

Vol 3 Issue 08

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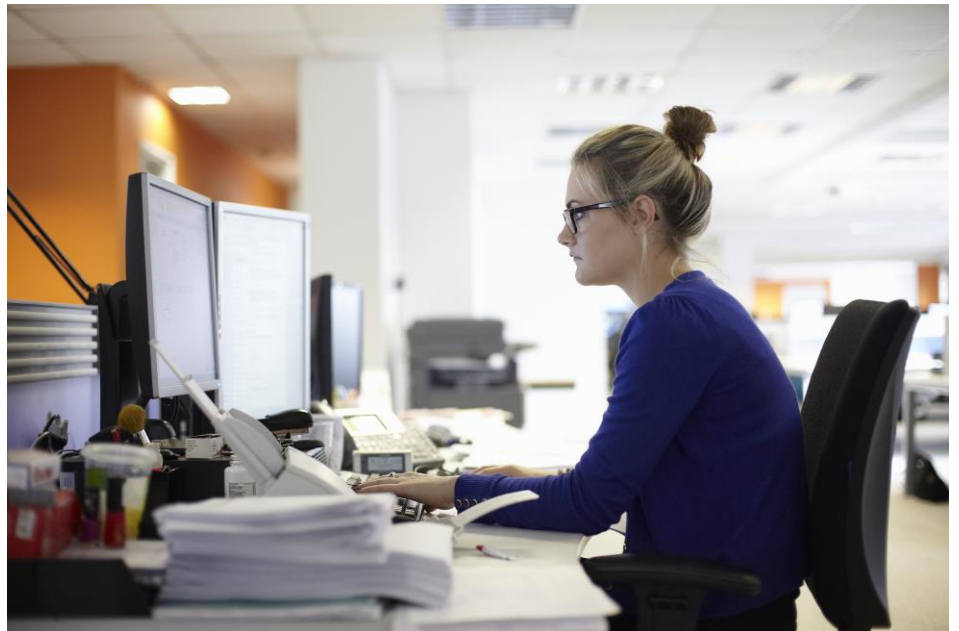
And More



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.

We created this monthly newsletter to expand the Guild's efforts to reach that goal. The newsletter includes information on coming events, classes, and Guild news. We offer bits of writing wisdom, poetry, memories, writing tips, and whatever is new in the writing world that comes our way.

In each issue you, our readers, have a chance to see your work in print. Past issues of the newsletter are also available on the Guild's website.

We encourage you to send in news of your group's events, book announcements, writing tips, recent successes or publications, and news from other writing groups.

**See back page for submission information.**

## Contact Information

### Guild Name

Elk Grove Writers Guild, Inc

### Street Address

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## Newsletter & Submissions

Penny Clark - Editor

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## What's Happening?

The Elk Grove Writers Guild's 2023 Writers Conference will be September 23. Registration is waiting for you. See more on this and other Guild events by checking the President's Column each month. Check out the flyer pages for any flyers the newsletter has received.

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**“Words are sacred. They deserve respect. If you get the right ones, in the right order, you can nudge the world a little.”**

Tom Stoppard

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Guild meetings are 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. 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 the next meeting it's at Round Table Pizza 10054 Bruceville Road, in Elk Grove.

The next meetings are Aug. 4, 2023, and Sept. 1, 2023. Meetings are from 12:30 to 2:30.

**Contact** [loyholder77@gmail.com](mailto:loyholder77@gmail.com) for answers to any questions.

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## **GROUPS & EVENTS**

**CWC** Regular monthly meeting is the first Friday of the month. A speaker meeting is later in the month. For information on current meetings go to, California Writers Cub, Sacramento branch.

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**NCPA** monthly meetings are on 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>

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### **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>

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“I can shake off everything as I write, my sorrows disappear, my courage is reborn.”  
Anne Frank

## **Capitol Crimes**

Meets on the third Saturday of the month from 1 – 3pm. For info go to <https://capitolcrimes.org/events>

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## **The Gold Country Writers**

GCW has an active calendar. For information about their Writers events or directions contact Margie Yee Webb at [mywebb@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mywebb@sbcglobal.net) or <https://goldcounyrtwriters.com>

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## **Black Women Write**

Black Women Write meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month from 10 until noon. For information contact. [BlackWomenWrite2020@gmail.com](mailto:BlackWomenWrite2020@gmail.com)

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## **The EGWG Bulletin Board**

### **SPEAKERS and TEACHERS**

**The Guild is planning events for 2024, and beyond. We’re searching for fresh content from speakers and instructors in all areas of writing.**

**If you are interested in being a speaker in a Guild event, contact Loy @ [loyholder77@gmail.com](mailto:loyholder77@gmail.com)**

## July's EGWG Meeting

Our sympathy goes out to our member who recently lost her husband.

