

Vol 2 Issue 04

April 1, 2022

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# Elk Grove Writers Guild

*Writers Helping Writers*

## Welcome!



The Elk Grove Writers Guild main goal is to help writers be the best they can be.

To expand our efforts in reaching that goal, we created this once monthly newsletter. In it we pass on information of coming events, guild news, and offer little bits of writing wisdom, poetry, memories, writing tips, and whatever news in the publishing world that comes our way.

We offer you, our readers, a chance to see your work in print. Published newsletters are also available on our website.

I encourage you to contribute short articles and stories, event announcements, writing tips, and recent successes or publication events. Events from other writing groups or any interesting writing thing you find.

Come. Join us on our adventure.

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## What's Happening?

We're planning a busy year for 2022. The guild's second event is on May 15th. It's going to be a good time for all who attend. See the President's Column for more information. Summer Academy is coming in June, July, and August. More on that later.

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*“A writer's life and work are not a gift to mankind; they are its necessity.”*

*Toni Morrison, The source of Self-Regard: Selected Essays, Speeches, and Meditations*

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The Guild meets on the first Friday of each month. We will continue meeting in a virtual setting in 2022 until it's considered safe to meet face to face. We gather as a Writer's Circle to talk in the language of writers, sharing what and how we're doing. Topics vary as we ask questions about problems we might have with our works in progress or discuss the latest information in the publishing world.

Guild members post their WIP on Google Docs and share it with other members for critiques. The posted work *will* get a response. It is a wonderful way to receive input from other writers who give valuable insight on the work presented.

If you're interested in joining the guild, go to the **Join** page on the website listed in the left column. Fill out the membership application and send in your dues. If you'd like to see what we're about first, and want to join our next virtual meeting, contact Loy at [loyholder77@gmail.com](mailto:loyholder77@gmail.com) and you'll receive the link.

The next meetings are April 1, 2022, and May 6, 2022. Meetings begin at 12:30 and last approximately one and a half hours.

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## COMING EVENTS



**CWC** First Friday meeting, April 1st – First Friday, 10 a.m. The meeting via zoom is open for chat at 9:30., begins at 10:00-11:00am.

For a link to the meetings, go to the website <https://www.cwcsacramentowriters.org/2022/writers-network-march-4-writing-for-the-environment/>

### **NCPA**

Their monthly meetings are on the second Sunday of the month from 1:00-3:00pm

The meetings usually feature a speaker on various writing subjects.

They will continue their virtual meetings on zoom. Check with them at the address below for current information.

<https://www.norcalpa.org>

## **FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS**

WHAT: FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

WHEN: April 30, 2022, from 10am -6pm

WHERE: Old Town Plaza, Elk Grove

WHY: Celebration of the Arts!

WHO: Hosted by the Elk Grove Fine Arts Center.

- Individual authors can rent a booth (12x12) to display and sell their books (\$50 per booth)
- Authors can share the rental of a booth

- Author/poet reading

In addition to author and artists booths, there will be live performances, food trucks, a student art show, wine by McConnell Winery, and a children's art activity center. It will be a fun day for the Arts!

If you have any questions, or would like a vendor application

Festival of Arts Committee

Darrci Robertson, Chair

(916) 685-5992

[egfinearts@frontiernet.net](mailto:egfinearts@frontiernet.net)

[elkgrovefineartscenter.org](http://elkgrovefineartscenter.org)

## ***“Our Life Stories: A Cross-Generational Writers’ Conference”***

**Saturday, April 30, 2022, on Zoom**

The conference is sponsored by the **City of Sacramento’s Hart Senior Center and Cosumnes River College**, with support from the ACC Senior Services.

The focus of the annual event is the collection and writing of family stories and memoirs.

The conference features a variety of workshops led by experienced and nationally recognized writers.

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*Coming Events Continued*

Maeley Tom, author of *I’m Not Who You Think I Am: An Asian American Woman’s Political Journey*, is this year’s keynote speaker.

