



Fall 2023

# Penwheels

For Escapees Writers . . . Published or Not

## HIS NAME WAS GILBERT

BY JANICE LASKO

August 1988 was our third year as full-time RVers. We were in Texas on the bottom tip of South Padre Island because friends told us that area is one of the prime windsurfing spots in the United States.

“Let’s go,” we said.

We didn’t know if we were early or late for the windsurfing season, or even if there was a season. No matter, we had nothing but time and could stay as long as we liked. . . or not!

A cozy, 10-space RV park on the bay side became our home base. The owners of the park, Jan and Jim, made room for our 40-foot fifth-wheel. We wrestled the rig in, nested and settled in, waiting for the winds.

Jan and I became friends; we walked every morning. Gabby and Jim talked fishing and gardening. That’s how Gabby ended up taking care of the plants and flowers around the park and was able to reduce our monthly space rent. Gardening has always been one of his happy places.

The setting was ideal because Jim allowed us to leave our sails rigged and moor them with our boards at their pier that jutted out from their fishing supply and grocery store. The RV park, store, storage and gardening sheds, and their manufactured home were connected by a boardwalk.

Whenever a breeze came up, we’d put our harnesses on, hook the masts to our boards, hook on to the boom and in less than five minutes, start sailing. Bathing suits were usually already on.

One day the winds started to blow; a gentle breeze at first, then stronger. Gabby and I spent the morning sailing non-stop across the Bay. It was glorious.

*{If you read Janice’s essay last time, you know this perfect adventure is about to take a turn for the worse! [Read more on page 13](#)}*



## EDITOR’S NOTE

Fall is so often seen as a time when things are shriveling up and dying—not around here! Your fellow Penwheelers keep bringing new life to the group, which keeps things interesting and less predictable. (And if we liked predictability, we wouldn’t be RVers, would we?)

We welcome new voices, the return of familiar ones, and much more. More than 20 of you responded to our survey, providing insight into the writing you do (or hope to do) and how Penwheels can help you accomplish those goals. See a rundown on the results ([page 3](#)) AND a new opportunity to connect with other Penwheelers ([page 11](#))! (Can you tell I’m excited about it?)

Sabine Hartmann launched a challenge in the in Facebook group, with terrific results, 100 words at a time. See those stories starting on [page 12](#).

Did you know that the word “essay” means “to try”? Trying to tell the truth is what essay writing is all about.

So since “essay” **doesn’t** mean “perfect piece of writing,” give writing one a shot and submit it! If you’ve not yet sent something in, you can still qualify for the Win-Win random drawing with a submission to the Winter 2023 issue (deadline: November 15). Go for it!

*Ellen*



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

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AND MORE!



## BRAGGIN' RIGHTS

BY  
JOANNE ALEXAKIS

CarolAnn Quibell SKP#38554—who lives in Canada—contributes an article to the *Escapees* July/August 2023 magazine (page 54): "Welcome to Canada!" She tells us how to cross this international border, the rules, the restrictions, and some wise questions to ask yourself before entering Canada. Years ago (my old memory does not recall which years) CarolAnn was our Penwheels newsletter editor. I thank her for her past volunteering and welcome her back home!

Lucinda Belden SKP#159950 relates her experiences adapting to the desert, "The Desert in the Human" (page 21). Lucinda, congrats on seeing the beauty of our beloved desert lands!



What can you do with a well-worn book other than throw it out? Grow crystals on it and make it into a unique piece of art! That's what Alexis Arnold has been doing. See examples at [alexisarnold.com](http://alexisarnold.com)

## JAIMIE'S TIPS

BY JAIMIE BRUZENAK



Get paid a decent amount for your writing! "Ten Paying Writing Markets that Pay \$10-\$1000" in the *Writers Weekly* May 31, 2023 issue:

<https://writersweekly.com/this-weeks-article/10-paying-writing-markets-that-pay-10-to-1000-by-emmanuel-olaleye>

Maybe one of these apps will be useful to you! *Writers Weekly* June 15, 2023 issue includes

"8 Phone Apps That Can Help Your Writing Career" by Omoleye Okusaga: <https://writersweekly.com/this-weeks-article/8-phone-apps-that-can-help-your-writing-career-by-omoleye-okusaga>

**Warning** for authors with books on Amazon or available through Ingram. See this July 28, 2023, *Writers Weekly* article: <https://writersweekly.Com/angela-desk/warning-and-please-share-authorunit-is-still-trying-to-scam-authors>

EDITOR'S NOTE: *IKES! MY BAD! I just found these tips from Jaimie in another e-mail account... More to enjoy this month, eh?!?*

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>

Are you thinking of having Aunt Martha who used to teach high school English edit your book? Think again. And read this article in *Writers Weekly* 12/3/21: "Why You Should NOT Hire Just Any Old Tahm, Dikk, or Herry to Edit Your Book." <https://writersweekly.com/angela-desk/why-you-should-not-hire-just-any-old-tahm-dikk-or-herry-to-edit-your-book>

{ Oh. . there's more! [See page 12!](#) }



## SURVEY SAYS...

**THANK YOU** to all of you who took a few minutes out of your precious writing time (yes, I know that's what was sacrificed...) to fill out the 2023 Penwheels survey. Your input will help **us** deliver a better newsletter to **you**, and that's valuable to all of us.

This issue is taking a first step in incorporating some of the ideas and wishes you expressed (see "Survey Says: Connect!" on [page 11](#)). As with everything in this newsletter, it's up to you whether it works or not.

So, who are we? (Or, at least, who answered the survey?) What do we write?

- 46% of us write short stories, personal essays, and memoir/autobiography
- 34% write magazine articles, letters and blog entries
- 27% write novels
- 23% write poetry
- Also noted: songwriting, scriptwriting, social media content, children's books, and grocery lists ☺

We primarily write for publication (46%), for family and friends (27%), and for ourselves (27%).

73% of respondents have been published while close to 8% are not interested in publishing their writing. Of those published, 71% are self-published and 24% said they are traditionally published; the remainder said they're not sure they know the difference (there's article there, don't you think?).

What compels us to sit down and write? Everything! Self-expression, family histories, recording inner thoughts and ideas, to finish projects like novels and articles, to share their faith, and set the imagination free were all mentioned as writing goals.

But our challenges are pretty much the same: making the time to write, lacking confidence, improving writing skills, sticking with a project, and marketing came up more than once. Revision and editing were also mentioned. (Ah! So many ways we can help each other!)

{For more on the survey results and to see who won the random drawing, [go to page 18](#)}

## LITTLE FREE LIBRARY

CONTRIBUTED BY JAIMIE BRUZENAK



Little Free Library on the beach in Coronado, CA.



