

# PENWHEELS



FOR ESCAPEES WRITERS ...  
PUBLISHED OR NOT

Winter 2022

## Where Are You?

by Darlene Miller



## Editor's Note

from Ellen Behrens

The question that I am asked most often through 15 years of RVing full-time and 10 years of half-time RVing is "Where are you?"

I am in the middle of nowhere.

The campground where I am located today is beside the Colorado River which is the dividing line between Arizona and California. Although we are legally in CA, the nearest town is Parker, AZ, which is six miles away. The mailing address for the campground is Earp, CA. (Earp has only a post office.) Since there are no towns in CA near here, we even use AZ Mountain Time for activities.

If you hit a wild donkey or receive a speeding ticket you need to go to the county seat which is in San Bernadino, California. That is 215 miles from here and takes about 3 and 1/2 hours to drive.

Wyatt Earp used to live in the area. He would be in AZ if he was in trouble with CA and vice versa. RVers do the same thing when they use up the week between their two weeks on and two weeks off in a membership campground.

Since we want our mail delivered to us, we use Escapees mail service to send it to a postal box in either Earp, CA, or Parker, AZ.

If you are in the witness protection program, this is the place to be. No one can find you.

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This issue marks one full publishing cycle since I began editing this newsletter. My motto has been "This is YOUR newsletter" and I'm thrilled when I get feedback and suggestions about what to include.

A few of you gave thumbs up to the idea of including fiction, so each of you is invited to send in your short fiction! Woohoo! Please keep stories to 1000 words maximum, OR send me something longer but so wonderful it would make a great serial, and we'll publish it across issues. Double woohoo!

And many thanks to Lew Leistikow for suggesting a Letter to the Editor section – and for providing our first (you can see it toward the end of the newsletter). Have something you want to say? Don't hold back! Lew's comments are very positive (and we're very grateful for that) but even if you have a rant, please send it anyway: we wouldn't be writers if we couldn't take a little criticism, right?

As always, we welcome your personal experiences—stories from the road, about writing, about what inspires you and motivates you. Send it all in!

Congratulations to Darlene Miller, whose last-minute entry in the Win-Win Contest got her name in the drawing. Watch for more chances to win!

Best Holiday Season Wishes!

*Ellen*



## CONGRATULATIONS

**Darlene Miller**

**Winner of the Penwheels  
Win-Win Contest!**

Her prize was choice of a  
unique SKP bracelet or \$10

Amazon gift card.  
Thanks to all entrants!



## Inside this Issue...

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**And more!**





## Jaimie's Tips

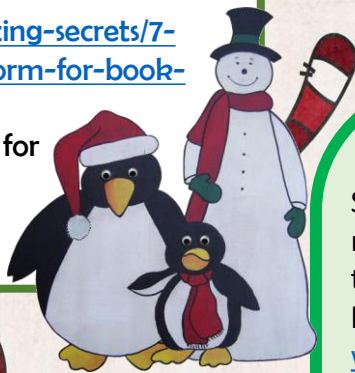
from Jaimie Bruzenak

For members who are actively selling books, this article in the 9/15/22 *Writer's Weekly*, "How To Write a Killer Newsletter To Help You Sell More Books," by Verity Partington, has excellent tips on why and how to send an email newsletter as well as links to some fine examples of effective ones.

<https://writersweekly.com/marketing-secrets/how-to-write-a-killer-newsletter-to-help-you-sell-more-books-by-verity-partington>

In another *Writer's Weekly* column, I came across Book Tok. My social media is limited to Facebook so, while I've heard of Tik Tok & others, I don't participate. If you have written a book, though, it sounds like this is an important resource. Read <https://businessreview.berkeley.edu/booktok-when-tiktok-met-the-book-industry/> to see how it is driving sales. More about Tik Tok and other ways to use it for book promotion at <https://writersweekly.com/marketing-secrets/7-reasons-tiktok-is-your-best-platform-for-book-promotion-by-william-opar>

For us readers it may be a source for finding good books to read!



## Good to Know...

Looking for an out-of-print book? Hunting for a book you just can't find on Amazon? Try Bookfinder [\[www.bookfinder.com\]](http://www.bookfinder.com). When I typed in the title of my first novel, I was thrilled to see it's available around the world. Books sure travel, don't they?!

Contests can be a great way to motivate yourself to finish a project. Here's a list of 40 that are FREE to enter via the Write Life: <https://thewritelife.com/writing-contests/>

## Braggin' Rights

by Joanne Alexakis



No Penwheelers were spotted in the bylines of the recent *Escapees Magazine*. If you've published something, let [Joanne](#) know!

