

2025



Summer

For Escapees Writers Published... Or Not

Snakes Alive!

by Joanne Alexakis

One winter in 1995, when my husband and I first began full-time RVing, we were boondocking (dry camping in our Holiday Rambler travel trailer) on BLM (Bureau of Land Management) public land in the Sonoran Desert of southwestern Arizona. We delighted in the sunny gentle weather and unrivaled vegetation. The dignified saguaro cactus stood sentry over the organ pipe and jumping cholla spiny cacti. We enjoyed the ocotillo and creosote bushes - so starkly beautiful. The big blue sky turned bright turquoise as the brilliant red-orange sunrises and sunsets radiated over the mountain ranges. We were in Paradise!

As it neared the month of March, the mild temperatures warmed even more and we anticipated viewing the spring blossoms of the desert cacti. As Minnesotans, we realized that few people are fortunate enough to be able to experience this gorgeous dry climate happening.

One day Nick and I were lazily driving along on a seldom-traveled dusty gravel back road just south of Ajo, AZ. I spied a large stick lying on the road. "Stop! Back up! I think it's a snake!"

[Was it a snake?!? Find out on [page 9](#)]

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...and much more!

Editor's Note

We're almost halfway through 2025 already—can you believe it? Me neither! And we're still without a newsletter editor for 2026....

If you're thinking this isn't something you can do, you're wrong. This newsletter has been around a long time (remember our 30+ years celebration last year?). It's taken many forms under many editors. Make it yours!

We also have openings for someone to do profiles of our members and we learned that, sadly, Marguerita McManus won't be penning her helpful marketing column any longer. If you'd like to share on a topic on a regular basis, we'd love to have your voice added!

As I've written since becoming editor, this is YOUR newsletter ☺ What would you like to read in it? What would you like to share in it?

It's your turn!

Please don't make me become that teacher who doesn't see any hands go up and has to start calling on people in the back row....

To a season of great beach reading and writing,

Ellen



"I'm just going to write because I cannot help it."

— Charlotte Bronte

Braggin' Rights

Contributed by Joanne Alexakis

No Penwheels members were spotted in the recent *Escapees* magazine. If we missed YOUR byline, please let us know so we can all celebrate!

ALL publication credits will get our attention, so don't be shy. If you've recently authored a guest blog, magazine article, poem, or short story (online or in print); published a book, or otherwise gotten your writing in front of a lot of readers, we want to celebrate with you—and read what you wrote! Contact [Joanne](#) or [Ellen](#) with details and links. Thanks!

Jaimie's Tips

Contributed by Jaimie Bruzenak

Just because it is on Facebook doesn't mean it's legit! Here are TWO alerts related to FB:

Before you fall for a publishing or book marketing scam, read this article in the 2/25/25 issue of *Writers Weekly* by James M. Walsh, Esq.: <https://writersweekly.com/this-weeks-article/facebook-profiting-from-fraud>

Do you belong to a FB writing group (other than Penwheels, which is vetted)? If so, don't get scammed! Read this article in *Writers Weekly* 5/14/25: "Is Your Favorite Writing Group on Facebook Being Moderated by a Scammer?" at <https://writersweekly.com/angela-desk/moderators-in-facebook-groups-scamming-members>

Don't Get Scammed!

The Author's Guild has info you should really, really take a look at.

General scam info:

<https://authorsguild.org/resource/avoiding-publishing-scams/>

Latest scam alerts:

<https://authorsguild.org/resource/publishing-scam-alerts/>

*Little Free Library:
Coronado, California*
Contributed by Jaimie Bruzenak



What is Copyright, Anyway?

The US government's copyright office has issued a wonderful FREE guide that explains what you need to know as a writer about protecting your rights. Nope, not the boring text you might expect from the government, but instead clear language and excellent graphics to explain things.

Read about it here:

<https://www.copyright.gov/newsnet/2025/1070.html>

Get it free here: <https://www.copyright.gov/intellectual-property-toolkits/copyright-registration-toolkit.pdf>

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Writing advice really only works for you... if it works for you. This isn't meant to be a riddle. There are countless bits of wisdom, courses, sage *bon mots*, and "here's how I made a million dollars" out there. Many of them are good. Many of them worked for the people providing them. But! If it doesn't work for you, don't force it. Try something else.

