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Elk Grove Writers Guild

*Writers Helping Writers*

## Welcome!



Elk Grove Writers Guild first met in 2018 as a critique group. Our main goal was and is to help writers be the best they can be.

To expand our efforts in reaching our goal, we created this once monthly newsletter. In it we'll 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.

Come. Join us on our adventure.

## Contact Information

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## What's Happening?

We're planning a busy year for 2022. And the guild's first event is next month. It sounds like it will be a good one. See the President's Column for information.

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*“Because this business of becoming conscious of being a writer, is ultimately about asking yourself, how alive am I willing to be?”*

Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird*

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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 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 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. Fill out the membership application and send us 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 Feb. 4, 2022, and Mar. 4, 2022. Meetings begin at 12:30 and last approximately one and a half hours.

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## The EGWG Bulletin Board

### **ARE YOU A SPEAKER?**

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

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

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



## COMING EVENTS




**CWC** First Friday meeting, February 4th – First Friday, 10 a.m., Gini Grossenbacher – “Tips for the Productive Critique Group” The meeting via zoom is open for chat at 12:30.

### Other Speakers

February 19th-- Saturday Monthly, 1 p.m., Kathy Lynne Marshall, “How to Organize Your Manuscript for Self-Publication”

For a link to the meetings, contact Marcia Ehinger of CWC at [mehinger@comcast.net](mailto:mehinger@comcast.net)  
Or contact CWC at [www.cwcsacramentowriters.org](http://www.cwcsacramentowriters.org) and click on announcement



“If there’s a book you want to read, but it hasn’t been written yet, then you must write it.”

Toni Morrison

## **FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS**

On April 30, 2022, the Elk Grove Fine Arts Center will be hosting the 2022 Festival of the Arts, at the Elk Grove Old Town Plaza. The goal of the Festival is to show case the arts in the community of Elk Grove. The arts include 2- and 3-dimensional art, performing arts, music, and writing.

We would like to invite you to participate in the Arts Festival. How can you take part?

1. Individual authors can rent a booth (12x12) to display and sell their books (\$50 per booth)
2. Authors can share the rental of a booth
3. The EGWG can rent a booth to share information about your organization with the community
4. Author/poet reading

In addition to artist booths, we will be featuring 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!

**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.

If you have any questions, or would like a vendor application, please respond to this email. We hope you and your members will join us in bringing the arts to our community!

Festival of Arts Committee

Darrci Robertson, Chair

(916) 685-5992

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

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

## More Coming events

### **SIGN UP NOW!**

## **Just marking time after the lockdown?**

So many social anchors have been torn away due to the recent pandemic. Come explore how you and your church families can reclaim a sense of common time and community through learning the meaning of our ancient Christian worship seasons.

In the process, you can make a closer connection between a life of faith and your daily rhythms, including how to:

- Gain a sense of personal meaning from the time patterns of the ancient worship seasons
- Experience authentic worship, whether with a congregation or as a family at home
- Anchor your passage of time in the Christian Year regardless of public gatherings.

### *You Are Invited –*

## **Tossed In Time: Worship Seasons Workshop**

**Saturday, February 12, 2022,  
9:30 to 3:00**

Led by Betsy Schwarzentraub at  
Elk Grove United Methodist Church, 8986 Elk  
Grove Blvd, Elk Grove, CA 95624

*Tossed in Time* introduces people to the ancient Christian seasons to help them reshape their sense of time and find their place in a larger Story. Peter's experience of walking with Jesus on the stormy sea begins this book and ties the chapters together. Reflection questions and at-home activities help readers live by a rhythm that follows the life of Jesus, discovering a pattern that can infuse each day with greater meaning.

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

Free Monthly Speaker Meetings, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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>



## **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 more information.

<https://www.norcalpa.org>



## **Writers Beyond Borders Programs**

**Rana Sobeih** | Library Assistant  
**Charlotte Mecklenburg Library** | South Boulevard Library

Pronouns: she/her/hers

O. 704-416-6400

[rsobeih@cmlibrary.org](mailto:rsobeih@cmlibrary.org)

You can register with Rana for the South Boulevard library *Writers Beyond Borders* program hosted by Surabhi Kaushik on **the third Wednesday of each month at 9:30 AM**. We are so excited to meet with you virtually!