*Give in to the temptation to share...  
Send something!*

Spring Issue:	Feb 15
Summer Issue:	May 15
Fall Issue Deadline:	Aug 15
Winter Issue:	Nov 15

*Publication is on the first of the next month.*

## Bookish Gifts

Send an Owlcrate box to your favorite young adult reader (or yourself, if you love YA books!). I've never tried these, but they look high-quality and seem to have a nice combination of items with the book(s): [www.owlcrate.com](http://www.owlcrate.com)

Looking for a way to write your story for your loved ones? Chronicle Books has just the thing! "With this keepsake collection of twelve letters you can fill each with words of wisdom that only a grandparent can impart then postdate, seal with the included stickers, and gift this paper time capsule for future opening." Letters for daughters, sons, mom, friends... see them all here:

<https://www.chroniclebooks.com/collections/letters-to-my>



## Little Free Libraries from Jaimie Bruzenak

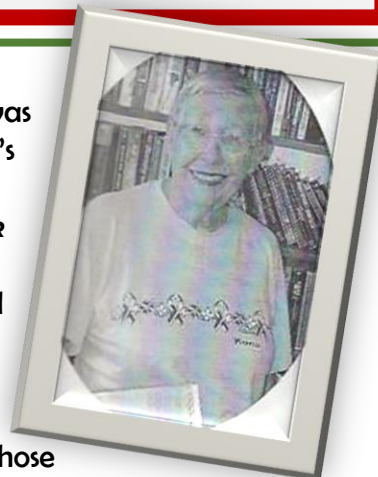


Many thanks to Jaimie for a Little Free Library dappled in sunlight – a welcome respite from the cold (and often cloudy) days of winter so many of us are experiencing! This Pasadena, California, library is fashioned like a birdhouse and it looks as though bookworms have depleted its offerings!



**Help a library!** Author Allison Winn Scotch has started a movement to stock needy libraries with books—and all of us can help. If you're not already donating gently read books to local libraries, think about doing that. If you'd like to help in a more directed way, see Allison's spreadsheet of needy libraries and the types of books they would appreciate receiving:  
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1XRyXZzCwO-ap5akLdNiF8fmAcbtIVcS0X4gFQmPV4Q/edit#gid=0>

## In Memory of Joan Wood submitted by Joanne Alexakis



We lost one of our own last September 2022. Joan Wood was a Penwheeler back in the 1990's and she was a lot owner at Escapees North Ranch RV Park by Congress, Arizona. Joan (pronounced Jo-Ann) belonged to the North Ranch Writers' Group. I often visited North Ranch in 1995-1999 and was privileged to spend time with those wordsmiths. Joan's outgoing personality always sparked at their meetings. This troop put out *The Hoot*, the North Ranch newsletter, with everyone chipping in as a columnist or a reporter to fill the pages.

Several writing group members, self-named The Girls of Summer, became a band of novelists. They got together and planned a book, *Mystery at North Ranch* (2006). Each author wrote a chapter of the story that lined up to tell their tale. A soft-cover 113-page book, this was a popular read around this camp. The Girls of Summer were Norma Scheall, Carol Butterfield, Helen Taylor, Joan Wood, Rosemary Starr, Sandy Wilson, all of whom have passed on. Jane Holcombe and Kaye Huckleberry are the surviving Girls of Summer.

Joan Wood also belonged to the line dancing class at North Ranch. I danced with her in 2015-2020—and she was in her 90's! She was a delight and had us all laughing. Joan had the best “hip bumps” move of anyone in class. She could really “shake her booty” and she loved the Country Western singer George Strait. She would swoon when his songs were played.

In about 2020, Joan moved up to the Prescott AZ area to be with family. We missed her then and we miss her now.



## Marisa's Member Profile: Janna Roznos

Janna Roznos has always worked in fields that required excellent writing – from subcontracting in the aerospace industry to coordinating grants and exhibits for a museum – and it's a set of skills she's put to use in writing romance.

Romance is consistently the top-selling genre in fiction for a host of reasons. One is that it centers on believable characters readers want to spend time with as they find their happily ever after. This takes thought and preparation from the author, and that is clearly a place Janna excels.

She does story planning and character development on paper, and so always has a notebook and assortment of pens nearby. And she spends time thinking through her characters' motivations – what's driving them to do the things they do. Janna has a healthy curiosity about people's motives, which also shows up in her reading choices. Other than romance, nonfiction is a favorite of hers, where the focus is on unpacking what caused folks to embark on the wild, wicked, or wonderful actions they got up to.