Loy gave an update on the conference, and we were thrilled by the sum granted to us by Sacramento Arts and Culture. That is a great cushion for future Guild offerings.

AI was again a topic of discussion. No doubt it will be a continuing subject at meetings. Karen volunteered to do a class on it in August. I haven't heard whether that will happen.

Three blogs on AI use for authors and more, are listed on top of page 10.

If you have a question about who in the area does cover art, check out: [phillipscovers.com](http://phillipscovers.com) for information.

Books about writing are available on the Guild's web site, [egweg.org/library](http://egweg.org/library). Check in with [georgehahnjr@comcast.net](mailto:georgehahnjr@comcast.net) to arrange for delivery of book(s).

Remember to check out the Guild's writing classes on [egweg.org/classes](http://egweg.org/classes). When first given were 2 hours long. They can be printed for later study. Class titles are:

[Class 1 - Beginning](#)

[Class 2 - Characters](#)

[Class 3 - POV](#)

[Class 4 - Final Conflict](#)

[Class 5 - Plot](#)

[Class 6 - Synopsis](#)

[Class 7 - Description](#)

[Class 8 - Revision](#)

[Class 9 - Blurbs](#)

[Class 10 - Memoirs](#)



[Amazon.com: In Your Dreams!: An Unlikely, Later in Life Love Story eBook : Michaels, Dana: Kindle Store](#)

Middle-aged American **Katerina Mancini** will never give any man a chance to break her heart, again. But a nice, persistent British actor tempts her to risk it all for the love she thought she'd never find.

**Jamie Knight** is tired of pretending to be a playboy just for publicity. His married friends' lives appeal to him and he wants a life with someone who loves him for himself, not his acting career, income, or his family's status.

*In Your Dreams!* is a younger man-older woman romance about people whose difficult choices could derail their futures.

\*\*\*\*\***The Review**\*\*\*\*\*

From the very first page, you want to know more about Katerina and her life experiences. In pops Jamie, who realizes that all the artificial glamour is just sparkle and fake and that he's finally ready for a real, genuine relationship. A great read at the beach, chilling out in a hotel room or having a quiet moment at home. Finally, a Real love story.

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**“We are all apprentices in a craft where no one ever becomes a master.”**

**Ernest Hemingway**



Elk Grove Writers Guild  
*Writers Helping Writers*

## EGWG President's Column

Hello dear writers.

Free class to members of the Elk Grove Writers Guild on Artificial Intelligence taught on Zoom by Karen Trinkaus on 8/19/2023. The class will be two hours long, from 1:00-3:00 PM. A recording of the class will be provided to members afterwards. To register, just send an email saying you are interested to Loy at: [loyholder77@gmail.com](mailto:loyholder77@gmail.com)

Non-members, the fee is \$20.00, sign up on the Guild's webpage before 8/17/23.

The Elk Grove Writers Guild only has 4 Board members. We need volunteers to help with planning, scheduling, budgeting, attracting speakers, a new venue, and producing an event, and also doing a fund-raiser event. If you have time and want to help, email:

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

Stay Tuned!

Loy Holder, EGWG President

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**“Everybody walks past a thousand story ideas every day. The good writers are the ones who see five or six of them. Most people don't see any.”**

**Orson Scott Card**



## From the Bookshelf

### REPRIEVE

B. Barrett

I heard the low murmurs and laughter of the nurses in the hallway and knew I was alive. I had survived the open-heart surgery. There was no sense of elation or joy. It was simply a statement of fact mixed with surprise.

It was a painful awakening. The tube in my throat hurt and I was really thirsty. My mouth was so dry, my lips felt cracked. My teeth and tongue were stuck together. I wanted to beg for water. However, I couldn't talk because of the air hose. I fell asleep again, thank goodness. When I awoke, I tried to communicate my thirst, but the nurses couldn't understand my “sign” language. Finally, I wrote WATER backwards in the air and was told I couldn't have any. When I wrote ICE, the nurse shook her head. By now my lips and mouth were excruciatingly painful.

