

April, 2024

Suburban Scribe

Sacramento Suburban Writers' Club Newsletter

sactowriters.org

Krysta Tawlks will be our speakers on Monday, April 8th, at 7 p.m. at the Fellowship Hall at 5501 Dewey Drive, corner of Dewey and Madison.

Writers For Writers: Practical Benefits of a Writing Community

Let's be honest—sometimes it's hard to congratulate the success of other writers as they reach their goals and accomplishments especially if we are waiting for our chance to shine. However, an uplifting writing community is a more effective writing community. Come learn practical ways to build a community of allies that help us make a mark in the writing world.

Krysta Tawlks was content to write for herself most of her life until she met other writers who were really “going for it.” This inspired her to jump into the query trenches and pitch her novel to agents and publishers. She has since published *Children of the Wild*, a young adult historical fantasy, with Monster Ivy Publishing. She spends her days writing, mothering her two kids, and teaching English to English learners at the local college.

You can buy Krista's book here: <https://www.monsterivy.com/product-page/children-of-the-wild>



Reasons to Attend Meetings In Person

Usually I fill this space with fun musings and mad ramblings, but this month instead will be a suggestion.

It goes without saying: the more active the club, the more it benefits everyone. The writing community lives and dies with the people who call themselves writers. Thus if you want a growing, active, writing community in Sacramento, you (**YES YOU**) have to build it. And **WE** collectively will build it together.

So bring your fellow writers, friends, family, neighbors, countrymen, dogs, cats, horses, goldfish, your local librarian, your favorite hair stylist, your imaginary friend, and even your pet tarantula. Bribe them with food and money, or drag them there kicking and screaming if you have to. The more the merrier.

Hello, fellow writers and artists of all walks of life, members, and guests — EVERYONE IS WELCOME, NO MATTER YOUR ... WELL, NO MATTER YOUR *ANYTHING!*

Please join us in person at 7 p.m. at 5501 Dewey Drive, Fair Oaks in the Fellowship Hall of the Crossroads Christian Fellowship Church behind the white fence at the edge of the parking lot. We meet there on the second Monday of every month except May when we meet at a local restaurant.

We **HIGHLY** encourage meeting in person. The room has a super-large television for viewing the speaker if they are not in-person, plus there are usually goodies you can snack on. Feel free to show up early for the chance to talk to some of the hippest dudes and dudettes in the Golden Bear state.

If you **MUST** join on Zoom 7-9 p.m. from home, please contact President Ron Smith in advance for special accommodations.

Ronald Smith, President SSWC

NOTE: AFTER OUR MEETING ON 4/8/2024, ZOOM WILL BE AVAILABLE BY SPECIAL REQUEST ONLY.

IT SNOWED TODAY IN RANCHO TOWN

By Jeannie Turner

It snowed today in Rancho town,
Or so it seemed to me.
Small bits of white came from the sky,
What could these white bits be?

I looked around and saw the sun
Still shining in the sky,
But still the snow came falling down.
I really wondered why.

If it is snowing, why am I mowing?
The thought flew through my mind
Well, I am mowing and it is snowing—
Must be a different kind.

And then I looked and saw the tree,
The plum tree in full glory.
That tree had made a Blossom Snow,
And so thus ends my story.

**READ
ME!**

Join us for the April 2024 Writers' Mingle!

Are you a writer looking for some inspiration and feedback? Do you want to meet other writers in our area who share your passion for words? Then come to the Writers' Mingle, hosted by the Sacramento Suburban Writers Club. It's a **FREE** and casual event where you can connect and chat with fellow writers. You can also bring a sample of your work to share with everyone, if you like. We'd love to hear what you're working on!

The Writers' Mingle will be on Saturday, April 20th from 9 am to 11 am. Due to the environment, we had to change locations. For now, our member Mary Lou has graciously opened her home to us. Please contact her at mledsonanderson@yahoo.com or look for her address in the membership directory on the website. She is in Citrus Heights not far from our normal meeting location. If you would like to help out and bring coffee, please shoot her an email.

Don't miss this opportunity to mingle with other writers and have some fun. No reservations are needed, just show up and join us. We hope to see you there!

**READ
ME!**



Our Next Mingles

Be there or be a clodhopper

April 20 - Support & Critique Groups

HELP !!! VOLUNTEERS

Gondor Calls for Aid! Will You Answer?