She also enjoys nonfiction stories about the great outdoors. A recent read that's stuck with her has both the beauty of terrain and digging into people's motivations: *Death in the Grand Canyon*. It takes place not too far from one of Janna's and her husband's favorite areas to camp, on the Colorado River right at the Arizona and California border – though thankfully with a great deal less death and murder. They also love camping (or glamping) in Central California where they have excellent BBQ and a beach in relatively close proximity.

Many, but not all, of their trips are planned around fly fishing. In fact, they got their travel trailer to make all those fishing trips less hotel-bound and more delightful.

They get out about eight times a year, and after fishing all day, Janna settles in and writes at night. Travel has helped her learn to settle in and block everything out to get writing done – even if it's for just a few minutes. Now she's able to write anywhere she can set up her laptop, though she prefers quiet when there's a knot she hasn't quite untangled for what comes next in her story.

*{Continued on page 10}*

"Writing is perhaps the greatest of human inventions, binding together people, citizens of distant epochs, who never knew one another. Books break the shackles of time – proof that humans can work magic."  
— Carl Sagan

Isn't it neat to learn something about other Penwheels members? Well, just as you enjoy "meeting" other members through Marisa's Profiles, **we'd love to meet YOU this way!** Contact [Marisa](#) if you'd like to be profiled—and don't be surprised if she contacts you directly via e-mail with an invitation! Please show your support of her efforts and the group by saying Yes!







## Fiction Tips: Time to Write

by Deb Sanders

I am a research lover. Give me a topic and I'll research the heck out of it. I'll find the old, the new, the untried, the questionable, the hype, the myth, and sometimes what is perceived as truth. Research almost always gets in the way of my writing because I tend to dive head-first down the rabbit hole only to come up hours later and realize I've not written a single word in my manuscript.

How does a writer avoid the pitfalls of research? Social media? Life?

The most productive and successful novelists schedule their writing time as if it were a full-time job . . . because for many of them, it IS their full-time job. They schedule time for research, connecting with readers or other writers through social media, blogs, zoom meetings, and personal appointments. But most importantly, they block at least 4-6 hours a day to finish their manuscript.

James Patterson stated in a recent interview with the *Daily Beast*, "I pretty much write seven days a week, 52 weeks a year. I'll get up around 5:30, put my house in order, write a little bit, maybe an outline for that day. Then I'll go out around 7, frequently walk a golf course for an hour by myself. Then I'll come back and write until, oh, 11 or 12."

Some authors choose to schedule their time by word count. Ernest Hemingway set a daily word count at 500 words – but he notoriously re-wrote his work over and over until those 500 words were as close to perfection as possible. Stephen King believes in a strict daily word count of 2,000 words. He believes if you don't write daily, your characters become stale. Neil Gaiman prefers a 1500-word count but confesses to days when the flow allows him to write 4,000 words and other times when he only writes 150. "It all balances out."

Have you noticed the one similarity between these great novelists? They write daily.

It boils down to time management. Most authors do not write 8-10 hours a day unless they are on a publishing deadline. They still enjoy activities. Time with family. Vacations. And yet they continually produce(d) impressive works.

If you are serious about writing, you must set a consistent schedule. It doesn't matter if you want to write one book a year or three. Write daily. Set a time or word count. Stick with it until it becomes a habit.

If your lifestyle is busy, use a word count barometer to keep you on track. Write in the doctor's office while waiting for an appointment. Write in your car while waiting to pick up the kids from school. Write in the airport while waiting for your flight. If you work, write during your lunch hour. I once wrote 300 words on my phone while waiting for a stage play to start. I have used voice-activated devices to record a scene while hiking.

There are opportunities every day to write. Find them—and finish the next "Great American Novel."

*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>*





## World of Publishing by Margo Armstrong

### [Kindlepreneur](#), The Top Kindle Writing Pro

Dave Chesson has taught major publishing companies and millions of self-publishers how to sell more books. You may have read about him but never explored his 264 free articles, 113 videos, and two free courses that can reliably guide you through the Kindle maze...and never spend a dime.

He brings the latest reliable tips and Kindle news to the public free of charge. If you are new to publishing on Kindle books, you are in for a treat. Easy to follow with plenty of flow charts and honest assessments, if Dave's name is on it, you can believe it. Needless to say, I am a big fan. Throughout the years, he has explained and encouraged me to reach for more in the world of Kindle promotion.

