. Welcome, Deb! **Donna Gates-Smeall** joins us with her first in a series of articles about the English language while **Doris Hutchings** provides more insight into our group's history.

Janna Roznos takes a little time away from working on her first romance novel to offer up insight into her writing process. **Janice Lasko** returns with another article that will help us all while **Jaimie Buzenak** and **Joanne Alexakis** continue to provide their expertise and tips.

Margo Armstrong, in addition to her World of Publishing column, gives us an article on why you shouldn't give up your "moral rights." Curious? I was, too!

We had three great "Best Writing Advice" submissions, so **all** are getting prizes and all are being included—be sure to check those out along with many other hidden surprises! In the past, the newsletter included many personal essays. The "Personal Essay Corner" is a space where *you* can share *your* essays (250 words max).

REMEMBER: If your writing is published in this newsletter, it's considered published (yay!) but this can also affect whether that particular piece of writing can be submitted to other publications or contests. If you have questions about this, please let me know.

As always, let me know if you have ideas, suggestions, or—especially!—something you'd like to contribute.

Happy Spring!

Ellen Behrens, Editor



Marisa's Member Profile: Gary Spangenberg

Gary Spangenberg has several patents and built his three-story house from scratch, and those are only the tip of his fascinating iceberg. He and his wife Margie have been RVers since Expo '67, for which they rented a small pop-up, towed it behind their Plymouth, and set off with their two toddlers.



That kicked off decades of travel. Gary and Margie moved cross country in a Class C custom built by three aircraft engineers on a 1942 Packard Hearse chassis—quite an adventure with two children, a dog, and a parakeet. After the brakes gave up somewhere in the Smoky Mountains, the class C was retired from travel, and became the camping lodge on their new lake lot while they built their home.

Multiple rigs followed—notably the fastest in the east, a twelve-foot trailer behind an '83 Corvette, and including their 2003 Winnebago, which took them 180,000 miles through almost all 50 states, to Alaska (site of their most memorable scenery on the Fishhook Trailhead in Palmer, Alaska), and through 72 National Parks....

{Continued on page 10}

Inside this Issue...

[Jaimie's Tips](#)
[Braggin' Rights](#)
[World of Publishing](#)
[Member Profile](#)
[Little Free Libraries](#)
[Fiction Tips](#)
[Etymology & You](#)

[Penwheels History](#)
[My Writing Process](#)
[Personal Essay Corner](#)
[Moral Rights](#)
[Remembering George](#)
[The Three Ps](#)



Jaimie's Tips

from Jaimie Bruzenak

In the 1/21/22 issue of WritersWeekly, this generous fiction writer offers 3 productivity tools that could be useful. I used a "style guide" when writing nonfiction but his is more extensive. And the chart tracking character names is brilliant. His books sound intriguing as well! <https://writersweekly.com/this-weeks-article/three-free-homemade-productivity-tools-for-authors-chris-norbury>



Braggin' Rights

by Joanne Alexakis



No Penwheelers were published in the *Escapees* magazine this quarter...

Have you published an article, poem, essay lately? Book?

Have you done a reading? Book signing? Presented at a conference?

You have the right to brag!

Send your braggin' rights to Jo (joalexakis@earthlink.net) or Ellen (ellenbehr@aol.com) so we can celebrate with you!

Little Free Libraries

from Jaimie Bruzenak

Jaimie Bruzenak's great photos of the Little Free Libraries she spots on her travels are a reminder that books reach people in ways we can barely imagine. But how did these start?

According to Emma Hine (writing for *Poets & Writers* magazine), a Wisconsin man named Todd Bol "placed a schoolhouse-shaped box in his yard in 2009 as a memorial to his mother" and as a way to encourage book sharing in his neighborhood.

In 2012 he founded Little Free Library, a nonprofit to promote them. When he died in 2018 more than 75,000 LFLs existed in 88 countries. Today there are more than 100,000 around the world!

Know of a community where a LFL would be valuable, but money isn't available to build one? There's a nonprofit for that, too: the Impact Library Program helps with funding, with a special focus on communities of particular need, such as Native American reservations.

Have you seen any Little Free Libraries? Contributed one of your books to one? Swapped books through one? Helped build or fund one? We'd love to hear **your** Little Free Library story!



Links To Follow!

- Get **weekly prompts** at [The Time Is Now](https://www.pw.org/writing-prompts-exercises) from Poets & Writers at <https://www.pw.org/writing-prompts-exercises>
- **25 Publishing Facts for Writers:** <https://www.writersdigest.com/getting-published/publishing-faqs-for-writers>



Insights From Published Authors

To start this year off with insights into the business side of selling your books (also known as the world of publishing), I have collected several blog posts from different authors. These brave souls disclose their personal “business side of writing.” Much is learned from their revelations that apply to the average writer. This is a rare opportunity to look into what authors from different genres actually do to generate book sales and their profits from that effort.