Workshop presenters include Lisa Dominguez Abraham, Lora Connolly, Frederick K. Foote, Lesley Gale, Ginny McReynolds, Kathy Lynne Marshall, Kakwasi Somadhi, Bob Stanley, and Kate Washington.

The virtual conference runs from 9AM to 3:15PM. The \$20 fee includes morning and afternoon workshops and a writing activity for all attendees to end the day.

*Continued from page 3*

All are welcome. Registration is required by Thursday, April 28. To register, visit [Registration Link](#) or [www.ourlifestories.org](http://www.ourlifestories.org).

For questions about the conference, call the Hart Center at (916) 808-5462, or email: [hartcwritersconference@yahoo.com](mailto:hartcwritersconference@yahoo.com).



## California Writers Club (CWC) (San Joaquin Valley Writers Branch)

Free Monthly Speaker Meetings, 2nd Saturday of each month ~ 12 noon – 2:30 pm  
Zoom meetings until return to in-person meetings at UOP in Stockton.  
<https://www.sjvalleywriters.org>

Open to all genres and levels ~ get published in Great Valley Stories Anthology, Vol. 1.  
Subscribe for zoom links & newsletter:  
<https://sjvalleywriters.us10.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=899132e01f7a84cc55e31563e&id=7acdb2b23f>

## CWC JVV Branch Coming Event

California Writers Club author John Byrne Barry presents “Setting That Works,” showcasing the ways memorable setting does more than describe the backdrop to your story, but also reveals character, advances the plot, and echoes the theme. Barry will include settings in California’s Great Central Valley to kick off San Joaquin Valley Writers first anthology, GREAT VALLEY STORIES.

Following Barry’s presentation, June Gillam will offer the first free weekly writing workshop focusing on “Great Valley Story Settings,” and

“GVWriters on the Writers Journey” to get started on the anthology project, though her website [www.junegillam.com](http://www.junegillam.com)

Saturday, April 9, 12 noon-2:00. For Zoom link, go to <https://www.sjvalleywriters.org> then ABOUT, email subscription. Or email June Gillam at [gorillagirlink@gmail.com](mailto:gorillagirlink@gmail.com)



## Elk Grove Writers & Artists Presents:


**Annual Spring Zoom Writing Series:  
*Writing Deep Scenes and Plot Twists,*  
begins Tuesday, April 5, Ends Tuesday,  
May 24, 2022. From 6-8pm.**

Whether you’re a commercial storyteller or literary novelist, whether your goal is to write a best-selling memoir or captivate readers with a satisfying, beautifully written story, the key to success is the same: writing deep scenes with plot twists. The April 5<sup>th</sup> class is free to returning members. **Enroll now!**

This popular course will help you write or revise a novel, short story, flash fiction, or memoir for today’s readers and market, filled with rich characters, compelling plots, unexpected twists, and resonant themes. We will feature a literary or publishing luminary as speaker-guest.

The classes are on Tuesday evenings from 6-8pm. The fee is \$25 per class, pay-as-you-go.

For more details, please contact Gini at: [ginis.writers1@gmail.com](mailto:ginis.writers1@gmail.com)



“If you want life-long friendship and selfless camaraderie, join the army, and learn to kill. If you want a lifetime of temporary alliances with peers who will glory in your every failure, write novels.”

Robert Galbraith, *The Silkworm*

## Capitol Crimes Killer Workshop

Saturday May 14, 2022, at Rancho Cordova City Hall. Two programs: live - virtual.

In person. Keynote: Gregg Hurwitz NYT #1 International Bestselling Author of 23 thrillers, presents “Lots More Good Stuff.”

Crime authors, Crime scene lead from Sacramento crime lab, a cover artist, and more.

Virtual presentation: Anne Marie Schubert, District Attorney talks of closing the Golden State Killer case using genetic genealogy.

The virtual program includes panels on the law, sex trafficking, and mystery authors.