The key to selling your book is getting it in front of the most potential customers. Right now, this is Amazon Kindle. Some authors do this with elaborate launches, extensive pre-developed email lists, and other cutting-edge tactics. However, many Kindle authors neglect the simple optimization of their book sales page on Amazon.

The [Kindlepreneur](#) shows you how to:

- Setup your Amazon author central account and the Author's Page.
- Republish vs Update a Book: Which One Is Better?
- Find a copyeditor that has a strong grasp of the trade.
- Use his winning formula for creating book descriptions.
- Find the best book promo sites.
- Easily select the right pen name.
- Use his strategy for launching your book.

The knowledge of the *Kindlepreneur* is vast and he supports the new author, helping to bring it all together in the Kindle world.

### A New Option for Copyright Disputes

Writer Beware's [Victoria Strauss brings us new options for copyright disputes](#), "Taking legal action if your copyright is infringed can be complicated and confusing—not to mention expensive. Suing an infringing party, which must be done in federal court, can rack up enormous legal fees, and take years to resolve. (For instance, the Authors Guild estimates that the average cost of a copyright suit is \$400,000—often more than the value of the claim itself.) And there's no guarantee of success. It's a situation that, for many creators, renders their rights under copyright essentially unenforceable." As United States' authors reel under attack from the rest of the world, read her article about the new Copyright Claims Board (CCB) to get all the latest information.

*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](#).*





## A Lesson in Alone Time

by Lew Leistikow



I had stopped for lunch at a small roadside rest stop, relaxed and enjoying the quiet, disturbed only by a light breeze blowing through the sage and scrub cedar brush. As I was returning to my truck from a picnic shelter, a white pick-up that had been parked a way behind me pulled up and a single lady stopped and rolled down the window and called out, "Would you consider trading straight across?" Meaning, of course, her truck for my whole rig. She complimented me on it, saying that it really "makes a statement." We chatted for some time, and she told me that she was on her way back to Phoenix with a truckload of things from her aunt's house who had passed away. She told me of her daughter in mid-twenties who has cancer. This is her second go 'round with it. She had it in the spine, they conquered that, but later cancer returned and was in her brain. So sad! She asked me to pray for the young lady, who is married and has a young son. - - - And listening to her talk, (we chatted, out here on the lonely Utah desert, like we were old friends), I learned something. Or at least got a new slant. Shortly after Lynn died, Gail Philman, having lost her husband not long ago, told me that traveling was difficult, lonely, not having anyone to share all the beauty with. As I traveled, that thought was ever-present in the back of my mind. Then, I met this lady, Joy, who had the opposite outlook. (Yes, she had a husband back in Phoenix - - too bad!) She told me that when folks wanted to 'volunteer' to accompany her on a trip, so the drive wouldn't be so lonely and boring, she declined. She told me that she treasured her time alone. She also loves the road and used the time to regain strength, appreciating the world around her, meditating and offering prayers.

After we parted, her words came back to me and I realized that it is a matter of attitude. I do so love to cruise down the road, marveling in the awesome beauty surrounding me day after day. It can be and in truth, it has been often lonely without my lifelong partner and navigator at my side.

*{Continued on page 10}*





## Summing Up the Evolution of the English Language

by D. G. Smeall

In the last article we reviewed Middle English trends and differences between the “Old and Middle English” writers. Plus we looked at some of the of writing styles and the authors/writers who introduced the new genres.

People like Charles Darwin, Artemus Wade, Sir Thomas More, Geoffrey Chaucer, and Roger Bacon were a sampling of those who made a huge impact on the evolution of the English Language during the “Middle English” period.

Now, to conclude the “peek” into how our English Language evolved—we discovered that during the Middle English period, many of the earlier English grammar rules began to be ignored in an effort to appear more creative within the writing composition. Before expanding on these deviations from the normal; I should like to also point out that women writers began to have an effect on the writing audience, while not writing under their own names; they adopted pseudonyms to make their mark on the literary world. Louisa May Alcott, Eudora Welty and several other females hid their identity under male pen names to avoid the disapproval of their male counterparts.

Back to the two most important linguistic developments that characterized the “Middle English” period as stated in the [Wikipedia.org](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/MiddleEnglish):

- 1) in grammar, English came to rely less on inflectional endings and to spend more time on
- 2) the specific word order that would convey the maximum information regarding its subject.

In layman's terms, the Middle English period saw significant changes to its vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and its orthography, which deals with the spelling and punctuation elements of the language. Orthography is the art of writing with the proper letters according to the standard usage of the language based on the cultural, social and political environment.

