

July, 2024

Suburban Scribe

Sacramento Suburban Writers' Club Newsletter

sactowriters.org

Joan Griffin will be our speaker on Monday, July 8th, at 7 p.m. at the Fellowship Hall at 5501 Dewey Drive, corner of Dewey and Madison.

July Topic: Memorable Characters

Three dimensional characters—characters that come alive to readers—that's the goal for every narrative writer. Historic characters, contemporary characters, characters far in the future or in imaginary worlds—it doesn't matter—they must be interesting and likeable, and they must come alive in readers' minds.

How to do that? Writers must endow their characters with all the trappings of the human beings who will be reading about them. Characters must act and interact, they must think, feel, and emote.



Joan lives under the spell of wanderlust. She takes wing, whenever possible, for actual destinations near and far and for literary locales in the pages of books. A native Californian and proud UCLA Bruin, Joan lives in the Northern California foothills of the majestic Sierra Nevada, a world she loves exploring. Joan navigated her way through two careers—marketing computers, then sailboats—before applying her love of storytelling to her dual passions of teaching and writing. Retired after 25 years of teaching middle school, Joan currently teaches classes in literature and history at the Osher Lifelong Learning Program (OLLI) at Sierra College and is a member of the OLLI Advisory Council.

Joan's best-selling adventure memoir, *Force of Nature: Three Women Tackle the John Muir Trail*, recently published by Black Rose Writing, is equal parts gripping adventure tale, personal memoir, and vivid nature writing.

Her website is: <https://www.joangriffin.us>. She will also be selling her books at the SSWC meeting.

Reasons to Attend Meetings In Person

1. Give your AC a break and use someone else's.
2. You'll get to rub shoulders with rascalions.
3. The sprites living in your home may actually clean your house while you're away.
4. The book you promised yourself you would write this year still isn't written, and by surrounding yourself with other writers it will serve to reinforce your priority of actually writing it.

Editor's Note:

The 4th reason may or may not be applicable to myself.

Also, see page 2 for something cool.

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

SSWC Flash Fiction Contest

In honor of flash fiction month, I am holding a flash fiction contest. The contest is simple: just write a story using the prompt "My fake brother slept on the floor" and send it to Brittany at tealya@hotmail.com by July 31st.

You can write any genre you like and you are free to change "my" to he or she in the prompt. Oh, and since this is flash fiction, it can only be 250 words or less. The winner will be announced at the August meeting and receive a small prize. Flash fiction is a great chance to try out new genres and techniques in writing so why not give it a try?

**READ
ME!**

Join us for the July 2024 Writers' Mingle!

**READ
ME!**

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, July 20th from 9 am to 11 am. We are meeting at the Denny's in Roseville. We have a private room reserved for our mingles for the rest of the year! The address is: 122 Sunrise Ave, Roseville, CA 95661.

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!



Writers' Mingle

NEW LOCATION

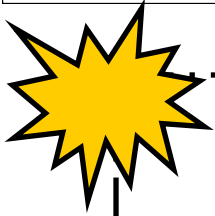
Now meeting at Denny's Roseville on Sunrise (at Douglas)

Saturday July 20, 2024 --- 9 am to 11 am

All are welcome --- No charge

Focus: Captivating Characters





A Blood Stained Hood

By Kyra Blacklock, Winner of the 2024 Scholarship
(Serialized by Editor due to length)

Maybe if I had been harder on Parsley, urged that not everyone was friendly, maybe this could have been avoided. But my little girl let Red take her to Granny's, desperate to explain that our family wasn't a threat to theirs.

As soon as Chervil, one of my sons, came running to me and whining that he couldn't find Parsley for their patrol, I felt my stomach drop. I barked at my mate and we set off racing to Granny's, Chervil and another of Parsley's brothers hot on our tails.

By the time we got there it was too late. Those barbaric monsters killed my daughter. She was beaten and broken...and tied up to their garden gate. A clear threat to my family.

I can't remember exactly what happened after that, I'm pretty sure rage blinded my mind and took control of my every action. The next thing I know, I'm in the house. And it is terrifying. Traps and guns line the walls, hundreds of animals mounted along the roof. I know it was dangerous and stupid, but no one was listening and I wasn't losing another pup to Red. So I lunged.