<https://authordiscovery.com/get-fans/>

<https://www.ronvitale.com/blog/2021/12/11/2021-year-end-wrap-up-full-sales-and-expenses-as-an-indie-author>

<https://selfpublishingadvice.org/authors-how-to-reach-readers-in-the-age-of-the-algorithm/>

Scams and Other Deceptions

Writer Beware: The Blog published by Victoria Strauss is an important blog for any writer-in-progress. She seeks out scamsters who cater to new writers hoping to play on their vanity. This wily market seems to span the world affecting writers everywhere.

Pay to Play Bookstore

The latest in book selling schemes comes from New Jersey called *The Reading Glass Books*. It charges \$350 for shelf space in the store. You set the price, deliver the books and receive 100% (you have already paid \$350 to put them in the store). If you buy into this scheme, check out the location on Goggle maps to ensure plenty of foot traffic. For more info, check with Victoria Strauss at *Writer Beware: The Blog*, <https://accrispin.blogspot.com/>.

Copyright Registration Services

Victoria also posts an interesting article about “copyright registration services” that cater to writer’s anxiety about theft and plagiarism. One point to note about *Copyright Registration Online* is in the Terms and Conditions section, “*Until these fees are paid in full, Copyright Registry Online will have complete ownership and control of users [sic] copyright registration.*”

Victoria cautions “no matter what you may have heard, if your work is unpublished and you're still at the query stage, there’s no need to register at all. By law, you own copyright from the moment you write down the words.

“This is not the way copyright works. You can't lose ownership of your work unless you explicitly agree to surrender your copyright, and there is nothing in *Copyright Registration Online*'s application process, or its Terms and Conditions, to effectuate that.”

Literary Agents

Caution is given again about the many scams generated out of the Philippines. The latest involves false claims with major motion picture studios, alliances with the Authors Guild, and demands for money to head off fake one-star reviews.

The cautionary tale here is to *read all the fine print*. So, until next time, stay well and keep on writing.

Margo Armstrong is a writer and publisher with over 20 books now available on Amazon.com. Her book *Writing & Publishing Books for Fun and Profit* is available in eBook and print at Amazon. See all her books at [AuthorCentral](http://AuthorCentral.com).



Fiction Tips: Words Matter

by Deb Sanders

Every author strives to keep readers engaged from the opening sentence to the last paragraph. When people are emotionally invested in your story, it's a good bet they will keep turning pages.

How does one accomplish that? By using words and phrases that dig into the gut and eviscerate emotions.

Readers must feel your words, not just read them. Write for the senses. Paint a picture using sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell. Long after the exact text in your novel has faded from your reader's memory, they will remember how those words affected them.

Choose powerhouse verbs. Be expressive. Change things up. Try converting nouns into verbs such as *thundered across the room* or *honeyed his words*. It can add a unique flavor to your writing voice.

Recently, I've fallen in love with the prose written for a spoken narrative by character Elsa Dutton in the television series, *1883*. An example: *"Some call it the American Desert, others the Great Plains. But those phrases were invented by professors at universities surrounded by the illusion of order, and the fantasy of right and wrong. To know it, you must walk it. Bleed into its dirt. Drown in its rivers. Then its name becomes clear. It is hell . . . and there are demons everywhere."*

Powerful. Moving. Words that don't require a televised image for emotional impact.

Not all sentences must be gut-wrenching to insert your reader into the story. Plain: *The elderly woman hit her knee and laughed*. Expressive: *Gnarled fingers thwacked a bony knee as a raspy cackle burst from the old woman's mouth*.

Use adverbs sparingly. Instead of *walk slowly*, try *meander*, *shuffle*, or *tread*. Avoid the word *suddenly* to preface unexpected situations. Go straight for the surprise or startling event. In most cases, words such as *really*, *just*, *quite*, *rather*, *totally* weaken your intention. Instead of writing *the soup was really good*, state why it was good. *"The soup was good, a blend of spicy broth and chopped vegetables that warmed her insides."*

Choosing the right words can establish tone. Avoid archaic, formal phrases if penning a contemporary comedy. Likewise, stay away from modern slang in a historical piece. Sprinkling colloquialisms throughout your story can add humor or define characters but try not to "over season" dialogue with cliches or regional terms that might confuse readers.

My last suggestion and perhaps the most important is to write the complete story without worrying about wording. Save it for the editing process. Too many writers spend weeks revising a first chapter only to find the story veers away from the outline halfway through, making all that work irrelevant. Trust me . . . I know!