How is this different from grammar? Grammar only deals with how we structure the language and how it is applied in both speech and writing. Orthography, as I mentioned earlier, only deals with the spelling and punctuation elements.

These ultimately led to extensive regional variations which we see in such examples as different spellings for common words like color or colour, or flavor vs. flavour. (see <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/MiddleEnglish>)

For a look at a truly fine piece of Middle English Literature, I would recommend exploring *The Canterbury Tales*, written by our Father of Middle English Literature, Geoffrey Chaucer (1340s-15 October 1400).

Middle English developed over many decades following the Norman Conquest of 1066, not only through linguistic influences of Norman French, but also of Old Norse from Viking populations that had settled in Northern Britain.

This evolution of the English language was affected by the differences between the world regions—the linguistics employed by different regions were considered, assessed, and either accepted or rejected based on the social, economical, and political influences of the region in question.

Our English language worldwide is what it is today due to the various factors mentioned above. This concludes our look at the Evolution of the English language.

*{Find out what's coming next from Donna here}*

### GRAMMAR QUIZ

Which of the following is correct?

- A. The newspaper quoted him as saying, “Everything in due time”.
- B. The newspaper quoted him as saying, “Everything in due time.”

*{Answer on page 12}*





# Pay Phones!

by Joanne Alexakis

It was 1994, before the popularity of cell phones, when Nick and I sold our home in Rochester, Minnesota, and started full-time RVing. We left without a phone and no way for anyone to reach us.

In order to stay in touch with my family, my sister and I set up a weekly schedule for me to call her collect from a pay phone. Paula kept in contact with our four brothers and relayed their questions and comments to me. Her technique worked superbly and I loved hearing about my relatives. These trusty pay phones also served as my accounting headquarters to check up on bank balances, my scheduling booth for RV park reservations, and my cubicle for setting up mail drops.

Making a phone call was always challenging and rarely did I have the delight of a phone booth that lit up when you slid the folding door shut. Those beauties seemed to be reserved for Clark Kent when he needed to change into his Superman outfit. A majority of the pay phones I used were open boxes attached to a wall or a post. Unless they were in a mall hallway, they were usually outdoors. That, of course, put us pay phone users outside, standing in line, in hot or cold weather, with rain, wind, darkness or bees, flies and maybe mosquitoes. So, I was always properly dressed for my pay phone calling sessions and prepared for a little shower on my shoulders, dust blowing into my nostrils, or a wasp who had already claimed my pay phone as his nesting site. Somehow I successfully shared these pay phones with all types of weather and many little critters.

In 1997, I used the Rapid City, South Dakota, Wal-Mart pay phone located inside their front doors. I had to call my Escapees girlfriend, Kitty Ann, with whom I had worked at Custer State Park in the Black Hills of South Dakota. Our 14-year-old German Shepherd Dog had died of old age, and I knew Kitty Ann would want to know and comfort me. As I told her on the phone about my beloved dog, tears were running down my face, my voice was trembling, and even though I was speaking as quietly as possible, other Wal-Mart shoppers could hear my shaky conversation. When I finished talking to Kitty Ann, I hung up and turned to do some shopping. Twenty feet in front of me, and looking at me with some concern was a young Native American man. He was about my height with straight shoulder-length black hair and a very sympathetic appearance. He walked up to me and placed his thumb on my forehead as if to leave a gentle imprint. Then he nodded and disappeared into the store. He spoke no words, but I was left with a sense of, "You will be okay." I thought maybe I had been favored by an Indian medicine man. That pay phone had put me in a position to receive this blessing. A humbling feeling!

Nick and I eventually got set up with a voice mail service through my Discover credit card. We called an 800 phone # to leave messages for our family and friends and they could leave messages for us in return. We could check on the location of fellow SKP Boomers, meet up with them on our travels, and share campsite locations. It was a step up!

Unfortunately, pay phones were taken out of service, disconnected from their posts and walls. One reason I heard that the pay phones were being removed was because drug dealers were using them like their own private office. Taking the phones away interrupted the dealers' services. Having fewer pay phones for communication didn't hamper Nick and me since we were happy to accept a Workamper-type job that required a cell phone, which our employer supplied. Once we got that instrument, we were spoiled!

Our current Smart phones are awesome but cannot compete with the indebtedness I have for the simple pay phone. I am grateful to these reliable inventions that allowed me to communicate my needs in this world.