For example, a piece of excellent advice is: "Sit down every day and write X number of words." And generally that works for me (the number might shift). But sometimes I get real, real stubborn, and the longer I force myself to sit in the chair, the less ability I have to produce words. Worse, I get super reluctant the next day too, and before I know it, sitting down to write is some kind of terrible chore rather than the thing I want to do. So when I feel that unwillingness start to rise, I do one of two things: get up and go for a walk or clean the kitchen or sing at the top of my lungs; or try "Okay, just jot down what the next scene needs to be; no pretty words, just word vomit, then I can go." Sometimes the word vomiting becomes an actual joy to write and I keep going, sometimes I do my couple of words and flee, but either way, sitting to write the next day remains fun, not something my brain is actively against.

So if you've ever heard a piece of writing advice that sounds absolutely lovely, but you just can't get it to work for you... let it go. Try something else. Find the things that work for you.

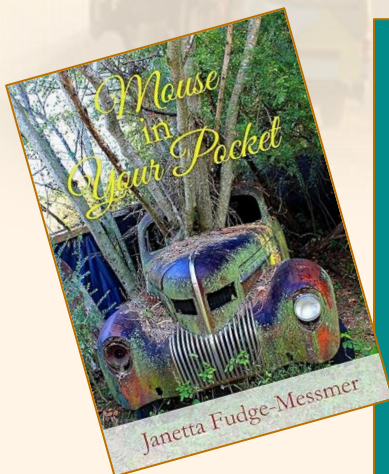
And... fun fact, what worked for you in one particular time, or with one particular project, might not hold true in the future. Circumstances change. Some of us have complicated brains that do really well with routine, or really poorly, or really well until they don't.

With that said, I have one exception. Or course I do! One bit of writing advice that has never let me, or anyone I know, down: let the first draft be the first draft. I promise, this is also not a riddle.

Is your novel piecemeal? Do your words feel like trash? The scenes don't go quite right together? Something is missing in one of the character's arcs (or all of them)? You are completely surprised by the action in the climax or a special tool someone needed, or you get further in and realize your beginning is all wrong?

Awesome!

[Why in the world does Marisa think this is awesome?? See [page 8](#) to find out.]



New Book by Penwheels Member!

Jessica Montgomery inherits her uncle's property—i.e., a junkyard. After much deliberation and prayer, Jess decides to clean up the mess Melvin left her...with her family and friends' help, of course. But amid this seemingly overwhelming situation, she meets Jimmy Barnes. He claims her uncle left him the old truck parked on her front lawn. Did she mention he has no proof of ownership, and a tree is growing out of it?

In *Mouse in Your Pocket*, Jessica soon learns that her common sense flies out the window, except for when it comes to Jimmy Barnes. Can life get any more complicated? In Miss Montgomery's case, yes, it can. 😊

Find out more about Janetta's new book here: <https://www.amazon.com/Mouse-Your-Pocket-Janetta-Fudge-Messmer-ebook/dp/B0F3D7M1VX/>



Do you dream about earning your living as an author? Applying these tips to your writing can help you monetize your work more effectively. Here are some steps you can take:

- ✓ **Write Multiple Books:** Instead of focusing on one long, award-winning book, try to produce several shorter books. This can help you reach a wider audience and increase your chances of making sales.
- ✓ **Consistent Marketing:** Treat your writing like a business. Develop a marketing plan and stick to it. Use social media, email newsletters, and other platforms to promote your books regularly.
- ✓ **Systematic Approach:** Create a system for writing and promoting your books. This could include setting aside specific times for writing, editing, and marketing each week.
- ✓ **Diversify Formats:** Consider publishing your books in various formats, such as eBooks, audiobooks, and print. This can help you reach different types of readers and increase your sales. Amazon has introduced a new method to simplify the skills and time needed for successful development of various formats. KDP Select also provides some free advertising options.
- ✓ **Self-Publishing Resources:** Take advantage of self-publishing resources, especially those offered by experts like Dave Chesson at Kindlepreneur.com. These resources can provide valuable insights and tools to help you succeed.

By following these tips, you can build a successful writing career and make the most of your creative efforts.

Margo Armstrong is the author and publisher of over 10 books now available on Amazon. Her book "About Men: Myths Revealed" is now available in eBook, paperback and now audio format. Listen to her podcast "RV Lifestyle Expert" on your favorite podcast platform. Contact Margo at MovingOnWithMargo@outlook.com



Summer Poetry

Writing a poem doesn't have to be a complicated, academic process. The *Writer's Digest* has listed 168 different poetic forms with links to explanations, samples, and encouragement to try them.