Debra S. (Deb) Sanders lives in southern Arizona where she embraces the Old West, seeks out good hiking trails, and pens cozy mysteries and thrilling tales late into the night. You can learn more about her books and adventures at <https://debsanders.com>

Another Helpful Link!

Have an older book you'd like to market but want advice? Marketing Strategies for Older Books: <https://www.amarketingexpert.com/2021/09/23/book-marketing-strategies-for-older-titles-book-marketing-podcast-recap-2/>



Etymology and You, The Writer

by Donna Gates-Smeall

With the two options for definitions of the word ETYMOLOGY (see the sidebar on the right), a writer can begin to understand the origins of any language they encounter. For many PENWHEELERS, English is bound to be the first language they will use in their writing.

Etymology is a part of the LINGUISTICS family of the study of words. Its beginnings truly began in the 18th century with earlier beginnings being a form of witty wordplay.

The methodology of Etymology uses some of the following:

- **philological research** which examines changes in the form and meaning of a word by tracing older texts to see how the word changed over time;
- making use of **Dialectological data** which is where we might see the variations between dialects, which might yield clues about its earlier history;
- the **comparative method** might be used to systematically examine and compare related languages to determine which words derive from their common ancestor language and which forms of the word were instead later borrowed from another language;
- perhaps **studying semantics changes** via hypotheses about the changes in the meaning of particular words.

Sounds confusing? Or daunting? Or overwhelming? Don't sweat it. We will look at some these variables in the English language over the next three years as I work my way through the volume I am revisiting since receiving my Bachelor's Degree.

I was fortunate enough to have signed up for a college class to study the English Language and its etymology and other wonderful parts of the English Language like idiomatic language, oxymorons, and slang. (We will explore idioms and oxymorons later on in my column.)

I thought I knew the English Language well from studying grammar, but in signing up for the class, which was ideally designed for English language teachers to study in preparation for teaching their students ENGLISH, I discovered I didn't really know the language.

Did you know, for example, that there are so many different stages in our timeline where the English language evolved and that handwriting had to eventually decipher the phonetical and linguistical meaning of the words people spoke, it is sort of like trying to make sense of someone's accent, which is also another aspect of Etymology. (Another of my future columns on how the English language evolved over the various time frames: early English, middle English, etc.

There are so many layers to the English Language, from its origins to its "themes" of the ages, its timeline of growth and evolution to what it is today along with so many other variables.

According to Wikipedia, "The Sanskrit linguists and grammarians of ancient India were the first to make a comprehensive analysis of linguistics and etymology. This study of Sanskrit etymology provided Western scholars with the basis of historical linguistics and modern etymology" (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etymology).

Before the advent of written volumes, most of the etymological purview was more of an attempt to make sense of a language than an academic pursuit to convey the information to a general public seeking understanding of the languages they used. Today, we can spend hours and hours examining a language to determine the origins of a word. I remember having to learn some Latin words to determine what the medical terminology during my Medical Assistant vocational training meant.

{Continued on page 12}

Definitions of Etymology

Wikipedia:

"Etymology (/ˌetɪˈmɒlədʒi/) is the study of the history of words. By extension, the etymology of a word means its origin and development throughout history." Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etymology>

Webster's Dictionary:

<https://www.merriam-webster.com>

Essential Meaning of Etymology:

1: an explanation of where a word came from; the history of a word. According to its etymology, the English word "dope" comes from the Dutch word, "doop" (which means "sauce"). 2: the study of word histories

Full Definition of Etymology:

1: the history of a linguistic form (such as a word) shown by tracing its development since its earliest recorded occurrence in the language where it is found, by tracing its transmission from one language to another, by analyzing it into its component parts, by identifying its cognates in other languages, or by tracing it and its cognates to a common ancestral form in an ancestral language

2: a branch of linguistics concerned with etymologies
Commonly confused, by writers and other professionals who need to know the basic origin of Etymology, is the latter word and Entomology. Take some time to review the two words in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary or at [wikipedia.com](https://www.merriam-webster.com) to distinguish the differences. (Etymology is the study of the linguistic origins of a word whereas Entomology is the branch of study scrutinizing the world of insects.)

Source:

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/etymology?src=search-dict-box>

Penwheels History

by Doris Hutchins, Penwheels Historian



Myrna Courtney was the founder and first editor in 1994. The second editor was Jaimie Hall (1996), who was followed by Carol Ann Sutherland, Ann Rose, Joanne Alexakis, and Doris Hutchins.

- Alice Zyetz was a moderator for the PENWHEELS BULLETIN BOARD (PWBB).
- Betty Prange oversaw membership...the Traveling Magazine published.
- Doris Hutchins became Historian in 2004.