Calling all members — SSWC is in need of volunteers. (Yes, that means you.)

Snacks/Refreshments

Publicity

Historian

Membership Committee

Nominations

There was a Newsletter position, but that spot has been taken by a Sinister Rapsallion.

No individual job takes a lot of time, and you learn a lot about the club, our members, and about writing by helping out. Plus you get Theoretical Cookies which we may or may not keep track of.

Contact Ron Smith ... or any other Board member listed on the last page of this newsletter.

\$1000 Writing Scholarship!

Awarded by Sacramento Suburban Writers' Club
The 2024 Scholarship for High School
Seniors is now open for submissions



Read all the details at:

<https://www.sactowriters.org/2024-scholarship>



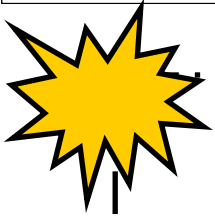
And submit your work early to:

scholarship@sactowriters.org



Awards Banquet: May 13, 2024, Monday eve

Deadline extended: **April 19, 2024**



Keywords – A Personal Tale

By Jim Mounts-Miller

During January, I optimized my previous dormant website, Appaloosa Radio Online for the iPhone and Android. It is a central element in my new endeavor as a publisher. In the second week of February, I checked the site's traffic. I found that during the previous 30 days, it had 46 unique visitors and they viewed (on average) 1.7 of its pages.

I have been doing an intensive study on marketing, watching videos, going to various sites, even reading books from the library.

Almost every marketing guru said the same thing. Keywords play a crucial role in book marketing, since they help potential readers discover your book in the vast sea of titles available in the market. They all recommend embedding crucial keywords into your book's title, its subtitle, its metadata, and its blurb.

And many recommended selecting your keywords even before starting to write the book.

In an older video, I stumbled onto an online resource that Google provides. The video suggested going to the **Glimpse** site and identifying the most searched keywords on your topic --- the keywords people actually search for --- and then build these keywords into your title, subtitle, and blurb.

I decided to try it for my website Appaloosa Radio Online.

When we created the site, we used the tagline: ***Where original fiction comes alive!***

Pretty catchy, right? So we thought.

But, as I said earlier, in the last 30 days, the site had only 46 unique visitors.

I decided to use Glimpse to search for keywords that might improve our traffic.

I joined on the "free" level and did a run on the single keyword "**audiobooks.**"

First, I learned that during the last 30 days, there were 2.7 million Google searches which included the word "audiobook." This represents a gain of 6 percent during the last year.

OK. So what? Well, our free version of Glimpse gave us an Excel datafile with the top 625 searched topics using the keyword "audiobooks."

Guess what was at the top?

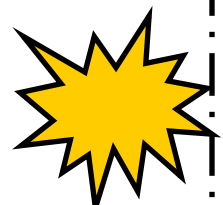
It should have been obvious to us.

The top one was: "**Free audiobooks.**"

Now, we don't publish full audiobooks, but Appaloosa Radio Online has (at the time this is written) 167 free audio stories written by 16 different authors. And we are very proud of the quality of our audio and of our stories.

We believe we offer an excellent product for free.

Continued on next page..



Continued from previous page...

We believe we offer an excellent product for free.

But there were 2.7 million searches and only 46 ended up on our site!

So, I changed our site's descriptor. It now reads:

"Free audio stories for the iPhone and Android"

I ran the site for seven days with this new description and found that we had 86 unique visitors, and they were viewing more of our pages.

I am pleased to share that today (March 1 – 22 days later) when I checked again, we had reached 371 unique visitors, and on average they viewed 2.7 of our stories.

I don't know how many of the visitors used a mobile phone to access the site. (Buying that level of information would cost me about \$500 a year!) Yet, it is my hunch that it is a sizable number.

Still not the numbers that Amazon and Spotify get. They are the top ranked searches for 'audiobooks.' But we're growing.

An Opportunity

By Cle Curbo a.k.a. Paul Turner

Death or change must come to all beings, including a writers club. Covid hit and membership slipped. Or did it merely change to more online? If so, the more broadly traveled world has our members past, present and future captivated. How broad? As broad as the internet. Whereas all we seem to push is our small physical space. Don't get me wrong. I love meeting in person. The SSWC Mingle has a good size group, and guess what? We get to converse with each other, not just in the group, but as person to person. And, we can order food!