*Joanne & Nick Alexakis (SKP#19367) began full-time RVing in 1994 and just received their Escapees 30-year-membership pin. Back in 1994, boondocked out in the Arizona desert, Joanne became encouraged by a newly-formed and inspirational group of SKP Boomers who were initiating the Penwheels BoF. Their influence was a primary motivation for her interest in writing and she still shares friendships with many of them. This winter Nick & Jo are again enjoying the Arizona desert, mountains, sunrises & sunsets.*

## A Lesson in Alone Time

by Lew Leistikow  
{Concluded from page 7}



## Marisa's Member Profile:

Janna Roznos

{Concluded from page 4}

I've said often, these past four years, that never before in my life, have I been alone. It is a difficult transition for me, never having been a loner. I knew guys in the service who were loners - - going on 'liberty' by themselves. But that just wasn't me. I liked to be with the group. And in my marriage, we, the three of us and later when Diana had grown there were the two of us and we were a group in ourselves. We both enjoyed being with others, but were also very comfortable and happy just with each other.

And so, these days, as I continue 'down the road', both along the highways as well as the 'road of life', I think that a brief encounter with a lady and fellow traveler at a rest stop may have taught me an important lesson. But I'll have to work hard at remembering what she said. It is far too easy to feel lonely and to feel sorry for myself. "Use the time to regain your strength, to appreciate this wonderful world that God has created, to meditate, and to offer prayers."

You can see the results of Janna's writing focus in her short story in "Secrets of Moonlight Cove: A Romance Anthology," and then stay tuned for her first novel. Once she'd written it, she sent it to a few beta readers and got good feedback. Like many writers, she wasn't content with that and wanted it to be even better. While it's hard to find that 'good enough' point and stop fiddling, Janna brilliantly secured a developmental editor. The editor picked up all the great things that were working in the book, and also zeroed in on the parts that weren't doing what they needed to - along with suggestions on how to shore them up.

Janna's working on that now, making her novel into something readers will absolutely fall in love with.

A happy ending we all deserve!

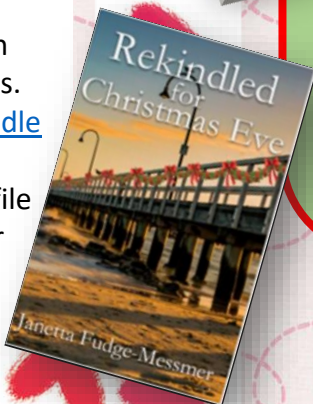


You can follow Janna's adventures and updates at her blog, [www.jannaroznos.com](http://www.jannaroznos.com), and on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (all as Janna Roznos).

## New Book by Penwheeler Janetta Fudge Messmer

Love a good Christian love story? Then this is your book! In *Rekindled for Christmas Eve*, Reese Solomon retires from the Navy, but settling into civilian life brings him some unexpected twists. Find out more about this novel for [Kindle here](#) and [paperback here](#).

If you missed Marisa's excellent profile of Janette, you'll find it in the Summer 2022 issue. **Congrats, Janetta!!**



Marisa Wolf has been writing since the age of six when she penned illustrated "Sarah and Idaho Potatoes." A science fiction and fantasy novelist, Marisa's latest novel, *Ally*, is now available. She and her husband have been full-timing for over two years. Find out more about her books at [marisawolf.net](http://marisawolf.net).







## WINTER PROMPTS

- ‡ In honor of MLK Day, write a speech on civil rights that you would give if you could.
- ‡ Write a valentine's sentiment for someone you don't like, focusing on their positive attributes.
- ‡ Draft a short story about two very opposite people who fall in love.
- ‡ Pick someone randomly on the street. When you get home, write a poem about that person.



## Special Dates for Writers

December  
 7th: National Letter Writing Day  
 8th: National Pretend to Be a Time Traveler Day  
 10th: Dewey Decimal System Day AND Nobel Prize Day  
 22st: National Crossword Puzzle Day  
 30th: No Interruptions Day

January  
 2nd: National Science Fiction Day  
 8th: World Typing Day  
 11th: National Clean Off Your Desk Day  
 18th: National Thesaurus Day

February  
 4th: Thank Your Mailman Day  
 7th: National Send a Card to a Friend Day  
 14th: International Book Giving Day  
 17th: Random Acts of Kindness Day



## Summing Up the Evolution of the English Language

by D. G. Smeall

*{Continued from page 8}*

Next time, we will take a look at Alliteration, which is the recurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words. This alliteration is a great tool and gives a piece of writing a lulling, lyrical, and/or emotive effect. Umm, did you catch that alliteration there?

Depending on when this article is published, I am wishing you a Happy Holiday Season or else, welcoming you to our new year, 2023! Whenever you see this article, know that I am thinking of all our Penwheelers and Escapee RVers and wishing them the best blessed times of their lives.