In the beginning of the Newsletter there were many members who were short story writers and not used to writing and sharing their stories with others. Throughout the years their stories, with practice, became longer and some were published. Hence the saying "published or not."

The following members were some of the short story writers:

- Don Lynn, "Wooden Boat Festival"
- Jan Lasko, "Sincerely, Halifax on the Waterfront"
- Joanne Alexakis, "The Lights" (Spring 1998)
- Betty Prange, "Fortress at Louisbourg"
- Judy Howard, "Coast to Coast with a Cat"
- Verna Oxford, "Why Do I Write?"
- Jim Cook, "Ultralight Flying"

Ed Waters was a very gifted writer of poems and writings. Here is one of his writings:

**When I was older, I came to the Sonoran Desert.
People told me that I would find nothing of value.
They said there was little water and no gold.
They forgot to tell me about the poets, the writers,
the artists.-The creative energy crackling around
the desert like monsoon lightning.
I must tell them about the treasures I have found
I wonder if they will change the subject.**

In the Winter 2007 issue, George Bruzenak's "Fly Fishing with Omar Khayan" appeared. This was a very long, interesting 1 1/2 page writing by George. (I shortened it by mistake and the writer was not very happy.)

Did You Know?

Escapees founders Joe and Kay Peterson belonged to the Penwheels BoF!

Kay Peterson #1 Home is Where You Park It
Beating the Odds

Joe Peterson #1 Marketing Your Published Book
Setting up Your Own Company

Joe wrote more articles for the Spring 1999 Penwheels.

The Best Writing Advice I've Ever Received

by Jo Alexakis

The best writing advice I've ever gotten is to just keep writing. Don't let writer's block, anxiety or silly mental immobility over take you. Just keep putting down ideas, thoughts, and words to keep different viewpoints spilling out. You can go back later and judge content or word usefulness. Keep your hand moving. Keep your pen making marks on that paper.

In about 1995-ish, *Writing Down the Bones* by Natalie Goldberg was pitched to me by original Penwheelers Alice Zyetz and Jaimie Hall Bruzenak. Just keep writing was the important theory. We early Penwheelers participated in writing exercises to illustrate this point. We would then read our scribbles back to each other enjoying our journalistic production. Scrawling was never such fun! Over the years, I gained valuable advice and lots of encouragement from Jaimie and Alice. They are the most positive teachers and leaders in my writing motivation. Their images in my mind always give me confidence.

I also appreciate lessons learned when I came across *If You Can Talk You Can Write* by Joel Saltzman. It couldn't be that easy, I thought. But reading this book made me realize that this simple concept could cover a lot of territory. So, if I just notate what I would normally say to another person, that should qualify as 'writing', right? My thinking is not extremely original, innovative, creative, imaginative, or fresh. So after putting my words to paper, I rely on my dictionary and thesaurus a lot and often, to flesh out my lack of vocabulary and spruce things up.

My Writing Process

by Janna Roznos



I thought, to write, all I had to do was find a comfortable spot at the neighborhood coffee house, order one of those frothy laden calorie coffee drinks, stare at the blank screen of my laptop, and inspiration would hit. All those ideas, stories, and thoughts crowded in my head would spill across the blank screen—my fingers tapping across the keyboard.

Did. Not. Happen.

So I struggled. However, after numerous on-line classes about the writing craft and reading countless of how-to books, I have developed a 'work-in-progress' writing process for myself.

I begin with a narrative outline about what the story is going to be about. I include my ideas, thoughts, some catchy dialogue, and list the areas where I need to do some research.

Next, I rewrite this with an emphasis on the backstories of my two main characters. I write female/male romance, so I need to know how these two are attracted to each other, what their motivations are, and—most importantly—what has happened in their lives (backstory) that is going to make them hesitant to fall in love.

Next, I start to define those big external plot points: the inciting incident, the 'fun and games' of getting to know each other and falling in love, the false victory, the moment of despair when all is lost, the awakening, and (finally) the happily ever after.

Now comes the 'magic'! I write all tiny beats (the internal plot points) of the characters as they slowly discover each other and discover much about themselves. This is the character arc, and I probably spend most of my time reworking and revising this. By this time in my process, I have discovered some holes that need to be fixed in the plot (that research I still need to do!) along with making sure the timeline of my story works for my plot.

My writing process isn't linear. I don't write from the beginning to the end with each revision, but rather I write in a rotating circle to make sure what I wrote in the latter chapters doesn't somehow seem off based upon what I wrote in the beginning chapters. I also make a point of writing every single day—even if it's few words. It keeps me connected to my story and my characters.