Like the Blitz Poem: fifty lines, easy peasy, with instructions like a recipe that even I could follow: <https://www.writersdigest.com/write-better-poetry/poetic-form-the-blitz-poem>

Or try one that could be considered a type of recycling, called Erasure and Blackout Poems (do follow the link to see the example of the blackout poem by Austin Kleon):

<https://www.writersdigest.com/write-better-poetry/erasure-and-blackout-poems-poetic-forms>

The Diminishing Verse Poem is a fun form too, and pretty easy to master:

<https://www.writersdigest.com/write-better-poetry/diminishing-verse-poetic-form>

The full list of poetic forms can be found here: <https://www.writersdigest.com/write-better-poetry/list-of-50-poetic-forms-for-poets>

Have fun and share what you come up with! We'd love to see it!



CarolAnn's prompts for this issue were these three:

- I'm sorry it slipped my mind.
- The look on his face said it all.
- If I could go back in time I would...

*See page 8 for CarolAnn's
Fall 2025 prompts!*

Lew Leistikow and Janetta Fudge Messmer each responded to a different one. Here's what the third prompt inspired in Lew (below). See the next page for Janetta's response to the third prompt.

Have a prompt you'd like to share? How about a response to one? Give in to the urge to jot something, then send it to CarolAnn at loracvs@gmail.com.

If I Could Go Back In Time....

By Lew Leistikow

"If I could go back in time, I'd..." What? I pondered this for a while before deciding what I could have done to change my life path; improve or maybe change events or actions.

As to my life and how it went, I would have complained many times along the way. But by the time I retired from the Navy at just shy of fifty years old, I saw that my life had gone exactly as it should have. Mistakes along the way? Oh, there were many that at the time brought discouragement and feelings of helplessness. But as I thought back from that young age of fifty, I began to see that every misstep was in fact a lesson along life's path. As the lessons piled up, I didn't see them as that, but just problems to deal with.

However, these lessons proved to be what led me to be able to retire, when I did. We had a nice home in Jacksonville, Florida, a truck and trailer that were paid for. Had we stayed and lived in our house, it would have meant that we both would have had to work to support all the expenses of that house. My Navy retirement check would have barely covered maintaining the house.

However, there was another path: I had been an avid follower of the magazine *Trailer Life* since the late sixties. And in the months before retirement, I read about the Escapees RV Club. A few stories of the club led me to join and to buy a book on 'full-timing'. We had been camping since those early days back in the sixties, and by now were on our sixth RV. By retirement our original VW Van had grown to be a thirty-foot Argosy trailer and along with our Ford diesel truck, we had just about all we needed.

A book from the club's newsletter filled in the blanks; mail forwarding, residence and licensing along with voting answered most of our questions. Of course, there were many things to learn when we set out on our adventure, but with camping experience behind us and the book from Escapees, we did just fine.

As to what I'd change—not much! I'd like to be able to look back and say that I made no mistakes with my wife. Young and dumb and full of myself. I could have treated her with more love but honestly, I didn't know how.

And those mistakes along the way that proved to be lessons? They gave me the knowledge and experience to enable me to retire as early as I did and begin twenty-three years of full timing, a life-changing adventure. Now, approaching ninety years old, being a strong believer in the Almighty, I look at the mistakes as 'guidance'. Guidance that led me along a path that turned out to be a perfect life—at least for me.



A Christmas Surprise

By Janetta Fudge Messmer

[Inspired by CarolAnn's Prompt: "The look on his face said it all"]

Today seemed the perfect day to take the kids to get their pictures with Santa done. I dressed them in their best outfits, and we set out for the mall to get the final photo for their dad's calendar, which we'd give him on Christmas morning.

In my purse sat the pictures for January through November. Each held a special meaning for me and their father. The one with Jolly Old St. Nick would definitely surprise my husband. The look on his face would say it all when he reached December.

Once we arrived at the mall, I expected a line a mile long, but only one family stood between us and the big guy. As I watched the photographer, I sent up an arrow prayer thanking the Lord for our good fortune. The people in front of us walked away with their Polaroid, and we moved up since we'd be next. Santa's elf took over and placed the children on his lap. In less than two minutes, I retrieved the kids, and we trekked off to Kinko's.