In closing, you can be sure that I am enjoying some great quality family time with my parents, Barb and Harley Pickett plus my son, David with his new wife, Minami.

Minami hails from Fukokoma, Japan and is newly wedded to my son, David. (Please forgive me my bragging, but I have waited for this event for a long time. Now, I can't wait until they make me a grandmother. (giggling).)

Blessed be until we meet again in 2023,

D.G. Smeall

[dgsmeall@me.com](mailto:dgsmeall@me.com)



*Donna Gates-Smeall is an accomplished writer with two books (Com-PEN-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.*

All I want for Christmas.... is **you**! Well, your writing, that is! The Spring 2023 issue will celebrate new beginnings, and we hope to include YOUR poetry, short stories, personal experience pieces, and advice of all kinds related to writing. Send your submissions to [ellenbehr@aol.com](mailto:ellenbehr@aol.com); put **Penwheels** in the subject line, and send it before February 15.



Guess where most romance books are set! The beaches of Hawaii? The snowy mountaintops of Colorado? Nope and nope! Bloomington, Indiana, is the setting of 92.59% of all romance novels in America. If you're surprised by that, you'll **never** believe the third most-used city for a romance book. See the list (scroll down the page) and find out other amazing facts about books and locations in "Books Around America" here: <https://crossword-solver.io/books-set-around-america>

### GRAMMAR QUIZ

This is a common error—I've even seen it in big-city newspapers. **B** is correct: *The newspaper quoted him as saying, "Everything in due time."*

The rule for this is really very simple: periods *almost always* go inside double quotation marks (one exception is when there's a citation for the quoted material). For more details on this rule and its few exceptions, [follow this link](#).

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## Where Are You?

by Darlene Miller

*{Concluded from the first page}*

You can have your mail delivered to the nearest post office via general delivery. I suppose the law could subpoena Escapees Mail Service to learn which post office general delivery site the mail was sent. Then they would need someone to stake out the post office to catch the person picking up the mail.

Once when I was in the Escapees RV Park in Livingston, Texas, a deputy asked me where an address was on Rainbow Drive. I told him that it was in the mail building over there. He said, "But I'm supposed to serve a paper." He left without going into the building.

But being incognito does not sell books. When a friend asked to help me by writing a news item for the local newspaper and TV news, I had a hard time explaining where to send it.

The problem with being parked nowhere is there isn't much opportunity to sell books. However, the campground has a craft sale every week. Among the homemade dishcloths, plastic bag holders, jewelry, and cookies, you will find me selling my books. You guessed it. Writing is my craft.

I do see some of the same people at the campground year after year. I socialize with them but by January; I really need a big hug fix. Then I go about 40 miles south to Quartzsite, AZ and meet with the Boomers.

The Readers Oasis, in Quartzsite, is a bookstore where Joanne Winer welcomes all authors to have a book signing. When you ask her, she will tell you to provide your own table and chair and sit outside the bookstore. However, there are not as many customers to the store since her husband, Paul Winer, died. He was known as the naked bookstore owner.

*Darlene Miller and her husband, Terry Miller, are parents of eight children. They spent 15 years full-time and 11 years half-time traveling in all the states and provinces of North America in their RV to see their kids and other family members. She loves to read and write.*

*Find out about her books here:*

<https://www.amazon.com/Darlene-Miller/e/B06Y49KMVV>

You can contact her at: [rovingpenna@gmail.com](mailto:rovingpenna@gmail.com)

## Your Special Invitation!

A recent Escapees Magazine article described MyRVRadio.com – a streaming service especially for RVers. Program Director Lucinda Belden invites you to e-mail her with info about your book(s) and links! If you're selected for an interview, they'll contact you. Interviews are not live, so no worries about stage fright! E-mail your info to [Lucinda@myrvradio.com](mailto:Lucinda@myrvradio.com) and tell her you're a Penwheels member. Good luck and let us know if you'll be on the air so we can spread the word!



## Letter to the Editor

This is in response to the last Penwheels newsletter. First, it was great! Lots and lots of info. Maybe I paid more attention because I was in it—profile and writing about losing our Chief. I really felt flattered and pleased to see me in print. Anyway, I have taken a lot away.

I know it's just a quarterly and something that you do in addition to all your other activities, but some items prompt a "Letters to the Editor" note. And maybe not really appropriate for a quarterly but, in a way, that's another compliment—good stuff.