My process is definitely not static; it's evolving and changing just as I am as a writer. The more I write, the better (I hope!) I become, and the more I write, the more I understand and refine my process.

Janna Roznos and her husband Terry are seasonal RVers and avid fly fishers. She is currently working on her first romance novel.

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Grammar Quiz!

Which of these is incorrect? Why?

- A. From a newspaper article: "The findings proved for the first time that there is vast amounts of carbon in the lower mantle."
- B. From a book description: "This is Thaddeus at his best, pulled away from his normal life and cast into a cruel world where the cartels run rife and anything goes."

[{Answer on page 13}](#)

The Three Ps

by Janice Lasko



My three Ps of writing are, Perfection, Progress, and Patience. If my work is Perfect, I am making Progress. And, it is important to have Patience when writing. But, give me patience and give it to me NOW!

Study the style of the material most often used in the publication you are striving to be accepted. If the following list suits your style or suits a particular publication, correct the words and phrases in the list below. After all, the correct usage could be the difference in your material being published or rejected.

Everyone will slip once in a while. On the other hand, slang, cuss words, wit, sarcasm, improper grammar could fit the story. Remember, you are in control of your writing. Some of these words or phrases can easily be misused if not corrected. After you fix the following sentences use these suggestions only if they fit your writing style.

{Hint: It's the *italicized* words to consider changing.}

1. Those *ones* are what I suggest you purchase.
2. I have the *same exact* shirt. / I have the *exact same* shirt.
3. I was wondering where *it's at*.
4. He *continued on* his journey.
5. How are you? I'm *good*.
6. What month is it? It's *the month of* January.
7. *I want to* thank you.
8. Print it *out* and send it in.
9. We're *gonna* go to the store.
10. It's *like* I'm tired. *Like* I should go *like* to bed.
11. *I don't think* we should go in that direction.
12. First of all, read the list. *Second of all*, this list needs your input.
13. It's a *really* good idea, I like it *very* much.
14. That's the *honest truth*!
15. Are those the people *that* helped you?

[{See page 12 for suggested changes.}](#)

Married 50 years to husband Gabby, who turned 97 in January, we knew traveling was in our blood. During our 28 years of full-time RVing, we have held 35 part-time jobs. The most rewarding job, definitely not part-time, was as Escapees magazine editor. After 14½ years, I retired. Gabby and I currently reside in Sun City, Arizona.

The Best Writing Advice I've Ever Received

by Jaimie Bruzenak

A group of Boomers held a Boomerang at Pena Blanca in Southern Arizona in 1994. Alice Zyetz, who later became my co-author of several books, suggested that interested writers meet and do writing exercises *a la* Natalie Goldberg's *Writing Down the Bones*. Wow! Her instructions formed the basis for groups of writers, many of whom joined Penwheels, to gather in writing groups whenever a few of us met up (Escapades, Quartzsite, Boomerangs). That got me started writing.

When I thought my first book, *Support Your RV Lifestyle*, was about ready to go, I asked many writing friends to review a chapter or two and give me feedback and make corrections. I was blindsided when one writer informed me that I needed to outline my book so that my sections within the book reflected elements of my outline. I might use all capitals for the A, B, C sections but then throw in a D1 or D2 as a capital instead of formatting that differently. I followed her advice and had a much stronger reference using that framework. Thanks Judy!

Natalie Goldberg's
writing practice rules*

- Keep your hand moving. No matter what, don't stop.
- Lose control. Let it rip!
- Be specific
- Don't think.
- Don't worry about spelling, punctuation or grammar.
- You are free to write the worst junk in the world.
- Go for the jugular.

*See abbreviated explanations of each: <https://whisperdownthewritealley.wordpress.com/2011/10/25/natalie-goldbergs-rules-for-writing-practice/>

The Best Writing Advice I've Ever Received

by Marisa Wolf



"The purpose of a first draft isn't to be perfect. The purpose of a first draft is to *exist*." There is a ton of fabulous writing advice out there, and I am grateful for so much of it. This is the one I repeat to myself most often. Every time I stare at the cursor and write/delete/yell at the words that aren't quite cooperating, I have to pause and remind myself the first draft isn't going to be glittering genius. It's going to be messy and awkward and have run-on sentences and questionable grammar and a mix of em-dashes and ellipses and [notes to myself to fix later]. That's the point of it. Because in that muck of words, there will also be the story that I can clean up and make into something I want people to read.

You can't edit a blank page, so let that first draft be a mishmash of good ideas and hanging plot points and characters who appear and disappear willy nilly. Reminding myself of that (endlessly, it seems) lets me actually *write*, rather than get so caught up in making it perfect that I have very few words at all. When I take this advice and get a first draft down, then it *exists* in all its messy, messy glory. The first draft has done its job, no matter how spectacularly 'eh' I might feel about it. Once the words are on the page, I can work through and make them better. They just...have to be there, first. So celebrate the mess of a first draft—it's accomplished its purpose! Then we can get back to work, and make it great.