Please suspect that I favor change over death. Yet, each change brings a little death to our routine, to our what-we-are-used-to. Or, need it do so? Really, I'm still a member, yet I yearn for something more than our monthly speaker meetings. Yes, I fondly recall the days of meeting before the club meeting. We would discuss topics in better writing; practice flash fiction; engage with each other in plans to write more and better.

Here then is an offer. Try out the Prolific Writers Section of SSWC. Send your request to join to lpaulturner2050@gmail.com. I'll respond with the agenda for the Grand Opening Meet of Thursday, April 18, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting is only slated for an hour. Pack your notebook and be prepared to scribe, or simply to listen and participate. - L Paul Turner

ELK GROVE WRITERS GUILD PRESENTS SPRING SEMINAR



APRIL 13, 2024

Elk Grove Community Center, 8230 Civic Center Drive, Suite 140, Elk Grove, CA 95757.

Registration Begins 1/20/24.

Registration Fee is \$35.00. To Register click on <https://egweg.org/spring/>

Program:

12:00 – 1:00 PM - Check-In and Pizza Lunch

1:15 – 3:30 PM - Gini Grossenbacher, M. Ed, Speaker Presents:

Exploring Deep Point of View: Fiction and Memoirs

Join Us!

Our class on Deep Point of View (DPOV) in fiction and memoirs delves deeply into the perspectives of your characters.

The course begins by laying the groundwork of Point of View (POV), differentiating between First Person (1st POV) and Third Person (3rd POV). We examine the specifics of each, covering aspects like pronoun usage and narrative perspective, and offer insights into crafting engaging stories using one of the other POVs.

The focus then shifts to DPOV, a narrative technique that immerses readers by merging the narrator's and protagonist's viewpoints. This section discusses DPOV's benefits in enriching reader engagement and its implementation in notable literature.

We study the common challenges in maintaining a consistent POV, highlighting frequent mistakes and ways to rectify them. Please bring your work-in-progress to practice refining DPOV.

By the end of the class, you will have a thorough understanding of DPOV, gaining the ability to create stories that vividly portray characters' inner worlds. This knowledge is crucial for those aiming to write engaging novels or memoirs, making DPOV an invaluable element in your writer's toolkit.

© 2024 Gini Grossenbacher, Author-Editor-Educator. <https://ginigrossenbacher.com/>

Please email loyholder77@gmail.com with any questions or comments. Hope to see you there.

Writing Tip from the Grammar Guardian:

Communication and Punctuation Marks

By M. L. Edson (AKA Mary Lou Anderson)



Commas (with “mm”). Those dots with a squiggly end.

Coma (with “m”). What you were probably in when you ignored (or forgot) comma rules.

One of the most misused punctuation marks, commas help us understand what we are reading. Their placement is not always decided by a pause and shame on some teachers for relying on this not-always-correct-way of knowing when to place a comma.

A comma will tell the reader that someone is being spoken to. Direct address. *Hey, Fred, want to see a movie?* Some writers want to discard the first comma in the above example, but, strictly speaking, it should be there.

In American writing, our commas go inside quotation marks. *The criminal said, “Hands up,” after pulling out his water pistol.*

Inconsistency with using the “Oxford Comma.” This type of comma is when one is placed between *all* the elements of a series, even before the conjunction. If you are not insistent on being consistent when using that punctuation mark, confusion may ensue. My favorite example is when a contractor ordered paint: “blue, white and red.” Cans of blue paint and pink paint were delivered. The contractor refused to pay for it. The supplier sued. The judge’s decision: white and red combine to make pink. No comma. Combined colors. It was what was ordered. Pay up. Next case.

This space is reserved for your short story or poem next month.

It can’t be as vexatious as phantom traffic, of that I’m sure.

Please email your submission to kevincastle32@gmail.com

P.S. If you’re nice to him he won’t entice you to try the wild and mysterious flavors of Bertie

Bott’s Every Flavour Beans.

(Submissions are for members only. Annual membership is super cheap. Feel free to email

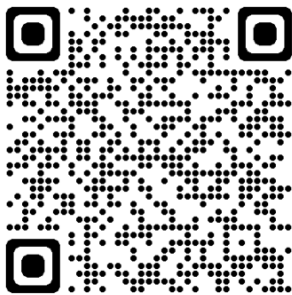
Kevin the Newsletter Goblin with questions.)