*Please note that these programs will be recorded and will be made available on the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library YouTube channel.*

## Poetry Corner

### REFINED

Amy spread white bread  
with soft yellow butter  
and pulled open the tin  
kitchen bin-drawer  
loaded with sugar.  
Amy slapped that slab  
sunny side down  
onto the flat field  
of white granules  
and ground it around  
in small palm circles,  
picking up all the grains  
her little teeth  
could crunch into.

June Gillam. *So Sweet Against Your Teeth: Poems from Childhood's Fall* (Woman Song Book 1).

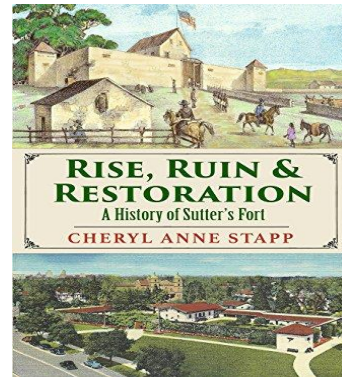
Gorilla Girl Ink. Kindle Edition.

[Amazon.com: So Sweet Against Your Teeth: Poems from Childhood's Fall \(Woman Song Book 1\) eBook : Gillam, June: Kindle Store](#)



“We never sit anything out. We are cups, quietly and constantly being filled. The trick is knowing how to tip ourselves over and let the beautiful stuff out.”

Ray Bradbury, *Zen in the art of writing*



## Rise, Ruin & Restoration: A History of Sutter's Fort by Cheryl Stapp

[Amazon.com: Rise, Ruin & Restoration: A History of Sutter's Fort eBook: Stapp, Cheryl Anne: Kindle Store](#)

*James Scott* **The authoritative work on Sutter's Fort...** Reviewed in the United States on May 17, 2018

Simply put, this is one of the best local history works I've read on Sacramento. Dynamite detail and lucid prose. You can also tell that Stapp researched the topic thoroughly. Very fine work and the standard by which all other works on the fort or antebellum Sacramento should be judged.

### About Cheryl Stapp

Cheryl Anne Stapp has served as a volunteer docent at Sutter's Fort State Historic Park for several years. She lives with her husband in Sacramento, in bygone days an important Gold Rush town and stagecoach center. Visit her website "California's Olden Golden Days" at <https://CherylAnneStapp.com>



## January's EGWG Meeting

January's meeting included a discussion on audio books and whether one speaker or two were better. Those experienced in audio books said two speaker books were more expensive due to paying two speakers and the extra time in merging the speakers into the book.

Scams are still circulating, and members were reminded to be wary of people wanting money to do wonderful things with their stories.

One member brought up the subject of keywords on Amazon, saying she'd gotten them right this time because the book was getting reviews right after being published.

If you're interested in keywords, what they are and how to find them, in the following places.

<https://blog.reedsy.com/guide/kdp/amazon-keywords>

<https://kindlepreneur.com>

And <https://publisherrocket.com/>

George Hahn reported that his book *The Path to Contact* is still in the works. (The editor of this newsletter beta-read this book and it's the perfect follow-up in the series.)

### **Good News!!**

Cheryl Stapp sends, have you already heard the wonderful news from 1/14/22!

**A Seat at the Table Books, bookstore & café** is open Mon-Sat from 7-6

9257 Laguna Springs Suite 130, Elk Grove  
Phone 916-538-3482

It has a full café menu with breakfast & lunch and books!

website [A Seat at the Table](#)

## The Presidents Column

### Save the Date

### For Joan Gelfand



On March 12, 2022, from 1:30 to 3:30 PM, Joan Gelfand will speak via Zoom on how "You Can Be a Winning Writer: *The Four Cs of Successful Writers.*" The Elk Grove Writers Guild (EGWG) is sponsoring this inspirational class. Tickets are \$20.00 for EGWG members and \$25.00 for non-members. Tickets go on sale **January 15, 2022, through March 8, 2022.** Go to the EGWG website on [1/15/22](https://egweg.org/gelfand) at <https://egweg.org/gelfand> to buy your tickets. The Zoom link for the event will be sent on March 11, 2022.