Red and Granny were sitting at a table, cleaning blood off of a blade. My daughter's blood. Before you know it Granny is dead on the floor. Puncture marks from my jaws wrap around her throat, blood pooling below her on the floor. I should say I feel bad, but truly I don't. I spun towards Red. I've never been a fan of killing children, but here I was facing the murderer of three of my own. Red killed Parsley that very hour, and had slain my first litter three years prior. A snarl erupted from my throat and echoed throughout the room. Her Granny's blood dripped from my muzzle and I had my sons and mate blocking the door in case Red escaped.

I should have bolted then, gotten my family out of there and hidden deep in the forest until we could move the youngest pups. But I didn't...and how I wish I had done anything but what I did.

I threw myself at Red. Wanting to, NEEDING to tear that sickeningly smug smile off her face. To shred her red cloak that was dyed using my family's blood. To end her bloodline before it ended mine. A howl vibrated through my ears. It was Chervils, low and strong, running through the trees and reaching the ears of the rest of our pack. His littermates, my children. I knew that they would arrive soon, aching for this battle since they heard the story of why they had no older siblings. And I was terrified. That howl was a call to war, and if this murderous family knew anything, it was that howl.

A howl for backup, for others, for help, or to fight. My pups were charging straight into a bloodbath, where they would see their sister's corpse hanging up. Which would make them forget their training. They would fight on instincts and rage, which would lead to careless mistakes.

(See next month's newsletter for part 3!)



P.S. The Scholarship Committee will be meeting in August via Zoom. You can reach committee chairperson Karen Sepahmansour at karensepah@gmail.com or message at 916-616-594 if you have any questions or would like to be involved.

A Brief History of the Suburban Writers Club

by Pat Biasotti

I, Pat, am probably the oldest living member with a continuous membership since the early 70s, and I am immensely grateful for the friendships and help provided by SSWC all these years.

Our club owes its existence to Ethel Bangert, Jean Giovanni, and a third lady whose name has been forgotten. Ethel was once very involved with the California Writer's Club and she sponsored Eva Rutland, a talented and well-published author for membership. However, Eva was turned down, because she was black and Ethel was so infuriated she terminated her own membership and with the other two started SSWC around Bangert's kitchen table.

They soon outgrew the kitchen table. When we moved to Sacramento in 1972, I immediately enrolled in Ethel's writing classes at Adult Ed. Of course, I joined SSWC which she promoted, and I especially enjoyed their helpful critique groups.

By the time I joined, we were meeting at a member's home and from there moved to the community room in a bank building. After that we used a series of libraries, which sometimes caused problems, because a member was responsible for picking up the key for the outside door to the library community room. I think we've always met on Monday evenings, but often the library closed at 5 PM and they had to pick up the key early. If it was a 3-day holiday, the key had to be obtained on Friday.

Sometimes they forgot to obtain the key in time and this led to some unusual meeting places. One was particularly hilarious. We had finger-food for our banquet, but we were locked out. However, a member opened his near-by high school biology classroom for us and we ate our food among vines dangling in our faces, and with a live tarantula staring at his food from his converted glass aquarium. Another time when locked out, our president had a good friend who owned a near-by restaurant and offered us his banquet room. It wasn't our regular banquet night, but we had an impromptu one, repaying him by purchasing bites of this and that, coffee and dessert.

For years the board was composed of only four main officers—president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, but about 25 years ago Katie Maxwell became president and instituted all the chairmanships we have today.

I run the risk of forgetting some important members, but my good friend Barbara Jodry published an outstanding club newsletter for many, many years, followed by Bonnie Bair and others. Bud Gardner, who taught his "Writing For Publication" classes at American River College was a great promoter of SSWC. In recent years we owe a great debt to all those--too many to enumerate—who have compiled and published our four anthologies, especially Tom Hessler (deceased) who spearheaded the idea.

Formerly, for banquet evenings we used to engage an illustrious speaker. However, one time the speaker had to cancel at the last minute, and the president quickly obtained some members to read their stories. It was such a success that this brilliant idea has remained our banquet night entertainment ever since. Some of the readers have been Penny Howard with her delightful and funny animal tales, John Powell who read his Haiku poetry about gaming (a nicer word for gambling), Jeannie Turner's poetry, or Tealya Lord's fantasy and science fiction.

Thus, we can be thankful for the three women who started SSWC, and all the officers and those on the board so dedicated to their jobs, plus the helpful critique groups. After meeting all over the area for years, we are especially indebted to member Al Gilding, who arranged with his Crossroads Community Fellowship Church for our great meeting place these past several years.