Appaloosa Radio

Jim Miller

I have introduced a new feature to my Appaloosa Radio webcast site called **91-Second Stories**. These are complete fiction stories that run about 91 seconds to listen to. Typically, this runs 250 to 350 words. It is an exciting genre to write in. Concise and pithy stories that carry an impact.

I am inviting the Club's members to submit their own 91-Second Stories which I'll convert into audio.



I have been webcasting the stories on both my podcast (Appaloosa Radio Podcast) and on my main site (Appaloosa Radio Productions). Of course, the podcast is always available on services such as Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Podcasts, Amazon Music, Overcast, etc.

Appaloosa Radio—James Joel Miller Jim.mount.miller@gmail.com
online audio theater where original stories come alive!

You can also check out the newly formed Appaloosa Radio YouTube Channel featuring some of our very own members! <https://www.youtube.com/@Appaloosastories>

Appaloosa Radio is a production of the Appaloosa Springs Audio Theater, a volunteer collaborative whose purpose is to create, produce, and share original story content through webcast radio experiences.

We offer a **permanent archive** of our original audio stories at Appaloosa Radio Productions --- <https://appaloosaradio productions>

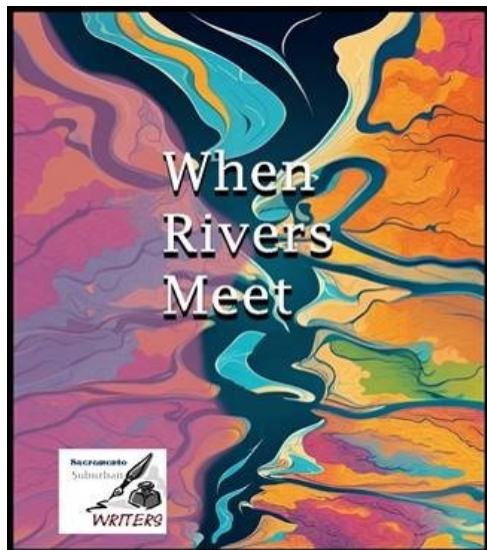
We also offer a **podcast** service that adds new episodes each week. The podcast host is at --- <https://appaloosa radio.buzzsprout.com>

Principal contact: jim-j@appaloosaradio productions

Behind every door is an untold story . . .

~ Jim Mounts-Miller ~

When Rivers Meet



The Sacramento Suburban Writers Club is going beyond print to sharing our stories by audio and video. We will host a story-sharing platform that will webcast our audio stories to services such as Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Podcasts, Stitcher, iHeartRadio, TuneIn, Alexa, Overcast, PocketCasts, Castro, Castbox, Podchaser, etc. That means that anyone can listen to them on their smartphone or in their car wherever they may be in the world!

We are also posting the same stories to a YouTube channel that will also feature other stories written by the Club's members. That option opens even more opportunities for sharing our tales. The Board has decided to begin by webcasting stories previously published in one of our anthologies.

Thus...

If you have written a story that has been included in any of our published anthologies, please contact Jim Mounts-Miller at jim-j@appaloosaradio productions or Brittany Lord (a.k.a. tealya) at tealya@hotmail.com to confirm that you wish to have your story (or stories) webcast on these new platforms.

We are calling this an audio-anthology and we have tentatively named it, "***When Rivers Meet***" and the subtitle is "Fiction from the Sacramento Suburban Writers' Club."

There is no charge for webcasting your stories on any of these platforms.

Future SSWC Speakers / Events

April - Krysta Tawlks, YA Fantasy Author

May - Annual Banquet

June - Kimberly Watkins, Educator in Language Arts

July - Joan Griffin, Author and Editor

August - Susan Osborn, Freelance Writer and Storyteller

Future SSWC Speakers / Events

September - Barbara Young, Children's Book Author, Non-fiction, Short Stories

October - Shannon Dittmore, YA Fantasy Author

November - Chris Hennessy, Filmmaker

December - Annual Winter PARTY!

This page is intentionally repeated each month.