Pick up a book to read while you sun!

Isn't this a great author photo?

[Click here](#) if you're curious to know more about the writer Paul Samael who used it on his "About" page.



*A rare photo of the reclusive author trying to work out how to turn on his laptop*



# ONOMASTICS : WHAT'S IN A NAME?

BY DG SMEALL

Before I dive into the wonders of our English language's etymological devices, I wanted to apologize to my readers for my lapse of an article in the last two issues. Much has happened in the short time that I have been away from my writing desk, between losing a brother and a carpal tunnel syndrome surgery on my right hand; life has been hectic and unpredictable which made me unpredictable with my column. So I hope you will forgive me for failing to deliver in the previous issues.

First of all, you need to understand that there was a time when names were not important to a person, survival as a species was the only thing that kept individuals moving one step at a time. What I mean to say is that in the undertaking of developing a common English-centric language, many devices were created to boost the value of their native language versus one common language (being English). There was the dictionary war which was touched on in my last article; then the genres of the English language were introduced to further define the foundations of the English language for all to engage in.

Onomastics is the naming practice of the Anglo-Saxon, Vikings, and many other ethnicities that make up the foundations of world-based English. With the emergence of societies overtaking another society, there came a blending of types of English. Over decades, we see a traditional take on English which could be seen as the Shakespearean English or Chaucer language; then there is the introduction of slang, which slid into our English language in the 19th Century, along with dissecting differences in the English language when spoken with an accent, which refers to the British English versus the American English.

This is added to by way of an intrinsic need for belonging when a person had built his reputation in his society. He then sought to have a name for himself, whether it be as a blacksmith, a scribe, or a banker.

Initially, these individuals may have chosen their occupation as their surname, or perhaps their physical location may have been the source from which they got their surname (e.g. Warner is a region of Germany which has families with the last name Warner or derivatives of the name Warner, such as Werner, Wessel, Vessel, Wessells, and Warne). In the case of occupation, the scribe might take the last name : Writer, Author, Scribe, Scribbler or Penn.

Failing those methods of getting a surname, as in the case of Swedish and Norwegian surnames, they became sons of Anders (Andersonnes) or daughter of Anderson (Andersdotter/Andersdatter). A nod to the parental naming practice is the intent of an individual named Anderson who develops a township as well, who soon becomes the Father of the town of (whatever last name the developer was born with), and names it, for example, Andersonville.

In some rare occasions, a writer might choose a nom de plume under which to write. Some examples of this are Mark Twain, who was actually Samuel Clemens, and romance writer Nora Roberts, who also writes under other names J.D. Robb, Jill March and Sarah Hardesty. The reasons are too numerous to list here as to why a person would write under a different name or adopt another name to live under after their parents so carefully aligned their name at the time of the child's birth.

[{Read Donna's conclusion on page 15}](#)

You can't wait for inspiration. You  
have to go after it with a club.

-- Jack London

*It doesn't matter if you're worthy  
of doing it.  
It matters that it's worthy of doing.  
-- Amy Rowland*



# FICTION TIPS: HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR CHARACTERS?

BY DEBRA S. SANDERS

I'm working on a project to create an AI version of my main character, Daisy O'Connor in the Dead Tales series. My developer asked what type of personality she had so he could incorporate those traits. I sent copies of my books; a recent book trailer that is lighthearted, fun, and embodies the "feel" of the series; and provided an overview of her backstory. That should have been enough, right?

Wrong.

He asked me to take a Myers-Briggs personality evaluation, pretending I was "Daisy." I did, and the results were disconcerting. Her personality type was more introverted and less headstrong than the character I believed I was writing. I guess I don't know Daisy as well as I thought I did.

Understanding our characters is crucial for creating engaging and authentic storytelling. A starting point in character development should incorporate one or more of the following strategies:

- Character Profiles - Create detailed character profiles that include information about their background, personality traits, values, beliefs, motivations, fears, and goals. Write down their physical appearance, family history, and any other relevant details that shape who they are.
- Backstories - Craft detailed backstories for your characters, including significant life events and experiences that have shaped them. Understanding their past can shed light on their present actions and decisions.
- Flaws and Vulnerabilities - Avoid making characters too perfect. Introduce flaws, vulnerabilities, and internal conflicts that make them more relatable and human.
- Character Arcs - Plan your characters' arcs throughout the story. Understanding where they start and where they end up in their growth and journey can help develop their personalities and actions.
- Psychological Tools - Familiarize yourself with psychological tools like the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) or the Enneagram to gain insights into character traits and behaviors.

That brings us to MBTI—Myers-Briggs Type Indicator—and the evaluation of that personality known as an Enneagram.

While there are some impressive resources in print to help writers understand archetypes, such as *The Complete Writer's Guide to Heroes & Heroines* or *The Hero Within*, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator takes our understanding to a deeper level and helps avoid stereotypes. When writers assign an MBTI personality type to their characters, it helps them maintain consistency throughout the narrative. Characters with defined personalities are more likely to respond to situations in ways that align with their traits, making their actions and reactions believable and coherent.

Investing time and effort into understanding your characters on a psychological level is the path to creating multi-dimensional, relatable, and compelling personas that will resonate with your readers and enrich your storytelling.

It's essential to remember that while the MBTI can be a valuable tool, it's not a comprehensive representation of the human personality. People are complex and multifaceted, and characters should be, too. Use the MBTI as one of many tools designed for character development to create rich, relatable, and memorable fictional personas.

Here are some resource links if you'd like to learn more or try the MBTI for free.

<https://www.verywellmind.com/the-myers-briggs-type-indicator-2795583> > Myers-Briggs Guide  
<https://www.crystalknows.com/personality-type/types> > Enneagram types and test  
<https://personalityjunkie.com/enneagram-posts/> > Myers-Briggs – Enneagram Correlations

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://debsonders.com>

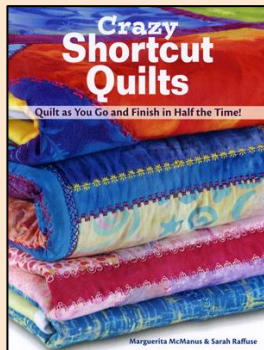


# MARKET SHARE: If a Picture is Worth a Thousand Words...

BY MARGUERITA McMANUS

If a picture is worth a thousand words, what's a book cover worth? Does a book cover evoke expectations when you reach for a book? Do you choose the books you reach for by their cover?