Registration Price:

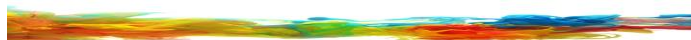
Members - \$75.00

Nonmembers - \$90.00

To register or for more information, go to:

<https://www.capitolcrimes.org/Workshop>

Recording of the virtual event will be available to registrants through July 31, 2022.



## The EGWG Bulletin Board

### **ARE YOU A SPEAKER OR TEACHER?**

**The Guild** is planning now for events in 2022 and for the **2023 Conference**. We're searching for speakers, teachers for classes on writing, and for other events.

If you are interested in joining the guild's speaker roster, contact Loy Holder at

[loyholder77@gmail.com](mailto:loyholder77@gmail.com)

## The Writers' Annex

A project of the Community of Writers  
ANNEX the writers  
The Short Course:  
The Poetry & Poetics of  
Lucille Clifton  
with Kazim Ali  
Online Thursdays, Apr 21 - May 12  
More info and registration at  
[www.communityofwriters.org](http://www.communityofwriters.org)

### **The Poetry & Poetic of Lucille Clifton with Kazim Ali.**

The class will be online and run on Thursdays from, April 12 – May 12, 2022, for 4, 2-hour sessions.

Lucille Clifton's legacy as a poet, writer, and educator is far reaching and fundamental to the poetics of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The class will be led by Kazim Ali, a poet, novelist, essayist, and professor.

This short, online class is for anyone who has an interest in reading or writing poetry. All are welcome.

**For information and registration go to**

[www.communityofwriters.org](http://www.communityofwriters.org)

## Poetry Corner

### Rainstorm

By  
Christina Francine

It's dark, except for dials  
and headlight beams.  
A jagged bolt stabs the air.  
Thunder booms explode.  
Through Dad's window crack,  
a cool breeze brings the smell  
of trees and wet dirt.  
Back and forth go the wipers,  
"Tick-tock" and "Squeak."  
The rain says, "Rat-a-tap-tap,"  
like Mom's fingers when  
she's waiting for Dad or me.  
We listen and are still,  
Even my baby brother.  
Maybe he's asleep.  
I am dry and safe.  
Oh, how I hope we're  
not close to being home.

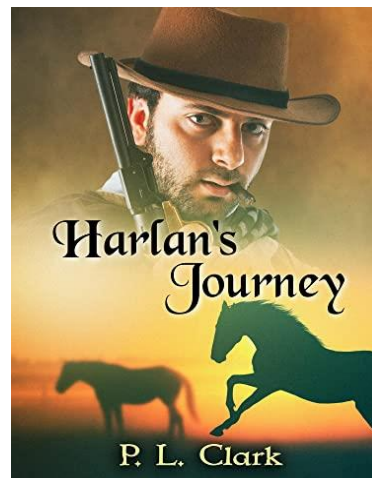


"People who think that grammar is just a collection of rules and restrictions are wrong. If you get to like it, grammar reveals the hidden meaning of history, hides disorder and abandonment, links things and brings opposites together. Grammar is a wonderful way of organizing the world how you'd like it to be."

Delphine de Vigan, *No and Me*



## \*\*\*\*\*Five-Star Review\*\*\*\*\*



[Harlan's Journey - Kindle edition by Clark, P. L.. Literature & Fiction Kindle eBooks @ Amazon.com.](#)

Getting shot by a vicious murderer gives a man a new perspective. Surviving a serious wound, which would put a lesser man six feet under, made Harlan West's decision to leave the Texas Rangers simple. On February 1, 1876, he begins his quest, destination unknown. However, the road to a new life is filled with trials and tribulations. Will Harlan survive the journey?

Young widow Emily Lincoln faces the harsh reality of running a 65,000-acre cattle ranch in Cheyenne, Wyoming Territory without her man. She needs the ranch foreman's experience, but his motives are suspect, and she's afraid.