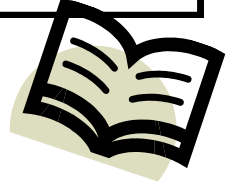
Follow the SSWC podcasts at:

<https://anchor.fm/sactowriters>

Spotify (<https://open.spotify.com/show/0UHX19RTviPkRXMzkysg6V>)

RadioPublic (<https://radiopublic.com/sactowriters-694Q1Z>)

Pocket Casts (<https://pca.st/z1e83qlq>)



Which Club Members Have Published?

Check out the SSWC website. You will find a list of members and their book on our club's website: <https://www.sactowriters.org/books-by-our-members/>

If you are a member and have published material, send the information to Wes Turner, including any links to your own website and/or to a site that sells your books (eg Amazon). His email is listed in our club roster. Wes will add your book(s) to the list.

R U Done Yet?

Have you finished another book? Had any kind of material published recently? Finished a BIG Milestone on your current project?

Are you holding a Book Launch or Public Reading to let the world know what you have accomplished? Let the other members and readers know so we can support you!

Send a brief announcement (including links and your contact information) to kevincastle32@gmail.com and have it included in the next newsletter.

Please include a copy of the cover.

Members — Wanna be Published?

Submit your own short story, article, poem, or excerpt of your own book to the newsletter for publication. (Please keep it to under 450 or so words ... or it will have to be serialized.)

It would give you bragging rights as being published if you are going to be in contact with an agent and/or publisher.

Send all Submissions to Kevin The Newsletter Goblin:
kevincastle32@gmail.com

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Note that the article to the left is directed to "members."

So, if you do *want to be published* in any future newsletters, make sure your dues are up to date.

Join the Club!

We are a vibrant club with active writers, have several critique groups (with room for more), and stay wonderfully supportive of each other.

SSWC supports local writers and encourages everyone to write and publish. Attending meetings is free, but membership brings benefits, such as publication in the newsletter and anthology, use of our club's library, qualification for grants to attend conferences (limits apply), and ability to join our first-class critique groups.

MEMBERSHIP is paid on a yearly basis. If joining after April, dues are prorated by quarter (unless you are just really late in maintaining your membership!).

_____ Individual \$40 / year

_____ Couple \$55 / year

_____ Full-Time Student \$30 / year

_____ Platinum Senior (70+) \$30 / year

More information is on our website: sactowriters.org

Name: _____ Genres: _____

Published? Y / N (yes, includes self-published) Email: _____

Phone: _____ Address: _____

Website/other info/address (optional): _____

MAIL YOUR DUES TO: Jeannie Turner. Her address is in the Directory. If you don't have a copy, email Jeannie at turnerjeannie48@gmail.com and she will let you know where to send it.

OFFICERS

Elected Officers:

President	Ron Smith (El Capitan)
Vice President	Brittany Lord (And Lady)
Secretary	_____
Treasurer (Money penny)	Mary Lou Anderson

Chairs:

Coffee/Treats	_____
Conferences	_____
Critique Groups	Brittany Lord (And Lady)
Historian	_____
Librarian	Ron Smith (El Capitan)
Membership People)	Jeannie Turner (Voice of the People)
Newsletter	Kevin Castle (Goblin)
Nominations	_____
Prgm/Speakers Extraordinaire)	Laura Kellen (Speaker Herder)
Publicity	_____
Raffle	_____
Scholarship	Karen Sepahmansour & Bernard Wosney (The Dynamic Duo)
Sunshine	Nan Roark (The Good Witch)
Website	Wes Turner (Technowizard)
Workshops	_____

**There's a spot in the list
above for YOU!**

WRITING PROMPT

(450 Words or Less)

As the old saying goes, April showers do, in fact, bring May flowers. It has to rain in order for there to be plant life.

Likewise, it can't always be sunshine in our lives. Sometimes it does have to rain. But if you let it, that rain will bring flowers and rainbows another day.

For this prompt, write about figurative or literal rain that brought about something beautiful in your life.

MEETING INFORMATION

7:00 - 9:00 PM

We meet the second Monday each month, year round. Be there or be square.

5501 Dewey Drive, Fair Oaks, CA

Just north of the Madison/Dewey intersection,
across from the Safeway.

In the Friendship Hall through the white fence.

All writers are encouraged to attend.

(Yes, that means you!)

Membership not mandatory but brings privileges
such as publication in the newsletter!