This was my third open-heart surgery. The attempt to replace the mitral and aortic valves six months before had been unsuccessful. At that time, another cardio surgeon found so much calcium, he couldn't remove it all.

He took a stitch in my mitral valve and closed me up. I was in the hospital for a week and sent home. Twelve days later I was in Emergency with Congestive Heart Failure. Because of the stitch, the blood flow in the mitral valve was so restricted it was impacting my breathing. The only way to repair it was another open-heart surgery and the cardiovascular surgeon who had performed the operation said I would never survive another one. I was given Furosemide and Metoprolol. By this time, my breathing was so bad, I had to rest after only walking six feet and I couldn't say a complete sentence without stopping to take a breath.

Since there was nothing more my primary care doctor and cardiologist could do, I was put on Home Health Care and again I was sent home. This time to die. When I asked the Home Health nurse how that would happen, She said I would go to sleep and simply stop breathing.

I started having nightmares. I woke up standing next to my bed, trying to feel my way in the dark, not knowing where I was or if I was alive or dead. That question was the worst part. Although I'm a spiritual person, I had no idea what to expect. How do we define death? Was it the impenetrable darkness in my nightmares or a bright light with all my relatives and friends who have already passed over? Or perhaps, an extension of my previous life only at a lower energy level – sort of going from technicolor to black and white or even

vice versa? After a couple of weeks of nightmares, I started to sleep with a night light. Once there was light in my room, I could see the familiar surroundings and that helped stop the uncertainty.

During my three-month checkup, I again asked the surgeon for another operation. I was willing to take the risk, but he refused stating there was a 98 percent chance I would die on the operating table. I knew there was no hope from that doctor, so I asked for a second opinion and was given the name of a top cardiovascular surgeon in the Bay Area about two hours away. During the five weeks I waited for an appointment, I prepared for death. By now I was only sleeping about an hour or two each night. My skin itched incessantly and the involuntary muscle jerks in my legs made relaxation impossible. The only thing that helped was baths. The relief was temporary so some days I took two or three a day trying to relax those muscles and soothe my skin. It helped for a short while. They were wonderful. I used Epsom salts, a soothing mixture called Tired Old Ass Soak and another one for deep relaxation. My bathtub is small, and I often fell asleep for an hour or so until the water cooled.

I told myself over and over that things will work out as they should. I trusted in Love. I never thought about living. I was too busy just surviving each day and night.

My sister drove me to the Bay Area for my first appointment with Dr. Vincent Gaudiani in Mountain View.

We arrived at his office and had to wait. He was delayed in surgery. I sat in the office trying not to get my hopes up. I was so scared he wouldn't operate. When the doctor finally walked in, I'll never forget his words. "I'm going to do the operation because if I don't, you'll die. But it's a difficult and dangerous one. Are you sure you want to go through with it?"

The relief that he would operate was so intense, I could only nod. If I had been able to breathe better, I would have gotten up and danced. I signed more papers so all my medical records could be sent to him. His nurse made another appointment for me in a month. Those thirty days seemed endless. By that time, I could only speak about four or five words without taking a breath.

During my next appointment Dr. Gaudiani asked if I had changed my mind. I hadn't. He told me I was a very courageous person. I couldn't relate to that. To me there simply was no alternative. I knew without the surgery, I would die within a few weeks. At least this way, I had a chance. It had been five months since the prior operation. The doctor wanted me to wait another month to give the scar from my last surgery more time to heal so it was scheduled for the end of April.

Another four weeks. I was given the doctor's private cell phone number in case my body couldn't wait that long. By the time I checked into the hospital, I could barely say two words without

taking a breath and even walking a few steps was difficult.

As you know from the first sentence, I survived. But that is only half my story.

\* \* \* \* \*

There are many books and articles about preparing to die, but not many that talk about life after survival – when you've been given a reprieve. Yes, there is much written about second chances but all that seemed meaningless to me. There was, of course, a long period of physical therapy to strengthen my body and improve my breathing and I concentrated on that. It took quite a while to be able to focus my mind again, but that improved as the medications were eliminated. But, underneath all this activity, I felt haunted. It was as if some part of me was missing. Like I'd left part of myself behind. Death had been waiting for me and I had somehow missed the appointment, that only half of me had crossed over. I felt like Bruce Willis in *The Sixth Sense*. He had died and didn't know it. Can you feel depressed because you didn't die?

