

December, 2024

Suburban Scribe

Sacramento Suburban Writers' Club Newsletter

sactowriters.org

YOU will be our speaker on Monday, December 9th, at 7 p.m. at the Fellowship Hall at 5501 Dewey Drive, corner of Dewey and Madison.

December Topic – POTLUCK!!!!

(Presenter: YOU)

Are you the reincarnation of Ebenezer Scrooge? If not, then it's time to Party! So put on your best Ugly Christmas Sweater, dust off the fruitcake you made last year that nobody ate, and start practicing your off-key Christmas carols.

Please note: **EVERYONE** (Yes, even you) needs to bring something to eat for the potluck.

How to Tell if You're The Grinch

1. Are you as cuddly as a cactus or charming as an eel?
2. Do you have termites in your smile? Do you have garlic in your soul?
3. Would people rather spend time with a seasick crocodile than with you?
4. Is your brain full of spiders or your heart full of unwashed socks?
5. Is your heart a dead tomato or an empty hole?
6. Would people rather eat a three decker sauerkraut and toadstool sandwich with arsenic sauce than spend time with you?
7. Do you drive a crooked hoss?
8. Is your life full of the most disgraceful assortment of deplorable rubbish imaginable mangled up in tangled knots?
9. Do people avoid you with a thirty-nine and a half foot pole?

If any of these are true, you might be The Grinch.



PAY ATTENTION!!!

April, 2025—Sacramento Writing Workshop is hosting a 1 day event. (I went to the last one in 2019 and I highly recommend it). See here for info: <https://sacramentowritingworkshop.com/>

FREE Talk: Self-Promoting One's Writing. <https://authorspublish.com/lectures/free-talk-publicity-101-for-authors-with-caro-perny/> (A fellow SSWC member watched this and found it very helpful)

Editor's Note:

If you don't show up to the Holiday party, you are most certainly The Grinch.

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.

Ron Smith, President SSWC

Where Can Curiosity Take Us?

By Karen Sepahmansour

Are we from the stars?
Can we go to Mars?
How far can we see the light?

Are we specks of dust?
Who did create the strings of trust?
Beings of hearts and brains.

In this planet of people
We reach above the steeple
To find out who we are.

Find the farthest star
We can evolve so far
And find our light in the sky.

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 Monopoly Money 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.



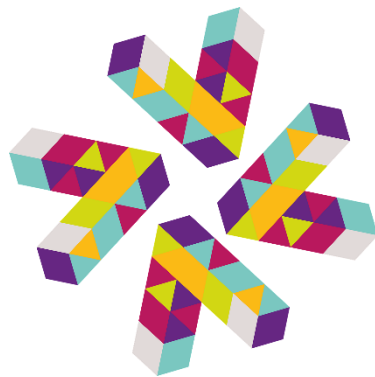
Writers' Mingle

**Now At The Grooviest
LOCATION**

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

122 Sunrise Ave, Roseville, CA 95661

Saturday December 21st, 2024 --- 9 am to 11 am
All are welcome --- No toll fee for the Bridge Troll



This Month's Topic:

It's a Surprise!

Like Getting Presents on Christmas.



History of the Carol “O, Holy Night”


By Pat Biasotti

The beloved Christmas carol, “O, Holy Night,” or “Cantique de Noel” in French, has an interesting history. In the French town of Roquemaure in 1843, the priest wanted to celebrate the church organ repair and commissioned a citizen named Placide Cappean to write a Christmas poem. Cappean was proud of his poem, “Minuit Cretiens.” (Translation: “Midnight Christians”) and asked composer Adolphe Adams to put it to music. In 1847 an opera singer, Emily Laurey, premiered it at Midnight Mass in Roquemaure. The French people loved it and its popularity spread. However, authorities discovered that Cappean, the lyricist, was a socialist and Adams, a Jew, thus they forbid it to be sung at services. Too late, because the French continued to sing “Cantique de Noel” in their homes.

Meanwhile in America, Bostonian John Sullivan Dwight, had studied to be a Unitarian minister but suffered severe panic attacks and had to forsake that calling. He found a new outlet for his training and talents by founding a journal for musicians which became popular. In 1855, he heard the French version of the carol and as an Abolitionist was greatly impressed by lines in the third verse: *Truly He taught us to love one another, His law is love and His gospel peace. Chains He shall break for the slave is our brother, and in His name all oppression shall cease.* (Dwight’s version). He kept the original meaning intact by translating the French lyrics into English and the hauntingly beautiful carol we sing today. As the editor of the Journal, he used that publication to popularize the carol in the United States and it also appeared in several songbooks. As this was during the Civil War, it became very popular in the North. Dwight firmly believed that Christ came to free all men, and he hoped even those in the South would embrace this truth.