This advice has pushed me through countless episodes of writer's block. "It doesn't have to be great," I tell myself when the page remains stubbornly blank. "It just has to be words I can fix later." As I start to believe it, and the words start cooperating again, suddenly some of them aren't so terrible. They're workable. Some are even great! It's a freeing reminder, and I hope it helps you, too. Let your first draft be terrible, so long as it exists—it will only get better from there.

Marisa Wolf has been writing since the age of six when she penned and illustrated "Sarah and the Idaho Potatoes." A science fiction and fantasy novelist, Marisa's latest novel, Ally, is now available.

She and her husband have been full-time RVing for the past year and a half.

Find out more about her books at marisawolf.net.

Personal
Essay
Corner

The Bell Does Toll

by Doris Hutchins



The little girl, dressed in heavy clothing, was walking quickly up the hill to old Oxford School, built in 1896. The school's name was written in red terracotta over the front Portico.

Over the school year the girl had completed her schoolwork, and had not been tardy, not even a day. Today was a special Valentine's Day, her sixth birthday. She was given the honor of ringing the ancient Paul Revere school bell that was up in the tower.

She was escorted up to a point near the bell. Assisted by the Toller, her small hands grasped the long rope and pulled as hard as she could. The sound of bells ringing was akin to church bells. How beautifully they chimed alerting school children that classes were ready to commence. Today, she became the Toller.

These memories occurred many years ago, and now I recall hearing the powerful chimes on my Ninety-Fourth birthday. That rings a bell!

Do you have a short essay to share? Don't be shy! Send it to Ellen at ellenbehr@aol.com

Marisa's Member Profile: Gary Spangenberg

{Continued from page 1}

With such a gorgeous home base at the lake, their travel was about sightseeing and experiences, often a fast pace of two-day stops and off to the next. That pace didn't leave much space for writing at the time, but now Gary's building the habit of writing at the end of every day to keep his memories crisp.

The pandemic has kept him more at home these last few years. That's given him time to reflect on the endless adventures and unusual happenstances of his life. Lately, a Ralph Waldo Emerson quote has been top of mind – *"A man is what he thinks about all day long."*

Time then, to work on his memoirs. His first attempt at a bio was for fellow amateur radio hobbyists – that one was more straightforward facts than the fun stuff.

Gary's approach to his memoir now is to tie together the logic and factual notes of life with the emotional elements that will "allow one to vicariously live my experiences rather than just read about them." To that end, he's taking skills from his many years of instructional speaking, writing as though he's in verbal conversation with his reader – a perfect approach to share the path of his life at a less whirlwind pace than his RV travels.

Gary arrived in the United States at 12, and two years later, he received an Earl Nightingale record with the speech "Strangest Secret." He took a great deal of inspiration from that, including this beauty, *"Life should be an exciting adventure. It should never be a bore. A man should live fully, be alive."* He's held to that advice since, changing jobs six times (once for money, and five times for "inner fulfillment and fun," may we all be so lucky), and seeing the country with the passion and observational eye of a writer.



His favorite place to work on his memoir is his enormously comfortable recliner. His view *"includes a leaf sprinkled teak floored deck and the endless ripply surface of the lake surrounded by the far away shoreline. On my right is a C.CRANE internet radio softly playing endless SMOOTH JAZZ. The music serves as an intermezzo between the collection of thoughts yet to be written."* With that ability to paint a scene, he's bound to give us a memoir we'll pour through the way he and Margie took on the States.

Marisa Wolf has been writing since the age of six when she penned and illustrated "Sarah and the Idaho Potatoes." A science fiction and fantasy novelist, Marisa's latest novel, *Ally*, is now available. She and her husband have been full-time RVing for the past year and a half. Find out more about her books at marisawolf.net.

Prompting You!

Pick a quote that describes how you feel today. Write it down, explain why it describes your feelings – be specific! Then write about someone feeling the opposite.

Prompting You!

Pick a book from your shelf at random (or open one at random from your e-reader). Use the last sentence as the first sentence in a poem or story.

Prompting You!

Go outside. In five minutes, write down everything you can about what you see, hear, smell and feel.



Giving Up Your Moral Rights

by Margo Armstrong

Under what circumstances would you give up the *moral rights* to your original articles? *Say What?* This is the latest challenge writer's face when remitting their articles to contests held here in the United States. Take from it what you will, but it seems to conflict with our stand on democracy. Am I right or just paranoid?