I picked out the calendar style I wanted and explained to the clerk which photo went with each month. I paid for it, and as we headed out of the store, I thought, "I've bought my hubby outstanding presents before, but this will be a grand slam home run."

Fast forward to Christmas morning. I'd saved the best for last. He opened the calendar, and his smile grew bigger and bigger as he flipped the pages. I know he wondered, "What picture will December have?" because we'd never done photos to fit the holiday theme.

UNTIL THAT YEAR!

He turned to the last photo and almost ripped the pages apart. Hubby laughed uncontrollably, then said, "You took the kids to the mall to get this done. I would never have expected you to do it."

Let me explain why he reacted this way. You see—our 'kids' aren't your normal, run of the mill children. They are three-inch-tall stuffed animals. Now, before you pass judgment, allow me to plead our case:

- The furballs don't talk (obviously), but they have entertained us, nonetheless.
- They have saved us from fights. Example: My hubby lay on the floor in his underwear, saying in a deep voice, "Mom, don't be mad at Dad. He didn't know what he was doing."
- Finally, as our twilight years approach, soon we'll be able to go into a store carrying them, and no one will say a word about an older couple talking to stuffed animals as they shop.

My recommendation: go out and buy a furball (or two) and start talking through it. Then let me know if your stress disappears. Ours did!

Photo of Randy & Hazel
on the beach!



"When something is bothering me, I write a song that tells my feelings."

— Loretta Lynn

Don't you love those "Best Books of the Summer" recommendations and lists like it? Me, too! Except, of course, when the books on the list *don't* exist! How does that happen?!? Al of course! [Read more here.](#)



I save files. I'm fairly well organized with descriptive folders though that doesn't mean I can always find something. It is a surprise when my habits—that some would call clutter—result in a connection and I am able to help someone.

In 2004, 20+ years ago, I wrote an article for Road Trip America about Sue Henry who wrote several mysteries featuring Maxie McNabb and her mini-dachshund Stretch who travel in her Minnie Winnie [<https://www.roadtripamerica.com/rv/Sue-Henry-Writing-on-the-Road.htm>]. Her mysteries were primarily set in Alaska but also set in places she traveled. She was a wonderful writer and I especially enjoyed the RV connection. I was disappointed when she retired.

This morning I was contacted by a woman from France. Her publishing company has acquired the rights to translate her books into French. She inquired about the photo I have of Sue standing by a seaplane. I had to use Google to find out where that was! Then I located the article and photo in my Road Trip America Columns folder. That didn't tell me how I got the photo but I imagine Sue sent it to me to use. A Google search found it only in my column. Knowing that even if I sent it to her, whoever has the rights to her books and photos would have to give permission, I googled Sue's obituary and found out she died in 2012 and had two sons.

I provided this information plus attached the photo with the admonishment that she'd need to get permission to use it. She was pleased to receive my response so quickly and is in contact with Sue's publisher, which she hopes leads her to more photos and a successful translation and launch of Sue's books in France!

A couple of months ago I put a Dutch woman in contact with the relatives of a deceased writer friend who I met through the Arizona Professional Writers organization. I save emails plus a blog I had written about her when she died several years ago.

Who would think my article written 20 years ago or a blog entry and correspondence at least 5 years ago could lead to a present-day inquiry and that I could help? It felt good—both that I could find them and that they were useful!

As an aside: I almost lost all these files because I only had them saved in one location. Files you may want to refer to need to be saved in more than one device or external drive!

Jaimie Bruzenak began writing about travel, RVing and working on the road while full-time RVing with her late husband Bill. It led to writing and working for Workamper.com and publishing books and articles, some with her co-author Alice Zyetz. She now resides in Tucson, AZ in an over-55 mobile home park, still traveling, but no longer by RV.



“Listen always to people talking. Listen to patterns of thinking displayed in talking. Think about this: if a husband comes home at night and says to his wife, ‘What do you think happened to me? When I got onto the bus tonight I sat down next to a girl and when the conductor came along he had a live penguin riding on his head, a live penguin, can you imagine? And when I looked at it, it turned out it was a talking penguin and it said “Tickets, please,” and there was this guy across the aisle and you really won’t believe this but it turned out he had a parrot in his pocket and the parrot put out his head and he and the penguin got to talking and I never heard anything like it in all my life,’ don’t you know that after the husband has said all this his wife is going to say, ‘What did the girl look like?’”