A legend tells that during the fierce fighting of the Franco-Prussian War, on Christmas Eve 1871, a French soldier emerged from his trench and stood on the battlefield unarmed. This crazy man shocked both sides and they ceased firing. He started singing “Cantique de Noel.” He had sung all three verses when a German soldier stood up and broke into Martin Luther’s carol, “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come.” Supposedly, the fighting stopped for twenty-four hours in honor of Christmas Day.

By 1906 Adams was dead, Cappean and Dwight were old men when “O Holy Night” startled the world by being the first song heard on the radio. Radio waves had transmitted only Morse Code. However, Reginald Fessenden, a university professor and once the chief chemist for Thomas Edison, figured out how to combine two frequencies to carry the human voice. Hoping it would work, he started reading from Luke: *And in those days there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus...* . Wireless operators on ships at sea and those at newspapers sat shocked as a human voice interrupted the usual dots and dashes. A miracle? Then Fessenden picked up his violin and started playing “O Holy Night.” Thus, through this Christmas Eve miracle music was heard all over the world.



Intelligent Life... Or Something Like It The Worst Singer in the Universe is Crowned!

A Series By Kevin Castle

As of two days ago, Gorg, a Borgus from the planet Corgusborg of the Scorgurcorburgus Galaxy has been crowned the Worst Singer in the Universe. The details of the event were a closely guarded secret. Each contestant was sworn to secrecy under threat of death while each judge was driven in a stretch limousine there under the pretext that they thought they had won a lifetime supply of ice cream from the planet Earth. The judges also happened to be criminals serving infinite life sentences at Pri'son Prison, so no one actually cared about the torture they were about to endure.

To avoid any unnecessary accidents, or deaths, the contest was held in a secret location on the desolate planet Vandragoth. This was to avoid having any escaped sound waves travel across space and time which, at the very least, would cause someone's brain to bleed and ears to rupture. A special building was built just for this occasion which has since been melted down and erased from existence by the Universal Police Force. Inside the building was a single room, devoid of time, that was made of cement, reinforced with Adamantium Walls, and encased in a Waslehaus, from which no sound is said to escape. As a safety precaution, singers and judges were separated by sixteen inches of soundproof glass, but no one really knows why as no one actually cares about the judges.

Gorg was first up, and she proceeded to sing a local ballad from her own planet. She was also the only contestant to actually kill someone, which is why she won first place.

Sing-53762, a damaged Opera Unit robot built by the R.O.B.O.T. company, sang in binary so no one actually understood it. However, she did make everyone's ears bleed and cause involuntary convulsions and was awarded third.

Szothramar, a Longorian, was the surprise entry as he wasn't even invited. Due to poor security, he was able to sneak in undetected and was only spotted after they sealed and encased the room. No one thought he would do well, but he sang a note so high that it was impossible to hear and it shattered all 16 inches of soundproof glass. Luckily, he was last in the rotation and was awarded second.

The event was considered a success by all, even with no audience and no televised show. The after-party is set for next month, and as a precaution no singing will be allowed there.

If you want to learn more about this spectacular event, they are releasing a DVD of interviews done before and after the event entitled "Beyond the Notes." Before and after pictures of the judges will be included as limited edition posters. The DVD is likely to be gruesome and violent, and will definitely sell out quickly.

As an unforeseen benefit, the Judges of Justice have mentioned they are discussing using this as a new prison sentence and a new way to inflict community service. They hope this will deter people from crime in the future.

To Elope, Or Not To Elope

By Jeannie Turner

The other day, I visited a friend living in a quite fancy retirement home.

At the sign-in-and-out desk, I couldn't help but notice behind the employee a rather large binder with the title "Eloperments." I had heard that this retirement home was well-noted for its varied activities, but match-making?? A naughty thought crossed my mind—perhaps this retirement home has a romance department! I couldn't help but chuckle at the idea.

After my visit, I asked the attendant about that strangely titled binder when I was signing out. I was astonished when she said it contained names, pictures, and details about the residents who sometimes left unattended. Oh, I thought, what a kind person to create a new word to label that information rather than titling it runaways, escapees, or absconders. I certainly knew the meaning of that romantic word, elope!