The questions about death changed into those about life. This was a "new" opportunity. Was there for a special purpose I survived that operation? Over and over, I asked this question, but nothing came to me, or maybe it was so subtle I didn't recognize it.

I went through all the motions of living. I laughed frequently and after almost 15 months, I even began to write

and edit my poetry and short stories. I was feeling stronger and braver.

To test this, I decided to start with the night light I still used to keep the darkness away. Before I went to bed that night, I shut it off. I felt a little uneasy but managed to sleep okay. Although I didn't use it for several more nights with no reaction at all, I decided to turn it back on. Not because I needed to ward off the darkness. It was a choice, not a necessity. In the dim light I could straighten my blankets when they got tangled, plump up my flattened pillows and use the bathroom without stumbling. Sounds like a rationalization. Maybe it was.

Even months after the operation, I felt vulnerable. I knew there was a difference between the person I was before the anesthesia and this person who survived. But who am I now? I had so many questions. The biggest one? Why did I survive?

A little over five years later, I still hadn't found any answers. Death was still the Big Unknown. Then in November 2022, I passed out at a luncheon and was taken to Emergency. Again, I was told I urgently needed another open-heart surgery to repair my mitral valve.

When I got the news this second time, I remembered these words by Dylan Thomas:

*Do not go gentle into that good night,  
Old age should burn and rave at close  
of day;*

*Rage, rage against the dying of the  
light.*

However, I didn't feel any burning, raving or raging inside. Just Fear. Yes, my old nemesis was back, and I knew facing Fear is the only way to overcome it.

For decades I've believed life has to have quality, not just quantity. I could see myself lying in a hospital bed, connected to an oxygen tank, and staring at a white ceiling all day. Nope. Nope. Nope.

I made the choice to live out my natural length of time, whatever that is.

Five months later when I went to my new cardiologist, she ran more tests. Unexpectedly, they showed no further deterioration in my heart condition. It was still the same as it was in 2021. The tests in November had reflected the extreme stress I was under. Now, I lived a more relaxed and balanced life.

Again, I was reprieved. This was the second time. While I was relieved to know my life was going to be longer than I thought, I saw very clearly that for me, there are things much scarier than death.

Barbara A. Barrett

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**“There is no greater agony than  
bearing an untold story inside you.”**  
Maya Angelou



## T-Shirt Truths

1. I'm a writer, and you're a character.
2. Life is better when I'm writing.
3. A day without reading is a—just kidding—I have no idea.
4. They're.
5. I write books with happily ever after.
6. Fear the red pen!

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## What is a Vanity Press?

The simple answer is a vanity press is a publisher that profits from asking authors for money to cover printing expenses and not from selling books.

The definition above makes it easier to tell legitimate publishers from vanity and hybrid scammers.

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## Paraprodokians

A few more examples, just for fun.

“If I could say a few words, I would be a better public speaker.”

“You know what they say: you can lead a herring to water, but you have to walk really fast, or they'll die.”

“When you first entered the restaurant, I thought you were handsome. And then you spoke.”

“Her lips said, “No,” but her eyes said, “read my lips.”

“There are three types of people in the world – those who can count and those who can't!”

“Standing in the park today, I was wondering why a frisbee looks larger the closer it gets...then it hit me.”

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## Food for Thought

With AI becoming more available and used, I've noticed changes in the wording of the Copyright Page in books, aimed at AI copying works for their own use. It is as follows.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means, including information storage and retrieval systems, without written permission from the author, except for the use of brief quotations in a book review.

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**Keep your critters cool on walks!  
Test the sidewalk for how hot it is.**



### More on AI

One of the Guild's members provided the address for three blogs concerning using AI.

Who's Using AI?

(<https://valneil.com/2023/06/01/ai-author-survey-results-who-is-writing-with-ai/>)

ChatGPT Gave my Disabled Son the Confidence to Write

(<https://valneil.com/2023/05/04/chat-gpt-gave-my-disabled-son-the-confidence-to-write-how-i-learned-to-stop-worrying-and-love-the-ai/>)

How to Use ChatGPT as an Author

(<https://valneil.com/2023/05/04/how-to-use-chat-gpt-as-an-author/>)

Thanks Val.

