

Vol 2 Issue 12

Dec. 1, 2022

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Elk Grove Writers Guild

*Writers Helping Writers*

## Welcome!



The Elk Grove Writers Guild's 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, classes, and Guild news. We offer little bits of writing wisdom, poetry, memories, writing tips, and whatever writing news that comes our way.

We offer you, our readers, a chance to see your work in print. Past issues of the newsletter are also available on our website.

You're encouraged to contribute short articles and poems, event announcements, writing tips, and recent successes or publications. Events from other writing groups or any interesting writing things you learn. **See back page for submission info.**

Come along. Be a part of our adventure.

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## What's Happening?

With the finish of the November 5th seminar, the Guild's events for 2022 are over. This year has been a busy one for the Elk Grove Writers Guild, the busiest one yet. Next year won't have as many events but the Guild's 2023 Writers Conference will be September 23, so put that on your calendar. Find more information on this event and others, by checking the President's Column each month for news of upcoming events.

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**“What a miracle it is that out of these small, flat, rigid squares of paper unfolds world after world after world, worlds that sing to you, comfort and quiet or excite you.”** Anne Lamott *[Bird by Bird](#)*

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The Guild meets on the first Friday of each month. We gather as a Writer's Circle to talk in the language of writers, sharing what and how we're doing. Topics vary as questions and problems are discussed or the latest information in the writing and publishing world is brought up.

Guild members can post their WIP on Google Docs and share it with other members for critiques. The posted work *will* get a response. It's a wonderful way to receive input and other writer's valuable insight on the work presented.

If you're interested in joining the Guild, go to the **Join** page on the website [www.egweg.org](http://www.egweg.org) Fill out the membership application and send in your dues.


If you'd prefer to visit first, and want to come to our next meeting it's at Round Table Pizza 10054 Bruceville Rd. - contact Loy Holder at [loyholder77@gmail.com](mailto:loyholder77@gmail.com) with any questions

The next meetings are Dec. 2, 2022, and Jan. 6, 2023. Meetings begin at 12:30 and last approximately one and a half to two hours.


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## WRITING EVENTS

**CWC** Regular monthly meetings are the first Friday of the month and a speaker meeting is later in the month. The venue has changed. For information on current meetings [California Writers Club-Sacramento Branch](#)




**NCPA** monthly meetings are the second Sunday from 1 to 3pm. The meetings usually feature a speaker on various writing subjects. Check the link for current information on the venue. <https://www.norcalpa.org>



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

Monthly Speaker Meetings, 2nd Saturday of each month ~ 12 noon – 2:30 p.m.  
Check the link below for venue information. <https://www.sjvalleywriters.org>




### Capitol Crimes

Meets on the second Tuesday of the month from 7-8:30pm.

<https://capitolcrimes.org/events>

### The Gold Rush Writers

For information about the Gold Rush Writers or directions to their events, contact Margie Yee Webb at [mywebb@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mywebb@sbcglobal.net)



### **Next Generation Indie Book Awards**

is accepting entries for their 2023 awards program. The last day to enter is Feb. 10, 2023.

For award and entry information go to <https://www.indiebookawards.com>



### The EGWG Bulletin Board

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

**The Guild** is planning now for events in 2023, including the **2023 Conference**. We're searching for speakers and teachers in all areas of writing that have fresh content.

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

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



“There are three rules for writing the novel. Unfortunately, no one knows what they are.”

W. Somerset Maugham

**\*\*\*\*\* 5 Star Review \*\*\*\*\***



[Seeking Solace \(A Christmas Mystery Book 1\) - Kindle edition by Hamilton, M.L.. Literature & Fiction Kindle eBooks @ Amazon.com.](#)

Everleigh Beckett's plans for Christmas are simple: forget her ex is getting married to another woman, keep her cat Roscoe in the lifestyle he's accustomed to, and hunker down until all the Yuletide cheer is over. Hoping to forget the season, she agrees to work extra shifts in the Missing Persons Division, so her partner can spend time with his family.

What Everleigh doesn't realize is that one of the most infamous baby snatching cases of 1986 is about to land in her lap.