The broken dreams of people seeking new lives litter the wild west. For Harlan and Emily, their journey is just beginning, but will they be able to triumph over those who would destroy them?

### **The Review:**

#### **"Great Story with a Fun Twist"**

Fun story as told from both Em's and Harlan's perspective. The tension builds throughout the story as their trials bring them closer to meeting. Recommended for fun, suspense, and easy reading.

## The March EGWG Meeting

Another question on picture books came up concerning illustrations. The answer: illustrators are different than artists. Go to <https://printninja.com/find-an-illustrator-for-a-childrens-book> for more information

When you find an illustrator, ask questions before agreeing to anything, and be sure you know exactly what you need and don't use phrases of "Something like" or anything vague.

Again. If you're looking for an illustrator, try Reedsy.com. They rigorously vet all members. Or online enter, Children's Book Illustrators in Sacramento County.

Kathy Marshall's book, "*Finding Marshalls*" is live on Amazon.

George Hahn's Sci-Fi, "*The Ambassador: Path to Contact (Library Saga)*" Is available on Amazon – finally.

Editor: I beta read this one and it's excellent.



ISBN – What is It?

The acronym may make it sound more complicated than it is, but getting an International Standard Book Number ([ISBN](#)) is not like joining the Illuminati: you don't need a special introduction or to be someone's important grandchild. For \$125, any author can buy an ISBN through [Bowker](#) in the USA or [Nielsen](#) in the UK: agencies that issue ISBNs and cannot profit from their sale.

However, there are companies who will make a big song and dance about securing you an ISBN, charging you hundreds of dollars on top of the actual cost — when you could just spend 10 minutes on Bowker and do it yourself.



Elk Grove Writers Guild

Writers Helping Writers

## The Presidents Column

### WORDS & MUSIC

**A BOOK FAIRE & CONCERT**  
Sunday, May 15, 2022 – 10:30 am to 5 pm

At the Chicks in Crisis Campus,  
9455 E. Stockton Blvd., Elk Grove

- + **Author registration for book faire started March 15, 2022. Go to <https://egweg.org/WM>. Cost is \$20 for table space. Bring your own table and chair(s) or Share with a friend.**
- + **Open mic sessions are filled.**
- + **Listen to an author's words or find that perfect book.**
- + **General admission and Music Lovers – Tickets are \$10.00. Pay online at <https://egweg.org/WM>**

**Food and Drinks by Chicks in Crisis – will be available for purchase.**

**AND**

## **The Summer Academy**

The dates for Summer Academy have been set for June 25

July 23

August 27

Keep those dates open. Planner are busy getting the best speakers/teachers they can find for these classes. Stay tuned for more information as the dates get closer.



## From the Book Shelf

### SOMETHING TO SAY

Barbara A. Barrett

Jennifer stopped to catch her breath beneath the trailing branches of the weeping willow. The sounds of the owl in the tree across the lawn, and the crickets and frogs in the nearby pond reassured her no one else was here. Still, she didn't want to get caught again. If she stayed in the shadows, she could approach the house without being seen. *I have to see Jeffrey. I have to explain. Surely, he will understand.*

The bushes were taller than last time, and it was odd there were no lights in the house. Jeffrey didn't go to bed until midnight. Jenny had checked her watch under a streetlight not long ago and knew it wasn't later than 10:00. It had taken hours to get here. She had walked for miles before getting a ride from a young man who was heading home for the holidays.

Jennifer shivered. Her sweater wasn't warm enough, but she couldn't wear her heavy coat. The staff would have noticed and stopped her. She smiled to herself. The new guard had been easy to fool. She sat with Mrs. Anderson near the gate until closing time. When the bell rang, Jenny hugged her and walked straight out. He even waved and smiled as she left.