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### Poetry Corner

**Oops** I'm running this poem again because somehow the last line of the third stanza got left off. I underlined it.

#### **The Prison**

If I could release this body  
And finally break free  
I'd travel throughout Time and Space  
Wandering aimlessly.  
I would sit upon the moon's high ridge  
And peek at its other side,  
Play dodgeball in the Asteroid Belt

And catch a comet ride.

I'd wash my hair with stardust,  
Visit the Nebula Cone;  
Then go where it all began  
To see how much it's grown.

I'd look for other worlds like this  
And beside a sleepy stream,  
I'd eat the fruit from nearby trees;  
For an afternoon, I'd dream.

Barbara Barrett

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#### **PART AND PARTICLE**

The atoms that whirl  
Inside me,  
Are older than the Earth  
And men who first  
Walked here.  
Born in the universe,  
Hitching rides on asteroids  
And flaming comets,  
I have been everywhere and  
Everywhen.

Barbara Barrett

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#### **REMEMBER**

Register for the September 23<sup>rd</sup> Writers Conference by going to.

[egweg.org/23conf](http://egweg.org/23conf)

Admission is \$75.00 and includes great speakers and classes and a Continental Breakfast as well as lunch. The schedule is in the Flyer section at the end of this issue.

**Something to consider.**

“Don’t tell me the moon is shining;  
show me the glint of light on broken  
glass.” Anton Chekhov



**NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS**

**POETRY**

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

COMING EVENTS

CONTESTS

SHORT STORIES

WRITING OPPORTUNITIES.

Send submission by the **15<sup>th</sup> of the month**  
for the next issue.

**Take advantage of the free  
advertising!**

Send **Submissions** to:

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

**Use Garamond-14** for submissions.

Send in **word doc** **NOT** PDF. Thanks.

**August 2023**

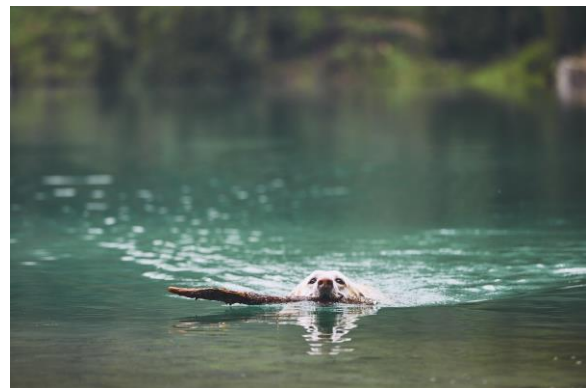
- Aug. 3- Nat’l Watermelon Day
- Aug. 9- Book Lover’s Day
- Aug. 13- Int’l Left Hander’s Day
- Aug. 14- World Lizard Day
- Aug. 26- Woman’s Equality Day

**More Writing Prompts**

- a. Boy meets girl. Boy falls in love with girl. The catch is their parents are engaged to be married.
- b. Research the history of your city or county. Imagine what life would have been like 50, 100, even 200 years ago.
- c. What was your best year ever? What made it special?
- d. You get to meet your hero or favorite celebrity. What do you hope happens during your visit?



Stay Cool. Hot summer days ahead!



**See you next month!**

What’s Happening in Our Area?

**August 2023**

Calendarpedia  
Your source for calendars

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
			GCW 10-12: Business mtg. -- All Wednesdays at Auburn City Hall Rose Room		12:30 PM First Friday EGWG Meeting, Round Table Pizza, EG Sacto CWC 9-11 a.m.: "How NOT to Write a Short Story" Elaine Faber, CH	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		Cap Crimes 1 p.m. (Zoom): "The Russian Science of Deception"	GCW 10-12: Drop-In Critique			SJWW 12-2 2nd Sat. at UOP: "How & Why to Use Film/Video in Your Writing" Chris Hennessy
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
NCPA 1-3: Monthly mtg., 4-5:30 @ Flaming Grill Café	SSWC (SacSuburban): 7-9 PM monthly mtg. "Children's Books," 5501 Dewey Dr., Fair Oaks		GCW 10-12: Speakers, "Authors at Book Clubs" panel + "We are Gold Country Writers"			Cap Crimes 3rd Sat. 1-3 "Tarot for Authors" S Natomas Library
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
			GCW 10-12: Drop-In Critique			SJWW: 12-2, Writers' Lunch @ a Stktn restaurant
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
			GCW 10-12: 5th Wed. special event	1:30 PM Last Thurs. EGWG Board Meeting		

If you or your group have flyers for your events that you’d like to see on the flyer page, send them **directly** to Penny Clark [turlockpenny@yahoo.com](mailto:turlockpenny@yahoo.com)

Make sure it’s NOT in PDF.