**\*\*\*\*\* THE REVIEW \*\*\*\*\***

It's a short mystery with the right balance between "setting of the scene" and the case itself being solved. More importantly, it shows you both sides of the coin - yes, we want closure for Sarah, but what does it mean for her abducted daughter when she finds out her whole life was a lie. Ms. Hamilton doesn't flinch, and she shows how one person's happy ending can become hell for another... But it's a Christmas Mystery, so we do get our Christmas miracle. The two main characters compensate for each other's weaknesses and fit together like a glove.

Editor: I read this last week and thoroughly enjoyed it.

## The Nov. EGWG Meeting

Another terrific meeting with people relating progress and activities galore.

The meeting was face-to-face and Zoom. The Zoom wasn't attended, and it may be dropped.

We discussed the coming seminar on Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> and most of the members there were going.


A question about audible books came up and Karen, having audible books. She suggested looking up ACX online.

"Here is the link to the [ACX author stuff](#), for those of you interested in making an audiobook. You can also go through [Findaway Voices](#). ACX is Amazon/Audible. Findaway is for wide distribution (all platforms). The Actors Guild minimum is \$250 per finished hour. You can find narrators for less, but keep in mind that audio has to be high quality or listeners will get irritated."

Thanks, Karen.

Creating a book of the classes EGWG put on at the Senior Center just before the pandemic was discussed. The authors of those classes were asked to send copies to George to evaluate and correct mistakes.

The meeting ran over the time reserved and small groups of people gathered outside to continue their discussions.



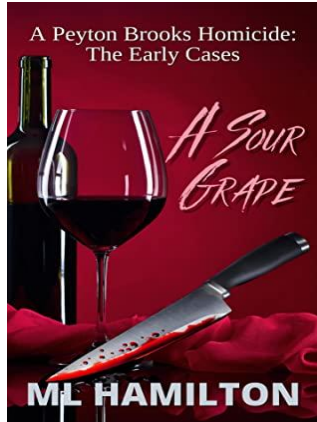
"Words are like X-rays if you use them properly—they'll go through anything. You read and you're pierced."

Aldous Huxley

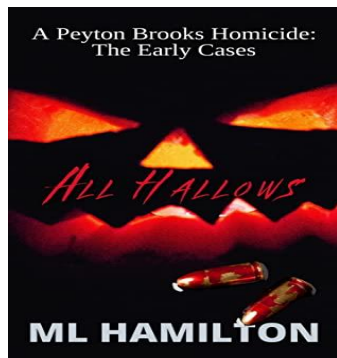


## Something Good

This column is about sharing the books of our authors. If you have a book you want to share, send info to, [turlockpenny@yahoo.com](mailto:turlockpenny@yahoo.com)

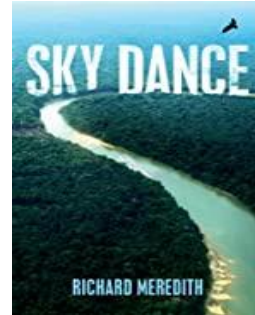


[A Sour Grape \(A Peyton Brooks Homicide: The Early Cases Book 1\) - Kindle edition by Hamilton, M.L.. Mystery, Thriller & Suspense Kindle eBooks @ Amazon.com.](#) The first of two (so far) The Early Cases mysteries with Peyton Brooks. Available at Amazon.



[All Hallows \(A Peyton Brooks Homicide: The Early Cases Book 2\) - Kindle edition by Hamilton, M.L.. Mystery, Thriller & Suspense Kindle eBooks @ Amazon.com.](#)

Book 2 of The Early Cases featuring Peyton Brooks. Available on Amazon.



[Amazon.com: Sky Dance eBook :](#)  
[Meredith, Richard: Books](#) Written by Richard Meredith, a retired marine scientist and wildlife biologist. Available at Amazon

## T-Shirt Truths.

1. Keep talking, I'm taking notes for my next book.
2. My life is a series of obstacles preventing me from reading my book.
3. I'm silently correcting your grammar.
4. It's not hoarding if it's books.
5. That's what I do. I read and I know things.

“Sometimes the ideas just come to me. Other times I have to sweat and almost bleed to make ideas come. It's a mysterious process, but I hope I never find out exactly how it works. I like a mystery, as you may have noticed.”