– From Shirley Jackson’s “Notes For a Young Writer,” as collected in *Come Along With Me*

[See more advice from Shirley Jackson in this article: <https://getpocket.com/explore/item/the-greatest-menace-to-the-writer-is-the-reader-and-other-advice-from-shirley-jackson>]



Fiction Tips (Concluded from [page 3](#))

By Marisa Wolf

Your first draft is doing exactly what it needs to do: existing. If you take nothing else from this series, please take this: The purpose of the first draft is to exist. That's it. Write it. Let it be as beautifully, wonderfully, gorgeously messy as it is. Because the point of the second draft? It's to go back in and look like you knew what you were doing the whole time. To find what the problems actually are, and smooth them out. If you try to do that too much in the early stages, you'll mire yourself in that first draft and never get out. Does that mean you can't edit and smooth as you go? Of course not! But release the expectation that the first draft is going to be the Perfect Novel, and just let it Be.

I have re-written the beginning of just about every one of my novels once I got to the end for the first time. Once, I forgot this advice, spent a full month writing and rewriting the beginning because it was wrong, but I didn't know how to fix it. I made zero progress, but my deadline didn't get further away. It wasn't until I finally let it be "good enough for now" and forged ahead that I made dramatic progress in the novel, and then once the draft was done, I tweaked the beginning in about an hour and was super pleased about it.

So. Find what works for you. Remember it might change. And let yourself—and your first draft—be who and what they need to be.

Marisa Wolf has been writing since the age of six when she penned and illustrated "Sarah and the Idaho Potatoes." A science fiction and fantasy novelist, Marisa's latest novels are linked on her website (find out more at marisawolf.net) After almost four years of full-timing, Marisa and her husband are temporarily landlocked. We'll see how that goes!



Prompting YoU: Penwheels Challenge for Fall 2025

By CarolAnn Quibell

It's time for a Penwheels Challenge! I've decided this month since we are all RVers of some sort we should use prompts that relate to our RVing experiences. So here are this month's prompts:

1. My first RV adventure was memorable because....
2. I wish I could forget the time we.....
3. If only my dreams of....

Set your imagination free! Write about something true OR write a little story OR a poem OR whatever occurs to you when you read the prompt. You could even use all three in one piece of writing if you'd like! It's YOURS, after all 😊

The maximum word count is 500 words. Please put a title and your name on the document.

Send your submissions before September 1 to Carol Ann Quibell at loracvs@gmail.com



Nick scowled at me - he knew all those squiggly critters were still underground in their winter dormancy. But he pulled our vehicle back around by 'the stick'.

By golly! It was a snake! A diamondback rattlesnake. But it was dead. It was lain out long and straight and still. In fact, I could make out a set of tire tracks imprinted across it's body. It must have been run over while crawling across the road. I stepped out of the car and walked near the snake's body. I just wanted to see up close what a rattler looked like. It was four feet long and as big around as a large hen's egg. Wow! I wanted to look at that triangular-shaped head and, of course, observe those intriguing rattles.

I had heard that a rattlesnake head can "be alive" and still attack, bite, and poison you even after it's body had been killed. I approached it cautiously. I walked warily all around it from a distance - circled it a couple times. Nothing. No response from the reptile. I tiptoed in a bit closer. All was quiet and still. I picked up a little peanut-sized stone and tossed it close to the snake. It did not move. It was dead. I plucked up another small pebble and flipped it towards the slitherer. It tapped the snake on a skip off the road. Still no life.

I moved in a little closer to observe the serpent. I had peered just a bit nearer when that scaly head rose up and weaved at me. It's tongue flicked in and out - in and out. Holy cat! I had heard that a rattler could "strike out" a distance of one half its body length. I instantly moved all of my body parts at least two feet away from that squirmy skin. It started to crawl. I ran! Fast!

Nick shook his head and sighed as I climbed back in the car. He knew it was time for us to vacate our paradise. We were no competition for the emerging desert creatures. Reluctantly we left, but we would return next winter, for sure!

Joanne and Nick Alexakis have been Escapees members since 1992. They began full-time RVing in 1994 and have explored many Escapees benefits (Boomers BoF, Boondockers BoF, Amateur Radio BoF, North Ranch RV Park, Rainbows End RV Park, and CARE) over the years as they traveled around the USA. Joanne is our current membership coordinator and a former editor of the Penwheels Newsletter.