This week Victoria Strauss ([Writer Beware](#)) breaks the story that affects all writers in the United States. Wattpad's **Open Novella Contest 2022** changes the company's entry rules. "Prize winners must grant rights exclusively, perpetually, and without option to terminate, and the contest sponsor can use those rights as it chooses, without notifying – or paying – the writer.

Additionally, winners *must waive their moral rights*, which include the right of attrition [*the right to have your work published without your name*] and the right to have your work published exactly as you wrote it." (italics mine)

This should be illegal, but apparently is not here in the U.S. According to Victoria, "moral rights are not recognized for writers, but they are important in much of the rest of the world."

As expected, Wattpad users (amid others) created a major blowback. For everyone of us that enters writing contests, this is a warning. Apparently, this type of *moral rights ruling* is common in the contest arena here in the U.S. Read every writing contest rule line-by-line so as not to risk your moral rights in the future.

Margo Armstrong is a writer and publisher with over 20 books now available on Amazon.com. Her book, [Writing & Publishing Books for Fun and Profit](#) is available in eBook and print at Amazon. See all her books at [AuthorCentral](#).

Remembering George: A Tribute to George Bruzenak

Contributed by Joanne Alexakis

In October 2021, we lost an exceptional member of our Penwheels BoF, George Bruzenak. He and his wife, Jaimie Hall Bruzenak, have been with Penwheels for many years. He was creative and adventurous which reflected in his writing. George took part in Na-No-Wri-Mo when he wrote a novel in one month—one-day-at-a-time; and once created a 3-page poem, "Fly Fishing with Omar Khayyam," which he submitted to the PW newsletter.

I only met George Bruzenak once several years ago. I spent an afternoon with several SKP Boomer friends at George & Jaimie's home in Tucson, Arizona. Jaimie was up in Pine AZ and I didn't get to see her during that visit.

George was a friendly, generous, and very good-humored gentleman. I know he loved and excelled in golf and Plein Art - painting in oils. I had brought along some old, old photos of Boomer get-togethers back in 1997-ish. Escapees spend a lot of time eating and many of the pictures were centered around meals. One picture was of Jaimie eating - her lips were pressed in mid-chew and her cheek was bulging like a little red squirrel. She was so cute! George saw that picture and said, "I want this photo! Heh! Heh! Heh!" Of course, I gave it to him, knowing that Jaimie would be presented with this portrait at probably the worst possible moment.

Penwheeler Janice Lasko relays that her husband, Gabby, was looking forward to playing golf with George Bruzenak now that they have moved to the Phoenix area. However, with George's passing, Gabby, 97, says he and George will have to wait for that golf game up in Golf Heaven.

George Bruzenak, 78, died of a heart attack while on the golf course. He was born and raised in Eveleth, Minnesota. George and his big personality will be missed. He leaves behind his wife, Jaimie, two sons and their wives, a grandson, an older sister, several nephews and nieces, and his cat, Tucker.



Etymology and You, The Writer

by Donna Gates-Smeall

{Continued from page 5}

Try breaking down the words: lobotomy, splenectomy, or carcinoma. (This is just a taste of how much effort we put into figuring out what our doctors are saying about us.). I used to ask the doctor I interned with, "Why do we have to have all these medical terms to explain simple things like having a bad spleen or a cancer?" His answer back then was to say it sets each profession apart if it has its own terminology.

Interestingly enough, the different terminologies all have base origins which one has to learn to decipher the word into a laymen's definition for everyone to understand. People in the medical, dental, legal, scientific, and academic, even the religious fields all have specific terminologies/vocabularies to speak of their fields.

This barely scratches the surface of the English language or any language for that matter. I am confident of this assessment of the English language due to the huge volume of material my professor assigned us to read, most specifically a book called *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of The English Language* (consisting of 489 pages of particulars about our English Language and how it evolved).

It is a hefty volume and with the limited amount of time to read and prepare classwork, I was given a bit of latitude with my studies (read that READING the whole book) due to vision issues and time constraints. I won't confess to having aced this class, as I didn't get an A. However, I did promise to spend time after college re-reading the materials. So here we are, on a journey to re-examine our understanding of etymological applications in the English Language.

To save time and space in this PENWHEEL Newsletter, this tease of an article is just the tip of the iceberg.

Please take some time to muddle through this preliminary brief introduction to ETYMOLOGY of the English Language, **write down any questions you might have, then send those questions to me at dgsmeall@me.com**. I will select up to five questions to answer and post these answers with my next column, which is where we look at the earliest evolutions of the English Language and examine the timeline of the English language.

Until next time, blessed be and have fun exploring the origins/history of the words you encounter every day.