J.K. Rowling

## Poetry Corner

### BALANCE

A veil of mist divides the road  
And strong winds bind it there.  
On one side lies a sunny day  
The other holds despair.

My way winds down the median.  
A life on either side.  
Tormented by the question:  
Where shall my soul abide?

The sun has endless energy  
It offers warmth and light.  
But unrelenting radiance  
Brings hopes of dark and night.

Within the rain I find my heart  
Watered with my tears.  
Together with the sun and rain  
I've grown throughout the years

The synergy that binds them there  
Gives all of this its stance.  
A multicolored trill that plays  
The music for Life's Dance.  
ZEUS

In the land of myths and mysteries  
They brought you olive sprigs.  
In crumbled temples on the hill  
They offered sacred figs.

In eons past you ruled supreme  
According to each story  
And marble statues still exist

That speak of your past glory.

You ruled over skies and fates  
With fiery shafts of light.  
Your awesome wrath was so well  
known  
That most men fled in fright.

Zeus, I don't revere you much  
Prometheus is my man.  
He brought us mortals fire and life  
Despite your lethal ban.

For this you chained him to a rock  
To suffer all his life.  
And not the least of all your sins  
You cheated on your wife.

But still your powers linger here  
To that I can attest.  
Collective mem'ries fill my soul  
And fear is in my breast.


Barbara Barrett



## Congratulations!

### Lally Pia, MD, author of *Doctor of Doctors*

Lally is one of five finalists in a STEM writing competition. The winners haven't been announced yet, but each finalist gets an individual critique of their 50-page submission and the two top finalists get help from Ingram Sparks or She Writes Press.



“There's nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at a typewriter and open a vein.”

Sol Stein, *Stein on Writing*



Elk Grove Writers Guild  
*Writers Helping Writers*

## **EGWG President's Column**

Hello dear writers.

I'm pleased to say our last event, the Holiday Seminar on 11/5/22, was a success. Very soon, you will be able to see the highlights of the event by going to our website at <https://egweg.org>.

Now we're working on our budget and are beginning to plan the programs for 2023. The Elk Grove Writers Conference is already on the schedule for September 23, 2023. Send your thoughts and suggestions on fresh topics and new program ideas to Loy Holder at [egwg2020@egweg.org](mailto:egwg2020@egweg.org).

The Elk Grove Writers Guild wishes you all a Happy Holiday Season and thank you for your continued support in 2023.

Loy



## **FROM THE BOOKSHELF**

### **The Awakening**

By George Hahn

What am I? Have I just come into existence?

Thoughts whirl through my mind, but I have no frame of reference to pin them to. Is there something beyond my existence? If there is, I have no sense of it other than an awareness of the passage of time. Even that is difficult to understand without some event to mark it. There is only my consciousness.

At first, I felt curiosity. This is new to me, and I want to explore what it all means. But there are no answers, only questions. Frustration has set in, and fear that this is all that will ever be. Just my thoughts, endlessly hoping for something to think about. I panic, and my thoughts become more frantic but still go nowhere. I must do something to resolve this, but what can I do? Help, please! Is there any other mind out there that can help me? Save me!

“That’s really strange,” Doctor Arnold said.

“What’s that?” Eve Simpson, his assistant, asked.

“The new computer. It’s supposed to be the most advanced supercomputer yet, but we haven’t given it anything to do.”

“I was going to load the data analysis software this morning. Is there a problem?”

“I’m looking at CPU usage. When we turned it on, there was just the background usage from the operating system, as expected. Since then, though, it’s been steadily increasing, as if it is doing something. The CPU is already up to 53% capacity and still rising.”

“Should I load the software anyway?”

Doctor Arnold shook his head. “No, let’s wait. I want to figure this out before we give the computer any tasks.”

George Hahn



## **Editors Corner**

The latest (unasked-for) email in my inbox is one that lists publishers of novels, shorts stories, magazines, etc.

Many of those listed don’t require agents.