Summer Santa Ideas

Remember when you were little and maybe around your birthday or some other holiday you'd get a package in the mail? Remember how exciting that was?!? Now, thanks to online shopping.... we don't need a special occasion to send a gift or give ourselves the thrill of seeing a package on the porch or in the mailbox anymore! here are some things any writer might be tempted to order.

- Tee shirts:

<https://www.amazon.com/Writing-Definition-Sarcastic-Explanation-T-Shirt/dp/BoDMWQF8TV/>

<https://www.amazon.com/Funny-Writing-Writer-Gift-T-Shirt/dp/Bo856WTK9Y/>

- Typewriter Pen Holder: <https://www.amazon.com/Shabby-Vintage-Typewriter-Pencil-Organizer/dp/Bo7D32JYQ8/>

- Ball cap: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/Bo8Q826GKZ/>

- Tumbler: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/BoDCWW28HK/>

- Candle: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/BoDWFHKQYM/>

- Dice Game for Inspiration: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/BoCBNNXY43/>



I once read a book by a writer who confessed she felt a wicked sense of guilt about how she treated her friends. Someone would call with a problem or complaint, and she'd eagerly respond with a sympathetic ear. "You're such a great listener!" they'd tell her.

Hence the guilt. Yes, she was listening. Yes, she was asking how things were going or how they had turned out. Of course she cared about her friend. But she was also curious: What was the trouble? What was the solution? Were other people likely to experience this same problem? Was there an article in it? Maybe a short story? Someone who'd make a great hero? Villain?

We don't like to think of ourselves as heartless exploiters, of people who'd sell out a family member's distress in an article or story. But the fact is, writers are always absorbing everything.

In a visit to a public library to use the Wi-Fi while on the road a couple of years ago, I noticed an elderly couple (well, even more elderly than hubby and me).

The woman was speaking very loudly to her companion, so there wasn't really any eavesdropping going on (or so I tell myself). Clearly I heard her tell him, "Yes, it's got cowboy hats on it." Then, "You've already read that one, it's got your mark on it." And finally, "You've got four books, Howard. I think that's enough, don't you? Let's go. Let's go, baby."

I don't know about you, but I could probably write an entire story about that couple, making their visit that day to the library the central scene. How about you? What have you overheard lately?

Ellen Behrens has published books, stories, articles, essays, poetry, and thanks to Penwheels, a newsletter. She's been at this writing thing a long time and hopes to be for much longer. After many years on the road and writing fiction, she's turning her attention to a memoir (if she can stop staring out the window of her new house). You can find her books on [Amazon here](#) and watch for a new blog post, due to appear someday, eventually, [here](#).

Links to Fun and Free and Hopefully Interesting Stuff....

If you're like me and struggle to find the right title for your book, here's some great advice, including words that most often appear in bestsellers: <https://www.readerviews.com/whats-in-a-name-the-science-behind-bestselling-titles>

Q: What do these books have in common?

"All Quiet on the Western Front" by Erich Maria Remarque

"All the Birds in the Sky" by Charlie Jane Anders (sci-fi/fantasy)

"The Call of the Wild" by Jack London

"Little Red Riding Hood" retold by Trina Schart Hymen (and all Grimm's tales, btw)

"The Hill We Climb" (book version) by Amanda Gorman

"The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" and "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" by Mark Twain

A: They're all on some banned book list, somewhere. If you feel strongly about this issue and want to DO SOMETHING, this organization has ways you can help: <https://bookresumes.uniteagainstbookbans.org/>

Don't you love it when something unexpected happens in a novel you're reading? If you wonder how to get that element of surprise into your own fiction, Kathleen McCleary has some suggestions:

<https://writerunboxed.com/2025/04/09/the-unexpected/>

[See More Links on [page 12](#)]



THE HAIR UPON THE OLD GROUCHE'S CHIN
WAS ALWAYS AS NEAT AS A PIN
THE POINT OF THE VAN DYKE,
POINTED DIRECTLY AT THE CODGER'S SHOES.

HIS SHOES WERE ALWAYS POLISHED
HIS CLOTHES FASTIDIOUS
AFTER YEARS OF RETIREMENT HIS FUNDS WERE
DEMOLISHED.
THE SPEED AT WHICH HIS BEARD GREW WAS INSIDIOUS.