Joan Gelfand has a BA in Creative Writing, an MFA from Mill's College, and her real-world experience includes being an educator, community organizer, writing coach and author of three poetry collections, a chapbook of short fiction, the Amazon #1 best seller, "You can be a Winning Writer," Mango Press and her debut novel, "*Extreme*," published by Blue Light Press in July 2020. "*Extreme*," was featured on NPR/Tech Nation and was named a

Presidents Column Cont.

## finalist in Fiction for the International Book Awards.

Send questions to [egwg2020@egweg.org](mailto:egwg2020@egweg.org) or email [loyholder77@gmail.com](mailto:loyholder77@gmail.com).



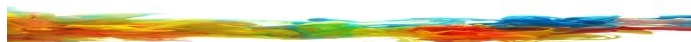
### Words and Music: Book Faire and Concert

Join us on Sunday, May 15, 2022, from 10:30 AM to 5:00 PM at the Chicks in Crisis Campus, 9455 E. Stockton Blvd., Elk Grove, CA.

- Enjoy live music.
- Open Mic – to read your work.
- Sign up for a space to sell your books.
- Food and Drink available to purchase on campus.

Registration opens March 3/15/22 and ends on 5/6/22.

**If you have questions, email**  
[loyholder77@gmail.com](mailto:loyholder77@gmail.com)



“The impulse to write things down is a peculiarly compulsive one, inexplicable to those who do not share it, useful only accidentally, only secondarily, in a way that any compulsion tries to justify itself. I suppose that it begins or does not begin in the cradle.”

Joan Didio, *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*



## From The Bookshelf

### THE GLASS COFFIN

Caution, sexual content

Samantha groaned and opened her eyes. It was pitch black. Not even a dull glow of red from her clock radio. “Damn, the lights are out again.” Sam swung her leg to get out of her bed. “Ow!” It struck something and the pain shot up through her knee and ankle bone. “What the hell?” Sam bumped her head as she tried to sit up. Cautiously, she explored with her hands. Above her, not even an arm’s length away was a flat, smooth surface and as she spread her hands out, on each side she felt wood. “Omigod, they’ve buried me and I’m still alive.”

Sam kicked and pounded her fists against the roof. Her screams echoed in the small space. “I’m not dead, I’m in here alive. Help! Help! Oh, help me!” Sam felt the panic rise through her body and knew if it reached her brain, her mind would close down. “Breath deep.” She told herself. The tears still poured from her eyes but eventually, her heart stopped pounding. She listened for voices or any sounds. Sam heard nothing, but she could think again and there was something sharp beneath her thigh. Sam explored the surface beneath her. It felt like a ballpoint pen. A pen! This is bizarre. How did it

*Glass Coffin Continued*

get in here? But its presence reassured her. It's a nightmare, a dream. She would wake up in a few minutes, get herself a glass of milk and look at her emails.

When a sliver of light appeared above her and began to widen, Sam could see she was in a wooden box with a clear plastic top panel. The wooden sides were about three feet apart. She was still wearing her pajamas. Their soft green glowed as the panel blocking out the light rolled away. Instinctively, Sam tucked the pen beneath her. When the glass top was completely uncovered, Sam could see there was a hose nozzle plugged into the box in the side panel at her feet. Oxygen. Yes, she could hear the faint hiss now. She hadn't noticed it before because of her screams and fear. Sam's relief at being found was abruptly cut short when she saw the man standing above her was completely naked.

"You're awake. Good. I've been waiting." He laid down and began rubbing himself on the glass just above her face. Sam shut her eyes to block it out. Immediately she could hear the hissing at the bottom panel stop. "No, no my dear. The cameras show you are not looking. There will be no oxygen until you do." When Sam opened her eyes, the oxygen came back on, and he began rubbing again. Sam endured the sight by looking at him without seeing. Her eyes were open, but she her mind was elsewhere. She went to the meditation point she'd learned in her yoga class and then to her favorite snorkeling spot in the Caribbean. Sam focused until she could feel the warm salt water on her body. Beneath the clear warm water, she spotted the sunken ship. Putting on her snorkel mask, Sam took a deep breath and went below

the waves to explore. When she eventually came back to her prison box, she noticed he was cleaning the glass above. The only salt water was the tears from her eyes.

When the panel above her closed again, it was almost a relief to be alone. The relief didn't last long when she realized even with her deep breaths, breathing was more difficult. "*He's cutting down the oxygen.*" Probably less oxygen after every session until she died.