I have taken away some of the individual contacts noted at the bottom of various articles and hope to add to my desire to write more. Deb Sanders notes on her page that she has several short stories that are unpublished. So, how do you share something like that? For me, I'm not too anxious to be published, but would like to share some stuff and especially get feedback. The feedback is the big thing that helps me improve and urges me to write more.

Notes to the Ed: Re: Jaimie's Tips - gives some good reference sites.

- Braggin' Rights - nice to see the mentions
- LFL's - my daughter was doing this in Denver a few years ago
- Jaimie's 'Keeping in touch'. We hit the road in '86. Not only little to no computer/email/web, but had to stop at a military base (I'm retired Navy) to cash a check - \$100 - and sometimes Sears, using their credit card. Pay phones to stay in touch with daughter, family etc. Compared to today=Wow!
- Will have to explore 'Free Stuff'
- I clipped your 'Fall Prompts' as a reminder. Will try to do this. The Prompts and the contest; or does one count for the other? Anyway, I'll try for both . . .

Thanks for all your efforts,

Lew [Leistikow]

**We'd love to hear what YOU think of the newsletter! We read everything we receive and take every suggestion to heart.**

**This is YOUR newsletter – so have your say! Just send your notes to: Ellen at [ellenbehr@aol.com](mailto:ellenbehr@aol.com)**



*Thanks, Lew! Each contributor works hard to inspire and instruct us, so hearing they've succeeded motivates all of us to keep at it! We hope you'll continue to send us your writing, and that more Penwheels members will join in the fun!*

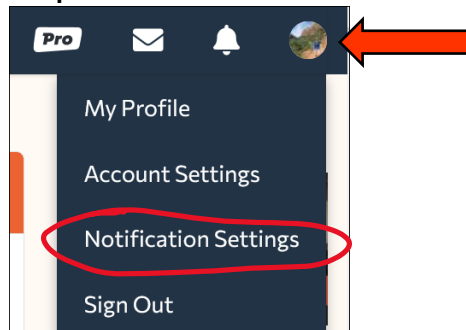
*Ellen*

## Missing Issues? Learning About Contests Too Late?

{This is long but important!}

The only thing that's constant is change, and that's certainly true with technology and all things "e-". If you're missing news from this group or just want to cover all of your bases, here are some tips.

1. **Make sure the editor has your e-mail address.** You DON'T have to be an Escapee member to receive the e-mail. E-mails won't come addressed to you but to [ellenbehr@aol.com](mailto:ellenbehr@aol.com) (the same e-mail address you should use to get on the mailing list); that's because I send a blanket e-mail using a "BCC" option to keep everyone's e-mail address private.
2. **Check your Spam mail.** Look for "ellenbehr" or "Ellen Behrens" as a sender, then save the e-mail address to your Contacts to keep future e-mails from going into your Spam folder. (It might take a few go-rounds to make this work.)
3. **Access the newsletters directly online from the Penwheels Newsletter Archive page:**
  1. Go to: <https://ellenbooks.com/newsletter-archive/>
  2. Click the link for the issue you'd like to read
  3. Pick either "Save" (and the PDF will download to your device in the folder you've designated or "Open" to read the PDF online (you can save it from here, too!).
4. **Sign up for RVillage, create a profile, and join the Escapees BOF-Penwheels Group:** when new issues of the newsletter are published, an announcement is made here, as are postings about contests and other items of interest. You can contact Marisa, our Penwheels RVillage moderator, to join the group or do it on your own.
  1. Once you're signed up, make sure you **set your Notifications, so you be alerted when something new is posted.** Click the icon in the far upper right corner (on my laptop, this is the image I uploaded of myself) to open a drop-down menu.



- a) **Click the "Notification Settings"** to set your preferences for how you'd like to be alerted.
5. If you don't see the Escapees BOF-Penwheels group on the left side menu on RVillage under "Groups I Have Joined" (the latest group you join will show), you'll have to do a search to find it. According to an RVillage admin, here's how to do that:
  1. When using the desktop version of RVillage, click "Discover" to expose the drop-down menu
  2. Click "Groups." On the left side of your page look for "Groups I have Joined," and click to view all.
  3. On this page, you can use the search bar to locate Escapees BOF-Penwheels or you can look through each page if you prefer.

(This isn't much fun, and I've been in touch with RVillage; they'll hopefully create an easier way to make the Group appear. I'll pass on any updates.) Remember: browsers and using a phone could affect these instructions.

Please let me or Marisa know if you have trouble getting this newsletter so we can see if there's anything we can do to help. We'd love to "see" you online!

*Ellen*