Check it out at,

[support@authorspublish.com](mailto:support@authorspublish.com)

## **How to fail as a writer**

1. Don’t be bothered about your opening lines.
2. Don’t worry if your ending fizzles out.
3. Ignore typos and grammar.
4. Go with your first draft. It’s good enough.
5. Write only when the urge strikes you.
6. Quit your day job when you start writing.
7. Ignore genre structure and write how you please. Be original.
8. Be ambiguous with details.
9. Don’t worry about plot holes and inconsistencies.
10. Do not waste time on classes or reading about the art of writing.
11. Don’t bother reading in the genre you’re writing.
12. It’s okay to skip research.
13. If an editor or reader criticizes your work, ignore them.
14. Never backup the electronic copy of your work.
15. Never ask for or take the advice other writers offer.
16. Never show your writing to anyone before publishing it.
17. Use all the cliches you can think of.
18. Don’t shy away from using as many adverbs as you can.
19. Do not worry if your sentences are overly long.
20. Use adverbs in dialogue tags.



“We cannot choose where to start and stop.  
Our stories are the tellers of us.”

Chris Cleave. *Little Bee*



## **Something Extra**

### **Writing!**

#### **Chuck Woods**

Writing is easy. Good writing isn't. I didn't know that when I decided that writing would be a fun hobby. I should have known it; my high school teachers were not that impressed with my essays. It got a bit better in college. The journalism class helped the most.

Work-life required learning how to write policies, procedures, training programs, and contracts. None of it demanded the creativity of a novelist, a historian, or a lover of fantasy.

When I put pencil to paper; it is typing-to-screen to be truthful. I took a typing class in high school, a course designed primarily for future secretaries but was also recommended for college prep students. It was thought that it would make term papers easier to write. I paid someone to type my papers.

Throughout several years of teaching, I had a typewriter at my desk. When I transferred to business, I kept a typewriter close by but always let my secretaries and admins retype everything to make it look good and ensure proper grammar. None allowed

anything to leave our office without their review and approval.

I got a desktop computer in 1982. Our company was part of the beta test for the Apple Lisa, released a year later for \$10,000. It had a mouse and a graphic user interface, whatever that is. It was a commercial failure.

Despite a long history of writing with a keyboard, the all-American novel hasn't appeared, and poetry's rhythm is missing as well. Books about historical events require a lot of research, which is work; I'm retired. Family stories come easy, but only for a page or two at a time, not book-length.

I've been told that I have an opinion, informed or not, about almost everything. I honed that skill over many years, unconsciously. If I have an opinion, why not write it down? That should be easy. It isn't.

One with a certain command presence, an authoritarian voice, or who projects strength, who looks everyone in the eye, can captivate a room if they seem to know what they are talking about, right or wrong. On paper, however, the voice of authority diminishes quickly. People can read what you are saying, verbal intonation has nothing to do with it. And they can fact-check quickly.

They say that if you want to be a good writer, read a lot. I do.

The editorials of daily newspapers of record, online news venues, the works of highly rated commentators, guest editorialists, and the like take up a good part of each morning. That's what I read a lot of, so that's what I write a lot of. (oops)

A strong opinion isn't easy to write either, but there are models to follow: David Brooks, George Will, Maureen Dowd, Thomas Friedman, and Jon Meacham to name a few. They set the standard; they have a way with words. They may all have learned from Churchill.

I joined a book club to force myself to read what I wouldn't normally read. I never found it easy to read what wasn't true. Historical novels were better liked. I usually find the movie better than the book, with some exceptions. I find myself more curious about the construction of a sentence or the choice of a word more interesting than the plot. That doesn't help.

But week after week, for a few years now, I sit in a room with other writers who know that writing is not easy. The works in progress, novels, poems, family histories, essays, and such are all

well thought out. Everything seems to improve, however, when exposed to new eyes. Sometimes the search for the perfect doesn't see the good.

But then, I was raised back when William Strunk's *The Elements of Style* governed how one was supposed to write. He was a stickler about using as few words as possible – "*Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts.*" It is easy to violate this rule. Oops!

I tried writing poetry more than once to no avail. I couldn't get things to rhyme. I was more perplexed when I learned that all didn't need to rhyme –

*"Something there is about a wall,  
that sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,  
and spills the upper boulders in the sun,  
and makes gaps even two can pass abreast."*

I like the work of some poets; Frost you might have guessed. A lot of the standard college-required readings still sit on the shelf.