See the next page for the 2023 Conference Schedule and the flyer after that.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Laguna Room</b>	<b>Franklin/Sheldon Room</b>
6:30	In the Building	
7:00:00 AM - Check-In - Hallway	Continental Breakfast & Book Store f/Speakers	
8:00 AM		Gregory Randall - What's New in the Writing and Publishing World in 2023.
8:45 AM		Close Partition bet. Franklin and Laguna
9:00 AM		Kakwasi Somadhi - Let Your Scenes Move the Story.
10:00 AM		Break
10:15 AM		Chris Hennesy - How to Build Your Media Platform.
11:15 AM		Break
11:30 AM		Kristen Tate - What You Need to Know About Getting Your Book Edited.
12:30 PM		Lunch
1:30 PM		Joey Garcia - How to Write a Blurb. It's Easier Than You Think.
2:30 PM		Break
2:45 PM		Judith Starkston - How to Show Emotion in the Details.
3:45 PM		Break
4:00 PM		Karen Phillips - What About the Cover Design of Your Book.
5:00 PM		Close and Clean Up
6:00 PM		Leave the Building

# The Elk Grove Writers Conference



The Elk Grove Writers Conference is **September 23, 2023**, at District 56, 8230 Civic Center Drive, Elk Grove from 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Participants will enjoy a complimentary breakfast, lunch, and a comprehensive program on the Craft of Writing. Register now at [egweg.org/23conf](http://egweg.org/23conf).



**KEYNOTE SPEAKER GREGORY RANDALL**, a multi-published author of thrillers like, "This Face of Evil," and "Pawns in an Ancient Game," will provide a riveting presentation on "What's New In the Writing and Publishing World in 2023."

**KAKWASI SOMADHI** is the author of "Coming Forth by Day," and several children's books such as "The Peacemaker and the African Beede." As an experienced teacher of Creative Writing at Cosumnes River College, she can show participants how to write a complex scene that moves their story.



**CHRIS HENNESSY**, filmmaker and TV producer, is writing, "Touched by Hannah," a book on a man with cancer, his one-pound newborn, Hannah, and their fight for life. It was featured on NBC News and is slated for release in 2024. He will then convert the book to a Netflix film. His experience and expertise will be reflected in his presentation on "How to Build a Media Platform."

**KAREN PHILLIPS**, of Phillips Covers, is a graphic artist and professional book cover designer with a degree in Applied Art & Design from Cal Poly. She has worked with many indie authors, and small publishers including Poisoned Pen Press and Blue River Press. She enjoys creating covers for all genres, and her presentation on book cover design is sure to help her class participants sell more books.



If you're a writer, the word "editing" causes goosebumps. **KRISTEN TATE** has the cure. With a PhD in English from Columbia University, success as an author of "All the Words: A Year of Reading About Writing," and a successful editorial service called the Blue Garnet, she will help class participants transform their work from rough draft to finished book.

**JOEY GARCIA** says, "Writers struggle with writing copy for the back cover of a book." Joey is an editor and professional Author Platform Coach who help writers get known, so when their books get written, an audience is waiting to read it. Bad copy could kill the sale of a book. In Joey's interactive session, attendees will learn o draft enticing back cover copy, and receive useful feedback.



**JUDITH STARKSTON** taught college writing and publishes fantasy and magic in a Bronze Age world. Her novel, "Hand of Fire" was a semi-finalist with the Benner's Award for Historical Fiction. Her novella, "The Scent of Slaughter and Love," shows she's mastered the art of inserting emotion into a story. The net effect? Her readers feel her characters' fear, love, hate, sexual attraction and more. Learn how to do this, and your words are sure to sell.



Elk Grove Writers Guild  
Writers Helping Writers



## REGISTRATION:

[egweg.org/23conf](http://egweg.org/23conf)

For more information on the Conference, go to [egweg.org](http://egweg.org) or email [loyholder77@gmail.com](mailto:loyholder77@gmail.com)