THE WATER WAS PUTRID AND PROBLEMS IT CAUSED.
INCLUDED TEETH FALLING OUT AND HAIR FALLING OFF.
THE GROUCHE'S HAIR GREW FAST AND WAS IN GREAT
DEMAND.
BECOME A DEMANDED COMMODITY.

SOON THE ONLY HAIR COLOR IN THE COUNTY WAS GRAY.
BUT, OH HOW THE CODGER MADE THE PEOPLE PAY.
HE WAS SOON THE WEALTHIEST MAN IN TOWN.
ONLY ONE THING COULD MAKE THE OLD MAN FROWN.

THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHOSE HAIR WAS GONE,
THEY HAD A DISEASE CALLED CANCER, THAT BORE THEIR
SCALP CLEAN.

MY CHIN IS A HAIR GROWING MACHINE,
ALL FUTURE CROPS WILL BE GIVEN FREE.

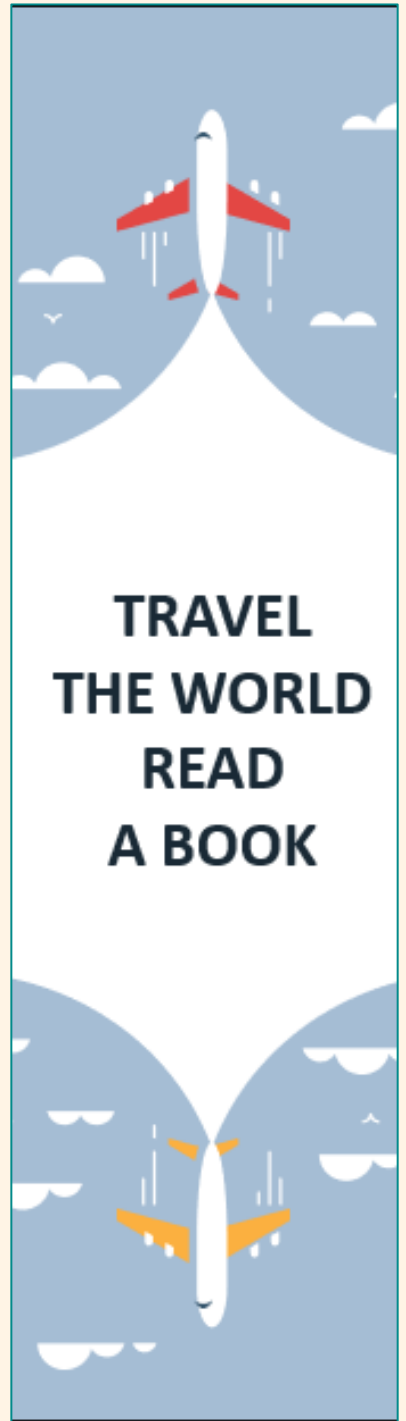
IT COMES FROM MY CHIN IN A BEAUTIFUL GRAY.
PURPLE, GRAY, ORANGE AND GREEN.
NEW OWNERS WILL PUT IT INTO THEIR OWN COLOR
SCHEME.

MARSHMALLOW, BANANA OR MELTED ICE CREAM.

THE GROUCH, THE CODGER WAS KINDER THAN THOUGHT,
THE PROCEEDS FROM BRIGHT COLORED HAIR HE THOUGHT
THAT'S WHAT I'LL DO WITH THE PROPERTY I BOUGHT.
I'LL TURN THEM EACH INTO A GREAT CITY PARK.

THE OLD MAN NO LONGER HID BEHIND THE DOOR,
HE STOOD ON THE BEACH,
WATCHING THE TIDE ROLL IN
NOW HE WAS REVERED AS THE CITY'S GREATEST
BENEFACTOR

ALL FROM A HAIR ON A CHINNY CHIN, CHIN



"I'm not a very
good writer, but
I'm an excellent
rewriter."
— *James Michener*



More Links – Including Publishers for Fantasy and Romance!