Hoping the camera couldn't see with ultra violet light or anything fancy, Sam began to explore the box she was in, this time with the purpose of getting out. Perhaps she could loosen the top and escape somehow. She pried at the crack between the wood and plastic and knew her fingers were bloody when she felt the blood running down her arms. A further exploration of the sides and bottom with her feet and toes was also fruitless.

"There's no way out. I'll die in here." The blackness inside her matched the enveloping darkness of the tomb.

The second session was even worse. With the low oxygen, she was losing her ability to focus her mind elsewhere as he lay on top of her. Through the glass she could hear his grunting. Afterwards, in the lower oxygen levels, she drifted in and out of consciousness. She embraced this release.

It was during the third session as he lay on top of her that the anger came. It started in her hands and feet, filling them with a strength she didn't know she had. Slowly it spread upward in her body. In her cold rage, she felt as if she could smash the top of the coffin and just walk out. Reason took over and as it did, another



*Glass Coffin Continued*

possibility occurred to her. She couldn't break out of here but perhaps she could make him come in.

The oxygen levels were almost too low for the effort it took to remove her clothes. She rubbed the nipples of her breasts to harden them.

By the time the light filled the small space again Sam was lying there naked, eyes shut. Her right hand was between her legs and with a soft circular motion, her fingers searched her clitoris for the sensitive spot she knew was there. There was no responding sexual arousal, but with Meg Ryan's performance in mind, she began to slowly rotate her hips and fingers. After a few minutes, she pushed her head back and arched her spine. With her breasts thrust out, she moaned and straightened her legs to their full length and began to press herself even harder against her hand. Slow at first, she increased the speed, allowing her toes to curl under. Then to her surprise, she touched the right spot. Her body arched even more and the moan she gave out was real. Almost startled enough to open her eyes, Sam slowed it down and continued the soft rubbing between her legs, softly moaning. As if to get a better position, She turned sideways and braced her left hand against the side panel, allowing one finger to rest lightly against the top.

In her sexual thrashings, Sam felt the panel open. She was no longer enclosed in this glass tomb. Surreptitiously, Sam began to fill her lungs with fresh air as if she were preparing for an ocean dive. Hidden in her left hand and wrist was the ballpoint pen. She held her breath, ready for the

chloroform rag that descended over her face. She struggled for a few seconds, heaving her chest without taking in any air and then went limp.

With his hands under her armpits, he pulled her out of the coffin. Sam let her dead weight make it as difficult as possible. Finally, she lay on a rough rug and his hands began to explore her body. Sam willed herself to lie motionless. She would only have one chance and she must make it count. She felt him insert himself into her and when his breathing became heavier and heavier, he lifted himself off her chest to get inside her deeper.

He never knew what hit him. With all the strength of her powerful rage, Sam savagely thrust the ballpoint pen into his right eye and pushed it hard into his brain.

Soaked in blood and brains, Sam dialed 911. Then, huddled in the furthest corner from the glass coffin with her pajamas held against her, she waited while the sirens got closer and closer.

Barbara Barrett



### **T-Shirt Truths.**

1. English is weird. It can be understood through tough, thorough, thought, though.
2. That's what I do. I read & I know things.
3. Dinosaurs didn't read and look what happened to them.
4. Never trust an atom, they make up everything.
5. I'm a writer, I dream while awake.
6. I'm a writer, I solve problems you don't know you have in ways you don't understand.

## Food for Thought

“If you read good books, when you write, good books will come out of you.”

Natalie Goldberg, *Writing Down to the Bones*



2022 is the Year of the Tiger

## 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, at least a month in advance. Take advantage of the free advertising!

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

[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)

## February 2022 The Year of the Tiger

- Feb 1-Lunar New Year
- Feb 2-Ground hog Day
- Feb 9-National Pizza Day
- Feb. 14-Valentine's Day
- Feb 21-President's Day
- Feb 22-Margarita Day

## A Few More Writing Prompts

- a. His feet were already numb, he should have listened.
- b. Red eyes stared back at him.
- c. The garden was overgrown now.
- d. Caroline cringed at the thought of walking outside in the sunshine.
- e. My grim-faced boss called me into his office.



**Stay warm and safe and keep on writing and editing. See ya next month.**