Donna Gates-Smeall is an accomplished writer with two books (COMPEN-di-um and Forever Friends (co-written with Karol Barkley of Tacoma, WA) under her belt, plus plans to write a few more in her lifetime. She has two Associates degrees and a BA in English.

The Three Ps by Janice Lasko

{Continued from page 8}

1. Those *shoes* are what I suggest you purchase. {You don't need 'ones.'}
2. It's the *same* shirt I have. {Saying *same exact* or *exact same* is redundant. If something is the same, it is exact.}
3. I was wondering where *it is*. {Ending sentences with a preposition is a no-no.}
4. He *continued* his journey. {The word 'on' is not necessary.}
5. How are you? I'm *well*. {When asked how you are, you are 'well' because 'well' implies "health."}
6. What month is it? It's January. {You don't need to say '*month of*' because January is a month.}
7. *I want to* thank you. {Saying "*I want to thank*" is asking permission, especially when you are dedicating your book to someone. Example: "*Thank you, Mr. Shaw, for instilling a love of language in his students.*"}
8. Print it and send it in. {'*Print*' is sufficient. You don't need "out."}
9. We're *going* to the store. {'*Gonna*' is slang and can be used in conversations, if it fits the story.}
10. I'm tired. I should go to bed. {Note how often some people use the word '*like*' when speaking. Has '*like*' replaced "*Um*?" Hmm, makes one wonder.}
11. I think we should *not* go in that direction. {A common mistake. To start a sentence with, "I don't think," is as if you are saying you are not thinking.}
12. First of all, read the list. *Secondly*, this list needs your input. {*Secondly* is proper. The "First" in a list, is "of all that follows." There is no such thing as "second of all."}
13. It's an excellent idea, I like it. {Whenever possible, replace '*really*' and '*very*' with stronger, more descriptive words.}
14. That's the *truth*! {You don't need *honest*, because the truth is honest.}
15. Are those the people *who* helped you? {When referring to people or individual names, they are *who*, not that.}

Now that you've had a chance to review the above list, submit your own words and phrases of which we should be aware. Go on, try it, it's fun. Think outside the box when making your list. Remember, you are in control of your writing but make it Perfect and keep writing! Hugs, Janice

Missing Newsletters? Updates? Special Offers?

You've maybe noticed we've added some new features to this newsletter, including contests! Don't miss any chance to win a prize – make sure Ellen has your e-mail address so you'll get important announcements and offers.

If you found out about this newsletter from an e-mail message, you're good to go.

If you got word from RVillage but never got an e-mail, send Ellen your e-mail address at ellenbehr@aol.com.

Make sure you "whitelist" ellenbehr@aol.com by saving Ellen's e-mail address to your contacts so Penwheels notes and announcements don't go to your spam folder.

We also heard from some of you that you'd like to be reminded that the newsletter is available (I know all about being forgetful, just ask my hubby!) so know that we'll be sending notes a little more often. We don't mean to be pests and trust you'll just hit the delete button if you've already gotten the news.

As always, THANK YOU for being so supportive of this newsletter, which encourages us all to keep at it!

Good to Know!

Authors on TV! If you stream your programs, you might find your favorite author(s) being interviewed on "About the Authors." [Find it here](#) or go to <https://abouttheauthorstv.com/>

Love Jaimie's photos of the Little Free Libraries? Well, what about a *rolling library*? Laura Moulton and Ben Hodgson share how Portland's Street Library got its start [here](#) or go to:

<https://lithub.com/the-creators-of-a-bicycle-powered-library-reflect-on-its-humble-beginnings/>

What *is* a short story? Bestselling author Lee Child isn't even sure he knows.... but he gives explaining it a shot in [this post](#) for Crime Reads: <https://crimereads.com/lee-child-on-the-invention-of-fiction/>

Looking for unusual ways to promote your book? BookBub has rounded up a few that might inspire you (but could cost you a few bucks, too). Find the post [here](#) or go to <https://insights.bookbub.com/outside-box-book-marketing-ideas/>

Contest of the Quarter



Click the image or go here for details:
writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions/annual-writing-competition

Grammar Quiz!

They're both incorrect!*

- A. "The findings proved for the first time that there is vast amounts of carbon in the lower mantle." "There **are** vast amounts..." is the correct phrasing.
- B. From a book description: "This is Thaddeus at his best, pulled away from his normal life and cast into a cruel world where the cartels run rife and anything goes." "Rife" is an adjective, not an adverb, so it should describe a noun, not a verb. A better sentence would be, "...cast into a cruel world rife with cartels."

* Yep, I checked! "Which" could refer to "one" or "ones." See The American Heritage Dictionary, Fifth Edition. Extra points for wondering!