I wish creating a book cover was as easy for authors as creating a menu: take a photo of the meal and let it sell itself. That even worked for me when I was writing quilting books. My personal funny story is that the one book I had traditionally published is the only cover I've ever received criticism on. All of my other book covers are photos I've taken. Here's the trad pub book, *Crazy Shortcut Quilts*, and my best-selling book. I used the 3-panel design idea from a movie poster as inspiration for the *T-Shirt Quilts* cover.



When I started writing novels, I hoped I could do the same thing. Pull out a photo, chose a good font and go. After a lot of research, I chose to hire a professional for my novels.

I'm an avid reader. It takes a good cover to entice me to click to read the blurb. My search for a new book to read usually begins with genre, which I specify online, the same way I use aisle locators in a bookstore. If I'm looking at the bestsellers, mixed genres on a rack or table (or online), I can tell a lot by the cover. Is it a playful bit of artwork? It's a Cozy something—mystery or beach read. Man chest? Romance, possibly spicy. Daggers, guns, and city streets? Crime. But what about within those genres? What are the things you look for to tell you that the author has written something you like reading?

Here's my attempt at a cover and my professional cover designer's version. Which would you reach for or click on and why? What does each cover say to you?



Author Marguerita McManus writes quilting books and contemporary fiction based on life in her home state of Alaska. A snowbird RVer, she's happiest boondocking in the desert. Contact her at [MMQuilts@gmail.com](mailto:MMQuilts@gmail.com)



# WORLD OF PUBLISHING: GENERATING A BOOK TITLE

BY MARGO ARMSTRONG

Common sense tells you that a book title should reflect the book content for obvious reasons: the reader. One of my favorite mentors, Dave Chesson, in his article [“Best Book Title Generator 2023: Free Tools & Trade Secrets,”](#) points you in the right direction here.

Nothing draws a reader in more than creating intrigue with your title. [Dan McManus makes this clear in his LinkedIn article way back in 2015.](#) The intrigue factor plays upon one’s curiosity and is a powerful motivator for readers to hit the “buy” button.

“Intrigue makes things interesting. We can’t help but want to know what’s behind door number 2. We’re nosy! When looking to stimulate sales, it’s one of the most powerful tools in our toolbox.” For most of us, clicking an online link satisfies that itch, we hope.

**WARNING:** On the path to creating intrigue, it’s easy to stray from the genre or get too broad, causing confusion. Watch out for this mistake!

Your title should match your genre. There are plenty of helpful tropes for fantasy titles, young adult titles, horror titles, mystery titles, non-fiction titles, etc. These tropes are not bad. Genre pairing helps the right kind of reader find your book.

The title might be the only thing a potential buyer ever sees, so your title needs to convey what your book is actually about. The book title needs to be **relevant** and **specific**.

Don’t mention dragons if there aren’t any dragons in your book. Don’t mention sexual themes if there are no sexual themes. Don’t mention corporate America if it doesn’t feature in the book. (Definitely do mention these if they show up in the book.)

Amazon has certain [book title rules](#) and requirements that authors must follow:

- The title on your cover must match what you put into Amazon.
- You can’t use claims of bestseller, rank, etc., in your title, even if it’s a bestselling book.
- Don’t mention deals, discounts, or reduced prices — even if it isn’t a lie.
- You can’t reference other books or any other trademarks.
- You can’t reference other authors or their [pen names](#).
- No irrelevant advertising is allowed.

Margo Armstrong is the author and publisher of over [10 books](#) now available on Amazon. Her book [“Writing and Publishing Books for Fun and Profit”](#) is available in eBook and Print format. Listen to her podcast “RV Lifestyle Expert” on your favorite podcast platform (now available on Amazon Music). Her monthly blog can be found at [MovingOnWithMargo.com](#)



## WORD OF THE QUARTER

Have you ever used a MacGuffin when writing a story or a book?  
Find out [at https://www.wordgenius.com/words/mac-guffin](https://www.wordgenius.com/words/mac-guffin)

Many thanks to Jaimie for providing us with this Word of the Day... one good enough to hold us for the next few months





# THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY (Almost 20 years in the making)

BY JANETTA FUDGE MESSMER

Today, I'm going to tell you about my latest novella, *Rekindled for Christmas Eve*. It is a Contemporary Christian Romance set in Annapolis, Maryland. And with any book—it has to have a back story. However, the backstory in this one doesn't have anything to do with the plot of *Rekindled for Christmas Eve* and all to do with my siblings and their help on this particular project.

Let me explain.

**THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY:** Years ago (2004), I spent a few weeks with my two sisters. We sat down for a couple of nights together and started brainstorming this particular story.

My oldest sister, Debbie, shared some great ideas to get me started on the plot. But my other sister, Linda, aimed for the stars when she said, "When Hollywood makes this into a movie, Tom Selleck will be perfect for the part of Reese."

I laughed at her optimism for my not-yet-written book and about said story making it to the big screen. However, for whatever reason, when I returned home, I put the story away and worked on many other projects.

In 2022, I glanced through my idea folder and found the notes from my sisters and our brainstorming session from 2004. So I decided it was time to sit down and write Reese and Madison's story.

When I typed THE END is when I brought my brother Stan into the picture because he's retired Navy. And since the Naval Academy is part of the story, I sought his expertise on all things Navy. I am forever in his debt for helping me get the Naval ranks correct.

After my brother and I finished discussing what I needed to fix, I said, "Stan, you can now check off your Bucket List that you've read a Christian Contemporary Romance." He laughed and said, "I enjoyed reading it. Then he added, "It'd make a great Hallmark movie."

Concerning *Rekindled for Christmas Eve* becoming a movie: Mr. Selleck won't play the main character, but he would make a perfect Captain Pointer. For Reese, I'm voting for Bradley Cooper. Just saying. . .

We've all heard the saying that "It takes a village." In my case, my family helped me accomplish a task that I'm not sure I'd have finished on my own.

*"Turning Life into Comedy" is Janetta Fudge Messmer's tagline. She writes Christian Comedy (with a touch of Romance). For Janetta, writing and traveling go hand in hand since she, her hubby, and their pooch are full-time RVers. Most days include sightseeing... but first Janetta has to sit down and write a few words.*



Here is the short blurb for *Rekindled for Christmas Eve*:

Reese Solomon returns to Annapolis—the place where Madison broke his heart. He's not back in Maryland a week and learns he has a twenty-five-year-old daughter named Kimberly.

The two meet and agree it is a God thing. They spend time together, and Reese finds out Madison (Kim's mom) is a widow. He hopes they can rekindle their romance, but Madison wants nothing to do with him.