Jennifer ran the short open distance to the next clump of bushes and then to the next. Still, she didn't see any lights. Maybe he was out for the evening or gone. *He has to be here. He just has to. I've got to tell him.*

Jeffrey slept in the room above the veranda. It

had been their room...Jennifer stiffened. The night sounds were gone. She went deep into the bushes and waited until she heard the owl and crickets again. The full moon was making things so difficult.

She ran to the vine-covered trellis that went to the balcony outside their room. This was the most dangerous part of her journey. Once she started climbing, she would be totally exposed. That was how she was caught last time. A sob caught in her throat as she remembered being taken away. She had gotten so close. The worst part was Jeffrey didn't even come to the window to see what was happening. If he had, she could have screamed her explanation and told him what needed to be said.

She had to find another way into the house. Again, she wished the moon wasn't so bright. Even with her dark sweater and pants, she was visible. Jennifer glanced at the sky. There were clouds on the horizon, but they would take too long to get overhead. She couldn't wait. The others might arrive before the moon was covered. They must know she was gone by now. Bed check was at 8:00. In the shadows of the porch and its high railings, she went slowly to the back of the house and found the small window leading to the basement slightly ajar. She sighed with relief.

Jennifer slid down through the window and found footing on what felt like a chair or chest beneath the window. She quickly brushed off the sticky webs, hoping there weren't any spiders in them. When she finally stepped onto the concrete floor, Jennifer was trembling with excitement. *Jeffrey, I'm coming. Once I tell you what really happened, we can be Jennifer and Jeffrey again. No more lonely nights in a small bed by myself.* The thought that he might not be alone chilled her. She quickly reassured herself. Jeffrey would never bring another woman to sleep in their bed. No one could be that cruel.

Jenny wished she had a flashlight. The cellar was dark, and she could hear small things scurrying. She prayed they were mice and not rats. She didn't want to scream. She was so close. Her heart beat faster when she felt the stair railing. It was dusty. *Why wasn't Mrs. Becker taking better care of the house? Spider webs, mice, dust! Even the bushes outside were overgrown.* As soon as she and Jeffrey got back together, she would have a talk with her and the gardener. Perhaps they needed more help. They were both getting older, and this was a big place: seven



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*Continued from page 8*

bedrooms, not to mention the numerous sitting rooms and the library.

Jennifer loved this house. She had inherited it from her uncle. On their wedding night, Jeffrey carried her over the threshold, and they went from room to room looking at the wonderful antiques.

None of the stairs squeaked. Even the door at the top was silent as she opened it and peeked into the kitchen. She knew it well: the big table in the middle with a large refrigerator against the wall. The old-fashioned stove was big enough to cook a holiday turkey and all the fixings. Jennifer could almost smell the homemade pumpkin and mince pies.

She and Jeffrey had guests for dinner that Christmas Eve. She had worn her green taffeta. The firelight brought out its shimmering blue highlights. The whole house had sparkled. It had been their last night together.

Jennifer opened the kitchen door leading to the main staircase. There were voices coming from the library. They're here already! Jennifer gently closed the door. At the other side of the room hidden behind a pantry shelf was the servants' staircase. It led to the second-floor hallway. Again, no creaking stairs gave her away as she groped in the dark. At the top, Jenny cracked open the door and closed it fast. There were flashlights coming down the hall. They were being very sneaky this time. That must be why the lights weren't on. Jeffrey might be home. Jennifer renewed her resolve to set it all straight. It wouldn't be long now. In the meantime, at least she was safe here. Only the family and the servants knew of this staircase. The door was cleverly hidden in the wall so it wouldn't disturb the beauty of the family portraits that hung upstairs.

Jennifer stood quietly until she heard their footsteps on the staircase. The room she and Jeffrey shared was at the other end of the long hallway. She moved slowly; happy the house was dark. She had never gotten this close before. Her fingers touched the delicate frame of a family portrait. She remembered it and knew their room wasn't far. Jennifer leaned against the wall. She was sweating profusely, and her hands and knees were shaking. Mrs. Brennan had told her not to get too excited. Remembering the ritual, Jennifer took

several deep breaths to control the anxiety and clear her mind. It worked. She stopped shaking and felt calmer. Jennifer wished Mrs. Brennan was here. She was kind and understanding and Jennifer had looked forward to their afternoon sessions. But even Mrs. Brennan would make her go back.