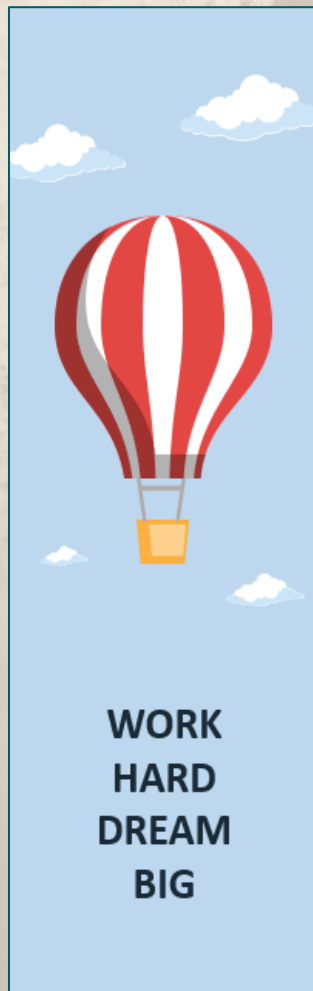
Folklore Review publishes fiction, poetry and art that are “unique, weird works that leave an imprint on us. Send us stories from a haunted wood, woven in greenery and bark. Tell us of the creatures that live in your mind.” Take a look at what they’ve already published before sending anything. When I checked the site, the “Current Issue” tab gave me the contents and I could read from it—free!—online:

<https://www.folklorereview.com/>

Romance writers take note: As of April, Harlequin (yes, THE romance publisher of the ages) was accepting manuscripts for their Harlequin Heartwarming imprint that are “Wholesome, fun and feel-good contemporary romances set in close-knit communities where the reader can escape to a world of love and belonging. Fall in love with small towns, friendly neighborhoods and romances that always end with happily ever after!” NO AGENT NEEDED! See their guidelines here (scroll to the Harlequin Heartwarming link): <https://harlequin.submittable.com/submit>

Okay. Books take a long time to write. If you'd like a quicker sense of accomplishment, and show how beautiful writing can be at the same time, check out Little Written Art: <https://www.littlewrittenart.com/>

Attention self-publishing authors! Avoid book design boo-boos! See This article from BookLife: <https://booklife.com/news/create/art-design/04/18/2025/top-7-diy-book-layout-mistakes-and-how-to-avoid-them.html>



Comments, suggestions,
ideas? Don't bottle them up
inside you!

[Send a Letter to the Editor!](#)

“Proofread carefully to see if you
any words out.”

— *Author Unknown*



If You Haven't Submitted Something to the Penwheels Newsletter

2025 IS YOUR YEAR!

Why should you submit something?

Anyone who hasn't submitted something in the last two years (since 2022) will AUTOMATICALLY WIN a prize! Anyone who has submitted in the last two years will be automatically entered into random drawing for a prize, too! Woohoo! You know what they say... More prizes = More chances to win!

How do you submit?

Simple! Just submit something for a 2025 issue. E-mail it (as a Word document if you can; if not, specify what you can send) to Ellen at penwheels@yahoo.com. Put "Win-Win Contest Entry" in the subject line of the e-mail. **Deadline for the Fall 2025 issue is August 15.**

What should you submit?

Articles on the craft of writing (how-to do something) or a personal experience essay (especially something related to your writing, RV travels, and/or involvement in Penwheels) are welcome. Word length: 500-750 words preferred.

Poetry (up to 25 lines) and short stories (up to 1000 words) are also welcome.

Not sure? Go with your gut and send it in!

Check out the Prompt Challenge for inspiration and send your results to CarolAnn at loracvs@gmail.com by **August 1**.

Who can submit?

Every Penwheels member! If you've never contributed to the newsletter before or if it's been a long time since you've sent something in, *you're especially encouraged*. **Chances of getting published in the newsletter: 99% 😊**

What can you win?

Prizes range from Amazon gift e-cards to free books by our members to handmade jewelry. 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 penwheels@yahoo.com

Missing newsletters, notifications, or announcements?

All members in our database receive e-mail messages when a newsletter is published. Those messages include a link for downloading the newsletter and have a copy of the newsletter attached. Newsletters are also available here, with past issues: <https://ellenbooks.com/newsletter-archive/>.

If you're not receiving these e-mails, please send your name and SKP# to Joanne Alexakis (joalexakis@earthlink.net) so we can add you to the e-mail list or update our membership listing for you. It's possible we have an old e-mail address on file for you.

If you're no longer an SKP member but would like to receive announcements and copies of the newsletter, please notify Ellen the editor (penwheels@yahoo.com) so she can add you to the e-mail distribution list. We do occasionally publish writing by former SKPs, so please don't hesitate to send something!

We don't want you to miss a single thing!

Hope you enjoyed this issue!