Where was he when she needed him? Why believe him now? And the so-called miracles Reese and her family talk about are driving Madison nuts. Will she continue to believe the lies others have told her, or will she allow the past to convince her of the truth and to trust in Reese and the Lord again?

Get *Rekindled*  
for just 99¢  
Sept 1 – Sept 30  
Don't wait to get your  
copy!

Find Janetta's books on Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/-/e/B01DWHA1EW>

Or connect with her online...

Website: <http://janettafudgemessmer.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/janetta.fudge.messmer>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/nettiefudge>





# REMEMBERING AN SKP BOOK PROJECT: AN INTERVIEW WITH KAY HUCKELBERRY

*They called themselves "The Girls of Summer": eight women from the North Ranch SKP park who decided to learn the ins and outs of writing a book by doing it, rather than reading about it. Published in 2006, the paperback book is still available online. Sadly, many of The Girls of Summer have passed on, but we're fortunate to have the insights Kaye Huckelberry, who not only helped write the book but served as an editor for it. See the Spring 2023 issue for a companion interview with Jane Holcombe, another participant in this amazing book project.*



**The wonderful introduction explains how Norma Scheall, founder of the North Ranch Writers' Group, dreamed up the project, wrote the first chapter, and "assigned" chapters to the rest of you. Did the group outline what would follow her first chapter? Or did each writer just wing it?**

If my memory serves me correct, Ms. Norma wrote the first chapter... then we were off on our own. Ms. Norma had set down some guidelines IE: No murder and NO negativity. Challenge for a book called *Mystery at North Ranch*.

**Was anyone unsure about their assignment? If someone was, how did that person -- or the group -- work through that?**

I remember we all were excited to hear what we each wrote...one chapter at a time. Since we didn't know where the writer in front of us was going with the story, it wasn't easy to have any preconceived ideas about what our own chapter would take us. I believe we all knew what our assignments were whether we knew how or where we would end up at the end. At our weekly meetings support and encouragement were given to each 'unsure' writer. Suggestions were given but it was still up to each writer.

**How did you as a group work through any challenges with the story itself?**

Great question! Our dedicated "editor" worked diligently to keep the story in the proper sequence, characters straight and just making sure the flow kept moving forward. Jane Holcombe and I also worked with the individuals to work out kinks. Which proved very eye opening and challenging. As a close group of Escapees to start with, we knew and respect each other's differences and writing styles. Common respect for the individual was important. One particular writer went into minute detail about jewelry. I loved this writer dearly and worked with her carefully to keep the story itself moving and not get bogged down with over-the-top descriptions of any one aspect of her chapter. I still respect her in-depth knowledge of what she had written.

**What did you learn most from doing the project?**

What a question!!!! I feel the first thing I personally learned was patience. Waiting for the next writer to finish her chapter. Waiting to see where the book was going. Then that last long WAIT for the that truck to show up with the first true copies of Our Book! The one true thing I learned from this experience was to trust and accept all the different writing styles. When working with the writer and 'editing' THEIR writings was to keep THEIR voice in their chapter and to not change things into MY voice. I may have said something one way...BUT this was not my chapter! I learned to love each and everyone for their OWN writing style.

**Did you publicize the book? What was the general reception to the book?**

Oh boy did we!!!! I believe there was even an announcement in the Escapees magazine reviewing the book. Each Sunday night at our Ice Cream Social we held book signings!!! Each writer was there at tables as folks bought the book then walked down the line to have each and every writer autograph their chapter or photograph. Excitement abounded. What a glorious, fulfilling time. This adventure was sooo motivating and exhilarating. I still get goosebumps remembering all those times!

[{Read more from Kaye's interview on page 16}](#)



# SOMETIMES...

BY CAROL ANN QUIBELL

Sometimes we get in the way of ourselves.

Does that make sense? We let our insecurities dictate how we manage our lives and stop us from doing things we are sometimes meant to do or at least try.

When I first started writing I never told anyone I was a writer. I felt like a fraud and, as embarrassing as it is, I never believed I was good enough. Initially, if I sent in a query or submitted an article I would wait for days or sometimes weeks for a response, all the while knowing it would be rejected. And then when my predictions came true, I wasn't surprised.

To be honest, I didn't have a lot of rejections—maybe because I didn't submit as many articles as I thought I did. But there came the day when I actually got mad and gave myself a little talking to. "If you want to write for magazines, and maybe write a book someday, you have to believe in yourself because if you don't, no one else will."

I decided I had to sit up and take control of my writing career if I wanted to be successful and earn a living. I wouldn't accept "no" for an answer.

I targeted a print magazine with its focus on a subject I knew very well. I sent an email introducing myself, asking whether they were interested in receiving queries. The response I received might normally have made me move on. The editor thanked me but said they were not looking for new writers at this time.

However, I knew I was more than capable of writing articles they needed and knew their readers would find my articles helpful. I decided to write an article, gathered some photos, and submitted it to the editor without querying first. Two days later I received confirmation that they liked it and would publish it in the next edition. Oh, and by the way, they would pay me \$80. I was off to a good start. Three months later I was asked by this same editor if I would be interested in writing a monthly column and of course I said yes. I wrote a column for that magazine for five years and developed a very good working relationship with the editor and his staff.

I used that experience to start writing content for other magazines with similar interests, developing a bit of a following and many connections.

My next venture into stepping outside of my comfort zone started with moving into a new community where I didn't know anyone. I had been reading the local newspaper and found they didn't have any travel pieces or travel information at all. I thought they needed some and took myself down to the local newspaper office and introduced myself. I told the editor I was a freelance writer and travel blogger and was interested in writing travel pieces for her. I gave her a bit of information about myself and a business card, then left. The very next day she called and asked if I would come in for a visit.

Naturally I said yes and was soon sitting in her office discussing some of the paper's needs. She explained that they weren't interested in travel pieces but was hoping I might be interested in writing on local events and working with her on marketing material for local businesses. My response was yes, and over the next two years I learned so much from her and gained confidence in my abilities as a writer.

I learned quickly we must take control of our writing careers if we want to be successful. I joined a travel writing association, taking advantage of courses made available to its members, and I paid attention to other travel writers. I quickly realized they were just like me—writers!

When I'm asked what I do for a career I now comfortably answer, "I'm a travel writer and blogger." This usually gets the conversation going, and I find that people are curious and interested.

So now I am asking you. "Do you get in the way of yourself?"

You must believe in yourself first because no one else will until you do. You're a writer.