Jenny wanted to run towards the door at the end of the hall. She was so close, just three doors down. She knew she would make it this time. Again, she felt her way along the wall, her fingers lightly touching the pictures.

As her hand touched the next doorknob, Jennifer almost screamed out loud. Again, her knees and hands began to shake. She knew Jeffrey was in this bedroom, not theirs. Image after image came back to her.

He wasn't with Jennifer that night. He had waited until she was asleep and then went to *her*. She could see Anne Welch clearly, a beautiful woman with dark expressive eyes and a slender figure that showed to perfection under her black strapless dress. Anne was a business associate. She and her fiancé were holiday guests. All evening Jennifer watched Jeffrey's eyes follow Anne. Several times Anne had deliberately brushed against Jeffrey and had flirted with him all evening. Anne's fiancé, David Allbright, had been furious. Later, when she was in the kitchen, he brushed past her and stormed out the back door. She was frightened by the look on his face and went to warn Jeffrey. But he wouldn't listen, "You're crazy," he told her. "Your problem is you're too possessive." Angry, Jenny didn't say anything about David's fury and with silent tears, cried herself to sleep.

She remembered awakening later and finding Jeffrey gone. She was in the kitchen when she heard the shots. She ran up the hidden staircase and through the half-opened door, found their nude bodies sprawled across the bed in the guest room.

One by one the scenes from that night flashed before her. The bodies, the gun in her hand, the suspicious looks when she didn't answer police questions. Jennifer shivered again as she remembered waking in a small room. Later she learned it was a sanitarium. At first, she didn't want to speak. Later, she couldn't. The doctors and staff called it Psychogenic Mutism and spoke of post-traumatic stress disorder.

*Continued from page 9*

It was almost dawn before the searchers found her. When they burst into the bedroom, Jennifer was staring at the bed. "I didn't kill them." Her voice was barely above a whisper. No one said anything.

Mrs. Brennan came through the crowd of uniforms and hugged her. "Thank God, we found you."

Jenny swallowed a couple of times and when she spoke again, her voice was stronger. "Mrs. Brennan, I saw the gun on the floor and picked it up, but I didn't kill them."

"We know, Jenny. It was her fiancé, David Allbright."

Jennifer nodded. "I remember he pushed me aside and rushed out the back door. He must have come back."

"Yes, he went to the car to get his pistol."

Jennifer took a deep breath, "I tried to tell Jeffrey. He wouldn't listen to me. He said it was all my imagination. Then he picked up his drink and went over to Anne." She closed her eyes, "I was so angry and spiteful I didn't tell him about David. Later when I awoke, I remembered David's face and knew I had to warn Jeffrey. That's why I went to the kitchen. I thought he was making a sandwich. We often did in the middle of the night. I was in the hidden staircase when I heard the shots. It never occurred to me he was in another bedroom with Anne." Her eyes filled with tears, "It was my fault they were dead. The worst part was knowing I'd never get the chance to explain. I wouldn't be able to tell him how hurt I was or that I was on my way to warn him."

"You just erased everything from that night."

Jennifer nodded, "Everything but the need to explain." She shook her head, "Until today, I couldn't even remember what I wanted to say."

\*\*\*\*\*

Mrs. Brennan sat with Jenny while she gave her statement to the police. When they left, Jennifer looked around the dusty library, "I used to sit with my uncle in this room. He left the house to me because I loved it. It's so beautiful and it was filled with laughter and fun in those days." The smile on Jenny's lips faded. "Mrs. Brennan, do you think I'll ever be able to live here again?"