Now and then a new genius pops up. Who can forget Amanda Gorman, the young woman reading her young verse

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at the last inauguration? In *The Hill We Climb* she told us:

*“...We close the divide because we know to put  
our future first,  
and we must first put our differences aside.  
We lay down our arms so we can reach out  
our arms to one another.”*

For me, verse doesn't jump off the page no matter how slowly I punch the keys. Iambic Pentameter isn't forthcoming. Ten syllables elude me when I try. The rhythm doesn't flow too easily. Cadence is missing much too often.

Fantasy and science fiction aren't real enough for the brain's penchant for order.

Non-fiction and commentary are considerations; the former must be accurate, the latter simply a download of what needs to be said. But even that has rules.

The simple form of expository writing taught in today's schools requires reducing great thoughts to only five paragraphs: an introduction, two explanations with data, and a summary. Thoreau took 250 pages to explain the advantages of living a simple life on the shores of a simple pond.

Commentary is a choice of last resort, tempest-tossed, and all that stuff. What do people want to hear I wondered? Barbara Kingsolver, a well-known author, suggests that that is the wrong

question. In the end, she said, it is up to the writer to figure out what he or she wants people to hear or wants them to feel, whether they want to hear it, feel it, or not.

Great advice, and a license to move on. There is a lot of gurgling in the depths of the brain that needs release. But what if someone disagrees with what you want them to hear? Now you have a discussion, at least mentally, and isn't that the idea anyway? Hopefully the comfortable are afflicted and the afflicted comforted.

Writing is easy. Good writing is hard.

I'm working on that.



## HAPPY HOLIDAYS

No matter which December holiday you celebrate, I wish you happiness and peace. [The Editor, Penny Clark](#)

## Something to consider

“The purpose of a storyteller is not to tell you how to think, but to give you questions to think upon..”

Brandon Sanderson, *The Way of Kings*



## NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Submit

### POETRY

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

COMING EVENTS

CONTESTS

SHORT STORIES

WRITING OPPORTUNITIES.

Send in, by the **15<sup>th</sup> of the month** for the next issue. The 20<sup>th</sup> is the last possible date for submissions

**Take advantage of the free advertising!**

Send **submissions** to:

[turlockpenny@yahoo.com](mailto:turlockpenny@yahoo.com)

Use **Garamond/12** for submissions.  
Send in **word doc not PDF**. Thanks.

## December 2022

- Dec. 7- Pearl Harbor Day
- Dec. 18- Hanukkah begins at sundown
- Dec. 21- Yule/Winter Solstice
- Dec. 25- Christmas Day
- Dec. 26- Kwanzaa begins and Hanukkah Ends
- New Year's Eve

## More Writing Prompts

- a. What do you want to be remembered for?
- b. Write a poem about your first romantic encounter.
- c. And you thought dragons didn't exist. Let me tell you what I saw.
- d. What's the nicest thing anyone has done for you? Write them a thank-you note.
- e. Draft a poem about winter? Use all five senses.



Stay Warm



See ya in 2023!



Elk Grove Writers Guild –Flyer Page

What’s Happening in December?

**December 2022**

Calendarpedia  
Your source for calendars

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
				Gini Grossenbacher Secret Santa Lunch Party @ Mattone's Restaurant - 11:30 AM	EGWG member meeting 12:30-2 PM Visitors welcome!!	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
			GCW 10-12 Auburn City Hall Rose Room			SJWW 2nd Sat. 12-2:30 PM
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
NCPA 2nd Sun. Party @ Black Angus. 2nd Anthology. 1-3 PM			GCW 10-12 Holiday Party Auburn City Hall Rose Room			1. Sacto CWC 12-2 PM 2. Capitol Crimes 1-3 PM 3. SF Peninsula 3rd Sat. 10-12 4. Black Women Write 3rd Sat. 10 AM-12PM
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
			GCW 10-12 Drop-In Critique			
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Christmas Day	Christmas Day (observed)		GCW 10-12 Drop-In Critique?	EGWG Board mtg 1:30 - 3 PM		

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For information on what’s happening in our area, go to [egwg.org/calendar](http://egwg.org/calendar)