*For those who haven't met me yet, I'm an RVer, freelance writer, columnist and regular traveler who loves to share my love for RVing and travel with my readers. Contact me at [carolann@rvingincanada.com](mailto:carolann@rvingincanada.com) My RV Blog focuses on Canadian RVers and those who are interested in coming to Canada.*

<https://rvingincanada.com>



## Read Something Someone Says You Shouldn't Read



October 1 - 7, 2023

### GRAMMAR QUIZ

Heard on a local news report: "You might have noticed the smoke waffetting...."

What do you think she was trying to say? Why?

[{Check your answer on page 19}](#)

I WRITE *because it*  
FULFILLS ME  
I DO IT FOR THE  
*pure joy of the thing*  
and if you can do it for  
*Joy* YOU CAN DO IT  
FOREVER  
- Stephen King



## SURVEY SAYS: CONNECT!

Your input via the 2023 Penwheels survey will definitely be shaping what's to come in this newsletter, and *we're starting now!*

One of the things that came up often was the desire to connect to share each other's writing. We do what we can with the newsletter—it thrives on you sharing your work, after all—and the PW members who devote time to the Facebook page are helping with that as well.

Facebook is one way to share writing, but remember that Penwheels doesn't own FB (we wish we did have that revenue stream, though), so you should be wary of posting original work online in that space. Before you do, read the site's Terms and Conditions and make sure you're familiar with their Privacy Policy. You won't know what you're allowing them to do with your material until you read those.

So what else is there? Well, I have another option in mind and what better time than to give it a try than now? (Duh. None!)

Introducing: **PENWHEELS CONNECT!** I'll devote as much space as needed to providing classified ads where you can reach out to other members to. . .

- Find early readers who can provide feedback and encouragement (AKA "beta readers")
- Serve as an expert resource (our members know a lot of stuff!)
- Attract a "writing buddy"—someone who will check in to make sure you're getting things done
- And more! You fill in the blank here. . .

I'll start with an example (and a real issue, too!):

I'd love to hear from past and present full-time RVers about their idea of "home." Not just "home is where we park it," but how did/do you answer the question, "Where's home for you?" when you were/are on the road? Send your responses to Ellen at [ellenbehr@aol.com](mailto:ellenbehr@aol.com) with the subject line "RVers at Home" – THANK YOU!

This is just under 60 words and explains as succinctly as I can what I'm looking for (and yes, I'm working on a new book ☺). Send your **PENWHEELS CONNECT!** ads to me at [penwheels@gmail.com](mailto:penwheels@gmail.com) – Deadlines for each issue match the regular deadlines. Now, let's connect!





## 100-WORD CHALLENGE

Four Penwheelers (so far!) have taken up Sabine Hartmann's Facebook challenge. Here are two of the responses; see page XX for more!

### "Camping"

Two seventeen-year-olds were camping high up in the Rockies. Sleeping soundly near their campfire, they are suddenly awakened by a loud, strange noise. It sounded like it was a steam locomotive coming up the road. Their camp is alongside a dead-end dirt road at least fifteen direct miles over three mountain ranges from any railroad. Frightened and puzzled by the very strange, loud noise, they peer out at the empty road. But nothing is there. The canyon is totally dark but the sound seems to approach and pass on by. Yet, no light or vehicle was ever seen. Eerie!

--Lewis Leistikow

### "WIRED"

Brian worked on the device, then grabbed the tools he'd used. Sweat dripped on his sleeve.

"Hurry up, I think...I...heard...them."

"Chill out." Brian tightened the last screw. "Let's do this."

They raced to the other room. Steve hooked up the device and smiled. "Done." The two escaped.

The Egyptian dignitary entered. Applause filled the room. Today he'd turn King Tut's remains over. The U.S. tour would begin.

The dignitary walked over and opened the sarcophagus. Snap. The loudspeaker boomed, "Ain't Nothing But A Hound Dog."

--Janetta Fudge Messmer

## MORE TIPS FROM JAIMIE!

Poets: check out these possible markets for your work in the 12/17/21 issue of *Writers Weekly*:

<https://writersweekly.com/marketing-secrets/six-high-paying-poetry-markets-by-avery-springwood>

Is there time enough to get your book published before the holidays so you can give it as a gift? Well, that depends on how far along with it you are. After you finish the text, publishing a book requires:

- Professional cover design (and the author approving that design)
- Interior formatting and conversion (and the author approving those files)
- Uploading files to the printer
- File processing by the printer
- Print galley (proof) printing, and shipping that to the author for approval
- Approval by the author, and then "release" of the book by the publisher through the printer's and distributor's systems.

You are responsible for the first three, though you may require assistance for a professional-looking book. However, allow plenty of time.

Angela Hoy, of *Writers Weekly* and Booklocker, suggests getting your manuscript in by at least October. (See <https://writersweekly.com/ask-the-expert/can-you-publish-my-book-and-get-me-copies-by-christmas-which-is-next-week>)

Have you ever done a blog tour to promote your book? How did it go?

Would you (did you) do it again?

Tell us all about it!

Send your input to Ellen at

[ellenbehr@aol.com](mailto:ellenbehr@aol.com)

*Give in to the  
temptation to share!*

Deadlines are always:

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

Publication is on the first of  
the next month.

## HIS NAME WAS GILBERT (continued from the first page...)

BY JANICE LASKO

When we finally took a break, while tying our boards to the pier, Jim said we needed to keep an eye on the weather because heavy winds were predicted. The wind suddenly changed from heavy to vicious, then to a full-blown tropical storm. Then to hurricane status.

Jan was in tears—she said she had been through these hurricane predictions before. However, one time she miscalculated, and they lost everything, including their manufactured home. After years of rebuilding, she was taking no more chances.

“What can we do to help?” we asked.

They gave us an immediate assignment of duties. Mine was to wrap and pack all her breakables. The men moored everything as safely as possible. We worked like fiends packing stuff away, hoping to beat the hurricane.

His name was Gilbert, and this brute of masculinity was expected to land on the island in two days’ time. After we battened everything down, Jan and Jim loaded their van and drove inland to be with their daughter and her family.

One advantage of living in an RV is the ability to pick up and move out of the way of danger. But before we left the island, we had to register with the police department. As soon as our rig was ready to travel, we went to the police station and told the officer we were there to register.

“Stand here, face front, smile,” said Officer Richard. “Here’s your picture. Wear it in the plastic sleeve on this lanyard at all times.”

Innocently, I asked, “Why do we need to wear these?”

With a smile on his lips, he replied, “You’re new here, aren’t you? It’s so we can identify your body if y’all don’t evacuate.”

He saw my stunned expression. “I’m teasing. The picture ID proves you are a resident and only locals are allowed back once the storm is over. This prevents looting and whatnot.”

So now we were considered locals, but we’re still wondering what Officer Richard meant by ‘whatnot.’