"If you want to badly enough. The bad memories will eventually fade and if not, there are other beautiful places." Mrs. Brennan put her coat around the shivering Jennifer and led her out of the room.

Outside, they stood watching the rain. Jenny breathed in the air. *Soon the sun will come up and there will be rainbows. Right now, it's enough that I have my memory back and I can speak again.* Jennifer turned and looked back at the house. *Perhaps one day I'll return and fill this house with warmth and love again.*



## T-Shirt Truths.

1. I'm a writer. I carry imaginary conversations with imaginary people about imaginary things. Deal with it.
2. I'm a writer. I'm full of dreams, sunshine, happiness, and rainbows...with a little bit of gloom, doom, angst, and murder mixed in.
3. I am a writer. That means I live in a crazy fantasy world with unrealistic expectations. Thank you for understanding.
4. I don't need therapy; I just need to write.
5. I am a writer. What's your super power?
6. I am a romance author. Yes. I have a dirty mind.



## **Note From the Joan Gelfand Event**

A writer needs a platform or community when talking about their published work. Consider this newsletter as part of your platform.

When you send in poetry, short stories, or memories—guess what? You are published.

Add this newsletter to your list of published works.



“Words are a lens to focus one’s mind.”

Ayn Rand

## Food for Thought

“writing is its own reward.”

Henry Miller



Enjoy the spring flowers

### SUBMISSIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

I'm looking for poetry, special memories, favorite author's quotes, flash fiction, a response to a writing prompt, or a book coming out in 2022? Send it to me.

If chosen, I will print it in one of the next issues and it will be available on the EGWG website's Newsletter's page.

**Do you or your group have an event coming up?** Send me info, by the 24<sup>th</sup> of the month for the next issue.

**Take advantage of the free advertising!**

Email for submitting: [turlockpenny@yahoo.com](mailto:turlockpenny@yahoo.com)

Please, use **Garamond – 12** for submissions. Send in word doc **not** PDF. Thanks.

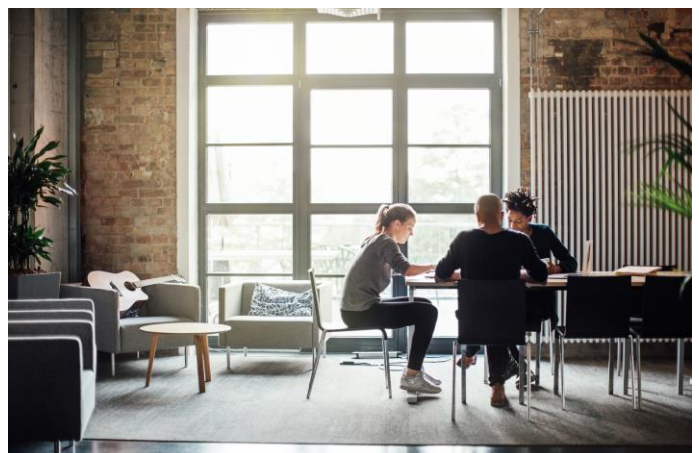
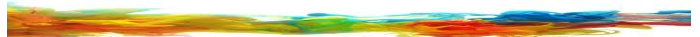
Do you know anyone who would enjoy this newsletter? Send their email address to, [loyholder77@gmail.com](mailto:loyholder77@gmail.com)

## April 2022

- Apr. 1-April Fool's Day
- Apr. 1-Natl. Poetry Month
- Apr. 9-Unicorn Day
- Apr. 12-Ramadan Begins
- Apr. 15-Passover begins
- Apr. 17-Easter
- Apr. 23- World Book Day

### A Few More Writing Prompts

- a. I'm embarrassed to tell you, but...
- b. Who is someone you admire? Why?
- c. The garden was overgrown now.
- d. Good versus evil. Do they really exist? Are there gray areas? DO good people do bad things?
- e. I turned from the ATM machine and my next-door neighbor stood, aiming a gun at me.



Enjoy the spring warmth. See ya next month!