A day or two later, I kept thinking back to that encounter. *Interesting word, elopements. I wonder what the story behind the actual definition of eloping is.*

I looked it up, and—to my surprise—this is what I found: first of all, elopement is not a newly invented word at all! Yes, the root word, elope' has historically meant "to run away secretly to get married—usually without parental consent." But it has also meant—and still means— "to escape."

"Legal elopement" is defined as a patient who is "incapable of adequately protecting himself, and who departs the health care facility unsupervised and undetected." Also known as bolting, elopement behavior is *any time someone leaves a safe area or caregiver without permission or knowledge.*

Since elopement behavior involves leaving a designated area without permission, this can include running away from a parent when out at a park or store, escaping from a home when a caregiver is distracted, or running away from school.

It's a common misconception that eloping is reserved for those old enough to fall in love. In reality, it's a term that can be applied to any situation where someone leaves without permission. I'm sure there's not a parent out there who hasn't had a child 'elope' in some form or other!



Writing Tip from the Grammar Guardian:

Writing — Past, Present, Future Now!

*From the Grammar Guardian
(aka, M. L. Edson / Mary Lou Anderson)*



The end of a year. Time to reflect. Time to recount what we've accomplished.

What? What we accomplished? No, not that! It can't really be nothing? At least not much?!?

Now is the time to realize that you didn't get even half done that you wanted to do ... that you *needed* to do to finish that story, to write that article, to publish that book.

Where did the time go? One minute it's 1998 and the next it's ... it's what?! almost 2025? Limber up those fingers. Jiggle those brain cells. Get those creative juices flowing.

First draft, don't worry about spelling, grammar, sentence structure. Yep, as the "Grammar Guardian," it hurts me to type those things, but you just gotta get those ideas out of your head into a format others can read. You can straighten out the story line, the info, the details later. Just get it out.

Set an example for your kids. Your grandkids? Show your siblings that you *really can* finish a book. Honor your ancestors. Memorialize your family. Set an example for the youngsters who bubble over with fantasy stories of their own. Help *them* write a story and publish it on Kindle.

Write the story of what it would be like if only ... if only ... if ... whatever ...

Thoughts and ideas percolate in your brain, making your typing fingers twitch. *What would the hero say about this situation? What does the heroine want to do to the bad guys? Are aliens real? What advice would your pet dog or cat share with you? What if ... what if ... what if...???*

Does it sound like I'm lecturing you?

Sorry.

That isn't my intent at all.

What I'm doing is selfishly trying to motivate myself.

Happy holidays, everyone. Happy writing.



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 ~

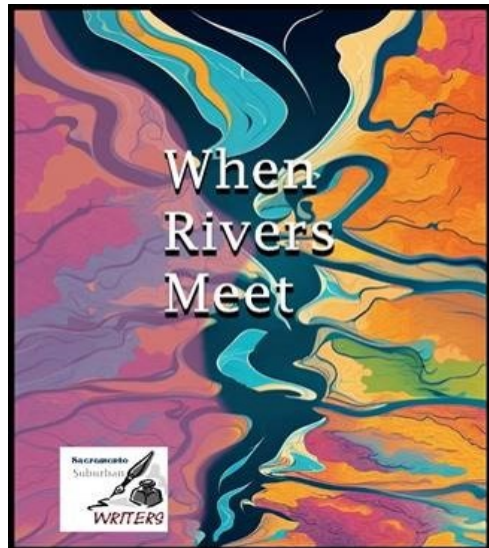
This space is reserved for your short story or poem next month.

It can't be as embarrassing as missing the annual SSWC Christmas Party, of that

I'm sure. Please email your submission to kevycastle32@gmail.com

P.S. If you're kind to him, he won't have the Christmas elves tie you to a chair with tinfoil and ribbon. (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

December - Annual Winter PARTY!

January - Susan Osborn, Flash Fiction

February - Mike Brandt, Rolling Out A Story

Future SSWC Speakers / Events

March - Tim Schooley, Historical (Medieval) Fiction

2025—??? It's a twisty mystery...

("I've got a blank space, writer, and I'll type your name.")

This page is intentionally repeated each month.

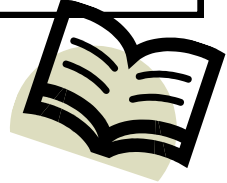
Follow the SSWC podcasts at:

<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. Money Penny)

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, Wes, and Linda (Cerberus)
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)

We all have memories of gathering around the TV with family during this time of year to watch Christmas Movies. So ignore them! Whether your favorite movie is *Elf* or *It's a Wonderful Life* or *A Nightmare Before Christmas*, write a short reimagined version of it.

P.S. Don't forget to send it to your favorite Newsletter Goblin!

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!