Earlier in our stay, Jan had introduced us to Tom and Alice, who owned a condo near the RV park. They also had an RV. With Hurricane Gilbert breathing down our necks, we traveled in our individual RVs to Laredo, which was expected to have only strong winds and rain.

Once in Laredo, the RV park owner showed us how to park our rigs—facing North and South, with our doors aligned so we could easily move from one rig to the other.

By dinner the four of us were starving, plus we needed groceries. Since there was only a slight drizzle, we walked to the restaurant. We ate, stocked up on supplies and began to walk back. Suddenly, the rain was coming in torrents. Now I know what people mean when they say the rain came down in sheets.

Suddenly a car screeched to a stop alongside us. It was our waitress from the restaurant. She shouted through the opening above her window, “Where do y’all think you’re going?”

“Just a few more blocks to the RV Park,” we said in unison, trying to protect our groceries from the rain.

“Come on, hop in. I’ll drive you to your RVs.”

[{Read the conclusion of Janice’s essay on the next page}](#)



## HIS NAME WAS GILBERT (concluded...)

BY JANICE LASKO

Our relief that we didn't have to walk the rest of the way turned to terror as she rolled her window all the way down, stuck her head out, started to drive, and shouted back at us saying her windshield wipers couldn't keep up with the rain and strong winds. With that apology, she began to zig-zag the car along the road. Thank gawd there was no traffic.

We made it. After changing into dry clothes, we sat down in Tom and Alice's motorhome to gulp our strong drinks of rum and Coke.

Gabby asked, "Does anyone want to walk back to the store for a lime?"

Three decorative pillows hit him at the same time.

Several days later, we left Laredo and returned to South Padre Island, proud to be considered locals as we showed our identification photos at the causeway.

Fortunately, the brunt of Gilbert only sideswiped the island. There was minimal damage. Our windsurfing equipment weathered the storm tucked neatly away in a storage shed. All of Jan and Jim's property was still intact. We helped them unpack, and everyone returned to normal.

The worst part of the ordeal was our ride in the waitress' car. We will never again underestimate the power of a storm.

The hurricane left perfect conditions for windsurfing. Gabby and I continued to sail across the bay, and Jan and I continued to walk, and Gabby nursed all the plants back to health.



*Janice and hubby Gabby have been full-time RVing for more than 28 years and have held 35 part-time jobs. The most rewarding job, definitely not part-time, was as Escapees magazine editor. After 14½ years, Janice retired—except for writing the occasional article for Penwheels (thank you, Janice!).*

**"I'll get the book done if I just set one day's work in front of the last day's work. That's the way it comes out. And that's the only way it does."**

**– John Steinbeck  
*Working Days: The Journals of  
The Grapes of Wrath***

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# ONOMASTICS : WHAT'S IN A NAME? (Concluded)

BY DG SMEALL

Honestly though, *onomastics* is the study of the etymology, history and use of proper names. An *orthonym* is the proper name of the object in question, the object of onomastic study. Another word for onomastics was, in a different century, *onomatology*, which was adopted from the French in the mid 19th Century. Now we call it onomastics from the Greek verb *onomazein* which is “to name”

(<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/ONOMASTICS>).

So that is a slippery slide into the naming practices which are a sloppy mess even to this date. Within onomastics is the study of proper names, especially the names of people (*anthroponyms*) and the names of places (*toponyms*). You see, our English language has many components that are broken down for individual study. Onomastics is just a broader term for the study of the meaning of all things named.

Do you hear an echo in here? I do. .onomastics, onomatology, orthonym, anthroponym, and toponyms. Add also to that list *patronymics*, and the list goes on, becoming more definite at the onomastics one selects to purview. In the end, onomastics is a science that studies names in all their aspects.

Next issue: SLANG and how it fits into our socio-economic structure as well as in our English language.



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

## Where's Marisa's Member Profile?

Sadly, no one accepted her invitation for this issue ☹ Don't be shy!

She makes it easy and fun, so just drop her a note at [marisa.wolf@gmail.com](mailto:marisa.wolf@gmail.com) to be a part of this wonderful series. It's the SKP way: **Sharing and Caring**

Editor's Note: While the newsletter might seem publishing-oriented, many of you are writing for more personal reasons. Please share your story with others in the group who might feel they're alone in their goal to write journals, family memories, and other items not meant for publication.

Every member is important—especially you! I hope you'll contact Marisa today ☺

# REMEMBERING AN SKP BOOK PROJECT: AN INTERVIEW WITH KAY HUCKELBERRY (Concluded)



**The book seems to refer to characters who might have been based on real people. Were there fellow Escapees at North Ranch who spotted themselves in the pages of your book? If so, how did they react?**

Oh that was the fun part! Of course, they did! They loved it and felt special that we included them in the book. Those who did not have the privilege to know those 'characters' loved hearing more details about their fellow SKPs.

**What did the group do with the millions of dollars the book earned? (Okay... maybe not that much?)**

We did make a bit of money but our decision was to always split any profits, after costs, evenly with those involved. Which we did.

**I couldn't find another book by this group. Was one book as a group project enough? Why wasn't there a sequel?**

Oh, it was talked about but the energy was just not there. We had lost a number of our writers. Others went in different directions. It was a very special time that could never be repeated. If we that were left had written another book, I believe it would have been very different without the restraints we had before.

**I understand that, sadly, some of the other Girls of Summer have passed on. Are you in touch with any others?**

Sadly Jane and I are the only two left. Although we remain friends, both of our lives have taken different directions. We did talk about this assignment and relived many giggles and memories.

**Did you go on to write other fiction after this project? Why or why not?**

I have not completed any fiction although I do have an unfinished manuscript I would love to finish. I have had an editor review it. It needs a lot of rewriting, but the editor loved the story and thought it was a real experience I had had...which I had made up the entire idea.

I have written, directed and produced several skits, a complete Melodrama performed at North Ranch, I have also written and directed several dramas for our church.

Our neighbor town of Yarnell suffered a tragic fire in 2013 losing 19 Hot Shot Firefighters, lost over 127 homes. I worked the recovery heading the in-kind donations. What I realized was that nearly every issue was addressed but one...the musicians had suffered horribly. They lost their instruments, their lifetime of music. They had no outlet to express their experience or grief. I talked with our local Del Webb Center for Performing Arts and asked if I could have one night in their center to put on a public show so our musicians could perform and begin healing. Needless to say the show was a success and our community responded enthusiastically.

**If another SKP group was thinking of doing a project like this, what advice would you give them?**

My first thought is DO IT! Its not easy but it's worth very minute of involvement. Set parameters, help each other. Most of all...Respect the Voice of each and every writer!