Writer Milestone! *M. L. Edson*

M. L. Edson (aka Mary Lou Anderson) just (finally) published her *Sierra Heist* book in paperback format. Also, the Grammar Guardian has also put out a revised and updated version of the *Grammar Guardian's Revised Critique Group Survival Guide* with more info, better lists, and ideas for working with other authors in critique groups.

Plus, a collection of six short stories are available in *Reality and Illusion*, a fun read.

The books, along with her other publications, are available at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). Just search for M. L. Edson, books.



Writer Milestone! *Cle Curbo (aka Paul Turner)*

In the last year, Mr. Curbo has been busy. *For the Love of Maggie O'Die* was published on Amazon and Barnes and Nobles Online late 2023, along with 2 audio stories in April/May of 2024. The audio stories are best found at: www.CleCurbo.com

Editor's Note: (Yes, you can celebrate your milestones in the newsletter!)

Writing Tip from the Grammar Guardian:

Commas in Direct Address

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



The Grammar Guardian has probably covered this before. However, after reading soooo many books in the last six months (yep, a lot of 'em), this needs repeating, stressing, emphasizing, reinforced:

Use commas in direct address.

What's direct address? It's when your character is talking to someone and the listener is "named." A comma goes before and/or after the name of the person depending on where the name is in the sentence.

"Listen, **Allen**, I told you to finish your cereal."

"**Mom**, it's soggy. I don't like soggy cereal."

"Well, **silly**, it would still be crunchy if you hadn't dilly-dallied, **son**."

It's not a *major* error. It's *only* a comma after all. But it is important. The reader can be taken out of the story, the action slowed, the suspense interrupted, the importance of the issue missed if there is missing or wrong punctuation and the reader hesitates.

So, listen up, **readers**. Pay attention, **writers**. Use commas, **all you authors**, in your writing when someone talks to someone else and mentions their name, nickname, or even insult.

(Okay, so the actual name doesn't have to be used, but you get the idea. Right?)

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.

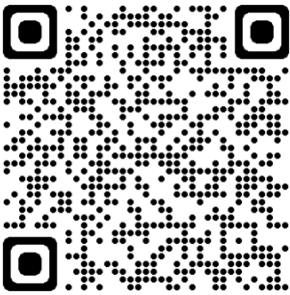
Contact Ron Smith ... or any other Board member listed on the last page of this newsletter.

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 ~

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

It can't be as empty as the editor's backpocket, of that I'm sure.

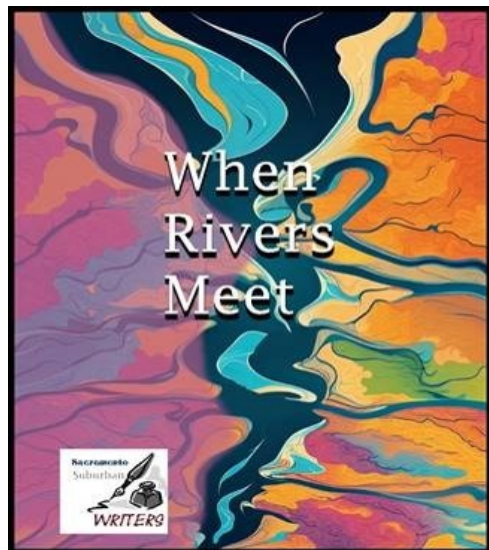
Please email your submission to kevincastle32@gmail.com

P.S. If you're kind to him he won't force you to sit in the corner for 15 minutes to think about what you've done.

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

Kevin the Newsletter Goblin with questions.)

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

August - Dena Kouremetis, Narrator and Voice Actor

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

October - Shannon Dittimore, YA Fantasy Author

Future SSWC Speakers / Events

November - Chris Hennessy, Filmmaker

December - Annual Winter PARTY!

January - Susan Osborn, Flash Fiction

2025—??? It's a twisty mystery...

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	Mary Lou Anderson (Ms. Moneypenny)

Chairs:

Coffee/Treats	_____
Conferences	_____
Critique Groups	Brittany Lord (And Lady)
Historian	_____
Librarian	Ron Smith (El Capitan)
Membership	Jeannie Turner (Voice of the People)
Newsletter	Kevin Castle (Goblin)
Nominations	_____
Prgm/Speakers	Laura Kellen (Speaker Herder Extraordinaire)
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)

Half the year is over!!! While you are melting this blistering July, think about those goals you set at the beginning of the year, especially those writing goals. Are you any closer towards them?

If not, get to it! Determine why you haven't made progress and adjust your course. If you have, celebrate your progress and keep pushing!

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!