**Is there anything I didn't ask that you'd like to mention?**

I can't think of anything at this moment. I do thank you for including me in the process. It's been a walk down memory lane. I'm still smiling with these thoughts and remembering each and every one of my friends who were involved in the book. I have been Blessed with their friendship and their individual talent.

Thank YOU, Kaye and Jane, for sharing your unique SKP writing experience with us!

**And to all other readers, if you know of a similar SKP writing-related project like this one, please let Ellen know so we can (in true SKP spirit!) SHARE!**



## LINKS TO FOLLOW

Things have sure changed since I started writing professionally many, many years ago.... so I'm grateful when I see an article like this one, "10 Things Writers Should Consider When Writing About Gender Identity" from *Writer's Digest*: <https://www.writersdigest.com/be-inspired/10-things-writers-should-consider-when-writing-about-gender-identity>

Need a book blurb? Not sure what they are or how to write one? See this professional copywriter's take on them:

<https://www.writersdigest.com/getting-published/10-things-a-publishing-copywriter-discovered-about-book-blurbs>

Procrastination is something most (all?) writers share. See bestselling author Liz Nugent's take on it here: <https://crimereads.com/id-rather-commit-a-murder-than-write-one/>

Wondering how much those negative reviews of your book might be affecting your sales? Turns out, not much at all. Here's what one researcher discovered about predicting sales using Amazon info: <https://fortelabs.com/blog/how-i-used-amazon-reviews-to-predict-sales-of-my-book/>

Many of us are working on memoirs. The best way to learn how to write them is to read as many good ones as we can find. Here's a great list to get you started, from Authors Publish: <https://authorspublish.com/22-memoirs-that-every-aspiring-memoir-author-should-consider-reading/>

Want more info on Little Free Libraries? Great article about it here: <https://www.independentpublisher.com/article.php?page=1985&urltitle=Little%20Free%20Libraries>

Margo shared a look at a modern version of the oldest way to camp in the US (after the Conestoga wagon, that is): <https://movingonwithmargo.com/2023/07/31/new-option-carsule-camping/>

## 100-WORD CHALLENGE

([continued from page 12](#))

"The Mission"

She crouched in the shadows, listening to his footsteps against the tile floor. He was closer. Pressing against the wall, she held her breath.

Her nostrils flared as the perfume applied strategically to her pulse points that morning now ignited in a burst of fragrance. Oh God...what was I thinking? He must know I'm here. I'm such a fool. Her mission was doomed.

The door cracked open and his hand slid across the switch. As light flooded the room, a chorus of voices rang out. "Surprise!"

Tears welled in her eyes as she saw his shock. Mission accomplished.

-- Debra Sanders

"Idaho Highway"

Driving on a desert highway; from here to the horizon, I can only see sagebrush and dust, until...suddenly!...quails are darting across the road. I stop to watch the parents with their fancy hats, and their tiny chicks following closely. I try to count. Eleven of them run on spindly legs, hurrying to keep up with their leader.

Quick! Where is my phone, my camera?

But...they've already disappeared under the bushes. The only reminder of their presence are soft parental clucks, doubtlessly meant to order the fluffy babies to stay close or, maybe, to point out some juicy snacks.

-- Sabine Hartmann





## SURVEY SAYS...

(Concluded)

In answer to the question, “What do you hope to gain from being a Penwheels member?” the same responses came up over and over:

- Community
- Inspiration and motivation
- Support and accountability
- Celebrating each others’ successes
- Sharing writing as contributors
- Improving skills

So, what role can the PW newsletter play in helping to achieve a member’s goals?

- Suggest ways to increase readership
- Include marketing techniques
- Update on writing trends
- Provide writing instruction
- Offer inspiration and motivation
- Share others’ stories, essays, and articles
- Motivate through writing challenges
- Help each other connect

I’d like to think we’re doing most of this already, but it’s great to be reminded we’re on the right track! As for connecting members to each other, if you missed the other part of this summary, [see page 11](#) for a way to use this newsletter more directly to reach each other. (And don’t forget to join the Facebook group at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/591028212965105>)

“What do you think is your greatest writing achievement? Why do you see it as a success?” garnered the most surprising results. I knew this was a group of terrific writers, but I had no idea how far-reaching it is! Technical and travel writing, foreign language textbooks, academic papers, RV-related how-to books, magazine articles, novels, poetry collections, and memoirs are just a few of the projects mentioned. Some of you have won prizes (congrats!) but the reason these projects often engendered a sense of pride was that they were completed at all: “The fact that I stuck with it to completion & that it helped so many people,” one respondent commented; another wrote, “[Writing] is a lonely path to travel with very little reward outside your own satisfaction. The results, in my case, still give me pleasure and satisfaction.” And yet another: “Finishing it showed I CAN STICK IT THROUGH TO THE END.”

Some respondents expressed their gratitude for the newsletter and acknowledged the effort that goes into producing it (yes! THANK YOU to each of you who have contributed!), saying it helps improve their skills, gives them new ideas and inspires them to keep going. In addition to that, several respondents mentioned how much they enjoy reading what fellow members have written: “It is fun to read what others write and whose interests might be at least partially the same as mine (such as living—or wanting to live—in an RV)” wrote one, while another said, “It’s good to see what everyone is up to.” A third wrote, “I learn a lot reading what other folks write.”

What does this tell us? Well, it sounds as though we’re pretty much delivering what’s wanted. We will add “PENWHEELS CONNECTS!” ([see page 11](#)) to help you network. And don’t hesitate to send something you’ve written to be included here. Others want to read your work. ***Our success is all up to you!***

Congratulations long-time member, Betty Prange!  
You’ve won a \$5 Amazon gift certificate for completing the PW 2023 Survey!

**"We are not a nomadic people,  
but there is more than a hint of  
this spirit of our great  
country—and the short story is  
the literature of the nomad."  
--John Cheever**

### GRAMMAR QUIZ ANSWER

Heard on a local news report: "You might have noticed the smoke waffetting...."

She meant to say "wafting," which means (according to my handy *Merriam-Webster Pocket Dictionary*) moving "lightly by wind or waves."

I'm not even sure "waffetting" (which is the phonetic spelling of what I heard her say) is even a word. Anyone know of it?

*What's your grammar pet peeve? Send it in!*

**"Writing a first draft is like  
trying to build a car and  
race it at the same time."**

**-- novelist Richard Ford**

**I'm writing a book on  
how tornados form.  
So far it's just a draft.**

## Fall Celebrations for Writers

### September

- 3: National Skyscraper Day
- 6: Read a Book Day
- 8: International Literacy Day AND Star Trek Day
- 9: National Teddy Bear Day
- 12: National Chocolate Milkshake Day AND Gym Day ;-)
- 13: International Chocolate Day (followed by another Gym Day??)
- 15: Make a Hat Day
- 16: National Dance Day AND Batman Day
- 17: Constitution/Citizenship Day
- 18: Hug a Greeting Card Writer Day
- 19: Talk Like a Pirate Day
- 21: World Gratitude Day
- 22: International Astronomy Day
- 25: National One-Hit Wonder Day
- 26: International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons AND National Johnny Appleseed Day AND Lumberjack Day
- 27: National Chocolate Milk Day
- 29: National Coffee Day
- 30: International Podcast Day

### October

- 1: International Day of Older Persons AND International Coffee Day
- 2: Name Your Car Day
- 3: Mean Girls Day AND National Boyfriend Day (hmmm....)
- 5: World Teachers' Day
- 6: World Smile Day
- 10: Ada Lovelace Day (fascinating: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ada\\_Lovelace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ada_Lovelace))
- 14: National Dessert Day
- 18: Pronouns Day

### November

- 1: National Authors Day (yay!)
- 5: National Redhead Day
- 13: World Kindness Day
- 14: National Pickle Day
- 15: GIS Day (RVers might find this worth celebrating: <https://www.wincalendar.com/GIS-Day>)
- 17: National Take a Hike Day
- 19: World Toilet Day
- 28: National French Toast Day

# NEW TEXAS LAW GOING INTO EFFECT SEPTEMBER 1 MIGHT IMPACT YOU AND YOUR BOOKS

Generally, we avoid politically-charged issues whenever possible, but if you write books for children or young adults, or if you imagine your books on shelves in school libraries some day, you must pay attention to what's going on at this moment. This very moment.

According to Andres Albanese and Ed Nawotka, writing for Publishers Weekly in their July 25 article, "Booksellers, Industry Groups File Suit to Block Texas Book Rating Law":

"Dubbed the 'Reader Act' (formerly known as [HB 900](#)), the law was passed on April 20 and [signed by Texas governor Greg Abbott on June 12](#).... Among its provisions, the new law requires book vendors to review books—including both new books and books it has previously sold—and to rate them, under a vaguely articulated standard, to be either "sexually explicit" (if the book includes material that would be "patently offensive" by community standards) or "sexually relevant" (if the books portrays any kind of sexual conduct). Booksellers are banned from selling books rated "sexually explicit" to schools, and students would be able to access books rated as "sexually relevant" only with written parental consent.

"Furthermore, the suit notes, the state has the power to "review and overrule the ratings for any book," effectively imposing a state standard. There is no transparency requirement for the state, and no appeals process. And if a bookseller or publisher refuses to adopt the state's rating, it can be barred from selling to Texas schools "unless and until the bookseller acquiesces to the government's demands."

If you're comfortable with your books being rated and potentially withheld from readers by the government, ignore this. If this disturbs you in any way, you can read the full article here, complete with links to additional information: <https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/publisher-news/article/92858-booksellers-industry-groups-file-suit-to-block-texas-book-rating-law.html>

## ON A RELATED NOTE...

This issue is coming out too soon for 2023 results, so here's the list of the Top Ten Most Banned Books from 2022: <https://www.bookbub.com/blog/the-most-banned-books-of-the-year>



## FALL PROMPTS

These are actual ads (misspellings intact; phone #s redacted) found in a free newspaper for people who want to sell, swap and trade stuff. Write a story, poem, or essay about the person behind the ad, the person who responds to the ad, or what the ad is referencing. Have fun with this and send what you come up with to Ellen so we can share it with other Penwheelers!

TO THE PERSON WHO STOLE my painting from our art show at the fairgrounds... Weather you know it or not, GOD saw you!

ATTENTION TO THE record buyer that was at Gary and Larry's Record Sale at 1301 Harrison last week. In the confusion, you said you gave me a \$50 for your purchase. I found your \$50; I regret this mistake. Please call me at XXX-XXX-XXXX so I can fix this. I remember your face.

2 wedding rings size 13. Sapphire and diamond in white gold plus gold band with diamonds.  
REWARD OFFERED  
XXX-XXX-XXXX





# ENTER THE FAMOUS PENWHEELS “WIN-WIN” CONTEST!

## What is the Win-Win Contest?

You win if your article is chosen, our fellow Penwheelers win because they benefit from what you’ve shared in the newsletter. So it’s a win-win!

## How do you enter?

Simple! Just submit something for the Winter 2023 issue. E-mail it as a Word document (if you can; if not specify what you can send) to Ellen: [ellenbehr@aol.com](mailto:ellenbehr@aol.com). Put “Win-Win Contest Entry” in the subject line of the e-mail. Deadline: November 15, 2023, for the Winter issue.

## What should you submit?

You can send in something on the craft of writing (how-to do something) or a personal experience essay (especially something related to your writing and/or RV travels). Word length: 500-750 words maximum. Poetry (up to 25 lines) and short stories (up to 1000 words) are also welcome. If you’ve got other ideas, go with your gut and send it in!

## Who can submit?

If you’ve never contributed to the newsletter before, or if it’s been a long time, you’re especially encouraged. The time has never been better to give it a shot! *All articles already published in the 2023 newsletters are automatically entered.*

## How will winners be chosen?

Okay, I confess. Winners will be randomly picked. Every article, column, news item and other tidbit is always of value to someone, right?

**PLUS!** A random COLUMNIST will be chosen. Maybe a random reader, too (if I can just figure out how to do that).

## When will winners be announced?

Winners will be individually notified by e-mail and announced in the Spring 2024 issue of the newsletter (wow! Thinking ahead, aren’t we?!?).

## What are the prizes?

The prizes are surprises (is that really a surprise to you?), but you can bet they’ll be writing- or RV-related in some way. But it’s not about the prize, anyway, right? It’s more about contributing to your favorite—no, MOST favorite—e-newsletter and supporting the work of your fellow Penwheelers.

***Don’t wait! Get started on your article today so it will be ready to submit!***

***Questions? Contact Ellen at [ellenbehr@aol.com](mailto:ellenbehr@aol.com)***

## ***YOUR VOICE MATTERS!***

No Letters to the Editor this month, but I’m always happy to hear – and share! – what you have to say, even if it hurts my feelings. Always welcome are your suggestions, ideas, and any needed corrections. Just send me an e-mail at [ellenbehr@aol.com](mailto:ellenbehr@aol.com) with “PW Letter to the Editor” in the subject line. Thanks!

*Ellen*

